



advanced leadership articles

A Publication of Ministers Fellowship

Pastor's Commentary on "THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST"

Pastor Wendell Smith
The City Church of Seattle

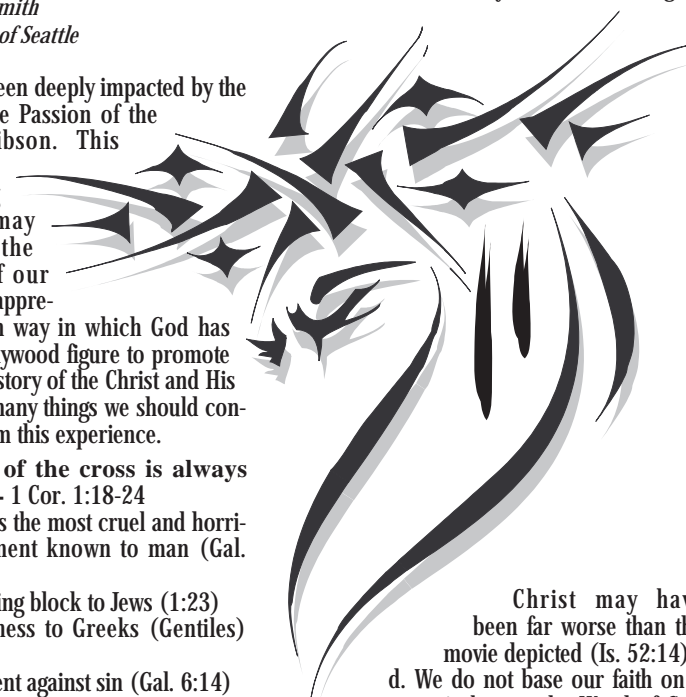
All of us have been deeply impacted by the recent movie, "The Passion of the Christ" by Mel Gibson. This new motion picture is sweeping our nation and may become one of the "epic" movies of our time. We can all appreciate the sovereign way in which God has used a leading Hollywood figure to promote a fresh look at the story of the Christ and His Cross. There are many things we should consider and learn from this experience.

1. The message of the cross is always controversial- 1 Cor. 1:18-24
 - a. The Cross was the most cruel and horrible punishment known to man (Gal. 3:1)
 - b. It is a stumbling block to Jews (1:23)
 - c. It is foolishness to Greeks (Gentiles) (1:23)
 - d. It is a statement against sin (Gal. 6:14)
 - e. It evokes persecution (Gal. 6:12)
2. The Movie itself is not holy or infallible- Phil. 1:15-18

PRAYER POINTS

1. Pray that there will be no anti-Semitic reactions anywhere in the nation or around the world because of this motion picture
2. Pray for people to have a Holy curiosity about the movie to see it and ponder its message
3. Pray for millions of Americans to attend the movie (There are 3000 Theaters showing it multiple times every day)
4. Pray for people to be led beyond an emotional response to genuine repentance
5. Pray for a tangible harvest of souls in every evangelical church in America- believing for 10, 50 or 100 souls per congregation being added to the Church

- a. It is one man's view of what happened
- b. We do not have to like the movie- although we should love the story it represents and the Savior it portrays
- c. The actual story of the suffering of



Christ may have been far worse than the movie depicted (Is. 52:14)
d. We do not base our faith on a movie but on the Word of God (Matt. 7:24)

3. God has been good to America to give another door for the Gospel- Phil. 1:12
 - a. There have been many revivals in our nation's history
 - b. Millions will be affected by this movie who might never listen to the Gospel any other way
 - c. This is an opportunity for the Gospel (Phil. 1:12)
 - d. We should take advantage of this (1 Cor. 9:22,23)
4. People need to hear, believe and repent- Rom. 2:4
 - a. God's goodness is to lead us to repentance (Rom. 2:4)
 - b. An emotional experience is not repentance (2 Cor. 7:10)
 - c. This may be a step in the right direction-but we should pray that people take further steps
5. It is impossible for a true Christian to be anti-Semitic without sinning- Rom. 11:28

- a. Our Savior is Jewish (Matt. 1:16)
- b. Our heritage is Jewish (Gal. 3:29)
- c. We are commanded to love (John 15:17; Matt. 5:44)
- d. We pray for Israel and the Jewish people (Ps. 122:6; Rom. 11:28)

6. We must renew our commitment to proclaiming the Gospel- Rom. 1:16
 - a. It is the Power of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16)
 - b. If Jesus is lifted up He will draw all men to Himself (John 12:32)
 - c. We are commissioned to make disciples- (Matt. 28:19)
7. We should renew our passion and love for Jesus and what He did for us on the Cross!

But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Gal 6:14 (NKJV)

...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. -Heb 12:2 (NKJV)

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS FROM MFI PASTORS

On "The Passion of The Christ" Movie

For example:

Seattle, WA: At The City Church, we booked five different auditoriums over two nights; pre-sold 2100 tickets; packed out the showings; people were deeply moved, some weeping and most did not want to talk; we saw a few respond for prayer but most needed to process it. The second night we handed out Touch Cards and invited people to church on Sunday.

Arroyo Grande, CA: Pastor Rocky Tannehill saw packed auditoriums and at the end of three showings asked people to pray and even passed info cards down the aisles; received over 300 filled out cards of people interested in God and church!

South Africa: Pastor James Monaghan has been appointed the point man for all

of South Africa to coordinate church groups to see the movie in three weeks.

Atlanta, GA: Pastor Rick Snow booked two auditoriums in the local theater on two different nights. Pastor Rick spoke briefly and then passed out Touch Cards and handouts about "Experience the Passion" series starting at Atlanta City Church. People were overwhelmed. Many stood outside with questions and expressed interest in coming to services. "I've never seen our community so open to the Gospel before," said Pastor Rick.

Monroe, WA: Pastor Jeff Knight arranged a pre-release on Tuesday with over 200 church leaders from the region. The response was intense as people just sat still while the credits rolled. Immediately following all the leaders stood in prayer as Pastor Jeff proclaimed an anointing over the theater to be used as a meeting place with God. The response has been varied. Some were stirred with anger watching Christ crucified, in others disbelief. One common denominator was the fact that, "He did it all for us..., WOW!"

Tacoma, WA: Pastor Earnest Williams. Approximately three-quarters of his congregation viewed the movie and then met at the church for worship and reflection. The presence of the Lord came in and created a time of repentance and re-evaluation of priorities. Pastor

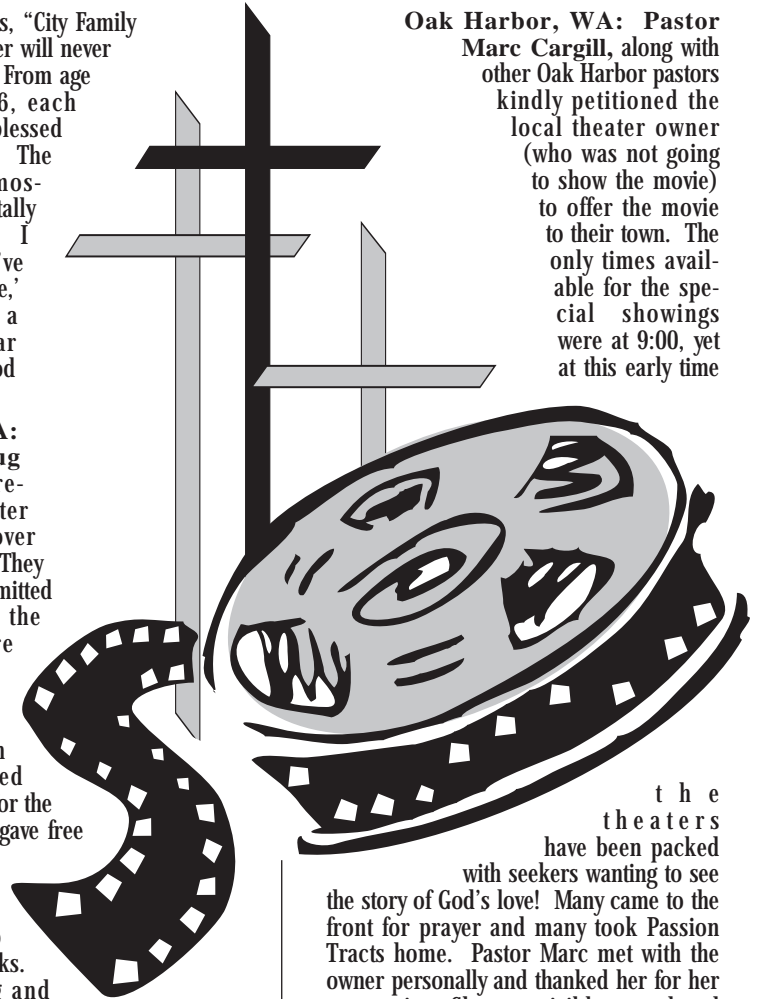
Williams states, "City Family Worship Center will never be the same. From age 10 to age 76, each person was blessed and changed. The Sunday atmosphere was totally awesome. I preached, 'I've Got to Be Sure,' followed by a dynamic altar call and a good offering."

Aberdeen, WA: Pastor Doug Cotton pre-sold a theater showing of over 210 people. They were not permitted to speak to the group before or after the movies, but many thanked them and showed appreciation for the movie. They gave free tickets to each first-time visitor over the two previous weeks.

Pastor Doug and another pastor gave a radio interview to a non-believing disc jockey and was pleasantly surprised by his response and kindness, who said, "It is evident to me that of all of the religions under attack...Christianity seems to be getting hit the hardest. Do you think that maybe we are witnessing a miracle happening before our eyes and we don't even know it? Maybe the kind that has happened throughout the ages to bring Christ back into the forefront." Pastor Doug was able to capitalize on that over the air waves as the Gospel went out in the Grays Harbor area.

VeraCruz, Mexico: Pastor Greg Buckiewicz has a "prime time" showing reserved for March 26-27. They purchased all 500 tickets and are selling them to their congregation only if they buy an extra ticket to invite someone. They are believing for over 200 to be harvested the first weekend. The theater is allowing them to pray with people at the end of the movie and to offer spiritual counseling to everyone as they leave the theater for a period of one month.

Oak Harbor, WA: Pastor Marc Cargill, along with other Oak Harbor pastors kindly petitioned the local theater owner (who was not going to show the movie) to offer the movie to their town. The only times available for the special showings were at 9:00, yet at this early time



theaters have been packed with seekers wanting to see the story of God's love! Many came to the front for prayer and many took Passion Tracts home. Pastor Marc met with the owner personally and thanked her for her generosity. She was visibly moved and greatly impacted. They have also made a special banner with the Passion of The Christ theme in front of their church listing service times and a special invitation.

Federal Way, WA: Pastor Floyd Earlywine's church, Bible Fellowship, joined with three other churches to book two auditoriums on Sunday afternoon. These showings were also open to the public with standing room only. His people handed out packets of tissues with a sticker which contained the name and phone number of the churches. The event also united pastors who have been praying together weekly for several years.

Seattle, WA: Pastor Dave Pearson purchased a block of tickets for his congregation and had several visitors come. While waiting in line they witnessed and handed out contact cards. The movie has made a significant impact on his church, providing a greater visual understanding of what Jesus experienced for the redemption of mankind.

ADVANCED LEADERSHIP ARTICLES

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The Purpose of

Advanced Leadership Articles

If you have an idea, article, insight, illustration, quote, question to ask, or humorous excerpt that you would like to add to the arsenal of other pastors, please call or fax:

Wendell Smith, MFI Editor
FAX 425-889-8940 or call:

1-800-304-CITY or email cityinfo@thecity.org

(All submitted info subject to editing, Thanks)

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS FROM



Dave & Donna Patterson

*THE FATHER'S HOUSE
Vacaville, California*

Preaching Emphasis:

- First & Second Peter

Special Events:

- Recent trips to Philippines, Brazil and India. God has opened a huge door to broadcast a worship program on the air in most of the major cities in India. We have already begun production on a weekly 15 minute program that will include live worship and a teaching time covering different aspects of worship.

Holy Spirit Activity:

- We have recently seen healings and salvation taking place during the worship portion of the service—people healed during worship with no one laying hands on them. Recently people began to get out of their seats and come forward for salvation and there was no formal invitation given. They were just crying and asking someone to help them get saved!

Ministry Breakthroughs:

- The youth ministry recently had an awesome conference called "Encounter" with guest speaker Jude Fouquier. Close to 600 youth and college age from our region attended this first attempt at a yearly conference. Many were saved, healed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ministry Update:

- After 14 months of demolition and reconstruction, we moved into our new sanctuary in mid-December, 2003. It's awesome to have our own building and the church has grown several hundred since the move in.

Don & Christa Proctor

*CHURCH ON THE MOVE
Roseville, California*

Preaching Emphasis:

- Since January, we have been preaching a series entitled "Faith is the Key." We have also taken advantage of the messages surrounding The Passion of the

Christ and many individuals in our congregation have used the movie and weekend services as an evangelistic opportunity.

Special Events:

- The 40 Days of Purpose (Fall Campaign) was a tremendous tool in our goal to reach the unchurched as well as further establish our values in the hearts of our congregation. It caused an acceleration in our momentum. Part of the process was a Ministry/Missions fair, which we highly recommend.

Holy Spirit Activity:

- On January 1st, after 4 years of being bi-vocational, I followed the Lord's leading to quit my outside job and be at the church full time. God has miraculously provided the finances, and the church has continued to grow. In September our average attendance was about 75, and we are now running an average of 125.

Ministry Breakthroughs:

- Virtually every part of our church body has experienced spiritual breakthrough over this last year. We started gaining momentum about 9 months ago. The Lord has helped us be more relaxed, while at the same time become more prepared for everything (God is in the details). There's a climate of acceptance that we always thought we had but was not adequately conveyed. Now most people in our Membership class say the thing they love most about our church is the "come as you are" feeling. Instead of pushing people toward their potential, we draw them based on their level and pace of commitment. We still have so far to go in every area, but the Lord has done great things.

Ministry Update:

- We'd like to say how much our MFI brothers and sisters have meant to us. We not only feel their love and support at the meetings, but we have experienced it on a regular basis throughout the year. We receive wonderful advice and friendship through occasional emails, phone calls, and even meeting half-way for meals. We are so thankful for this fellowship.

Mark & Carmen Yeadon

*A NEW DAY CHURCH
Lynnwood, Washington*

A New Day Church is new church plant serving the North King and South Snohomish region of Washington State. can view our portfolio at www.anewdaychurch.com.

Preaching Emphasis:

- Essential Habits of Developing Disciples; Building Stronger, Better, Lasting Marriages

Holy Spirit Activity:

- We are targeting individuals, families and leaders by introducing people to Jesus and purposely discipling them using a book which Pastor Mark has written, "A New Day Has Begun." As a result, we've had numerous people saved, baptized in water and the Holy Spirit. We are also using the Purpose Driven Life series - 40 Days of Purpose and have started six small groups in homes and businesses - one of which is in a technical school of 250 students. This group is being led by the owner and managers!

Ministry Breakthroughs:

- Pastor Mark has also continued working in other nations including twice yearly overseeing a pastors and leaders conference in Oaxaca, Mexico and this summer teaching a pastors conference in Indonesia with Kevin Connor, Dan and Don Peterson.

Ministry Update:

- We are grateful for the generous counsel, help and encouragement of the following pastors: John Small, Wendell Smith, Dave and Sandy Minor, Jeff Ching, Doug Sherman and Jess Slusher. We praise God for the relationship and fellowship of our MFI family.

John & Janis Finochio

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH

Harriston, Ontario CANADA

Preaching Emphasis:

- "Purpose-Filled Living," based on Rick Warren's book with modifi-

cations to fit our vision, core values and doctrine. We are finding our people are helped when we tie purpose and intention into church life, worship, prayer, serving and mission.

Special Events:

- Last fall we had our 2nd Prophetic Assembly with Bro. Moses Vegh and other prophetic ministries.
- In December we had Fred & Pam Kropp from The City Church lead our first "Encounter Weekend."

Holy Spirit Activity:

- We entered this year with a 40-day fast. It felt led to have our people daily lay hands on a map of Mid-western Ontario and pray for the increase of God's kingdom. We have since seen many incredible breakthroughs, including the healing of marriages, increase in salvations, healing of a stroke victim, and an increase in teens attending the church.

Ministry Breakthroughs:

- Prophetic Team: Over the last three years, I have been mentoring two church members in their prophetic calling. They have traveled with me as I have ministered in the States, Canada and internationally. This has been a great encouragement to our congregation to see that our small, rural congregation is having an impact in other places.

- Timothy Training Track: Early last year we began a ministry training track that has been paying large dividends. Once per month for 3 hours on Saturday morning we focus on one core value in one session and leadership principles in a second session, training every leader who has "people contact." They are catching our heart, understanding our philosophy, bonding relationally and getting practical equipping.

Ministry Update:

- Jan and I celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary in March, 2004. Great is His faithfulness!



SUBJECT: WHAT KIDS SAY ABOUT LOVE

A group of professional people posed this question to a group of four to eight year olds: What does love mean? The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone could have imagined. See what you think:

1. When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love. **Rebecca - age 8**
2. When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You know that your name is safe in their mouth. **Billy - age 4**
3. Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other. **Karl - age 5**
4. Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French fries without making them give you any of theirs. **Chrissy - age 6**
5. Love is what makes you smile when you're tired. **Terri - age 4**
6. Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK. **Danny - age 7**
7. Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more. My Mommy and Daddy are like that. They look gross when they kiss. **Emily - age 8**

BEST OF ILLUSTRATIONS, QUOTES AND FUNNIES

8. Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen. **Bobby - age 7 (Wow!)**
9. If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate. **Nikka - age 6**
10. There are two kinds of love. Our love. God's love. But God makes both kinds of them. **Jenny - age 8**
11. Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it everyday. **Noelle - age 7**
12. Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well. **Tommy - age 6**
14. During my piano recital, I was on a stage and I was scared. I looked at all the people watching me and saw my daddy waving and smiling. He was the only one doing that. I wasn't scared anymore. **Cindy - age 8**
15. My mommy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night. **Clare - age 6**
16. Love is when Mommy gives Daddy the best piece of chicken. **Elaine-age 5**
17. Love is when Mommy sees Daddy smelly and sweaty and still says he is handsomer than Robert Redford. **Chris - age 7**
18. Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day. **Mary Ann - age 4**
19. I know my older sister loves me because she gives me all her old clothes and has to go out and buy new ones. **Lauren - age 4**
20. When you love somebody, your eyelashes go up and down and little stars come out of you. **Karen - age 7**
21. Love is when Mommy sees Daddy on the toilet and she doesn't think it's gross. **Mark - age 6**

I JUST HELPED HIM CRY

Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four year old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, Nothing. I just helped him cry.

DAD'S PAY CHECK

Three boys are in the schoolyard bragging about their fathers. The first boy says, "My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem, they give him \$50."

The second boy says, "That's nothing. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a song, they give him \$100."

The third boy says, "I got you both beat. My Dad scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, he calls it a sermon. And it takes eight people to collect all the money!"

THE PIANO , ANONYMOUS

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a

Paderewski concert.

After they were seated, the mother spotted a long time friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her.

Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked

"NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing.

Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy was sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obligation.

Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was so mesmerized that they couldn't recall what else the great master played.

Only the classic "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

That's the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. But with the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful.

Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Feel His loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces.