

# Faith films still not flooding big screen

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## Faith films still not flooding big screen

**By Kim Lawton**

*Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*

LOS ANGELES (RNS)—This year's batch of Academy Awards nominees for Best Picture portrayed some complex moral dilemmas: A pregnant teen figuring out what to do; a lawyer in an ethical crisis; a Western saga overwhelmed by evil; a romance doomed by lies; a clash between an oil man and a greedy evangelist.

But except for the unsavory clergyman in *There Will Be Blood* and maybe the title *Atonement*, there's little explicit treatment of religion.

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Mel Gibson (right)  
directs Jim  
Caviezel in his  
portrayal of Jesus  
for The Passion of  
the Christ. Movie  
executives have  
been chasing  
“Passion dollars”  
since the 2004  
motion picture  
became a megahit  
worldwide, taking  
in more than half a  
billion dollars.  
(RNS  
photo/Philippe  
Antonello/Courtesy  
Icon Distribution  
Inc.)

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# What has Hobbiton to do with Jerusalem?

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# What has Hobbiton to do with Jerusalem?

**By Jay Smith**

*Howard Payne University*

Bible Belt Christians have struggled long with literature and film espousing a view of reality that confronts the values of our Christian life.

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## Some analysts say Huckabee may be new face of the Religious Right

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## Some analysts say Huckabee may be new face of the Religious Right

**By Adelle M. Banks**

*Religion News Service*

ASHINGTON (RNS)—With the race for the Republican presidential

nomination now behind him, former candidate Mike Huckabee has many possibilities ahead: Potential vice president to John McCain? GOP adviser? Another run for the White House?

Anyway, many observers note, one thing seems clear: Huckabee is now a kinder, gentler fresh face of the conservative evangelical movement, poised to follow the path laid out by Pat Robertson, who transformed his failed 1988 campaign into a powerful movement of the Religious Right.

Mike Huckabee
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# **IN BETWEEN: Mentoring: Is someone coaching you?**

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## **IN BETWEEN: Mentoring: Is someone coaching you?**

I retired from working with our Baptist General Convention of Texas churches in March 2006. I determined more work was needed to help pastors and other church leaders because too many ministers were being terminated, and little preventive (pro-active) help was coming forth from our offices. I felt it was time for me to focus on developing leaders as a “free agent” and not as a staff person.

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Soon I found myself working with a colleague, Kerry Webb, in training ministers and laypersons as leaders, not just followers. One of the extremely interesting discoveries for the two of us was the need to build a mentoring dimension into our training. Of course, how could we mentor others unless we were committed to going through that process ourselves?

We found a wonderful lady who became our coach. Actually, she was an executive coach, formally trained in a nationally recognized coaching certification process. Later, we determined each of our participants needed to experience that same coaching.

The Bible is loaded with examples of mentoring relationships. Some were with older-to-younger models (Paul/Timothy), others were with models in which age was not a big difference (Paul/Barnabas). It appears to me that younger ministers/laypersons today seem to be more open to the Paul/Timothy model. Regardless, this kind of relationship is vital to leaders today.

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# Christian rocker Larry Norman launched genre

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## Christian rocker Larry Norman launched genre

**By Kristi Turnquist & Grant Butler**

*Religion News Service*

SALEM, Ore. (RNS)—Christian rock lost one of its pioneers when Larry Norman, 60, died of heart failure Feb. 24 at his home in Salem, Ore.

“We’re receiving thousands and thousands of e-mails,” his brother, Charles Norman, said.



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## Texas Baptist Forum

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# Texas Baptist Forum

## Positive 1st impression

Randel Everett made a positive impression the day he was elected executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

- [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them to  
[marvknox@baptiststandard.com](mailto:marvknox@baptiststandard.com);  
250 words maximum.



*“What we evangelicals should have known before and have now demonstrated again ... is that we aren’t quite as popular in the public square as we like to think.*

*We may carry a pretty strong Word, but we also carry a fairly limp stick.”*

**Joel Belz**

World magazine founder, writing about the need to “end the illusion” about the political force of evangelicals (World/RNS)

*“There is a tendency on the part of some religious folk to see God with human characteristics, and then they assign to God some of the most damaging and destructive of human characteristics. I think there is a danger of having God conform to our image, rather than trying to conform to his.”*

**Ted Strickland**

Governor of Ohio (RNS)

*“The separation of church and state is like oxygen to the fire of religious liberty.”*

**Jon Meacham**

Newsweek editor (CBS News Sunday Morning)



I was impressed by his strategy, which will allow us to direct our focus on our genuine passion for the lost people of Texas. I sensed we have elected an authentic leader who can guide us without hesitation.

His convictions help me define what type of leader he will be for this moment—a leader whose focus is God's priority to save the lost ones.

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## **Judge rules for Windermere; Missouri convention to appeal**

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## **Judge rules for Windermere; Missouri convention to appeal**

**By Vicki Brown**

*Associated Baptist Press*

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (ABP)—Windermere Baptist Conference Center acted legally when it changed its articles of incorporation, a circuit judge ruled. But Missouri Baptist Convention officials immediately announced they plan to appeal the decision.

The ruling by Cole County (Mo.) Circuit Judge Richard Callahan was the latest action in a lawsuit the Missouri Baptist Convention filed against five

formerly related entities—Windermere, the Baptist Home retirement-home system, the Missouri Baptist Foundation, Missouri Baptist University and *Word & Way* newspaper—more than five years ago.

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## On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Brian Barkley** to First Church in Edmonson as pastor.
  - **Warren Camp** to First Church in Silverton as youth minister.
  - **L.D. Green** to First Church in Spade as pastor.
  - **Mike Johnson** to Bethel Church in Plainview as interim pastor.
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## Oxford researchers get \$4 million to study origins of belief

# in God

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## Oxford researchers get \$4 million to study origins of belief in God

**By Brittani Hamm**

*Religion News Service*

LONDON (RNS)—Oxford University researchers have been given nearly \$4 million to investigate the origins of belief in God.

The three-year project titled “Empirical Expansion in Cognitive Science of Religion and Theology” is designed to determine if belief in a deity is instinctive or learned. It will be funded by the Pennsylvania-based [John Templeton Foundation](#).

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## Houston pulpiteer urges: Be a blessing

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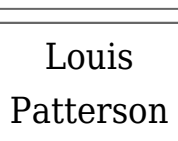
# Houston pulpiteer urges: Be a blessing

**By Stephanie Orr**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

HOUSTON—Be an avenue for God to work, not simply a pool of his blessings, pastors urged participants at the recent Baptist General Convention of Texas-sponsored African-American Leadership Workshop.

Louis Patterson, pastor of Mount Corinth Baptist Church in Houston, challenged the crowd to be a channel of blessing rather than simply a reservoir of praise.



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## After a long dry spell, church gives revival meetings another try

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## After a long dry spell, church

# **gives revival meetings another try**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

KILGORE—Pastor Eddie Hilburn hadn't held a revival meeting at least five years in a church he had served. First Baptist Church in Kilgore had gone even longer without scheduling a revival—at least the last decade.

That all changed recently, when the congregation held a four-day series of events it called Life Fest featuring Jon Randles, who leads the Baptist General Convention of Texas Evangelism Team.

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# **Science has contributions, limitations in end-of-life issues**

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# **Science has contributions, limitations in end-of-life issues**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

SAN ANTONIO—Science has made great contributions in helping people

with end-of-life issues, but it also has limitations, Allen Verhey, professor of Christian ethics at Duke Divinity School, told the Texas Baptist Christian Life Conference.

“Today I invite your attention tonight to the end of life—and to the contributions and limitations of science at the end of life,” he said.