

The most exploitative story ever told

An educated, Christian review of New Line Cinema's 'The Nativity Story'

Dec. 6, 2006

By Rick Snee

Every year, I watch movies and wonder if Hollywood will ever run out of ways to offend me. The answer is never.

Just when you think the studio execs can't sink any lower, they find more tragedies to exploit for a quick buck. Whether it's assassination movies, 9-11 movies, children-with-cancer movies or High Grant romantic comedies, these unscrupulous so-and-sos keep pedaling filth and expect me to shell out money to be insulted.

The smut machine known as La-la-land can make as many disaster movies as it wants, but there's one person you don't go after: Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior.

Yes, I'm talking about *The Nativity Story*.

I know what you're thinking. "But Rick, have you even seen the movie yet?"

No, of course not. Like any good Christian, I don't need to see a movie to know whether it's good or bad. We have a quick list of methods to determine any movie's worth.

1. Look at the title. If the title mentions anything about Jesus, faith, God or anal sex, then a red flag is raised.

2. Listen to what other people are saying about the title. As a religion, we all need to think the same. Therefore, if one Christian is offended, we are all offended.

Yep, just two steps. The beauty of this plan is simplicity, just like Creationist and Young Earth theories.

I didn't need to see *The Passion of the Christ* to know it would change my life and make me a better person. Look at the title: "Christ" and his "passion." There's no way to misconstrue those words. Of course, I also read what other people said about the title and noticed my Jewish brothers and sisters got angry because the movie might make them look bad. But I quickly dismissed their qualms: *The Passion* is about a Christian, not a Jew.

So I went to the theater and suffered with Jim Caviezel through the stations of the cross, whiplash after flesh-tearing whiplash. Christ's rib cage never looked more beautiful than on the big screen.

I didn't need to see *Dogma* to know it was pure evil. Once again, look at the title: "dogma." If you look it up in Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, you find this: "a point of view or tenet put forth as authoritative *without adequate grounds*." I also found out it was made by Kevin Smith, that potty-mouthed heretic from New Jersey who makes films about drugs and gay people.

I was almost certain this movie would insult my beliefs, so I checked what other people had to say. I quickly discovered my interpretation was not alone, so I have avoided this movie like a five-day cruise to Sodom and Gomorrah.

That said, I took the same approach to *The Nativity Story*. I didn't see anything wrong with the title: it's clearly about the "nativity," it tells that "story" and even includes "the" to differentiate it from any other nativity story, like *The Omen*. It passed the first test.

Then I checked the Internet to make sure everyone else interpreted it the same way. All of the other Christians decided it would be a good movie decided it would be a good movie and launched Web sites praising a movie they hadn't seen yet, so it passed the second test.

But there's a catch: these Hollywood blasphemers thought we wouldn't notice the director. Catherine Hardwicke also made *Thirteen*, another movie I've never seen, nor do I need to. I heard from another Christian that it is about teenage girls who sin by stealing, doing drugs and having sex.

Sure enough, they found an actual unmarried pregnant teenager to play Mary. It is obvious this is just a ploy for my hard-earned Christian dollars to humanize Mary and Joseph.

Not only that, but this is about the birth of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior. We know how this

movie eventually ends: He dies. Sure, it'll probably end with His birth, but that's just the precursor to when He turns 30. This is another attempt to turn tragedy into profit, and I will not spend one sent to promote it.

Reprinted with permission from *The Tartan*, Radford University, © 2006.