

Courageous Movieguide Awards Honor Everyday Heroes

Superman didn't fly into the Universal City Hilton in Los Angeles on Friday; he merely walked the red carpet alongside Hercules, Miss America and three of the lead actors from *Courageous*.

Dean Cain (*Superman* in the '90s *Lois and Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*) hosted the 20th Annual **Movieguide Faith and Values Awards Gala** Friday, which included appearances by Kevin Sorbo (*Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*) and Teresa Scanlan (Miss America 2011). But it was the everyday heroes from Alex Kendrick's latest blockbuster who walked away with the grand prize for movies.

Kendrick's *Courageous* (Sherwood Pictures) tells the story of four successful police officers who tackle their greatest challenge: fatherhood. Known for *Facing the Giants* and *Fireproof*, Kendrick and fellow *Courageous* stars Kevin Downes and Robert Amaya accepted the \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring Movie of 2011.

"This is our first [major Hollywood award]," Kendrick told *Charisma*. "This award symbolizes the support of movies that honor the Lord. Whereas we would appreciate any award, any time you are honored for stepping out in faith and honoring the Lord it has great significance."

Courageous emerged as the winner in a tough category that included other nominees *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never* (MTV/Paramount), *Of God's and Men* (Sony Pictures Classics), *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* (Disney), *Seven Days in Utopia* (Visio Entertainment), *Soul Surfer* (Sony) and *The Tree of Life* (Fox Searchlight).

"*Courageous* is really a sermon on film that lifts up **Jesus**

Christ,” Movieguide founder and President Ted Baehr told *Charisma*. “It is so heart-rending. There are moments in that movie that just take your heart and transforms it.”

The \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring TV Program of 2011 went to *KJB: The Book that Changed the World* (BBC). Other finalists in the television category included *Buck Denver Asks ... Why Do We Call it Christmas?* (EMI), *A Christmas Wish* (Hallmark), *The Lost Valentine* (Hallmark), *Love Begins* (Hallmark) and *Mitch Albom’s Have a Little Faith* (Hallmark).

The Epiphany awards are supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation.

For his role in *Courageous*, Kendrick took home the Movieguide Grace Award for Most Inspiring Performance in Movies in 2011. Other finalists included Justin Bieber (*Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*), Jim Carrey (*Mr. Popper’s Penguins*), Jessica Chastain (*The Tree of Life*), Sam Claflin (*Pirates of the Caribbean*), Viola Davis (*The Help*), Robert Duvall (*Seven Days in Utopia*), Nathan Gamble (*25 Hill*), Anthony Hopkins (*The Rite*), Dennis Quaid (*Soul Surfer*), Martin Sheen (*The Way*), Annasophia Robb (*Soul Surfer*) and Kevin Sorbo (*Soul Surfer*).

For her role in *A Christmas Wish*, Kirsten Dorn was honored as the winner of the Most Inspiring Performance in Television in 2011.

The Faith and Freedom awards for Promoting Positive American Values in 2011 went to *Captain Avenger* (the best movie) and *The Lost Valentine* (the best television production).

Choosing the winners was tougher than ever this year. “We see more and more good movies of faith and values each year,” Movieguide’s Ted Baehr told *Charisma*. “We have more nominees this year in categories where we used to struggle to just find one.”

Two decades ago Baehr set out to influence Hollywood

filmmakers to produce more family-friendly movies. He founded Movieguide and the Christian Film and Television Commission (which hosts the annual gala), and he has not wavered in his passionate reminder to producers, actors, writers and everyone with a camera, microphone or editing bay that audiences want faith and values.

"Most moviegoers want good to conquer evil, truth to triumph over falsehood, justice to prevail over injustice and true beauty to overcome ugliness," Baehr said.

Baehr backs up his statement with numbers. In his Annual Report to the Entertainment Industry, presented during the Movieguide gala, he said family-friendly movies averaged more than \$40.7 million per movie in 2011 in the United States and Canada, but that the least family-friendly movies averaged about \$19.8 million. Over the years, Baehr has seen the numbers shift to a point where more family-friendly movies are being made today than were produced two decades ago. And attitudes have changed.

"We know this is working," Baehr told Charisma. "People in Hollywood are talking about Jesus. They didn't talk about Him in Hollywood 20 years ago."

Those attending the Movieguide gala indeed talked about Jesus, faith, values and hope for quality family-friendly movies in years to come.

"I have two kids, a 3-year-old and a 4-month-old," said singer Julianna Zobrist, who performed at the gala. "As a parent you always want to protect your children, so I am encouraged to see that there are actually people in Hollywood who take the time to honor the people who promote family-friendly movies."

Natalie Grant, Pat Boone, BJ Thomas, Diana DeGarmo and Ace Young also sang during the event. "I am a mom now and I have a greater understanding of how important it is to have entertainment that is uplifting and safe for my kids to

watch," Grant told *Charisma*. "I am thrilled that more of these faith and family values [films] are being made and that the quality is better. It is time that the culture gets hungry for entertainment with meaning."

Support for Movieguide came from others, too.

"I am 100 percent behind faith and values in movies," Ron Kardashian told *Charisma*. "We have two children, a 2-year-old and a 7-year-old, and one of our heart's cries is that we would encourage Hollywood and the executive producers in Hollywood to make more family based content. And it looks like that is coming to pass. If we are airing that type of content through entertainment and motion pictures we can reach a generation whose only voicebox is television."

Kardashian and his family attend Jubilee Christian Center in San Jose, Calif., pastored by Dick Bernal.

Scanlan told *Charisma*, "We need more of this. We need to say that we believe in family values. We believe in traditional American morals. I think that is all of what I have been standing for in my year as Miss America. I have tried to represent what is true and wholesome and good in the country. That is exactly what this event does."

As a guide for parents, each year Movieguide names the best movies for families. The 2011 list nominees included *Hugo*, *Soul Surfer*, *The Muppets*, *The Adventures of Tintin*, *Courageous*, *Mars Needs Moms*, *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never*, *Puss in Boots*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and *Cars 2*. Martin Scorsese's *Hugo* emerged as the winner. Set in 1930s Paris, the film tells the story of an orphan who lives in the walls of a train station.

Disney's *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* was selected at the 2011 Best Movie for Mature Audiences. Other nominees included *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, *Captain America: The First Avenger*, *Mission: Impossible—Ghost*

Protocol, The Tree of Life, The Artist, Seven Days in Utopia, Sarah's Key, Thor and *The Way*.

"My main goal is to change the industry to make more movies that are lifting up Jesus," Baehr said.