

End-Times Film Hits, Misses 'The Mark'

It would be easy to say Pure Flix's feature film *The Mark* seems a little bit too familiar. But it's not entirely unoriginal.

On one hand, the movie is reminiscent of the 2000 Christian film *Left Behind*, which starred Kirk Cameron. In particular, there is one scene where the Rapture occurs and those who remain on an airplane are left to wonder exactly what happened. It's typical end-times stuff.

On the other hand, *The Mark* displays a fresh new concept to Tribulation era thrillers: The main character is carrying—unintentionally, I might add—a chip in his body that is considered to be the mark of the beast, referred to in the book of Revelation. According to Revelation 13:17-18, anyone on earth during the Tribulation period who does not have the mark may buy or sell anything during that time.

Craig Sheffer, a veteran actor who starred alongside Brad Pitt in the enjoyable Robert Redford film *A River Runs Through It*, portrays Chad, a former soldier and government agent who has struggled with believing anything related to God and the Bible during his lifetime. When a biometric microchip is inadvertently implanted into his arm, he becomes the main focus of Avanti Corporation, the company that invented the chip.

The new, secret technology is scheduled to be revealed at an important world summit in Germany, and Avanti tries to make sure that Chad arrives in Berlin from Thailand safely. That's when the fun ensues.

A group of mercenaries has followed Chad onto the plane in an attempt to obtain the microchip for their boss, who is assumed

to be the Antichrist. They hijack the plane—although with today's security the way it is, I'm always amazed as to how that's accomplished.

Chad eventually is captured. But, helped by some of the plane's other passengers, a savvy flight attendant he has befriended and the sudden mystery of the befuddling Rapture, the hijacking is put down. Through it all, Chad remembers the words and encouragement of his dead brother, and ponders the reality of Jesus' existence, much like Cameron's character, Buck Williams, in the *Left Behind* series.

Chad, slowly beginning to realize what the chip in his arm signifies and its importance to the world, eventually escapes from the plane along with the flight attendant, Dao. The ending leaves little room for doubt about sequels, following in the footsteps of *Left Behind*.

Another veteran Hollywood actor, Eric Roberts, Julia Roberts' older brother, stars as Cooper, the head of Avanti Corporation. He vows he will eventually catch up with Chad again in the near future.

The film contains a great deal of violence, but each instance is brief.

Set to be released on DVD and Blu-ray on Oct. 16, *The Mark* is somewhat predictable, but entertaining. For those intrigued by the end times and Bible prophecy, it's a new angle on an old story.