

So you'd like to go to

The Movies

by E. Drell Allen

"What's Wrong with going to the shows?" Ever-increasing numbers of young people are asking this question. With the widespread use of old films on TV, an easier conscience on the evils of the Hollywood-type movie has developed. Greater social pressures are put on our young people as more persuasive and compelling arguments on the "cultural advantage" of the movies are set forth. The attacks on the historic stand of the church against the evils of this entertainment medium have increased in both number and intensity.

"The movies aren't what they used to be," it is argued; "there are many more religiously bent movies than before, and Hollywood is making attempts to bring a higher quality drama to the public." Do you really believe that? You don't have to go to the movies to find out whether the "leopard has changed his spots," either.

The "Oscar" awards for the best in Hollywood personnel and production are presented each year. The report of the 1961 awards by UPI in the Minneapolis Star helps one to find the answer to the question, "Have the movies changed their moral tone?"

Says UPI, "All of the top winners (actors, actresses, and pictures) were involved in rascality and sex." The leading actress, who in her own personal life has been "beset by tragedy and scandal in recent years," played "a girl of easy virtues with many lovers," as she "hit the zenith of her career."

The best actor gained his award for the outstanding performance of "a hell-raising preacher who specialized in seducing women." Supporting role awards were made to a young woman for her portrayal of an "out-and-out prostitute"; and a man whose job it was to "provide girls for the gladiators." All of the awards were based on current films depicting loose morals, prostitution, infidelity, and satire on religion.

Not even for the "sake of art" can these debasing characterizations and productions be adjudged "decent." One who chooses to sit for two hours and view such moral filth cannot be free from having his mind and heart sprayed by its poison. If we are to be Christian, we must understand that we are to shun the very "appearance of evil," and, as the Apostle Paul further admonishes, "Whatsoever things are true, ... honest ... just, ... pure, ... lovely, ... of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

It does not take a mastermind to realize that Hollywood's movie offerings are based upon the desires of the people measured in terms of box-office appeal. In the above award selections, the reception by the viewing public in terms of dollars and cents that crossed the ticket windows played a significant part in determining whether they were worthy of consideration. It is reasonable to ask whether an industry that has been faced with economic chaos due to TV competition will easily give up what is morally reprehensible but financially successful. Not for a minute! Sex exploitation has been a number one drawing card since the inception of the theater; and so long as there is human sinfulness, it will remain the major attraction of the theater.

So you'd like to go to the movies! If you would, then reflect upon the kind of person you are, or will be, as you saturate yourself in the moral pollution that pours forth from the silver screen.

In "Herald of Holiness"

THE SECRET OF POWER

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about everything had been going wrong. Many were cold and discouraged, but I found one sister with a wondrous glory in her face and glad, sweet praises in her mouth. She told me how she had looked at others falling around her, had seen the carelessness of many, and noted the decline of vital piety in the church until her heart ached, and she felt disheartened, and her feet almost slipped. But she went to God, and got down low before him, and prayed and waited until he drew near her and showed her the awful precipice on which she herself was standing, showed her that her one business was to follow Jesus, to walk before him with a perfect heart, and to cleave to him though the whole church backslid. Then she confessed how near she had come to joining the great army of backsliders herself through looking on others, humbled herself before him, and renewed her covenant until an unutterable joy came to her heart and God put his fear in her soul, and filled her with the glory of his presence. She told me further that the next day she fairly trembled to think of the awful danger she had been in, and declared that the time of waiting on God in the silence of the night saved her, and now her heart was filled with the full assurance of hope for herself, and not only for herself, but also for the church. Oh for ten thousand such warriors!

The secret of all failures and of all true success is hidden in the attitude of the soul in its private walk with God. The man who courageously waits on God is bound to succeed. He cannot fail. To other men he may appear for the present to fail, but in the end they will see what he knew all the time, that God was with him, making him, in spite of all appearance, "a prosperous man."

Know, then, that all failure has its beginning in the closet, in neglecting to wait on God until filled with wisdom, clothed with power, and all on fire with love.

I WAS BORROWING TROUBLE

In one of my pastorates I was told that the church board when they were through with a pastor used skids. (A phrase used among the ministerial brethren.) They said they had brought them into play for my predecessor.

One night after board meeting the secretary lingered and drew me out into conversation. I could hear the other members in an adjoining room talking in muffled tones. It is needless for me to say, I was not getting what the secretary was talking about. I was talking to myself, something like this. "Yes you are getting the skids ready for me, well I'll see about that," etc. I slipped to the double doors and pushed them back, just as I expected, they were in a huddle and I was sure I was right. I said, "I thought the board meeting was over," they looked confused at each other, and as I thought guilty, and said, "Yes, that's right," and with the usual good nights they retired.

On my way home I mustered up courage to say to one of my trusted member, "What were you folks doing in there? If you want my resignation you don't need to do any funny business to get it, this is a big world." He said, "Now you sit tight, I am not free to tell you just what we were doing, only to say you are all wrong." I believed in that brother and took his advice. In less than ten days this board came to the parsonage, took my old open Dodge car, drove it away and in its place left a nineteen hundred dollar sedan, which was accepted with deep appreciation. That is what the board was planning behind closed doors. Submitted by U. E. Harding.