

Mel Gibson's Passion Film Ignites Passions

The storm of controversy surrounding Mel Gibson's film about Jesus death has had many facets. Is the movie anti-Semitic? Too violent for kids? Would Gibsons Jesus get married?

Representatives of the Jewish Anti-Defamation League and the Simon Wiesenthal Center feared provocation of anti-Jewish feelings and violence. Prerelease screenings found warm response from leaders including Vatican officials and Billy Graham. Others remained skeptical.

Much of the controversy centers on two questions about the film and the history it depicts: Were Jewish people responsible for Jesus death? And, if so, are all Jewish people thereby Christ killers? Anti-Semitism's ugly stains make certain fears understandable.

Raised as a Gentile in Miami, I had many Jewish friends. Miamis Jewish population exceeds that of many cities of Israel. My classmates talked of Hebrew school, synagogue, and bar mitzvahs. In school we sang Hanukah songs and Christmas carols. My parents taught and modeled respect and tolerance. Anti-Semitism makes my blood boil.

After finding faith as a university student, I explored concerns about anti-Semitism in biblical accounts of Jesus death. Jesus was Jewish, as were his early followers. Jewish people who opposed him aligned against Jewish people who supported him. This was essentially a Jewish-Jewish conflict. One faction pressured Pilate, a Roman ruler, into executing Jesus.

Jewish leaders did not physically hang him on a cross; Roman executioners did that. But some Jewish people were part of the mix.

Should all Jewish people bear the guilt for Jesus execution? Of course not. Neither should all Germans bear guilt for the Holocaust nor all Christians for racism or anti-Semitism, pedophilia, corruption, or other outrageous acts of Christians. We all bear responsibility for our own decisions.

But there is another facet to the guilt question. After I spoke in a University of Miami anthropology class, one student asked if Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus. Absolutely, I replied. Jews are responsible for Jesus death. And so are Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, atheists and agnostics.

Jesus said he came to help plug people into God, to give his life as a ransom for many. He believed his death would pay the price necessary to provide forgiveness for all who would accept it, becoming a bridge linking them to eternity.

According to this perspective, we – all of us – and our flaws are the reason Jesus went to the cross. Are we guilty of physically executing him? No. Was it because of us that he suffered? By his reasoning, yes.

Gibson's film is significant. Of course, I brought my own biases to the screening. I left impressed with the terrible pain Jesus endured, especially poignant because I believe he endured it for me.

Rembrandt, the famous Dutch artist, painted a memorable depiction of the crucifixion. In it, several people help to raise the cross to which Jesus is nailed. Light emphasizes one particular face among the cross-raisers. The face is Rembrandt's, a self-portrait. The painter believed he himself was part of the reason Jesus died.

Gibson told the Associated Press, "I came to a difficult point in my life and meditating on Christ's sufferings, on his passion, got me through it." The Passion film and story are worth considering and discussing among friends of any faith or

of no faith.

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Protecting Your Family On the Internet

Protecting from Pornography

What's available for free and sometimes delivered without asking for it is not just airbrushed naked women anymore—it's very clear pictures of people actually engaging in various types of sex, bestiality, and adults molesting children.

Like the tobacco industry used to, the pornography industry aggressively targets young children as consumers. They position their Web sites to be found in seemingly innocent searches using words like toys, Disney, Nintendo, or dolls. According to NetValue, children spent 64.9 percent more time on pornography sites than they did on game sites in September 2000. Over one quarter (27.5%) of children age 17 and under visited an adult Web site, which represents 3 million unique underage visitors.[\[1\]](#)

But they are not the only ones struggling with easy and anonymous access to pornography—over 200,000 Americans, classified as “cybersex compulsives,” are hopelessly addicted to e-porn. The study, conducted by psychologists at Stanford and Duquesne universities, appears in the March 2001 issue of the journal *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity*.

We personally know of people now in jail for stealing to support their porn addiction. Pastors are hearing from scores

of people in their congregations who are secretly addicted to e-porn. Exposure to pornography, for some, escalates into more perverse and dehumanizing images. Online pornography is so strongly graphic, sending a hormonal power surge through the brain, that it has been called “electronic crack cocaine.”

Protection from online pornography is essential. Parental involvement is the first line of defense. And Internet filters will add an additional layer of security in the home. Whether a filtered Internet service provider, a filtering software program, or even hardware filters just recently available, some level of filtering is better than none, but none are perfect. The technology is developing every day and filters are far more effective and less intrusive than a couple of years ago.

Many organizations have tested filtering technologies, and their evaluations and experience is available to parents. The Center for Decency (www.centerfordecency.org), the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families (www.filterreview.org) and a combination of several organizations at www.getnetwise.org are excellent resources.

Those sites will also provide excellent advice to parents about monitoring their children or spouse’s online activities as well as provide resources to deal with situations that arise if pornography is a problem in the home.

Put your computer in a public place in your home where anyone can see what’s on the screen. Determine how much time children can spend online. Some families link screen time to reading time: a half-hour of reading earns you 30 minutes of Internet time. Talk to your children about the dangers of pornography. We warned our boys about “mind dirt,” the kind of mental images that can’t be washed out of memory like the mud that was ground into their soccer uniforms. Talk about why pornography is wrong: because it destroys the dignity that God gives people made in His image, and because it fuels our flesh

instead of our spirits. [\[2\]](#)

Protecting our families from Internet pornography in our homes, businesses, schools, and libraries is one of the most loving and important things we can do for them.

Protecting from Predators

Several years ago when my son was about eight or nine, we had a memorable conversation when he decided he was going to run away from home. I used all the arguments from reason to try and dissuade him, but he was determined to leave. He was quite confident that if he met any bad guys, he'd just "beat 'em up," and that would be the end of that. I had to tell him about the *real* bad guys who are out there looking for vulnerable runaways, alone and defenseless, who either capture or lure them to places where they make horrible videos of grownups doing horrible things to kids—or worse. Thankfully, he decided to stay home.

As parents, of course we want to protect our kids from predators "out there" in the world; but it's just as important to protect them from predators online. Evil people and pedophiles know how to find children who don't know enough to be suspicious and self-protective, and they often rationalize their actions by saying that if parents don't protect their kids, then they deserve whatever happens.

One of the most unsafe places on the Internet is chat rooms. Conversations start out in a group, but one person can invite another into a private conversation. Anyone can initiate a private conversation, called an "instant message" or IM, with any other computer user once they know their nickname or screen name. I strongly suggest you teach your kids not to go into chat rooms or have private conversations unless you are supervising. Some "kids" they meet in chat rooms or IM's may not be kids at all, but adults with bad intentions.

It's essential to set down safety rules for our families. Teach your kids never to give out personal information like their age, phone number, school, or your town or city. Don't even let them use their real names. Kids must never call or meet an online friend in person unless a parent is there. And it would be wise also not to have a personal profile, which is a big part of the America Online community, but also Web sites like Yahoo (www.yahoo.com). Predators prowl the profiles looking for likely victims.

Donna Rice Hughes, [\[3\]](#) a children's Internet safety advocate, suggests some excellent questions to ask your kids who spend time online:

- Have you seen any pornographic pictures?
- Has anyone online talked dirty to you?
- Have you met anyone online whom you don't know?
- Has anyone asked you for personal information?
- Has anyone asked to meet you in person?

Ask the questions, and watch their body language for clues that anything has happened. We need to stay alert. We need to protect our kids from predators.

Protecting Ourselves Emotionally

The Internet has opened an almost literal Pandora's box of emotional disasters for huge numbers of people.

An innocent looking computer screen or television set, for those with Web TV, turns out to be a portal to enormously addictive and powerful relationships with people we would never otherwise meet. People can be overwhelmed by the sense of truly connecting with people in an intense, compelling way. It can be a shock and a thrill to get a computer for doing mundane tasks like word processing or bookkeeping and discover that when it connects to the Internet, there are live people on the other side of the screen! The nature of online

communication is different from the face-to-face or telephone communication we're used to in real life (or "RL" in net-speak). For one thing, people can project themselves as they wish to be. The painfully shy introvert can become a witty conversationalist, the charismatic center of attention in a chat room. Overweight, slovenly people can pretend to be buff and beautiful. Middle-aged men can—and do—present themselves as young girls.

This means that online communication so often isn't between *people* as much as between *personas*. Add to that the development of a dizzily rapid sense of intimacy, and you have the potential for people to get hurt by not guarding their hearts as Proverbs 4:23 tells us to do.

For instance, one young man met disaster when, lonely after his divorce, he thought he fell in love with a young lady he met in a chat room. They started talking by phone. He professed his love for her; she professed her love for him. She visited him for a romantic weekend tryst. But it turns out she was a fourteen-year-old runaway, not eighteen as she had said, and when her parents tracked her down they had him arrested as a sex offender. [{4}](#)

Many married people have discovered how intrusive the Internet can be when their spouses start spending hours online in chat rooms and private conversation. Many marriages have broken up over online affairs. It doesn't matter if the relationships become physical or not; when people give their affections to another person, it's adultery of the heart.

How do we protect ourselves emotionally?

First, pre-decide to guard your heart (Prov. 4:23). If you start to think and daydream about someone in a way that you would be embarrassed if others knew what you were thinking, pull back. You're probably spending too much time online and spending too much emotional energy on that person. Redirect

your thoughts to ones that are more righteous.

Second, if you're married, shore up your relationship. Spend at least as much time building into your marriage as you do with online friends. Resolve not to take your spouse for granted or compare him or her to your image of your online friends. Remember that we tend to project onto online friends the qualities we want them to have, and it's not fair to compare the reality of the person you're married to with the fantasy of the *persona* on the other side of the screen. Consider that it is extremely rare, and frankly unwise, for married people to have close friends of the opposite sex.

Third, watch how much of your heart you share with people online. They are, after all, strangers. Our emotions follow our hearts, and when we give chunks of our hearts away by sharing our hopes and dreams and feelings, our affections are tied to those pieces of our hearts. I've heard it called "emotional fornication," and for good reason.

It's important to realize how quickly and easily we can fall into the false and fast intimacy of online relationships. We need to remember that the intimacy is not real, but the pain that might come from forgetting that *is* very real.

Protecting Ourselves Financially

Every year, more and more people are buying and selling on the Internet. That means more opportunity for fraud, mischief and flat-out evil intentions. How do we protect ourselves financially?[{5}](#)

First, protect your online identity. Identity theft is a growing problem, and the Internet has only made it easier. Don't store your personal information or credit card numbers with online retailers. Reputable merchants will ask if you want them to keep track of your personal information so you don't have to enter it every time. It's not that hard or time-

consuming, and it's a good way to protect yourself. Don't give out more information than is necessary, especially your social security number. You're not being paranoid. You're being wise.

Now let's talk about making a purchase online. You don't have to be afraid to do this if you're dealing with a reputable company or organization. Be sure you're dealing with a real company or organization. Look for a physical address and at least one customer service number. (Call it to make sure it's active.) Check out the company online at the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org).

Before entering personal information, make sure you're using a secure, or encrypted, connection. Look at the site's Web address. If it changed to "https," the 's' shows that it's secure. Although, not all secure connections use the https designation. The one thing you absolutely must see is that the padlock icon on your Web browser is locked.

Once you make your purchase, print a copy of your online order and keep it for the length of the return or warranty period. Your printed copy may be the only proof of your purchase.

Use a credit card instead of a debit card. Credit cards give you bargaining leverage if you need to dispute a charge—for instance, if the item never arrived. With debit cards, it's like spending cash; once the money is out of your account, it's gone.

If you participate in online auctions like eBay or Amazon.com, be aware that auctions are the number one online scam today.[{6}](#) If you don't want to gamble, you can use a third-party escrow service where the seller doesn't get paid until the buyer receives and approves his purchase. The most money lost in Internet scamming is through the Nigerian money offers.[{7}](#) "These offers, which used to come by airmail but now are increasingly arriving by email, promise millions of dollars in exchange for allowing your bank account to be used

to safeguard someone else's riches. But the real intent is to take money out of your account, not put money in it." {8}

We need to be just as good stewards of God's money online as we do every other place.

Protecting Ourselves from Unnecessary Losses

The rise of the Internet has opened new doors to all kinds of unnecessary losses from which the wise person protects himself or herself. Probably the biggest loss is time. And probably the biggest time-waster is chat rooms. They are not productive, and many are not safe because predators prowl there. They encourage a false sense of intimacy and community. Chat rooms are a way to spend time, but when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, one wonders how much of that activity will withstand the fiery test and endure into eternity? (1 Cor. 3:12-15)

Another consumer of time is e-mail. The problem with this is that, like handwritten letters, some e-mail is valuable for true communication. And like newspapers, some is valuable for disseminating information. But a lot of time is spent forwarding messages that are actually hoaxes and urban legends. Like fake virus warnings, for instance. I get several of these a week, and often per day, urging me to forward the letter to everyone in my address book. Please, before passing on a virus warning, check it out at one of the sites that expose virus warning hoaxes, like www.Vmyths.com. And please don't waste your time or anybody else's by passing on e-mails that promise goodies in exchange for forwarding the message to a certain number of people. There is no such thing as e-mail tracking. Nobody will know if you forwarded the message, and you won't ever get the goodies.

But real viruses are a true threat, and they can wipe out data on your computer. That is a completely unnecessary loss

because of the excellent virus-protection software available today, such as Norton Anti-Virus or McAfee VirusScan. Don't open e-mail attachments if you don't know what they are or if you don't know the person who sent them. (You generally{9} don't need to worry about opening the e-mail message itself, though. It's the attachments you need to be concerned about.) Many programs infect a person's computer and send out copies of themselves to people in their address books and the sender doesn't even know it's happening. I regularly receive messages containing viruses and worms from people I don't know because I'm the one who sends out our online newsletter, the [Probe-Alert](#), and some people's infected e-mail programs automatically reply back with nasty surprises for my computer.

In this article we've looked at ways to protect ourselves and our families from online pornography and online predators. We suggested how to prevent emotional and financial disasters. And finally we've examined some unnecessary losses. Hopefully, you've found something that will help you pursue the worthy scriptural goal of "doing all to the glory of God," (1 Cor. 10:31) even in your online life.

Notes

1. "The NetValue Report on Minors Online," *Business Wire*, December 19, 2000.
2. I enthusiastically recommend two Web sites for people addicted to porn and those who love them. The first is divided into two sections, targeted at both groups of people, with different articles on each. www.pureintimacy.org. The second is www.settingcaptivesfree.com, which features an online Bible study program ("Pure Freedom") through which many have found freedom from sexual addiction for the first time in their lives.
3. <http://www.protectkids.com>

4. <http://www.ozarkcountry.com/jerry>.
5. The Kim Komando National Talkradio Show E-Zine, May 26, 2001.
6. <http://www.natlconsumersleague.org/susantestimony52301.html>
7. <http://www.fraud.org/scamsagainstbusinesses/tips/nigerian.htm>
8. <http://www.natlconsumersleague.org/susantestimony52301.html>
9. There are exceptions, such as the Wscript.Kakworm that someone sent me. According to the Symantec web site, "The worm utilizes a known Microsoft Outlook Express security hole so that a viral file is created on the system without having to run any attachment. Simply reading the received email message causes the virus to be placed on the system." This shows the importance of running an up-to-date virus protection program, because I was alerted to the presence of the worm as soon as it arrived in my inbox and before I opened the e-mail message that contained it.

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Animal House Revisited: Fraternity Fosters Faith

College fraternities don't always have the best reputations. Wild parties, hazing, elitism, substance abuse, gang rapes and more help perpetuate the Animal House image that the film of the same name portrayed. Parents – and many students – might wonder why any sane person ever would want to join.

Though the weaknesses of university Greek-letter societies are often what grab headlines, numerous national fraternities and sororities try hard to change both their image and substance. Believe it or not, many were founded to promote character development and strong cultural values and are seeking to return to their roots.

For example, my own fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha, has a vision "...to prepare and encourage collegiate men of good character, high ethics, and noble ideals to contribute positively to the world in which they live." Lambda Chi's annual North American Food Drive has raised over 10.5 million pounds of food for the needy since 1993.

The liability crisis is one factor motivating "Greeks" to focus on character. In today's litigious society, a tragic injury or death can prompt lawsuits that could put them out of business. Moderating local behavior helps perpetuate national survival.

But there is more going on here than mere survival. Often top leaders of national Greek organizations are deeply committed citizens who seek to live by and promote the principles their groups espouse.

Many Greek organizations were founded on biblical or quasi-biblical principles. Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) is one of the more prominent fraternities with over 240 active and inactive chapters and over 6,000 undergraduate members. ATO chief executive officer Wynn Smiley told me of his group's convictions.

It seems that ATO was founded in 1865 by a 19-year-old former Confederate soldier who wanted to promote brotherly love as a means of helping to reconcile North and South after the U.S. Civil War. The organization that young Otis Allan Glazebrook founded was not religious but sought to foster reconciliation and brotherhood based on the self-sacrifice and unconditional

love demonstrated by Jesus.

Smiley and his colleagues emphasize these roots in their recruitment and educational development. “Jesus made the most radical statements on love,” notes Smiley. An example: “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...”

Allen Wilson is ATO’s Spiritual Leadership Consultant. Most chapters have chaplains and Wilson travels to help encourage spiritual development. ATO even has a devotional book with inspirational articles by alumni and others on practical themes like character, trust, humility, truth, servant leadership and persevering through disappointment.

Smiley readily admits that not every member or chapter exemplifies such values. But he points out that hidden personal hurts – from family illness to depression – plus students’ concerns for their own future, ethical dilemmas and faith raise questions that “brothers practicing brotherly love should help each other explore.” He says that “ATO is committed to talking about issues of faith” and to providing “a loving, trusting environment for brothers to explore, discuss, argue and perhaps even on occasion resolve questions.”

He is onto something significant here. Animal House, meet the competition.

Martial Arts

The Origins and Popularity of the Martial Arts

Gliding across the Pacific, the Asian martial arts have become part of the mainstream of American culture. Today there are an estimated two to three million practitioners in the United States, 40 percent of which are children between the ages of 7 and 14.^{1} The martial arts industry generates annual revenue topping the \$1 billion mark.

Why this rise in popularity? For one thing, people today are interested in and more willing to accept Eastern ideas. What was once considered “foreign” is now embraced as old, and thus “tried and true.” Advocates extol the physical benefits and self-discipline that result from its practices. Movies further popularize martial arts with films such as *Enter the Dragon*, *Rush Hour*, and the Oscar winning *Crouching Tiger-Hidden Dragon*. The rise in crime also has people seeking to learn ways to protect themselves and their loved ones.

There are few written records regarding the origin of martial arts. These are interwoven with myths or verbal traditions that make it difficult to accurately trace the record. Archaeological evidence indicates that the martial arts may have begun as early as 2000 BC in the Fertile Crescent.^{2} From there it traveled eastward to India and China.

The father of the Asian martial arts according to the most popular tradition is an Indian Buddhist Monk named Bodhidharma who arrived in China in the late fifth century A.D. Settling in a monastery in the Songshan Mountains located in the Kingdom of Wei, he developed a series of mind-body exercises designed to improve the health of the monks and assist them in meditation. Based on the movements of different real and mythological animals and incorporating concepts from Taoism and Zen Buddhism, Bodhidharma taught a style of combat known as Shao-lin gung fu. Gradually, Shao-lin gung fu migrated from

the temples to the Chinese populace. It was adapted and refined as it spread across the country and eventually, to the world.

Martial arts have been very popular among Christians. Scot Conway, founder of the Christian Martial Arts Foundation, estimates between 50 and 70 percent of American martial artists – and roughly 20 percent of all instructors – consider themselves Christians.^{3} But other Christians argue that the philosophy of Asian martial arts is wholly incompatible with biblical teaching. They point to the origin of Eastern mysticism as reason for Christians to avoid any level of participation. Still others say Jesus' exhortation to "turn the other cheek" shows that using force is wrong.

How should a discerning Christian respond? Can we participate in the martial arts and be consistent with our biblical convictions?

Differences in the Martial Arts

Should Christians participate in the martial arts? In order to make an informed decision, it is helpful to recognize that there are two basic categories for martial arts. It is important to note that the division is not rigid; in some cases, values from one type may be blended or subtly integrated into the other. But for simplicity and clarity, we will use the two main groups.

One type, called "internal" or "soft" martial art, focuses on inner spiritual development, balance, form, and mental awareness. This soft art emphasizes two principles – that the mind dictates action and that the opponent's own force is used to defeat him or her.^{4} Students are taught Taoist and Buddhist philosophical principles such as the "chi" force and the "yin and yang" concept. Through breath control, soft art practitioners seek to "collect, cultivate, and store" this chi force which is located in the body. Some believe they can use

the chi force to strike down opponents from a distance. Examples of internal or soft martial arts include the Chinese Tai-chi Chuan and the Japanese Aikido.

The second category of martial arts is called the “external” or “hard” art. This type teaches that physical reactions precede mental reaction. It also promotes the idea that an opponent’s force should be met with an equal but opposite force. While the hard martial art system also uses breath control like the soft arts, the emphasis is on developing strength and quickness through the use of straight and linear body motions.^{5} The hard arts include certain forms of Chinese kung fu, and Shao Lin boxing. The Japanese arts were adapted from Chinese kung fu. The hard arts include Ju-jitsu, Judo, Karate, Ninjitsu, and Kendo. The Korean martial arts include Tae Kwon Do and Tang Soo Do.

While there are religious concepts in the martial arts, few schools would qualify as religious movements, and few seek to meet the religious needs of the student. However, a little exposure to Eastern mysticism may lead to greater involvement in the future. So as a general rule, Christians should avoid the internal or soft martial arts because of the concentration on the teachings of Eastern religions and philosophies. Several schools even utilize the occult techniques of meditation and altering consciousness. External or hard martial arts, on the other hand, concentrate primarily on physical training. These physical lessons usually do not conflict with our biblical convictions.

Before joining a dojo or martial arts gym, one needs to know the worldview of the instructor. Even some hard martial arts teachers incorporate Eastern ideas and occult practices into their styles. Look for instructors who teach the physical movements but exclude the Eastern ideas.

Eastern Concepts in the Martial Arts

Since martial arts are traditionally based on the Eastern philosophies of Taoism and Zen Buddhism, several key concepts can be prominent in the classes. Let's look at three of them.

The concept of "chi" or "ki" is central in some martial arts. Chi is believed to be the impersonal life energy that flows throughout the universe and pulses through the human body. By harnessing the chi in individuals, martial artists believe they can perform at higher levels of ability or can release chi power resulting in devastating effects. Chi is controlled through specialized breathing techniques, gymnastics, and meditation.

Another common martial arts teaching is the Taoist (pronounced "dow-ist") concept of yin and yang, that nature consists of conflicting elements which function in perfect balance to one another. As mankind should live in harmony with the Tao, so the martial artist must strike hard with firmness at times, but at other times accept the energy of the opponent, then reroute the energy, causing the opponent to defeat himself. This redirection allows a relatively gentle resolution, and brings one into harmony with the opponent and the flow of nature.

A Christian must also avoid the practice of Eastern meditation. The goal of this type of meditation is to empty one's mind, alter one's consciousness, or unite with the impersonal divine. Scott Shaw writes, "Meditation is a sacred process. It is the method used by the spiritual warrior to calm the mind and to connect the body and mind with the infinite."^[6] This greater awareness supposedly enables the martial artist to increase his or her performance. In many schools, the combined use of Eastern meditation and the chi are essential to mastering the art. (Not all martial arts use meditation for this purpose. Some use it to focus on the lesson or task at hand such as picturing the action in your

mind before physically carrying it out.)

But the mysticism of Taoism and Buddhism is not compatible with Christianity; neither is Eastern meditation the same as biblical meditation. The Bible does not teach altering our consciousness or emptying our minds. Instead, the goal of Scriptural meditation is to *fill* our minds with God's Word. (Psalm 1:2) Another danger of Eastern meditation is that it can open our minds to the occult, a practice the Bible prohibits. The Bible does not teach the Eastern idea of chi, that there is an impersonal life energy of the universe within us. Rather, the Bible says that each individual has an eternal soul that will either go to heaven or to hell based on whether or not they have a relationship with Christ.

Self Defense or Turn the Other Cheek?

Besides concerns about the role of Eastern religion in the martial arts, some people think martial arts encourages violence. Martial arts teach fighting, and so are contrary to the Bible's instructions about pacifism. Is there ever a time when Christians can use force?

Christian pacifists believe it is always wrong to injure another person. Many interpret Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:38-48, where he states, "Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also . . .", to mean never use violence. This is exemplified in the life of Christ who suffered silently and did not retaliate while enduring torture even unto death.

Despite these arguments, the proper interpretation of the Matthew 5 passage does not teach pacifism. In Jewish culture, to be struck or slapped on the cheek was an insult (2 Corinthians 11:20). Jesus was teaching that when a disciple is insulted for being a follower of Christ, the disciple should not retaliate with force. However, being insulted is a very different situation from being attacked by a mugger or your

wife being attacked by a rapist.

In the Gospels, Christ did not resist violent attacks because of His unique mission to be the sacrifice for our sins. However, in the Old Testament, the preincarnate Christ judged wicked nations with the sword. (Judges 6:11-16). Not only did He smite His enemies, He aided Israel in being an instrument of judgment as well. Revelation predicts the glorified Christ coming to judge the nations with a sword. Also in the New Testament, Jesus and His disciples did not teach military leaders to withdraw from the military (e.g., Matthew 8:8-13, Luke 3:14). In Romans 13, Paul writes that the government has the right to "bear the sword." In other words, a righteous government can use capital punishment when an offender is worthy of death.

Therefore, complete pacifism is not the spirit of Christian teaching. In fact, the most loving thing to do when a friend or family member is attacked by a harmful foe is to risk one's life and use force to restrain the enemy. If a man is attacking a child, or a woman is being raped, it would be morally wrong not to sacrifice your life and restrain the assailant even with deadly force if necessary.

The Bible allows a Christian to use self-defense and force when confronted with a criminal act. Force may not be used for revenge or out of unjust anger. Christians who engage in the martial arts should have a clear understanding of this. The use of martial arts must be for self-defense and protecting loved ones from acts of evil. One should never use their fighting system to instigate combat or seek revenge.

Should Christians Participate in the Martial Arts?

To summarize what I have covered so far, I believe that the physical aspect of martial arts can be separated from the Eastern religious and philosophical teachings. Also, I believe

the Bible teaches us that there is a time when we are called to use force, even deadly force to halt acts of evil.

Here are some practical guidelines if one is deciding to participate in the martial arts or if one is selecting a school. First, a person should check his or her motives. One should not engage in martial arts if one's motives include becoming a tough guy, showing off, or gaining revenge. Parents should make it clear to their children that the martial arts are never to be used for affectation or for instigating conflicts. Unworthy motives are detrimental to one's walk with the Lord and witness to others. Positive reasons include physical conditioning, discipline, and self-defense. Develop parameters for limiting the use of force. One of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control. Force is used in defensive purposes only.

Generally speaking, Christians should avoid the soft or internal form of martial arts because they tend to emphasize Eastern philosophical and religious ideas. External or hard martial arts emphasize the physical training. However, it would be wise to be on guard because many instructors of external martial arts may incorporate Eastern mysticism in to their system. Also, one should be careful to avoid the possibility of being enticed to learn about Eastern spirituality as they advance.

Find out the worldview of the instructor. The role of religion in the martial arts depends mostly on the instructor, so choosing a proper instructor is the most important factor. Some instructors claim to teach the physical aspect only. However, as students advance, instructors begin to incorporate Eastern religious ideas to help students attain a higher level of performance. Observe advanced classes to see if they incorporate Eastern practices. There is also helpful information through Christian organizations such as Karate for Christ and the Christian Martial Arts Foundation.

The Christian life involves caring for the nurture and growth of our mind, spirit, and our body which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. I have benefited greatly from my time in the martial arts. It has provided me great exercise, discipline, and opportunities to witness for Christ. There were times in my life when I had to use force to restrain hostile persons or protect loved ones. I believe that the martial arts can be beneficial to Christians who are informed and mature.

Notes

1. Glenn Rifkin, "The Black Belts of the Screen Are Filling the Dojos," *The New York Times*, 16 February 1992, 10.
2. Howard Reid and Michael Croucher, *The Way of the Warrior*, (Woodstock, NY.: Overlook Press, 1983), 16-17.
3. Erwin Castro, B.J. Oropeza, and Ron Rhodes, "Enter the Dragon? Wrestling with the Martial Arts Phenomenon Part I," Christian Research Institute, <http://www.equip.org/free/dm066.htm>, 2.
4. Reid and Croucher, *The Way of the Warrior*, 229.
5. Ibid., 61 & 227.
6. Scott Shaw, *The Warrior is Silent* (Rochester, VT.: Inner Traditions International, 1998), 53.

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<p style="text-align: center;">See Also:</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>"Martial Arts and Just War Theory"</u></p>
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Cyberporn

This article has been updated.

Please see Kerby Anderson's new article [Pornography](#).

12 Films of 2003 – A Christian Reviews Key Movies

Lord of the Rings, Whale Rider, and Winged Migration

This year the first of twelve films from 2003 that were especially notable is the final installment of Tolkien's trilogy *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, directed by Peter Jackson. The conclusion of the final installment is structured around the hobbits Frodo (Elijah Wood), and Sam (Sean Astin) as they attempt to return the Ring to Mount Doom where it can be destroyed and save Middle Earth from those who would use the Ring for evil.

Gollum, the grotesque creature who was once a hobbit, continues to struggle with his dual nature; he loves both Frodo and the power of the Ring, but can only have one or the other. This is a valuable lesson for all persons who must make decisions which will affect their lives for eternity. Unlike Gollum, Frodo, Sam, Gandalf, Arwen, and Aragorn are heroes who overcome great difficulties and extraordinary odds to do the right thing. They all simultaneously attempt to avoid the temptation of the Ring, and instead take the long road toward righteousness. Throughout all nine hours of the trilogy, and especially in this last installment, the epic battle in the heart of man and his nature to embrace evil instead of good serves as the thematic backdrop for some of the most amazing visuals in the history of film.

Those who enjoyed the *Lord of the Rings*, should also like *Whale Rider*. *Rider*, directed by Niki Caro, was the winner of

audience awards at both the Sundance and Toronto Film Festivals. This film falls into categories of both coming-of-age films, and those which emphasize the triumph of the will. A young New Zealand girl named Pai (Keisha Castle-Hughes) is the surviving twin of a difficult birth which also claimed her mother's life. Koro (Rawiri Paratene) is the tribal chief and grandfather of Pai. Koro is a traditional male in a traditional New Zealand tribe, and Pai is a less than traditional young girl who challenges the accepted way of thinking and dares to believe that she can become the next chief.

Third in a series of extremely good films which can be recommended to all audiences is *Winged Migration*, a documentary about birds directed by Jacques Perrin. The birds in this film are all flying long distances for the winter, either north or south depending upon their hemisphere of origin. The entire picture is like a nature documentary on steroids; it has all of the wildlife footage one would expect, coupled with seamless shots from ultra-light planes and balloons. This is state of the art documentary that allows the viewer to experience the lives of birds as never before seen.

Luther and Bonhoeffer

A second group of notable films for 2003 is *Luther*, a dramatic rendering of one of the greatest of the sixteenth-century reformers, and *Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace*, a historical documentary style drama about the German theologian who worked against the Nazis, and posthumously became one of the most important voices in twentieth-century theology.

The film titled simply *Luther* begins with the young reformer bargaining with God and vowing to enter the monastic order if his own life will be spared. He soon become the chief voice standing against the Holy Roman Church's practice of indulgences and overall spiritual blindness. The indulgences are a major form of income for the Catholic church, and Luther

(Joseph Fiennes) finds himself in a kind of David and Goliath position. One of Luther's chief opponents was Leo XII (Uwe Ochsenknecht), who took the young monk's teachings and sermons to be a personal attack upon authority, as well as a financial threat to the empire. Fredrick the Wise (Peter Ustinov), the prince of Augsburg, begins to side with Luther's teaching, and a full scale religious schism erupts.

The film captures Luther's life from his call to become a monk through twenty five years of debate and persecution at the hands of the Roman Catholic Church, and ends with the start of what would become the Protestant Reformation.

Bonhoeffer: Agent Of Grace is a film about the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer from the late 1930s to his death in Germany at the end of WW II in 1945. Bonhoeffer is in America observing the African-American style of worship when the film opens. America would be a safe place to sit out the war, but Bonhoeffer returns to Germany and begins a rhetorical campaign against Hitler, the Nazi party, and even the leaders of the church for their role in the rise of the Third Reich and of the persecution of the Jews.

Bonhoeffer joins the resistance movement when he returns to Germany, and soon he is being watched by the Gestapo. As the "final solution," the extermination of the Jews during the Holocaust, is implemented, he is arrested after a failed attempt on Hitler's life. Bonhoeffer's prison writings are very pragmatic, but they are also the reflections of a devout Christian who is wrestling with ethical dilemmas arising from the war. During times of war and great political evils, Christians must struggle with how much violence and evil can be used to resist an ultimately evil person or situation. Bonhoeffer was eventually executed in 1945 at the age of thirty-nine believing that there is a difference between the "cheap" grace we lavish on ourselves, and the more "costly" grace which may demand a man's life.

Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World and The Station Agent

Our list of notable films from 2003 continues with *Master and Commander*, an epic sea adventure set in 1805 when the British boasted that the sun never set on their empire. The film is based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian, and does for the early nineteenth century what *Saving Private Ryan* did for WW II; the film really makes viewers feel as though they are sailing the high seas in search of adventure.

Set on the *HMS Surprise*, the plot line follows the *Acheron*, a French warship, as it tries to catch the *Surprise* which is commanded by Capt. Jack Aubrey (Russell Crowe). Aubrey is contrasted with his friend, Stephen Maturin, the ship's surgeon. Capt. Aubrey is a pragmatist who pursues noble adventure and a life of war upon the sea. Maturin is a very introspective intellectual who travels with the British warship so he can collect animal and biological specimens. The contrast is highly textured and extremely well developed, affording the viewer a rare insight into the psyche of two very different, if not totally opposite, men. All of this and high sea adventure involving very violent war scenes make for a thoroughly delightful film.

Another fairly accessible film, but not one recommended for those under seventeen, is Thomas McCarthy's film, *The Station Agent*, which is centered around a dwarf named Finbar McBride (Peter Dinklage). McBride has a passion for trains, and uses that passion to protect himself from those who would mock and pester him. His devotion to all things relating to trains is fully realized when he inherits an old run-down train station in the town of Newfoundland, New Jersey when his only friend in the world, Henry Styles (Paul Benjamin), dies. Finbar moves into the train station seeking peace and solitude from a world that has a hard time understanding someone who appears to be so different, but who is actually more human than those people

who intentionally and unintentionally persecute him.

Finbar's hope for solitude is first interrupted by Joe Oramas (Bobby Cannavale), who drives a coffee truck and is always willing to give unsolicited advice to others. Finbar's solitude is further disrupted by Olivia Harris (Patricia Clarkson), a divorced woman who is working through the death of a child. Olivia almost hits Finbar with her car as he is coming and going from a nearby convenience store, presumably to emphasize his near invisibility to others. Like a good Flannery O'Connor short story, *The Station Agent* closes with a scene that will cause all viewers to examine their attitudes toward people who are different.

Elephant and Thirteen

Two films from 2003 that deal with teenagers are *Elephant*, from Gus Van Zant, and *Thirteen*, directed by Catherine Hardwicke.

Elephant's title comes from the familiar reference to an elephant being in the room, and everyone pretending that it is not there. The film is a chronicle of one day in a Columbine-like high school, and the complete inability of those involved, as well as those viewing the film, to comprehend what is happening. The camera simply tracks the activities of the killers and their victims in the hours that lead up to the massacre. Then the viewer gets a front row seat to the killings that any reporter would love to have for a spot on the evening news. Van Zant uses violence to protest violence, presumably believing that much of the violence we have in this country is due to not understanding how pervasive and real such violence is, or that it could happen to anyone.

The killers laugh and carry on in such an unconcerned manner that the viewer cannot believe they would strike out against their world by shooting their classmates. Christian viewers,

however, should be able to watch the film knowing that the explanation for such behavior rests in the doctrine of original sin and man's fall from grace. It can also remind people that things happen that do not always follow our expectations.

In *Thirteen*, another film dealing with teenagers, the emphasis is on the difficulties faced by many adolescent girls. Evie (Nikki Reed) is a wild child who loves to flirt with danger, and is exactly the kind of girl you would not want your daughter to have as a friend. She is popular, sexually experienced, and lives without shame or worry. Evie's character is a sharp contrast with that of Tracy (Evan Rachel Wood), the good and unassuming girl who just wants to be cool and hang out with a more popular crowd. Evie begins to relate stories of sexual conquests and shoplifting sprees that are particularly impressive to Tracy. It seems as though Evie wants to clone herself as many times as possible.

Melanie (Holly Hunter), Tracy's mother, is a divorcée and recovering alcoholic who can barely make ends meet. She is a little naïve concerning her daughter's behavior, but begins to have suspicions when Evie comes to live with them. Evie's behavior goes from bad to worse until a culminating scene where her lies are exposed, and Tracy begins to see the wisdom of her mother's advice.

Both *Elephant* and *Thirteen* are films which should be approached with caution. And while they are not for everyone, some people will find them to be among of the best examples of teen angst in recent years.

Mystic River, Stone Reader, and Finding Nemo

The last three films recommended as notable features from 2003 are *Mystic River*, *Stone Reader*, and *Finding Nemo*. *Mystic River*

is Clint Eastwood's twenty-fourth film, and one of the handful he has directed but not also starred in. The story is centered around the lives of three boyhood friends who grow up, get married, and live normal if not boring lives.

The three friends, Jimmy, Dave and Sean (played by Sean Penn, Tim Robins and Kevin Beacon respectively), have tried to forget the time when one of them was molested by a man in their Boston neighborhood. The emotional trauma the young boys suffered is revisited when Katie, Jimmy's daughter, is brutally beaten to death. The two main suspects are Brendon, Katie's boyfriend, and Dave, who came home mumbling about beating up a mugger and was covered in blood.

Jimmy takes the law into his own hands when he believes he has discovered Katie's murderer. There is a connection between the revenge Jimmy executes and the molestation the men witnessed when they were young. There is a "mystic river" that flows in a man's life, and rarely is the destination reached the same as the one hoped for. *Mystic River* finishes as a meditation on time, growing old, and the way in which the past continually affects the future.

Stone Reader, a documentary by filmmaker Mark Moskowitz, opens with a search for Dow Mossman, an author who wrote a single novel only to "retire" and disappear into obscurity. There are plenty of films based on books, and others with authors as major or minor characters, but there are very few films so purely about books, authors, editors, and the difficult task of seeing even a single novel through to publication.

Editors and publishers provide some of the most interesting dialogue, discussing everything from the difficulties of publishing, to the classic, but real, anxiety of the author, and the plight of the one-novel wonder.

The documentary is also a quest and road film. It is a kind of odyssey for anyone who has loved a particular novel or its

author, and wondered what became of them years later.

Finally, no list of notable films from 2003 would be complete without *Finding Nemo*, the animated film from Pixar, the studio responsible for *Toy Story*. In *Nemo*, the action is centered around an overprotective father and his son who are both fish. As in *Toy Story*, where the world of toys were brought to life, the Pixar people take viewers into the highly colorful world of the ocean. The viewer will be rooting for little Nemo as he is caught by a diver and is pursued by a loving father.

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Fahrenheit 9/11

Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*

Fahrenheit 9/11, Michael Moore's new documentary, has been raising much concern since its mid-summer release from a number of groups. These groups represent a large demographic, and no one appears to be lukewarm to the film; people either love it or hate it. Rated "R" for scenes from the Iraq war, and a split second clip showing the execution of a prisoner by the government of Saudi Arabia, *Fahrenheit* is an exercise in cut-and-paste film making that poses as a traditional documentary, but is really a thinly veiled and vehement anti-Bush propaganda piece.

The film won the Palme de'Or at this year's Cannes Film Festival, the first documentary film to ever capture the prize. A quick survey of some of the films in the past that have received the award, (among them Orson Welles' *Othello*, Antonioni's *Blow-Up*, Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* to name just a

few) raises the question of what makes this particular work worthy of one of the most coveted honors in cinema. I have been professionally involved in film criticism for almost ten years, and this is one of the worst documentaries I have ever seen. Moore's film is undeserving of a place among these heavyweights, but we appear to be in a time when anything that bashes America, its perceived imperialism, or the Bush administration, is not only good, but is something to be revered.

The film begins with the 2000 presidential election and the efforts to decide if Bush or Gore won. Moore claims in his film that several investigations uncovered the fact that Gore actually won. However, he fails to give us the sources of those "investigations." He does not acknowledge that newspapers as credible as the *Washington Post* and *The New York Times* declared that Bush won the electoral vote, even if he did not win the popular vote (it should be kept in mind that the final count on the popular vote may never actually be known). The film plays to all of those who believe that Bush "stole" the election, and ignores the fact that the Supreme Court awarded Bush the election after law suits from both parties were settled.

Moore then directs the viewer's attention to the House of Saud. In this segment, Moore concentrates his energies on the connection between the Bush administration and the Royal Saudi family. He equates being involved with the Royal Family as being involved with terrorists. Moore groups all of the people from a certain ethnic group into one neat category, and maintains that association with that group is wrong. This is just an introduction to Moore's casual handling of facts that will follow in the rest of the film.

President Bush on September 11

The continuing enthusiasm for Moore's "documentary" needs to be examined in the light of the misinformation, poor research, and disregard for the facts that constitute the main body of the film. Dave Kopel has written an excellent review of the film titled "Fifty-nine Deceits in *Fahrenheit 9/11*" that can be found at www.davekopel.com. It is a forty-page exposition with detailed information concerning the specific factual errors found throughout Moore's film, and is the basis of much of the information summarized in the four or five points we will consider.

In one of the early scenes in the film, President Bush is shown reading from the book *My Pet Goat* to an assembly of elementary school children after he had already received the news that the September 11 attacks were occurring (actually it was a chapter from *Reading Mastery 2* that Bush was reading to the children). Moore's voice-over, a technique that is uniformly suspicious with film makers as an indication of a poor film that needs rescuing or explaining to its audience, suggests that Bush sits quietly in a state of bewilderment wondering what he should do. The insinuation is that Bush is an incompetent and unprepared leader who has been dumfounded by the surprise attack. Moore goes on to say that Bush clearly did the wrong thing, and that he should have been prompted into action immediately.

Moore does not suggest what the president should have done; he merely derides his hesitation after hearing the news. Moore also leaves out the fact that the principle of the school, Gwendolyn Tose-Rigell, gave Bush high praise for his calm handling of the situation saying, "I do not think anyone could have handled the situation better." This praise came from someone who understands that children are easily alarmed and in this instance needed a calming voice from someone in charge.

Moore belittles the president for being dumbstruck by the attack. The insinuation is that a better leader would have

taken control of the situation and rushed into action to address the emergency. One could easily view the same clip and come to the conclusion that here was a man who was extremely disturbed by what he knew, and realized that all of the forces of American intelligence from the FBI, the CIA, and certainly the Pentagon were being called into immediate action, and that there was little that could be accomplished by rushing out of the room. What this segment of the film does is merely make fun of the president's facial expressions, and, in effect, for not stirring the young children, their parents, and the nation into a state of panic.

The Saudi Connection

Let's turn next to the relationship between President Bush and Prince Bandar of Saudi Arabia. Moore attempts to make a case that the Bush family is in a cozy and financially beneficial relationship with prince Bandar, and that this relationship could not help but interfere with United States' interest, especially during a crisis on the scale of the 9/11 attacks.

This claim or insinuation fails to point out that Prince Bandar has participated in a bipartisan relationship with both parties in Washington for decades. Elsa Walsh, in an article in *The New Yorker* magazine from March 24, 2003, gives a detailed account of former president Bill Clinton frequently turning to Prince Bandar for advice on Middle East agendas. She goes on to show how Bandar has become an "indispensable operator" for both parties.

Moore is either unaware or willfully omitting the relationship concerning Clinton's former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Wyche Fowler, whose present job is chairman of The Middle East Institute. This institute is heavily supported by the Saudis, who have secretly donated over \$1 million to the Clinton Library. The point in citing the Clinton administration's

involvement with the Bandar family is not to absolve the Bush family of any wrongdoing, if in fact there is anything wrong. The issue is that if one administration is wrong in cooperating with the Prince, then both administrations are wrong. What is far more likely is that Prince Bandar is a necessary ally and advisor to the United States regardless of which party is in power. Moore is hypocritical to ignore such connections, and this is a prime example of what one finds throughout the film.

By mentioning Prince Bandar repeatedly in association with oil money, Moore takes the viewers so far down a path of conjecture that many will draw the conclusion that the Bush administration's foreign policy does not have the United States' interest as a top priority. However, there may be some good that can come out of this if the viewer comes away with a concern about our nation's dependence on foreign oil. At present it is very difficult for candidates at almost any level to get elected if they run on a platform that appears to threaten American's supply of cheap oil and petroleum products. Therefore, Moore is correct in making the connection that American foreign policy may be overly dependent on Saudi interests. However, it is misleading at best to suggest that Saudi influence only occurs when Republicans are in office, and ignores the fact that both parties are influenced by Bandar and Saudi Arabia.

A Cavalier President?

Moore charges President Bush for being on vacation forty-two percent of the time during his first eight months as president. The calculation used to arrive at the number forty-two would be interesting in and of itself, but the fact that Moore ignores the concept of the "working vacation," or the fact that most presidencies could not fare well if they were subjected to such a calculation, is again very

misleading.

In his article "Just the facts of *Fahrenheit 9/11*",^{1} Tom McNamee exposes what may have been the source for Moore's forty-two percent figure. McNamee points out that of the fifty-four days Moore cites when Bush was at his ranch in Crawford, Texas, weekends were also included; a fact that Moore fails to point out. Another interesting source is Mike Allen's article in the *Washington Post*.^{2} Allen notes that Camp David stays have traditionally been used for meetings with foreign dignitaries, ambassadors, and other heads of state, and are routinely reported on cable and network newscasts as work. This alone should be enough to raise a cautionary flag for viewers of the film. Moore is playing fast and loose with the facts, never giving Bush the benefit of the doubt or pointing out that many of Bush's so-called sins are standard behavior for any administration regardless of the party in power.

Moore continues the slanted montage of images with shots showing Bush relaxing at Camp David, working on his Crawford ranch, and driving golf balls while lightheartedly responding to questions from reporters. The implication Moore wants the viewer to draw is that the leader of the free world is more concerned about his golf game than fighting terrorism and doing his job. The following Tuesday this clip was clarified by Brit Hume and Brian Wilson on the Fox News Channel. They reported that Bush was answering a question concerning an attack carried out by Israel in response to a Palestinian suicide bomber.

Moore evidently does not see the hypocrisy of failing to mention president Clinton hitting golf balls on the White House lawn moments after learning that Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had been shot, and not knowing whether he would live or die.

Again, this is another example of how Moore is throwing

together film clips, adding a voice over, and leading the audience astray. If this film were part of a graduate or doctoral research project of any form the candidate would be failed outright for false and misleading research and for failure to check his sources. Additionally, any reputable news organization making such a case would probably be sued for libel and slander.

***Fahrenheit 9/11* and the Current Crisis**

In this writer's opinion, it would be overly generous to just dismiss the film as composed of half-truths and misinformation. The film is not only a poor documentary undeserving of the prestigious Cannes Film Festival's highest honor, the Palm d'Or, but a potentially dangerous movie that may not be advantageous to our troops in Iraq.

Fahrenheit 9/11 is at best a propaganda piece that potentially played into the hands of al Qaeda, Saddam loyalists, and the coalition enemy operatives and terrorists who continue to back Saddam Hussein and are presently killing American soldiers and targeting United States interests around the world. In his own words found at MichaelMoore.com, April 14, 2004, he said: "The Iraqis who have risen up against the occupation are not insurgents' or terrorists' or The Enemy.' They are the REVOLUTION, the Minutemen, and their numbers will grow – and they will win." [\[3\]](#)

It is irresponsible to call Iraqis "freedom fighters" who have opposed themselves to a free democratic nation that is sacrificing its sons and daughters so that others might live without the threat of a totalitarian dictator who kills his own people. Moore maintains that he is deeply concerned about American troops, but also lauds the efforts of the enemy insurgents who are killing those troops. One cannot have it both ways and remain rationally consistent.

Several efforts are presently underway to begin distribution of *Fahrenheit 9/11* through Middle East distributors. Hezbollah, a known terrorist organization, is assisting *Front Row* distributors in the promotion of Moore's film. Additionally, Nancy Tartaglione in *Screen Daily.com* (June 9th, 2004) and Salon.com both reported that *Fahrenheit* will be the first commercially released documentary in the Middle East, opening in both Lebanon and Syria soon (Syria is presently on the United States list of terrorist states). It could easily be argued that Moore is indirectly getting rich from the approval and support of known terrorist groups and enemies of the United States.

Our country is a stronger and better place because of the freedom of speech we enjoy, and Moore in some ways represents a long tradition of vocal and organized opposition to the wars and policies of our government. He does have a right to be heard, and one should not avoid the film just because he or she has a preconceived notion of its message. *Fahrenheit 9/11* may prove to be a very important piece of propaganda, both in this election year and in the future. It could also be very important that there are people out there who have seen the film and can offer reasoned critiques to those who might otherwise be lead astray by this controversial and misleading documentary.

Notes

1. Tom McNamee, "Just the facts on 'Fahrenheit 9/11' *Chicago Sun-Times*, June 28, 2004.
2. Mike Allen, "White House On the Range. Bush Retreats to Ranch for 'Working Vacation'," *Washington Post*, August 7, 2001.
3. <http://www.michaelmoore.com/words/message/index.php?messageDate=2004-04-14>

Race and Racial Issues – A Biblical Christian Perspective

Kerby Anderson looks at the issue of race from a Christian worldview perspective. The Bible clearly teaches that all people are valuable and loved by God with no distinction based on race. As Christians, we are called to set an example by seeing all peoples as worthy of our love and our respect.



This article is also available in [Spanish](#).

Race has divided people in our world for millennia, and the prejudice of racism is still with us today. So in this article we are going to focus on some important aspects of race and racial issues.

At the outset we should acknowledge that, although we will use the term “race” through this discussion, it is not a very precise term. First, the Bible really only talks of one race: the human race. Superficial differences in skin color, hair color, hair texture, or eye shape may provide physiological differences between people groups. But the Bible doesn’t provide any justification for treating people differently simply because of these physical differences.

The Bible teaches that God has made “from one blood every nation of men” (Acts 17:26). Here Paul is teaching the

Athenians that they came from the same source in the creation as everyone else. We are all from one blood. In other words, there are no superior or inferior races. We are all from the same race: the human race.

Race is also an imprecise term in large part because it is not based upon scientific data. People of every race can interbreed and produce fertile offspring. It turns out that the so-called differences in the races is not very great. A recent study of human genetic material of different races concluded that the DNA of any two people in the world would differ by just 2/10ths of one percent.[\[1\]](#) And of this variation, only six percent can be linked to racial categories. The remaining 94 percent is "within race" variation.

Let's put it another way. All the racial differences that have been so important to people for generations are statistically insignificant from a scientific point of view. These differences are trivial when you consider the 3 trillion base pairs of human DNA.

A third reason the term "race" also lacks precision is due to interracial marriage. While it is probably true that the so-called races of the world were never completely divided, it is certainly true that the lines are becoming quite blurred today. Take golfer Tiger Woods as one example. His heritage is Thai, black, white, Chinese, and Native American.

Isn't it ironic that at a time when racial lines are blurring more and more each generation, the government still collects data that requires individuals to check one box that represents their racial or ethnic heritage? A growing number of people are finding it hard to classify themselves by checking just one box.

The Curse on Ham

Sadly, one of the most destructive false teachings supposedly based on the Bible is the so-called "curse on Ham." Ham was one of Noah's three sons (along with Shem and Japheth).

In the past, certain cults and even some orthodox Christian groups have held to the belief that the skin color of black people was due to a curse on Ham and his descendants. Unfortunately, this false teaching has been used to justify racial discrimination and even slavery.

One group said, "We know the circumstances under which the posterity of Cain (and later Ham) were cursed with what we call Negroid racial characteristics."^{2} Another group argued that "The curse which Noah pronounced upon Canaan was the origin of the black race."^{3}

First, let's clearly state that the Bible does not teach that people with black skin color are cursed by God. This curse was not the origin of the black race or black racial characteristics.

Second, it wasn't Ham who was cursed but his son Canaan (Gen. 9:18-27; 10:6). Only one of Ham's four sons (Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan) was cursed, so how could all black people be cursed?

As it turns out, the curse on Canaan has unfolded in history. The descendants of Canaan were perhaps one of the most wicked people to live on earth. They were the inhabitants, for example, of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Third, even if a curse is given, the Bible clearly places limitations on curses to three or four generations. In Exodus 20:5-6 God says, "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the

fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

Notice that this passage seems to teach that curses based upon disobedience are reversed when people repent and turn back to obedience. So not only is a curse limited, obedience to God’s principles can break it.

Fourth, the Bible teaches that the fulfillment of the curse on Canaan took place with the defeat and subjugation of Canaan by Israel (Joshua 9:23; 1 Kings 9:20-21). This had nothing to do with placing black people under a permanent curse.

Although the idea of “the curse on Ham” has been dying a well-deserved death, it is still important to remember that not so long ago people were misinterpreting a biblical passage to justify their racism and discrimination. No one race or people group is inferior to any other. In fact, the Bible teaches that preferences based upon race, class, or ethnic origin are sinful and subject to God’s judgment (James 2:9-13). All of us are created in God’s image (Gen. 1:27) and have value and dignity.

Racism

Racism has no doubt been the scourge of humanity. It usually surfaces from generalized assumptions made about a particular race or cultural group. While it is wrong and unfair to assign particular negative characteristics to everyone within a racial group, it is done all the time. The bitter result of these racial attitudes is intolerance and discrimination.

Often racism goes beyond just individual attitudes. These racial attitudes can become the mindset of a particular people group who may use cultural as well as legal means to suppress another race. These cultural norms and laws can be used by the

majority race to exploit and discriminate against the minority race.

Although racism has existed throughout the centuries, it gained an unexpected ally in the scientific realm in the nineteenth century. In 1859, Charles Darwin published his famous work *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection of the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*. It was the last part of that title that no doubt furthered some of the ideas of racial superiority that flourished during that time.

It is not at all clear that Darwin meant to apply the concept of favored races in this particular book to human beings. In fact, he did write more on this subject later, but the provocative nature of the subtitle was enough to fuel discussions about racial superiority and inferiority. Later Darwinists took the concept far beyond what Charles Darwin intended.

So why do people hold racist attitudes? Three reasons are: feelings of pride, feelings of inferiority, and feelings of fear. Pride and arrogance fuel racism. When we are proud of who we are, we can easily look down upon those who are different from us and do not manifest the same characteristics that we do. We can start believing we are superior to another person or race.

Racism, however, can come from the opposite end of the emotional spectrum: inferiority. We may not feel good about ourselves. So in order to feel good about ourselves, we disparage another person or race.

Racism also results from fear. We fear what we don't understand. We fear what is strange and foreign. Racial and cultural differences may even seem dangerous to us. Racial attitudes can surface if we don't seek to know and understand those who are different from us.

We should stand strong against racism and racist attitudes wherever we find them: in the society, in individuals, even within the church.

Biblical Perspective

We have already noted that the Bible really only talks of one race: the human race. Superficial differences in skin color, hair color, hair texture, or eye shape may provide physiological differences between people groups, but the Bible doesn't provide any justification for treating people differently simply because of these physical differences. The Bible teaches that God has made "of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17:26 KJV).

The Bible also teaches that it is wrong for a Christian to have feelings of superiority. In Philippians 2, Paul admonishes the Christians to live in harmony with one another. They are to have a gentle spirit toward one another, and to let this gentle spirit be known to others.

Christians are also admonished to refrain from using class distinctions within the church. In James 2, believers are told not to make class distinctions between various people. They are not to show partiality within the church. Showing favoritism is called sin and the one showing favoritism is convicted by the law. Surely these commands would also apply to holding views of racial superiority and inferiority.

Likewise Paul instructs Timothy (1 Tim. 5:21) to keep his instructions without partiality and to do nothing out of favoritism. This command would also exclude making racial distinctions based on a view of racial superiority.

Finally, we see that Paul teaches the spiritual equality of all people in Christ. For example, he teaches in Colossians 3:11 that "there is no distinction between Greek and Jew,

circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all." This is a significant passage because it shows that Christ has removed four kinds of distinctions: national distinctions (Greek or Jew), religious distinctions (circumcised or uncircumcised), cultural distinctions (barbarian or Scythian), and economic distinctions (slave or free).

A similar passage would be Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In Christ, our human distinctions lose their significance. No one is superior to another. A believing Jew is not superior to a believing Greek. A believing slave is of no higher rank than a believing free person.

Racism and racist attitudes are wrong. Christians should work to remove such ideas and attitudes from society.

Becoming Culturally Sensitive

Here are some suggestions on how to become more sensitive to differences in race and culture.

First, we need to take an accurate assessment of ourselves. Often our assumptions and predispositions affect the way we perceive and even treat others. A person who says he or she has no prejudices is probably in denial. All of us perceive the world differently and find it easier to accept people who are like us and harder to understand people who are different from us.

Our cultural worldview affects how we perceive others. It affects how we evaluate what others think and what others do. So an important first step in becoming more racial and culturally sensitive is to evaluate ourselves.

Second, we should try to empathize with others. We must start

learning how to look at life and our circumstances from the viewpoint of others. Instead of trying to make others think like us, we should strive to begin to begin to think like them. That doesn't mean we have to agree with their viewpoint, but it does mean that becoming empathetic will be helpful in bridging racial and cultural barriers.

Third, learn to withhold judgment. Tolerance (in the biblical sense of the word) is a virtue we should cultivate. We should be willing to put aside our critical thinking and judgment until we know someone better. Taking the time to listen and understand the other person will help build bridges and dismantle barriers that often separate and isolate races and cultures.

Fourth, do not consider yourself superior to another. One of the root causes of racism is a belief in racial superiority. Paul tell us in Romans 12:3 that a man should not "think more highly of himself than he ought to think." Differences in race and culture should never be used to justify feelings of racial superiority which can lead to racist attitudes.

Fifth, develop cross cultural traits. A missionary who goes overseas must learn to develop personal traits that will make him or her successful in a new and different culture. Likewise, we should develop these traits so that we can reach across a racial and cultural divide. Friendliness and open communication are important. Flexibility and open-mindedness are also important. Developing these traits will enhance our ability to bridge a racial and cultural gap.

Finally, we should take a stand. We shouldn't tell (or allow others to tell) racial and ethnic jokes. These are demeaning to others and perpetuate racism and racial attitudes. Instead we should be God's instrument in bring about racial reconciliation. We should seek to build bridges and close the racial and cultural divide between people groups and reach out with the love of Jesus Christ.

Notes

1. J. C. Gutin, "End of the Rainbow," *Discover*, Nov. 1994, 71-75.
2. Bruce McConkie, "Apostle of the Mormon Council of 12," *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake: Bookcraft, 1958), 554.
3. "The Golden Age," *The Watchtower*, 24 July 1929, 702.

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Athlete Ranks New Life Greater Than Olympic Gold

Suppose you had a chance to win a medal at the Athens Olympics. Could anything make you turn it down?

Olympic success can bring fame, lifetime honor and lucrative endorsement contracts. Olympic games usually bring many inspiring stories of victory through determination and achievement despite adversity. Stars are born and careers receive quantum boosts.

Consider British hurdler Tasha Danvers-Smith. She has been ranked sixth in the world in her event. Her Olympic prospects looked bright.

But her ticket to the Athens track was never punched. It wasn't injury or defeat that kept her from competing in the games. It was her personal choice.

Tasha Danvers married her coach, Darrell Smith, in November 2003. In early 2004, she was in excellent physical shape and keenly focused on her training. Then, as she told the *Telegraph* newspaper, she felt tired all the time, feeling flat

for no reason.

In the spring, a home pregnancy test showed positive and she learned she was nine weeks pregnant. "I was in shock, reports Danvers-Smith. I only took the test because I wanted to stop myself worrying about it. Not for one minute did I think it would be positive. The couple had not planned to start a family until after the Olympics.

Having a baby in December would eliminate her chances of competing in Athens in August. It would increase their expenses and mean lean times. They did not own a home and were living with her husband's parents. She – through her athletic competition – was the main source of income.

As she put it, When my body is my business, then if my body is not functioning, there is no business.

Feeling devastated, the couple considered an abortion. It would seem a simple solution to an inconvenient problem, a comparatively easy way to eliminate an obstacle to the success and recognition she sought.

The thought [of an abortion] did cross our minds as an option," recalls Danvers-Smith. But this line from the Scriptures kept coming into my head: 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

She tried to convince herself that she should terminate her pregnancy but struggled through her tears with an alternative she could not accept: "For me, the whole wide world was the Olympics. At the same time, I felt I would be losing my soul. It just wouldn't fit well. It would be a forced decision . . . something that wasn't going to make me happy at all.

Aiming now for the 2008 games, she seems happy with her choice and philosophical about her mixed metaphor situation: Life throws you curve balls and you just have to roll with the punches."

Abortion is, of course, one of today's most controversial issues. But regardless of one's views on this emotionally explosive topic, it seems appropriate to admire the dedication of a woman who wrestled with an agonizing decision and made her choice to bear her child and postpone possible future glory and fortune.

Regardless of what success eventually comes her way, might that choice become Danvers-Smith's lifetime golden moment?

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The Psychology of Prisoner Abuse

Those Awful Pictures

Do you remember how you felt as the Iraq prisoner abuse scandal began to unfold in spring 2004? Maybe you saw the disturbing pictures when they were first aired on CBS television's *60 Minutes II*. Soon they were transmitted around the globe. They greeted you on the front page of your morning newspaper and on the evening news. The stream seemed endless.

You saw naked Iraqi prisoners in various stages of humiliation: hooded, naked men stacked in a pyramid; others lying on the floor or secured to a bed; one in a smock

standing on a box with his arms outstretched and wires attached to him. In some of the photos, male and female American soldiers grinned and pointed. In one picture, a female soldier stood holding a leash around the neck of a naked male prisoner. In others, soldiers grinned over what appeared to be a corpse packed in ice.

What feelings did you experience? Shock? Anger? Rage? Disgust? Maybe you felt embarrassed or ashamed. "How could they do such degrading things to other human beings?" you might have wondered. Perhaps you feared how the growing storm might affect the life of your friend or family member serving in Iraq. Or wrestled with how to explain the abuse to your children.

Finger pointing began almost as soon as the story broke. High-ranking military and government officials announced that these were aberrations carried out by a few unprincipled prison guards. Accused military police claimed they were merely following orders of military intelligence officials to soften prisoners up for interrogation. Others insisted soldiers had a moral obligation to disobey orders to do wrong. The accused countered that the harsh techniques were in place before they arrived for duty at the prison. Ethical arguments surfaced that the war on terror demanded tough methods to help prevent another 9/11.

What factors prompt people to abuse others in such degrading ways? What goes on inside the minds of the abusers? Are there special social forces at work? While this article won't attempt to analyze specific cases in the Iraq prison scandal, it will consider some fascinating psychological experiments that reveal clues to the roots of such behavior. The results - - and their implications -- may disturb you. A biblical perspective will also offer some insight.

The Stanford Prison Experiment

CBS News correspondent Andy Rooney said the Iraq prisoner abuse is “a black mark that will be in the history books in a hundred languages for as long as there are history books.”{1}

Stanford University psychologist Philip Zimbardo was not surprised by the Abu Ghraib prison abuse. He had observed similar behavior in his famous 1971 experiment involving a mock prison in the basement of the Stanford psychology building.{2} The experiment showed that otherwise normal people can behave in surprisingly outrageous ways.

Zimbardo and his colleagues selected twenty-four young men considered from interviews and psychological tests to be normal and healthy. Volunteers were randomly assigned to be either “prisoners” or “guards.” Guards wore uniforms and were told to maintain control of the prison and not to use violence.

On the second day, prisoners rebelled, asserting their independence with barricades, taunting and cursing. Guards suppressed the rebellion. Zimbardo reports that the guards then “steadily increased their coercive aggression tactics, humiliation and dehumanization of the prisoners.”{3} He says the worst abuse came at night when guards thought no psychology staff were observing.{4} Zimbardo remembers that the guards “began to use the prisoners as playthings for their amusement... They would get them to simulate sodomy. They also stripped prisoners naked for various offenses and put them in solitary for excessive periods.”{5} They dressed them in smocks, chained them together at the ankles, blindfolded them with paper bags on their heads, and herded them along in a group.{6} Sound familiar?

It was Berkeley professor Christina Maslach, Zimbardo’s then romantic interest whom he later married, who jolted him back to reality. On Day Five, she entered the prison to preview the experiment in preparation for some subject interviews she had agreed to conduct the next day. Shocked by what she saw, she

challenged Zimbardo's ethics later that evening – screaming and yelling in quite a fight, she recalls. That night, Zimbardo decided to halt the experiment.[{7}](#)

Zimbardo feels that prisons are ripe for abuse without firm measures to check guards' lower impulses.[{8}](#) He recommends "clear rules, a staff that is well trained in those rules and tight management that includes punishment for violations."[{9}](#)

An old Jewish proverb says, "Like a roaring lion or a charging bear is a wicked man ruling over a helpless people."[{10}](#) Unfettered prison officials -- or most anyone -- can yield to their baser natures when tempted by power inequalities.

The Perils of Obedience

What about those who say they were only obeying authority? How far will people go to inflict harm under orders? In the 1960s, Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted classic experiments on obedience.[{11}](#) (Ironically, Milgram and Stanford psychologist Philip Zimbardo were high school classmates.[{12}](#))

At Yale, Milgram set up a series of experiments "to test how much pain an ordinary citizen would inflict on another person simply because he was ordered to by an experimental scientist." He writes, "Stark authority was pitted against the subjects' strongest moral imperatives against hurting others, and, with the subjects' ears ringing with the screams of the victims, authority won more often than not."[{13}](#)

Milgram's basic design involved a volunteer "teacher" and a "learner." The learner was actually an actor who was in on the deception. The learner was strapped to "a kind of miniature electric chair" with an electrode on his wrist. The teacher sat before an impressive-looking "shock generator " with switches indicating voltages from 15-450 volts.[{14}](#)

The teacher asked test questions of the learner and was

instructed to administer increasingly large shocks for each incorrect answer. (You say you've known some teachers like that?) The machine here was a fake -- no learner received shocks -- but the teacher thought it was real.

In the initial experiment, over 60 percent of teachers obeyed the experimenter's orders to the end and punished the victim with the maximum 450 volts. Milgram found similarly disturbing levels of obedience across various socioeconomic levels. His conclusions after hundreds of experiments were chilling:

...Ordinary people, simply doing their jobs, and without any particular hostility on their part, can become agents in a terrible destructive process. Moreover, even when the destructive effects of their work become patently clear, and they are asked to carry out actions incompatible with fundamental standards of morality, relatively few people have the resources needed to resist authority. [{15}](#)

Why did they obey? Milgram offers several possibilities. Fears of appearing rude, desires to please an authority, aspirations to do one's best, and lack of direct accountability can all cloud judgment. But could there be something deeper, something in human nature that influences abuse? A famous novel illustrates how the dark side of human nature can affect group behavior.

Lord of the Flies

Prisoner abuse shows what can happen when power inequalities and inappropriate devotion to authority distort one's moral compass. Nobel laureate William Golding's short novel, *Lord of the Flies*, [{16}](#) illustrates through a fictional story how similar flaws can manifest in society. A film version of the book helped inspire the popular television series *Survivor*. [{17}](#)

Lord of the Flies opens on a remote, uninhabited island on

which some British schoolboys, ages six to twelve, find themselves after an airplane crash. An atomic war has begun, and apparently the plane was evacuating the boys when it was shot down. The island has fresh water, fruit, and other food. The setting seems idyllic. Best of all, the boys discover, there are no grownups (the plane and its crew presumably have washed into the sea).

Four central characters soon emerge. Ralph is elected leader. Piggy, an overweight asthmatic and champion of reason, becomes Ralph's friend. Simon is a quiet lad with keen discernment. Jack becomes a hunter.

At first, the boys get along without much conflict. Soon, though, fears envelop them, and they debate whether an evil beast might inhabit the island. Jack and his followers kill a wild pig and, in frenzied blood lust, dance to chants of "*Kill the pig! Cut her throat! Bash her in!*"^{18} When Ralph criticizes Jack for breaking some tribal rules, Jack replies, "Who cares?" His hunting prowess will rule.^{19}

One night, some boys see a dead parachutist, which they mistake for the "evil beast" and flee. Jack posts a pig's head onto a stick in the ground as a gift for the beast. The decaying, fly-covered pig's head soon becomes for Simon the "Lord of the Flies," a sort of personification of evil.^{20} Later, Simon discovers that the feared "beast" is only a human corpse. Running to tell the group this good news, he encounters their mock pig-killing ritual. The crazed boys attack Simon and kill him. Nearly all the boys follow Jack and, acting like savages with painted bodies and spears, kill Piggy and hunt down Ralph. Only the surprise appearance of a British naval officer, drawn by the smoke from a fire, halts the mad pursuit. Ralph and the boys dissolve in tears. Ralph weeps, as Golding writes, "for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart..."^{21}

Lord of the Flies is filled with symbolism, both biblical and

from Greek tragedy. But Golding's stated purpose was "to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature."[{22}](#) Could his point that darkness lurks in the human heart help explain the prisoner abuse?

Animal House Meets Lord of the Flies

Prisoner abuse is a sad reality in the U.S. and abroad.[{23}](#) The Iraq prisoner abuse scandal smacks of fraternity hazing on steroids, *Animal House* meets *Lord of the Flies*. Consider from this sad episode some lessons for both prison reform and society in general:

- *Establish clear rules for prison staff; train them well and punish them for violations*, as Stanford psychologist Philip Zimbardo recommends.
- *Educate against blind conformity*. Some of Milgram's experimental subjects found the strength to resist abusive authority.[{24}](#) Some psychologists feel that strong moral values and experience with conformity can strengthen moral courage.[{25}](#)
- *Involve external observers and critics*. Often outsiders, not emotionally swept up in a project or event, can through their psychological distance more clearly assess ethical issues. For example, Christina Maslach, Philip Zimbardo's friend and colleague who challenged the ethics of his prison experiment, credits her late arrival on the scene with facilitating her concern. The experimenters who had planned and had been conducting the experiment for five days were less likely to be startled by the developing misconduct, she maintained.[{26}](#)
- *Realistically appraise human nature's dark side*. Again, Golding said *Lord of the Flies* was "an attempt to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature."[{27}](#) Jesus of Nazareth was, of course, quite clear on this point. He said, "From within, out of a

person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, eagerness for lustful pleasure, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these vile things come from within...." {28}

Some dismiss as simplistic any analyses of human suffering that begin with alleged defects in human nature. They would rather focus on changing social structures and political systems. While many structures and political systems need changing, may I suggest that a careful analysis of the human heart is not simplistic? Rather it is fundamental.

Perhaps that's why Paul, a leader who agreed with Jesus' assessment of human nature, {29} focused on changing hearts. Paul was a former persecutor of Jesus' followers who zealously imprisoned them {30} but later joined them and became a prisoner himself. {31} Paul eventually claimed that when people place their faith in Jesus as he had, they "become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!" {32} Could this diagnosis and prescription have something to say to us amidst today's prisoner abuse scandals?

Notes

1. Andy Rooney, "Our Darkest Days are Here," CBS 60 Minutes, May 23, 2004, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2004/05/20/60minutes/rooney/main618783.shtml>.

2. Kathleen O'Toole, "The Stanford Prison Experiment: Still powerful after all these years," Stanford University News Service, January 8, 1997, <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/news/pr/97/970108prisonexp.html>.

A slideshow presentation of the experiment is at www.prisonexp.org. See also W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*,

Third Edition (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), 447; Claudia Wallis, "Why Did They Do It?" TIME.com, posted May 9, 2004 (from *TIME* magazine, cover date May 17, 2004), <http://www.time.com/time/covers/1101040517/wtorturers.html>; John Schwartz, "Simulated Prison in '71 Showed a Fine Line Between 'Normal' and 'Monster'," *New York Times*, May 6, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/06/international/middleeast/06PSYC.html?pagewanted=print&position=>.

3. O'Toole, loc. cit.

4. Ibid.

5. Wallis, loc. cit.

6. O'Toole, loc. cit.

7. Ibid.

8. Schwartz, loc. cit.

9. Wallis, loc. cit. The words are Wallis'.

10. Proverbs 28:15 NIV.

11. Stanley Milgram, "The Perils of Obedience," *Harper's*, December 1973, 62-66, 75-77. (The article is adapted from Milgram's book, *Obedience to Authority* [Harper and Row, 1974]). See also Neuman, loc. cit.; O'Toole, loc. cit.; Schwartz, loc. cit.; Wallis, loc. cit.; Anahad O'Connor, "Pressure to Go Along With Abuse Is Strong, but Some Soldiers Find Strength to Refuse," *New York Times*, May 14, 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/14/international/14RESI.html?ei=5059&en=854c94250243f62d&ex=1084593600&partner=AOL&pagewanted=print&position=>.

12. O'Toole, loc. cit.

13. Milgram 1973, op. cit., 62.

14. Ibid., 62-63.

15. Ibid., 75- 76.

16. William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (New York: Perigee, 1988). This "Casebook Edition" includes the 1954 novel plus notes and criticism edited by James R. Baker and Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr.

17.

<http://www.cbs.com/primetime/survivor8/show/episode14/s8story3.shtml>.

18. Golding, op. cit., 69; emphasis Golding's.

19. Ibid., 84.

20. Many have noted that the phrase "lord of the flies" translates the word "Beelzebub." See, for instance, E.L. Epstein, "Notes on Lord of the Flies," in Golding, op. cit., 279: "'The lord of the flies' is, of course, a translation of the Hebrew Ba'alzevuv (Beelzebub in Greek) which means literally 'lord of insects.'" Theologian Louis A. Barbieri, Jr., commenting on Matthew 10:24 ff. says, "Beelzebub (the Gr. has Beezeboul) was a name for Satan, the prince of the demons, perhaps derived from Baal-Zebub, god of the Philistine city of Ekron (2 Kings 1:2). 'Beelzebub' means 'lord of the flies,' and 'Beezeboul' or 'Beelzeboul' means 'lord of the high place.'" (In "Matthew," John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* [Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc., 1983, 1985], Logos Research Systems digital version.) Biblical references to Beelzebub include Matthew 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18, 19. In a 1962 interview, Golding himself referred to "the pig's head on the stick" as "Beelzebub, or Satan, the devil, whatever you'd like to call it...." (James Keating, "Interview with William Golding," in Golding, op. cit., 192.)

21. Golding, op. cit., 186-187.

22. Epstein, op. cit., 277-278. The words are Golding's.
23. For example, see "Missouri 'Rain' Leads to Toilet Duty," *Inside Journal: The Hometown Newspaper of America's Prisoners*, 14:7, November/December 2003, 5. Inside Journal publisher Prison Fellowship, www.pfm.org, and its affiliates seek to help rehabilitate prisoners and promote restorative justice.
24. Milgram 1973, op. cit., 63-64.
25. O'Connor, loc. cit.
26. O'Toole, loc. cit.
27. Epstein, loc. cit.
28. Mark 7:21-23 NLT.
29. For detailed information on Jesus and evidence to support His claims, see www.WhoIsJesus-Really.com.
30. Acts 8:3; 22:3-5 ff.
31. E.g., Acts 16:19-40.
32. 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT.