

*Very truly I tell you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself. And He has given Him authority to judge because He is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. – John 5:24-29*

Our small group was formed around movies. We would watch a movie together in the theater or a rental in someone's house and then talk about the theological point, the way we might use it to share the gospel with an unchurched friend, or whatever God might bring to our minds. Then we wrote a review of the movie for the church with our reflections.

For our first movie, we decided to watch *Les Miserable* at the local theater. So we planned, and prepped, and finally arrived, only to find that the movie had left the theater 2 days before. What were we to do? Well, someone said, let's go to another one. How about "Warm Bodies", they asked? If you haven't seen it, *Warm Bodies* is basically *Romeo and Juliette* done as a zombie movie. Yup, zombies at church. Could I do this as a church event? Well, we were all grownups, and it was their choice, so in we went. It wasn't as bad as I'd feared. It was far worse. As I sat watching the main character named Rrrrrr (both for the sound a zombie makes and for his real name *Romeo*) eat a popcorn container of brains, I feared for my career.

Once the movie ended, we left and nobody said a word. Until Beth spoke up. Looking directly at me, she said, "You planned this, didn't you?" Confused, I said, "uhhhhhh" sounding much like Rrrrrr on a good day. "This was the gospel! Dead things coming back to life because of the love of another person, walls of fear falling as separate groups are reunited, self sacrifice... this movie was the gospel set to *Romeo and Juliette* set in a zombie movie!" And sure enough, it was.

Jesus' story of love for one another, self-sacrifice for friends and strangers alike, and life brought out of death is everywhere. It's in zombie movies where people catch a virus (uh oh) and turn into lifeless eating machines, only to have their hearts reborn from the love of another person. Zombie movies may be the easiest of the monster genres to liken to the gospel, but not the only by far.

In the bible, Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, even though they die they will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." We are all zombies, dead in our sin, until we meet, fall in love with, and agree to follow Jesus. Then He brings life back into our dead souls, and not just life but eternal life.

What movies have you seen recently? Where do you see the gospel in them?

What movie could you use to share the gospel with an unchurched friend?

As you watch your next movie, find the gospel, and talk with someone about it.