

5 Ways to Honor God While Watching Movies

Growing up as a young kid with a big imagination in the Midwest, my appetite for movies was anything but healthy. From a very young age, I would read and write reviews, pore over daily box-office results and beg my parents or older brothers to take me to the latest movie—any movie. Thankfully, I had parents who cared about what my siblings and I watched. It was a common practice in the Kayser household to read a review from Movieguide and do legitimate research on the media we were consuming.

What impacted me the most, however, wasn't a list of movies I was and wasn't allowed to see (though that list was important). What influenced me and continues to impact me today was how my family watched movies.

I didn't notice it then, but my parents' approach to watching movies profoundly shaped who I am now. It's easy, it's fun, and it just might change the way you watch movies. Best of all, it helps remind us to honor God in everything we do, even while watching movies. Here are five practical ways to do this:

1. Watch movies as a family. In a day and age where everyone consumes their media individually through tablets and laptops, it's very important that families view movies together. Movies were a communal experience when they were viewed in churches 100 years ago, and they continue to be that when you go to the theater. For children, it reminds them that life isn't all about them, no matter what they might think.

2. Discuss the values of the movie. It may be odd at first, but you might be surprised by the edifying things a 10-year-old will pull from a movie. As soon as the movie is finished,

simply ask, "What did we learn from this movie?" Invite discussion. Turn it into a game. This trains children to think analytically about the things that they watch.

3. Pray as a family. I can't emphasize enough how important this is. The simple act of discussing what we've learned in a movie and then praying that God would help us apply it in our lives is crucial. Evening family prayer was normal for me as a kid, but hearing my dad tie the movie we had just watched into his prayers made me view movies with whole new eyes.

4. Pray for the filmmakers who made the movie. Recognizing that the people behind the screen are real people with real problems gives children a healthy perspective of what Hollywood even is. Make it a common practice to pray for those in Hollywood who don't know Jesus and for those who do. To hear a young child pray for the hearts of famous actors and actresses is a precious and beautiful thing.

5. Make movie night a special event. When movies become a normal daily activity, it's not as special or powerful. Movies let us escape into stories to be inspired and uplifted. Then we can go back into the real world hopefully a better person. We start facing danger when movies and TV shows become a reality we'd rather live in than interacting with other people, especially your family and the people at your church.

Limit the amount of movies your family watches together. Research ahead of time what movies your family would like to watch at Movieguide, where we show what movies might be good to watch and at what age levels.

Finally, don't just watch movies that honor God. Watch them in a way that honors God and see Him bless your family through them.

Ben Kayser is the managing editor for Movieguide. This article originally appeared on .