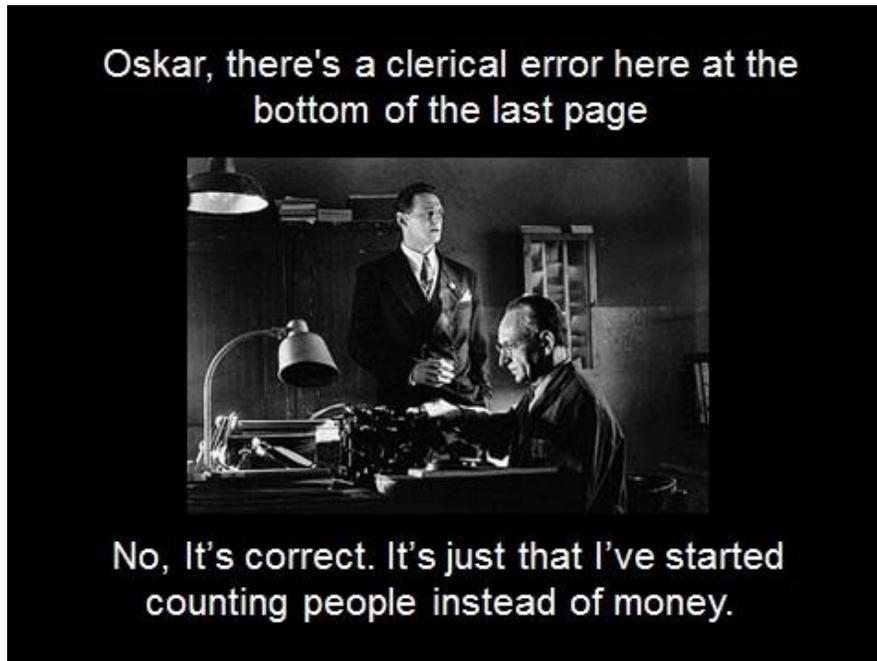


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Schindler's List & The Moral Law



Movie Background

Schindler's List is a movie based on the true story of Oskar Schindler, a vain, greedy German businessman who tried to make his fortune during the Second World War by exploiting cheap Jewish labor. In the process, however, he became a humanitarian amidst the barbaric Nazi reign as his conscience convicted him of the need to turn his factory into a refuge for the Jews. Oskar Schindler (**Liam Neeson**) managed to save 1,100 Jews from being gassed at the Auschwitz concentration camp. By the end of the war, Schindler, though penniless, amassed an untold wealth through the lives he saved. To see a video clip from the movie, click on <https://youtu.be/mxphAJID9U>

Digging Deeper

When you watch the movie, you are left with the stark realization of how evil man can be. The movie is all shot in black and white, with one exception. A young girl, perhaps six years old, is seen running through the Jewish ghettos in a red coat. We see Oskar Schindler observing her from a roof top. Then, later, as soot comes down from the sky, Schindler visits the place where the Jews are being burned - and sees the girl being taken in a wheel barrel to be burned with over 10,000 exhumed Jews. The movie

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audience knows it's her he because he sees the charred red coat left in the pile of bodies.

From one perspective, we can look at something like the Holocaust and ask; "How could a good God allow this to happen?" The implication of the question is that NO god, good or otherwise, exists. But on the other hand, if no god exists, then why does Schindler risk his life and all that he has to save 1,100 Jews? How does a "moral law" – a conscience - convict him of the need to take action unless there is a god who has planted this concept inside him?

In his book, **Mere Christianity**, C.S. Lewis writes this about what he calls "The Moral Law":

Another way of seeing the Moral Law is not simply one of our instincts is this. If two instincts are in conflict, and there is nothing in a creature's mind except those two instincts, obviously the stronger of the two must win. But at those moments when we are most conscious of the Moral Law, it usually seems to be telling us to side with the weaker of the two impulses. You probably want to be safe much more than you want to help the man who is drowning; but the Moral Law tells you to help him all the same.

Schindler is not the only person who senses the power of this moral law. At the end of the movie, when it has been announced that Germany has surrendered, with all the Jews in his factory and the Nazi soldiers present, he turns to the soldiers and says:

I know you have received orders from our commandant, which he has received from his superiors, to dispose of the population of this camp. Now would be the time to do it. Here they are; they're all here. This is your opportunity. Or, you could leave, and return to your families as men instead of murderers.

Upon hearing this, the soldiers are seen to slowly leave the building, not one of them willing to fire a shot. You see, others had also heard the call of this inward tug of the moral law, but Schindler was one of the few who responded. Schindler's whole mindset has been transformed. In Romans 12:2-3, the Apostle Paul writes.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

In the quiet of your heart, has God been trying to get your attention, pricking your conscience about doing the right thing?

Picture source: http://content6.flixster.com/photo/36/36/75/3636752_gal.jpg

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Questions for Further Reflection

1. Think about a time when you ignored someone who needed help because it wasn't convenient for you to help them. Maybe it was that homeless person you passed on the street the other day. What will it take for God to get you to pay attention to the needs of other people?
2. Can you think of a time when you responded to God's pricking of your conscience when it wasn't convenient for you? Write a journal article about that time and share it with a friend.
3. At the end of the movie, the descendants of the people Schindler saved are shown leaving a stone on his burial marker. It is their way of remembering what he did, and thanking him. If you were to die today, who would leave a memorial stone for you?

The Movies & Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis

More than at any time in our history, people question whether or not Jesus Christ is really the Son of God. People may agree that there is a "higher spiritual power," but they can't see Jesus as being the only way to come to Him – or "IT." Take the **Star Wars** series. Based on a 2011 census in England, "Jedi" had over 175,000 adherents in that country.

How can a religion based on a make believe movie character even exist? Perhaps it's because, in our day, we hear that all religions are the same. That somehow, some sort of circle of life connects us all – that all things are connected to "mother earth." This idea says there's no such thing as sin – and hence, no sense of guilt is needed.

In his book, **Mere Christianity**, C.S. Lewis dealt with all sorts of questions about God and Jesus. It is a book that has had a profound effect on my life, and I encourage you to buy a copy and read it yourself. I've compiled a series of newsletters I've written based on Lewis' work, using movies from the last 25 years to illustrate his points.

In *Discovering Mere Christianity At the Movies*, I believe you'll be inspired by the themes I've selected to illustrate the ten principles of Godly leadership. Please be sure to go to my website at www.wisejargon.com/at-the-movies/ to see *additional e-books I've created based on my newsletter, Conversations with the Culture*. And don't forget to **sign up to receive this free monthly newsletter in the future!** ,

At The Movies



In 2005, God laid on my heart the concept for a newsletter I've come to call **Conversations with the Culture**, to talk about the truths of the bible with an increasingly secular society. Since starting, I had an idea where the journey of writing it each month would take me. I've written about 150 issues over years. And now, I'm starting to organize them thematically so that you can order/download them as PDF documents. If you are someone who wants to identify trends in society, discuss current events, and see how to reach the culture around us with a biblical world view, I think you'll find this series I'm calling *Discovering Truth At the Movies* a valuable tool – especially if you work in youth/young adult ministry.



Discovering Truth at Movies:

Discovering *Mere Christianity* at the Movies. In his book, **Mere Christianity**, C.S. Lewis dealt with all sorts of questions about God and Jesus. It is a book that has had a profound effect on my life, and I encourage you to buy a copy and read it yourself. I've compiled a series of newsletters based on Lewis' work, using movies from the last 25 years to illustrate his points.

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Discovering *Godly Leadership at the Movies*: In this e-book, I've taken compiled ten newsletters I wrote to accompany my book **Think Like Jesus, Lead Like Moses: Leadership Lessons from the Wilderness Crucible**. I believe you'll be inspired by the themes I've selected to illustrate the ten principles of Godly leadership.

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