

Some thoughts on watching films

Stories are the stuff of life. They allow us to reflect on all sorts of issues at a safe distance as we engage with the characters, cry with them, laugh with them, get cross with them and generally share their experience. How they deal with the issues they come across may frustrate us, or give us new insights; cause us to laugh or cry; result in us hurling abuse at the screen or willing there to be a happy ending. And through it all we can encounter God in all sorts of unexpected places if we only take time to look.

Questions to ask yourself

What did you think of the film? What do you like most? Least?

Which incidents made you *think* or *feel* most strongly? How well did you think the film treated those incidents?

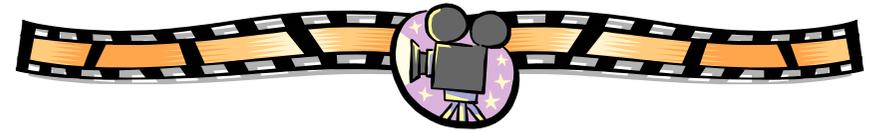
What issues did the film raise for you?

What character(s) do you most identify with and why?

Does the film have any echoes of Christian beliefs or stories from the Bible? Does it support or challenge Christian values?

Some facts about the film

- *Son of Rambow* is a project that Garth Jennings and Nick Goldsmith worked on for some years. Its development was interrupted when they were asked to make *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, and it is their second major feature film. It was inspired by Jennings' own experiences as a child in the 1980s, when video equipment first became available to the public, and the film recreates the atmosphere of an English comprehensive school of the time, using a soundtrack of both familiar and lesser known pop tracks from the era.
- The film was shot primarily in the English town of Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.
- The film includes excerpts from *First Blood* and is endorsed by Sylvester Stallone, the star of the *Rambo* series.
- The film includes a vintage clip of Jan Pinkava winning the BBC *Screen Test* competition. This actually took place in 1980, three years before the film is set.
- Garth Jennings describes the motivation behind the film: "We wanted to make a film that wasn't a gritty slice of childhood but rather one that really captured the way that life seemed to us as kids in the 80s. It was a time when days were long and sunny, school corridors were endless and French exchange students seemed like they were from another planet."
- It took five months of searching the schools of South London to find the film's two young leads. Neither of them had done any acting on camera before.
- The branch of the Plymouth Brethren portrayed in the film are the Raven-Taylor-Hales Brethren, a particularly exclusive group. They currently have about 40,000 members worldwide. They believe God's principle of unity is achieved by separating from and excluding all that which they consider evil, including open conduits of communication such as television, radio and the internet (see 2 Timothy 2:19). All social activities are restricted to others within the Brethren.



**A chance to watch films together.
An opportunity to discuss the issues raised.
A time of friendship, food and fun.**

4th Jan	Juno
1st Feb	The Kite Runner
1st Mar	<u>Son of Rambow</u>
5th Apr	Son of Man
3rd May	WALL-E
*14th Jun	Into the Wild

**Films start at 5:30pm
Followed by food, coffee and conversation**

**10 Bletchington Road
Islip**

**Further details from Jonathan (Ox 842214)
Email: info@spiritualityonscreen.org.uk
Web: www.spiritualityonscreen.org.uk**



The Son of Rambow

The Son of Rambow is a heartwarming comedy about two boys—one, the terror of the school, the other, a member of an exclusive sect—who come together through a shared passion in film-making. The resulting story invites us to reflect on friendship and the ways we engage both with each other and with the world.

Friendship

Friends are made in all sorts of ways and sometimes in the most unlikely of circumstances. And once made, friendships need working at. Think of your friends and the times you have spent together. Give thanks to God for them.

The pain of friendship

At one point, Will, referring to the blood bond they had made together, says: “It’s just a scab—it doesn’t mean anything. It doesn’t hurt.” How much are friendships only really forged in difficult times? Do we only know it means something when it really hurts, or is really hard? And what does that say about our friendship with God? There has been a great deal of pain for him—but what about us? Are we willing to allow our friendship with God to hurt and be painful? Or are those the times we drop away and look elsewhere?

Detached from the world

There has been much debate in Christian circles over the centuries about how much Christians should be part of the world and how much they should keep themselves apart from evil influences. Salt and yeast (Matt 5:13 and 13:33) lose their purpose unless mixed with other ingredients. However, it is very easy for things to get diluted. How do we engage with the world without losing our distinctiveness?

Not recognising those around you

We can often take people for granted, not realising what they do for us and, indeed, what they mean to us. Sometimes it is only when we have lost them that we realise how precious they were. Are there any people in your life that you take for granted? Are there those who love you deeply whose love you don’t often acknowledge? Are there ways in which you could tell them what they mean to you?

Reaching across boundaries

Will and Lee are not the most natural of buddies. Indeed, they have nothing in common until they find a shared passion in film-making. As they become friends, both are introduced to a world they knew nothing about before. We often gravitate towards people “like us” and in so doing miss out on the rich tapestry of life. Meanwhile, the church has a unique opportunity to bring all sorts of people together through a shared love of Christ. How much do you think we embrace that opportunity? Should we be doing more to bring diverse people together? Or are we happier simply meeting “Christians like us”?

Links with the Bible

The Good Samaritan (Lk 10: 30—37). Lee is the renegade in school, always getting into trouble, but he is the one who rescues Will while the rest save themselves.

The weaker brother (Romans 14: 13—19). How do you respond to Paul’s advice on avoiding those things which might make a weaker brother stumble?

Memorable Quotes

Joshua Do you want to read for us today, Brother William?

Will This has been my best day of all time.

Will (*talking of the watch*) It was my dad’s. He’s dead.

Lee Oh right. How did he die?

Will Mowing the lawn.

Lee Parents. You’re pretty much better off without them. That’s what I say.

Will Okay! (*Will swings from a rope and drops into the water*)

Lee (*filming Will*) Yeah! Keep swimming to the other side!

Will (*floundering in the water*) I can’t swim!

Lee What d’you mean you can’t swim?

Mum He was protecting me and our way of life. Promise me you’ll put these things out of your mind, William.

Will I promise.

Mum I know it’s hard but it’s for your own good in the long run.

Will I’ll never betray the Brethren again. I promise.

Lee What do you know about promises, blood brother?

Will Don’t push it.

Lee Yeah? You need to grow up.

Will You drew first blood!

Lee And you’re a head case!

Will It’s just a scab—it doesn’t mean anything. It doesn’t hurt.

Lee Don’t you ever call my brother a scab! You know, at least he’s there for me. At least, he cares about me. Which is more than I can say for you, blood brother! You’re a two-faced fake like the rest of them and I’m gutted it took me this long to work it out. I’m gutted I fell for it, Will. Lawrence is better than all of you and all that lot put together and he’s all I’ve got, alright? He’s all I’ve got.

Joshua We’ve had a group meeting and it has been decided that this must be your final warning. If the boy isn’t corrected I’m afraid you and the family would face expulsion from the brethren.

Will O my God, I’ve come to say thank you for your love today. Thank you for my family and all the friends you give to me. Amen.

Lee This has been my best day of all time.

Lee By the way, you spelt the title slightly wrong. There’s no ‘w’ in Rambo.

Will Oh. Okay.

Lee It was still good, though.