

'Les Misérables,' 'American Bible Challenge' Big Winners at Movieguide Awards

Blockbuster Hollywood movies and television programs that portray uplifting, faith-friendly content were honored Friday at the 21st Annual Movieguide Faith & Values Awards Gala, hosted by Tony Award-winning actor Joe Mantegna, star of *Criminal Minds* and *Cars 2*, and his actress daughter Gia Mantegna.

Attended by hundreds of elite directors, producers, actors and writers, this event at the Universal Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles featured not only "Best of" awards, but also included Movieguide founder Ted Baehr's "Report to the Entertainment Industry" to help Hollywood see through a wider lens how movies and television programming with faith and values do better at the box office.

"We see incredible breakthroughs in the movies as far as an increase in moral and faith content," says Baehr, noting that 57 percent of films now have positive Christian characters, compared to an abysmally low percentage only a decade ago.

This year, *Les Misérables* won the \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring Movie, while *The American Bible Challenge* won the \$100,000 Epiphany Prize for Most Inspiring Television Program.

Other winners at the Feb. 15 award ceremony included:

- Best Movie for Families: *Ice Age: Continental Drift*
- Best Movie for Mature Audiences: *Marvel's The Avengers*
- Faith & Freedom Award for Movies: *For Greater Glory*
- Faith & Freedom Award for Television: *A Smile As Big As the Moon*

- The Friess Free Enterprise Award for Movies: *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*
- Grace Award for Most Inspiring Movie Performance: Andy Garcia in *For Greater Glory*
- Grace Award for Most Inspiring Television Performance: Kyla Kenedy in *Raising Izzie*

A movie does not have to have an in-your-face, proselytizing “Christian” gist to be honored with a Movieguide award. “A good example,” explains Dr. Baehr,” is when Captain America says, ‘There’s only one God, ma’am, and I’m pretty sure He doesn’t dress like that.’ *Marvel’s The Avengers* is not only about patriotism.”

Acknowledging the presence and goodness of God—and even conveying the concept of “salvation” as portrayed in *Les Misérables*—counteracts the gratuitous violence, moral relativity and sensual content of other movies against which, warns Dr. Baehr, parents have to guard their children.

“The most powerful person in Hollywood is the 12- to 24-year-old who goes to the movies,” says Baehr. “Go to the good, rather than to the bad. Parents need to know the influence that movies have on youth. Vote at the box office.”

As top entertainment industry executives are watching, the implication of movie choices among Christians is that Hollywood will make more faith-based, inspiration movies and television programs if the segment continues to grow.

This Movieguide Awards ceremony, including the detailed “Report to the Entertainment Industry”, will be shown on the Hallmark Movie Channel. Check your local listing for dates and times.

For a complete list of the runners-up in the different categories, go to .