

Now Showing: Ted Haggard, the Movie

The HBO documentary The Trials of Ted Haggard dredges up a lot of pain and sometimes blames the church for the Colorado pastor's problems.

In November 2006 the American evangelical movement was dragged through an embarrassing credibility crisis when Colorado pastor Ted Haggard admitted to a sexual relationship with a male prostitute. This week it's *déjà vu* all over again. In a documentary about Haggard's moral failure, HBO dredges up the ugly scandal and shows us how Haggard is coping with life now that he's out of the ministry.

Slumdog Millionaire

Charisma editor picks best movie of the year! Slumdog Millionaire, which was nominated in 10 categories, won eight Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director. Below is J. Lee Grady's review of this rags-to-riches story.



Fox Searchlight Pictures

Directed by Danny Boyle

Rated R for some language and scenes of violence

It's not a Christian film, but *Slumdog Millionaire* gets my vote for the best movie of 2008 because it deals so honestly with the issue of exploited children.

Set in modern India, it is the story of Jamal (Dev Patel), a low-caste boy raised in the slums of Mumbai amid religious violence and cruel poverty. Orphaned and with little schooling, Jamal and his brother eke out an existence by begging in the streets, riding on top of trains and giving bogus tours of the Taj Mahal to naive tourists.

What Barack Obama Must Learn from Barak of the Bible

We must pray that our new president will honor the God of our fathers and seek counsel from His prophets.

The hearts of millions of Americans were stirred on Tuesday as we watched Barack Obama place his hand on Abraham Lincoln's Bible and swear to uphold his duties as president. The cynicism and divisiveness of politics gave way to civility for a few moments as Obama stood on that massive stage in front of the Capitol and spoke of a "new era of responsibility" that he hopes to initiate.

Four Ways Our Culture Is

Brainwashing Us

Forces in our culture want to rip the foundations of Christian faith right out from under America. Here are four lies we must challenge.

This past week I spent four days preaching at Emmanuel College, a Christian liberal arts school in northeast Georgia. I love speaking to college students because they are spiritually hungry, they love passionate worship and I don't have to wear a tie.

Where Have All the Leaders Gone?

The church today faces a serious leadership crisis. The only way to solve it is to embrace three forgotten virtues.

The people of Israel faced a leadership crisis during their sojourn in the wilderness. From morning until evening, dozens of people would line up outside Moses' tent to ask him to resolve a dispute. When his father-in-law, Jethro, saw the crowds outside his door, he pulled Moses aside and gave him wise advice that ended up being recorded in Scripture.

Holy Demolition

While our nation faces its toughest financial crisis since the Great Depression, the church is wandering in a wilderness of disturbing uncertainty. Ministries that enjoyed success two years ago are announcing layoffs. Some churches have been squeezed to a breaking point because donations are down.

A Word of Encouragement: Cross Your Jordan in 2009

Don't keep wandering in yesterday's wilderness as this new year begins. It's time to challenge your giants and claim new territory.

I spent the last couple of months of 2008 buried in the book of Joshua. Casual readers might dismiss the narrative as nothing more than a description of military conquests, but when I delve into its pages I discover the revelation of Jesus Christ—our “Joshua”—who invites us to engage in a spiritual adventure beyond our wildest dreams.

The True Smells of Christmas

The birth of Jesus was not about pine needles, eggnog, apple cider or cinnamon candles.

I associate Christmas with sensory overload: Colored lights twinkle, sleigh bells jingle and snow makes cheeks rosy, except here in Florida where we generate that frosty winter feeling with air conditioners. Then there are the holiday smells: Pine needles, cinnamon candles, spiced apple cider, eggnog, roast turkey and that musty smell of boxed ornaments that come out of the attic only once a year. Plus my favorite: White Christmas coffee, a strong brew with a tinge of coconut.

How 'Newsweek' Twisted the Truth About Same-Sex Marriage

In its Dec. 15 cover story, the magazine tried to rewrite the Bible. Don't believe the lies.

If awards were given for shock journalism, Newsweek would win the prize for its provocative Dec. 15 cover story. The headline, hanging above a simple black Bible with a rainbow-striped ribbon sticking out of it, reads: "The Religious Case for Gay Marriage." With one big *kaboom*, writer Lisa Miller dropped a literary bomb on 2,000 years of Christian scholarship by suggesting that Jesus would have been OK with Matthew marrying Mark and Luke marrying John.

Dreams of Christmas

The birth of Jesus was not a sweet, greeting-card moment.