Using films to enhance theological studies

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Abstract

Films, including secular films, are useful educational tools to enhance theological studies and encourage debate. The research methodology in this regard is to evaluate literature on the educational aspects of films in theological education, to evaluate the influence of films –especially secular films – on students by requiring them to write reviews to explain how a specific film can be of value in the discussion in the discipline, and to evaluate the educational aspect in class discussions of these films. Films such as "Life is beautiful," "The life of Pi", "Dead Poets Society", "Avatar", etc. were screened and discussed. The implications of these films for theology and the church are discussed. The major result is that films as an educational tool enhance student participation and debate on intrinsic issues. New educational methods are clearly available with these presentations and the implications are that students receive a much better overview of the related discipline.

Opsomming

Vollengte films, insluitende sekulêre films, is nuttige opvoedkundige hulpmiddels om onderrig in teologie en debat te bevorder. Die navorsingsmetodologie wat hier gevolg word, is om literatuur oor die opvoedkundige aspekte van films na te gaan, sowel as die invloed

van films – veral sekulêre films – op studente deur van hulle te verwag om resensies te skryf waarin hulle verduidelik hoe bepaalde films betekenisvol vir die spesifieke dissipline kan wees. Die opvoedkundige betekenis van films is ook in klasbesprekings daaroor beoordeel. Films soos "Life is beautiful", "The life of Pi", "Dead Poets Society", "Avatar", ens. is vertoon en bespreek. Die implikasies van hierdie films vir sending, die teologie en die kerk is bespreek. Die belangrikste gevolgtrekkings is dat films as opvoedkundige hulpmiddels deelname van studente en debat oor belangrike sake bevorder. Nuwe opvoedkundige metodes is beslis beskikbaar met hierdie aanbiedings en die implikasie is dat studente 'n beter oorsig oor die bepaalde dissipline verkry.

1. Introduction

Films, including secular films, are useful educational tools to enhance theological studies and encourage debate. This article discusses the implications of showing and presenting secular films to a class of students followed by discussion thereof and writing reviews on these films. After students had seen the different films, they had to decide how to engage the different aspects of these films. The implication for their own study as theological students is therefore very important. The specific films were chosen because of their intrinsic evaluation of valuable challenges, also relating to theological fields. Reviews are written to show how these films have an influence on the theological aspects being discussed in class. It is a helpful tool to enhance theological studies because it teaches students to use modern technology and to relate to modern technology to understand different aspects much better.

In this regard, the theological discussion is clearly enhanced by opening up the total implication of the wider world in which the students find themselves now and later on, when they are in ministry, should be able to relate to.

2. Methodology

The methodology of this article is to take into account the literature dealing with information systems and how it can be used to discuss different aspects of education. Therefore, in the first instance, the way in which information systems and media can be used to enhance education is discussed. Evaluation of films is also of great importance, as is the implication of the

philosophical reviews of missions. These different aspects of educational tools are then related to theology. A brief explanation of the contents of the films is given.

Secondly, the theological implications of communication and evaluation to come to a sound view of the relation of life and theology are discussed.

Thirdly, the implications of the films are discussed and evaluated to determine the implications for theology, and lastly these different aspects are weighed in a short empirical research to see how the different students related and evaluated the different aspects of these films.

3. Research question

Films have a massive influence on the community. The question is how it can be used to lead to deep theological implications and insights in education of theological students. Students' own views on certain films are essential and the question must be asked on how they evaluate the films shown to them, and the educational value of the films. From the discipline of missiology it must be asked whether secular films enhance the education of students to become involved in the community at large. Finally, the influence of films and the students' reception of films must be evaluated for the use in the education of students in Missiology.

4. The discipline of missiology

The implication of film in the education of theological students is of importance for the discipline of missiology. The discipline of missiology deals with the scientific evaluation of the total mission of the church. Mission is essentially the Triune God's involvement in the total world to bring it into a total new relationship with Him. In this regard Bevans and Schroeder (2006:285) explain that mission is not only more modest as it had been in the past, but also more exciting because "… it is about God's gracious invitation to humanity to share in the dynamic communication that is at the same time God's self-giving missionary life …" It also has to be explained in the light of Jesus' great commandment in Matthew 28:18, 19 and the implications of Jesus' calling in Luke 4:16-31. The concept of the Missio Trinitatis is therefore valuable (Bevans & Schroeder, 2006:295ff). However, this should be explained in light of the life and works of Jesus Christ. A deep Christological emphasis is therefore essential in mission (Wright,

2006:105ff). Missiology wants to understand how the Christological essence of mission must be evaluated, explained and disseminated in the world. Therefore mission is also the mission of the church as *missio ecclesiae*. It, however, also has implications for the world and especially humans, the *missio humanitatis*. Skreslet (2012:14) writes: "A thoroughgoing *integrative impulse* further defines the practice of missiology today. Obviously, a need for integration is to be expected when the study of mission is conducted with multiple methodologies potentially in play" (Skreslet). The research in this article has to do with the aspect of the education of students in mission on how to experience the wider world in which they are expected to live as people of mission. Missiology wants to enhance the way in which they can be present as theologians in the world.

5. Biblical guidelines for education in mission

Education in mission must empower the student to come to full fruition in the faith in Jesus Christ. To attain this the following biblical values should be emphasised:

1. Education in mission should always be established from the revelation of the Trinity in his glory. In this respect the essential honour of God should be acknowledged (Wright, 2006:134-135).

2. The human is in need of God's guidance and cannot find it in him or herself. In this regard Romans 3 is essential. Finding salvation and imitation of Christ is essential. Meyer (1994:209) explains: "Christ's incarnate life, His redemptive death, His risen glory and exalted place at the right hand of God, His directing and illuminating and empowering presence in the Spirit, His steadfast love and mercy, His eternal wisdom – all this is 'invested' in the project of Christian formation."

3. Education must always be education to empower the person to reach full personhood by becoming complete in Christ. Thatcher (1990:74) writes: "Christians confess unanimously that Jesus Christ is the decisive revelation of God while being at the same time the decisive revelation of man." He continues (1990:80): "The attitudes which Christians believe Jesus Christ perfectly exemplifies have never been more needed to help to bring the natural and human worlds to their completion and integration, by means of the love which transforms personal, social and global relationships, …"

4. Education should emphasise the need to become involved in the community to bring Christ to the community. Estep and Kuest (2001:81) write that moral development in the society and the influence of Christian education are important. In the relation between social sciences and Scripture education is able to engage the challenges of the community. Moral development has to be understood to engage from Christian moral perspective.

5. Education should empower the learner in mission for the present and the future. In this regard the realized eschatology of the Gospel of John is of importance. Not only is Christ the fulfilment of God's promises in future but also in the present. (Brown, 1975:cxv.ff.)

6. Education should lead the learner to know the situation of the people to whom they witness. The learner should have a much more comprehensive perspective of life before God (Coram Deo). Therefore a comprehensive understanding on how to change society is necessary. Van der Walt (2008:326) explains: "Christ alone came with a viable alternative. He did not announce a political or social programme, but brought a much more significant message: a new man, a new life, a new creation. Christ knew that changes in political and social conditions alone would not suffice to bring man one step nearer to the kingdom of God. Man himself is the problem. His heart had to change."

6. Information systems and media to enhance education

6.1 Films as information systems

The question must be asked how different aspects of education can be used by information systems such as films, in theological studies. Stair and Reynolds (2008:5ff) give insight into the way in which information systems can be used to organise and explain data and establish the outcome of the intervention. They explain that turning data into information is then a process, with logically related tasks which are performed to reach the outcome. To achieve this requires knowledge, and knowledge is exactly the reaching of awareness, and also the understanding of a set of information. This information can be used to support a specific task or reach a decision. Therefore, having knowledge means understanding relationship information. The process of selecting or rejecting the facts by evaluation is based on the knowledge used in a process converting data into information. Information can be understood as data made more useful for the application of knowledge.

The data of the films can be used to establish a relation to the world around us and to understand the relevance of the films in discussing the implications of the Christian Gospel.

Film is an important aspect of life, art and communication. Goldburg (2004:178) writes: "A relatively young art, film is not only part of the global leisure industry but has also become part of the social fabric of today's culture. Described by some as being vulgar, trivializing the stories it tells, corrupting the young and debasing moral standards, film has nevertheless produced sublime works of art which touch the human essence. Film, the most pervasive and powerful of all the arts, is at its best a mirror of human experience, in that, like religion, it attempts to deal with questions pertaining to the meaning of human life."

Ketcham (1968:362) regards film as a definite art form. It is a radical new art form since it commenced with the advent of technology: "The impact of a great film is powerful and catalytic; it can move us and affect us, at least initially, more than any other art form. This is true I think, because the great film, even more than the great painting or symphony – involves us, immediately in depth, subjectively as well as objectively."

Frisco and Ganzevoort (2009:s.p.) refer to the fact that the film is a complex but also successful compilation of image, music and story, leading to implications of relaxation and meaning. It is not only reflection but it also inspires moulding and education.

Films as art form are regarded as an important expression of the human condition. Therefore films are tools for enhancing interaction of humans and the world we live in. It asks questions about life and the way we are living.

In education it is always important to realize how the valuable insights of the world around us can be presented to enhance the leaner's ability to understand fully the implications of mission in regard to the presented challenges. Films can then be used in this regard. In this article the perception of students on how the films influence them in their missiological education is discussed/explored.

6.2   Films and theory of art

The theory of film is closely linked to the theory of art. Film is an important aspect of life, art and communication. Goldburg (2004:179) writes that it may be a simple matter to look at a film and evaluate it, but it is not. Observers evaluate the same film differently. Teachers and students may look at the same film and have totally different ideas about it. "Critical interpretation of

a visual image involves responses to certain types of visual content that may directly illustrate the cultural or the sociopolitical context of a work" (2004:182).

The theory of film is comprehensive and large. Narrative as process is often put forward as the essence of narratives such as film. Theorists link the essence of stories of film with those of literature. In this regard the Russian formalists' reference to concepts such as Syuzhet and Fabula plays an important role in evaluating the storyline of a narrative and also a film. The aesthetic theory of the formalists encouraged the breaking down of arbitrary boundaries among theory, history, and criticism (Bordwell, 1985/1995:xii). Many other theories followed, such as the American New Criticism and Structuralism. Bordwell (1985/1995:xiii), however, writes: "A good theory, I believe, should possess internal coherence, empirical breadth, discriminating power, and some recognition of historical change." He then proposes a theory of filmic narration.

Hill (1998:96) suggests that postmodernism is relevant in the modern theory of film, although the concept of postmodernism is notoriously problematic. The emphasis on heterogeneity and the fragmented character of social and cultural "realities" and therefore also the impossibility to have a unified comprehensive account of them is put forward. Polemisizing against "universalising" and "totalising" theories from the postmodern view tend to lean back to the local and the specific (1998:103).

Frisco and Ganzevoort (2009:s.p.) explain that hermeneutics play an important part in the evaluation of film. The hermeneutics of Ricoeur are in this regard valuable. In the reference to film, the view of the evaluation of film beyond the film, in the film and before the film is necessary. The first evaluation is about the intention of the film, the second about the view of the intertextual aspect and the third about the world that the film recalls. The hermeneutical communication between viewer and film, other viewers and the person himself/herself is of great importance in the evaluation of the film.

Hansen (2012:279), in an overview of the theories of Kracauer, Benjamin and Adorno, states that the change of film from the screen to smaller and smaller, even digital profilerations, brings about total new challenges in the theory of film.

A narrative approach is useful when it takes into account the aspect of storytelling (Gilmour, 2008:290 ff). The reception of the film is also very important. For this article this aspect is all important.

Ryan and Lenos (2012:11) write "It is important in doing film analysis that you remain flexible and open to multiple semantic possibilities of film technique."

Monaco (1981:44) is of the opinion that film is an art form and as medium is similar to language. It is not a language system with grammar, etc., but it performs in the same way as language does. Ferdinand de Saussure established semiotics where language is one system in a more elaborate system of signs and signals. Many codes and systems of communication are present in film and it becomes a comprehensive semiotic aspect. Although the system of semiotics is then accepted as useful, Monaco (1981:44) is of the opinion that it also reduces film to basic discrete units that can be quantified. "Like linguistics, semiotics is not especially well adapted to describing the complete metaphysical effect of its subject." The "language" is well described but not the artistic activity of film. Art should not only be described in semiological terms but in the "trope" which is the description of how in a very unusual and illogical way codes and signs lead to new interpretations (Monaco, 1981:45).

Marsh (2007:160) explains that although viewer response to a film is paramount, important aspects such as the ethical, political, and religious life should become involved in the response to films. The fact that film provides escapist entertainment must be taken into account. The viewer should, however, respond in a manner that the whole message is taken into account.

6.3 Film and education

Goldburg (2004:182) refers to the fact that the mutual relation between the creative arts and religious education has always been relevant. Aspects such as ritual, practice and the process of passing on the faith and religious ideas always had a relevant link to the creative arts. Goldburg (2004:182) is therefore of the opinion that the creative arts and the teaching of religious education should be linked. Ketcham (1968:360) also sees no reason why artistic function cannot very effectively be used in the process of teaching.

Pamela Mitchell Legg (Part II, 1997:131) asks whether contemporary films can be helpful to religious educators who want to engage people in religious exploration. Her answer is "yes", because film is an art form in which questions, values, and meanings of people are expressed. These aspects can then be reflected upon or interpreted. Films with the aspects of artful storytelling can invite people into religious exploration.

Education in missiology can be greatly enhanced by taking these aspects into consideration. The perception of students in this regard is of importance and should be established. Films indeed are of importance because of the full implication of the holistic influence on nearly all senses.

7. Contents of relevant films

Films in this section are relevant because certain issues regarding history, humanity and religion and the implications for mission are discussed. Mission in the full scope of establishing influence on peoples' lives has value for the whole community. These films enhance discussion on all aspects of humanity, religion and mission.

7.1 Avatar

In Avatar the aspects of colonialism and theological implications of the post-colonial theology can be established. Avatar is a film by James Cameron and it was screened in 2009. It is an epic science fiction film and starred well-known actors such as Sam Worthington and Sigourney Weaver. It is a film about people of earth looking for new areas to explore, because the earth's natural resources have been severely depleted. It is the year 2154 and because of the problem of not having enough valuable minerals, and unobtanium should be mined on Pandora, a densely forested habital moon orbiting the gas giant Polephemus in the Alpha Centauri star system.

The story is about people living on Pandora moon and how the humans try to obtain the minerals from that environment. The inhabitants are the so-called Na-vi, with their own community, living a simple natural life, experiencing their own truth, praying to their own god (a female god) and establishing a very good relation with their environment. The humans are the colonisers trying to destabilise the community. A paraplegic soldier becomes involved in the plot and in the end he changes his allegiance.

In the story of Avatar the link to colonialism is clear and the question asked by post-colonial philosophy and theology is presented. Certainly the present questioning of missions to people who were colonised is asked. The ensuing question to be asked is how to present the gospel in such a way that it is not detrimental to the well-being of people and that it cannot be seen as colonial outrage and in that sense also exploration of the people.

Although Avatar is a secular film and does not have specific biblical references, the reference to colonialism is clear, and the emphasis on the tree as a reference to the biblical tree of life can implicate theological aspects. Discussion on colonialism and the future of the church in such situations and the way in which it has a role to play in mission is valuable.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar_(2009_film). (Visited 6 February 2015).

7.2   Life is Beautiful

It is a film that also has very important implications for the whole question of theology. It is a 1997 Italian tragi-comedy directed by and starring Roberto Benigni. It is about a Jewish Italian bookshop owner, Guido Orefice, who has to continue to avoid the terrible times in the Second World War. He is sent off to a concentration camp with his son. In the concentration camp he tells his son a story to keep him alive: a story that is actually a lie, but he tells his son that they are in a competition and that they want to win the prize: a wonderful tank. The whole film makes a mockery of the racist logic and pseudoscientific reasoning of the National Fascist Party in Italy. It, however, explains the truth that life can be wonderful if it is lived within the situation of love and hope for the future.

Aspects of universal truth of the person who has had so much love for his wife and his child, that he uses a lie to bring about the positivity of life and therein life is glorified. In this glorification of life the whole future is understood.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_Is_Beautiful) (Visited 6 February 2015)

7.3   The life of Pi

The life of Pi is a film based on a Canadian fantasy adventure novel by Yann Martel with the same title, published in 2001. It is about a person who says that life is a story, you can choose your story and the story with God is the better story. The question is whether one religion is the truth, or whether we should accept that different religions also all have parts of the truth. The story is about a boy who is shipwrecked and then ends up on a raft with different animals. Together they have to continue to cross the seas. A Bengal tiger on the raft challenges the boy in many ways.

In the theological discussion it is very interesting to see whether the aspect of theology, religion and fantasy can be brought together and in which way the students understand that.

(*http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Life_of_Pi.*) (Visited 6 February 2015).

7.4 *Dead Poets Society*

It is a 1989 American drama film and stars Robin Williams. It is set at the conservative and aristocratic Welton Academy in the North-East of the United States and deals with a teacher with quite innovative ways of teaching, especially regarding poetry, and how this teacher teaches his students poetry but also to seize the day, the opportunity, the possibility of life, to do what they can, to experience life. In doing so, different aspects of life are challenged and one of the pupils commits suicide when he tries to follow his own dreams and his parents do not accept that.

Dead Poets Society also brings very important issues in theology to the students' attention. How does one seize the opportunity of life and what are the implications of living the fullness of life?

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_Poets_Society) (Visited 6 February 2015).

8. Implications

Nell (2015:s.p.) explains that theological education all the more realises the value of mixed learning where different interventions are possible. Mixed learning includes the use of new methods of evaluation, new methods of discussion and new methods of explanation, bringing together different conclusions. This does not mean that only a few techniques are learned. The student as person must be respected. The relation with the student should be that of mentor to empower rather than just to explain. The road is travelled with the student. Saunders (1956:318) writes: "Theologians concerned only with the *content* of the Gospel must be ready to face the problem of communication. Others who are directly concerned with Christian communication must be ready to leave surface thinking, with its gadgets and techniques, and get down to the depths of the Christian message for the world."

The relation between theology and life is important. Film enhances this possibility. Mercadante (2007:21) explains that film is such an important common denominator in present culture that is can be used to link audiences and emphasise different perspectives: "Film feels especially satisfying because it takes the jumbled, unclear reality we live in and endows it with an aura of order and meaning … In fact, it is so effective at this that for many – even churchgoers – it can take over the purview of religion (i.e., providing a source of values, comfort, and guidance in identity and character formation)."

Frisco and Ganzevoort (2009:s.p.) explain that the communication of the worldview in the evaluation of the film regarding the viewer and the film is essential. The implication is that the film also has reference to the worldview of the viewers. The hermeneutical communicative approach opens up new views on film.

Ganzevoort (2005:50) also explains that a process of deinstitutionalisation is present in the world which is more comprehensive that secularism, but that in the process film becomes a religious experience. There is, however, a positive implication, namely that the terrible evil, tragedy and mystery of life enacted in film have religious potential. A religious question may be implied and leads to a religious view or experience.

Van den Berg and Pudule (2009:515) explain how film leads to interactions so that we can become part of the action. They are of the opinion that the theology that comes from this action is also a theology of engagement, rather than a theology of answers. New horizons of understanding are therefore opened up by film, leading to engagement in theological sense of the reality around us.

The implication of these films on theology and the church are discussed. The question is how, in this new world in which we are living, to be a positive church, and a positive community of faith, and how a community of faith can be established by doing what is asked from the community and how that can be developed. The major results are that the films as an educational tool enhance student participation and debate on intrinsic issues. Therefore, these films are used as new educational tools. Students do not just sit in class, listening to lecturers discussing different theologians' views, through history and through modern times, but get into the nitty-gritty of listening to the world around one. One has to listen to the aspects of the world, as Karl Bart stated: one has to read the Bible and the newspaper. Lyden (2007:210) writes: "At the same time, Barth insisted that God, through the grace of God, uses sinful human language (whether as theology, philosophy, or whatever) as the medium to express God's Word in spite of its inadequacy to the task" and in this sense you have to look at the film and also at the aspect of life in essence, and how to discuss that. Therefore, new educational methods are clearly available with these presentations and implications are that students receive a much better overview of the related discipline. The essential discipline in this regard is the discipline of Missiology.

Wright (2006:22-23) explains the task of missions: "Fundamentally, our mission, (if it is biblically informed and validated), means our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's

own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation."

He (2006:23) adds that the Bible presents a portrait of God that is unquestionably purposeful. The God who walks the path of history through the pages of the Bible, pins the mission statement to every signpost on the way. He therefore says that mission and missiology have to do with people living in the total world in the presence of God, amidst the nations, to bring the value of the missionary task.

In Luke 10 we read that the Lord Jesus sent out 72 so that they could go out into the world, they had to enter a town and when the Kingdom of God is near, they had to bring the peace of God because it said in verse 5: If you enter a house, first say peace to this house, and if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him. If not, it will return to you.

Students must be made aware of these challenges of the world around them and how to present the Gospel to this world, by understanding the challenges on their way. They have to be present with the people of the world; therefore it is important to see and hear what the world around them sees and hears. But, on the other hand, they should also learn from the different aspects that they encounter in the film and then reply to that. Therefore the whole theological course is enlightened by dealing with these issues. It makes theology something very interesting and life enhancing by dealing with these different aspects. It also underlines the currency and relevancy of these issues.

Rindge, Runions and Ascough (2010:150) want to take seriously the aesthetic integrity of a film as the starting point for constructing a critical dialogue between films and biblical texts. The success of such a method depends upon its ability to illumine both a film and a biblical text, and engender insight into each as a result of placing them into mutually critical conversation.

9. Case study

Students' perception on the value of the screening of film is essential. Aspects of the evaluation of the value of the film for mission and the perception of the film are of importance. In the case study the reception of the film by the class of students needed to be evaluated. Furthermore the implications for mission so as to establish how the film had enhanced the students' perception of the missionary endeavour had to be laid down.

After the screening of *Life is Beautiful* a class of eight (8) students gave impressions.

Five questions were asked:

1. Did it have any value to look at the film?

Most definitely	7
Definitely	1
Neutral	0
No	0
Absolutely not	0

The students clearly saw much value in the film. Only one did not choose the highest value. It is clear that they find it meaningful to enhance their theological studies in this way.

2. Did it enhance your theological insights?

Most definitely	3
Definitely	4
Neutral	0
No	1
Absolutely not	0

One student is of the opinion that the film did not enhance his/her theological insights. The others overwhelmingly do think so. Could it be the theme or the way in which it was presented, namely the switch between humour and drama and tragedy? Theological insights can be developed in different manners and ways. It is clear that film has the possibility to do just that.

3. Are you able to apply the insights from the film?

Most definitely	2
Definitely	5
Neutral	1
No	0
Absolutely not	0

In general it is possible for the students to apply the insights of the film. This means the film has clear implications. In education this leads to the internalisation of the learning material.

4. Would you be able to apply the insights in mission?

Most definitely 　　　4
Definitely 　　　　　4
Neutral 　　　　　　0
No 　　　　　　　　0
Absolutely not 　　　0

Although not a "Christian" film, it clearly had much value for the students and they could apply it in mission. The film thus challenged the students to think anew about many issues. It makes it possible to realize how the world around us has influence on our environment.

5. Do secular films have value for your study?

Most definitely 　　　1
Definitely 　　　　　6
Neutral 　　　　　　1
No 　　　　　　　　0
Absolutely not 　　　0

It seems that the students do see overall value for their study in screening the film. This helps to understand that it is not only evangelical "Christian" films that can have educational value.

Asked to write reviews of the film all important aspects were emphasised.

1. One student saw even the relation with a fairly tale in the beginning which moves to a tragedy in the second part. The massive emphasis on hope is then explained. "The value of this film regarding missions is then exactly the same hope. In mission hope can be brought to people in terrible situations."

   The relation with Jesus Christ's suffering is drawn when the father gives up his own life for his child. "We have to bring this hope to the dark places on earth, and also to the dark hopeless placeless around us."

   The film had the implication that hope was envisaged by this student.

2. The student emphasised the substitutionary sacrifice of both the father and the mother in the film. This has great importance for the mission idea of substitution.

3. Student three saw the joy and ability to persevere and resilience as important. The suffering of the Jews had the influence that the student looked again to this her own life.

4. Love is the main idea from this student. The father's positive outlook in the face of death emphasised love. His whole way of life is positive and brings about an outlook to life to be accepted in mission.

5. The aspect of humour was emphasised. Doing things without hard structures. Nothing must stand in the way to proclaim God's Word.

6. Love is emphasised.

7. The father is seen as a Jesus figure. He gives his life for his son and wife. God communicates in different ways

8. The value of life is emphasised. Christ's service for life.

The students had good comprehension of the main issues in the film. They could find appropriate references to theology and missiology even though the film is not about a Christian but about a Jew and his family. Students saw the interplay between humour and tragedy. They could find explicit value in the film regarding their theological study. It leads to full appreciation of the fact that theology is totally related to the world.

10. Conclusion

The major results are that films as an educational tool enhance student participation and debate on intrinsic issues. New educational methods are clearly available with these presentations and the implications are that students receive a much better overview of the related discipline. The powerful interaction of students, lecturer and media are of importance for enhancing theological studies in the present world. It certainly enhances an outward movement towards the world around the theological student. In future discussion and evaluation can be positively applied to biblical texts and theological themes.

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