

Attention Hollywood: 79 Percent of People Want to See This in Biblical Films

The so-called “Year of the Bible” has Christian moviegoers packing movie theaters across the country. Films like *Son of God*, *Moms’ Night Out* and *God’s Not Dead* racked up a combined \$218 million in ticket sales in 2014.

A new survey, however, reveals the faithful won’t be duped by movies that are Christian in name only.

According to a survey of 1,200 respondents from Oxford-based Christian News Service and conducted by American Insights, 79 percent of those polled say “historical and biblical accuracy is important.”

Two-thirds (66 percent) of all adults and 74 percent of Christians (who make up 63 percent of all survey respondents) are likely to see a movie related to God.

“Christians perceive Hollywood and films that explore themes about God,” says Russ Jones, president/CEO of Christian News Service. “While some in Hollywood only see the Christian community as a financially lucrative target audience, many believers feel Hollywood doesn’t portray Christianity fairly.”

The Christian News Service/*NICAEA* Movie Poll also found that 66 percent are interested in seeing a historical movie about the rise of Christianity.

An element of the study gauged the interest of the viewing public for two upcoming movies, *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, which is a Ridley Scott-directed film with Christian Bale as Moses, and *NICAEA*, an independent film about Constantine the Great, St. Athanasius, the Council of Nicaea and the theological

question concerning the nature of Jesus of Nazareth.

Among those polled, 62 percent of the Christian community and 57 percent of the general public plan to see *NICAEA*, a film slated for release in early 2016 and based on the account of the Council of Nicaea at which Christians affirmed the full divinity of Jesus Christ.

NICAEA Executive Producer Charles Parlato notes the importance of producing historically accurate and biblically sound films.

"Taking liberties with the Bible for dramatic purposes like Dan Brown did in *The Da Vinci Code*, or the more recent film *Noah* is nothing new in Hollywood," says Parlato, a former Wall Street hedge fund manager. "Brown's contentions are clearly false, and I am not willing to let his interpretation of history stand unchallenged."

Eighty percent of the Christian community plan to see the upcoming *Exodus* movie if it remains true to biblical accounts. However, that number falls to 29 percent if the movie fails to be biblically accurate.

"This poll was conducted for the purpose of guiding the film and television industry in its production of both historically-based films and movies that explore questions about God," said Jones. "The results clearly show that the public will not be toyed with in regard to accuracy in both biblical and historical accounts."

Furthermore, 79 percent of Christians and 71 percent of all adults say, "The biblical accuracy of the story is important" when deciding whether to see a faith-based movie. Fifty-two percent of Christians strongly agree with that statement.

"The results are clear. Hollywood must look at this poll and acknowledge that the audience it seeks to serve must in every way be respected, and that respect includes the deeply held beliefs of that audience," Parlato says.

“The true artist can ask probing questions, but the questions must be asked honestly and must reflect historical and Biblical accuracy. We should not be surprised by the poll results. They simply affirm common sense.”