

CINEMAGOGUE



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Redeeming entertainment by understanding stories, connecting creativity with Creator, and exploring the link between images and imaging God.

Dear partner in the gospel,

Do you find your faith community - even your fellow leaders - have a disconnect between “entertainment” and their faith? 1 Corinthians 10:31 tells us that in whatever we do, we should be doing **“all to the glory of God”**. Most people love the sentiment, but honestly doubt the reality is possible. This leads to three major problems when it comes to our recreation with culture:

1. People consume film, television, books and other media without discernment or concern.
2. Others build religious safeguards for viewing, yet this only leads to “safe” consumption and has little connection to a vivacious life with Christ: permissible but not beneficial.
3. Due to a lack of understanding of how all stories parallel, distort, or intersect with the story Christians hold to be life and truth - the gospel - they miss chances to share their faith.

Cinemagogue began more than a decade ago as a series of “film and theology” events in Seattle, at Mars Hill Church, finding the connections between art and the gospel by the example of the apostle Paul in Athens (Acts chapter 17). Since then, it has grown into a website and podcast featuring examinations of current and classic film, television, and more. As chief contributor, I’ve been able to inspire and instruct other pastors and leaders, traveling to speak at churches, schools, conferences and institutions and helping create connections between Christianity and the culture around us.

By God’s grace, these efforts have been blessed: we’ve seen atheists become theists and theists become Christians, walked with Christian men and women maturing in their understanding of the God they love, watched more dialogue ensue between believers and their neighbors, and witnessed parents dedicating themselves to raise the next generation with a new view of entertainment. I would be honored to host, or be a part of, an event with you: to help your community redefine and redeem what entertainment means, to the glory of God. **The goals of this ministry are three-fold:**

- **Education:** learn how ANY story can inform and enhance your knowledge of God, scripture, and the world around us.
- **Edification:** find a new rhythm to your entertainment experience, making the stories of culture come alive in ways that inform and enhance your life with God and understanding of his great story (of which you’re a part).
- **Evangelism:** discover the ways in which how you enjoy culture can lead to easy conversation points with family, fellow Christians, and with your neighbors, students, co-workers and friends who share these stories.

Instead of a rebuking or condemning approach, Cinemagogue seeks to inspire communities, to have them consider the even greater joy and fun to be had when these ideas toward modern media are entertained and practiced. The tone is designed to engage and inform those who aren’t Christians as well. Please take a moment to review our vision, testimonials, and potential teaching topics in the included brochure. I’m passionate about this endeavor and would love to collaborate with you.



For HIS glory,

Pastor James Harleman