

The Influence of Most Fiction, Whether in Books, Movies, or Plays

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Summary: Story books, movies, and plays very often destroy a love for the Bible and sacred things. Our central concern should not be where the reading or viewing takes place (at home or in a theater), but the pernicious influence of **fiction**. “It creates an unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfits the mind for usefulness, weans the soul from prayer, and disqualifies it for any spiritual exercise.”—*Messages to Young People*, p. 272.

The Main Points Made:

1. The misrepresentation of life.
2. A dream world created, which makes the viewer unsuitable for everyday life.
3. Human pride exalted and made attractive.
4. Honesty, industry, thrift, and sobriety as social virtues neglected.
5. Desire inflamed for what we do not have, which arouses both covetousness and a hatred for the wealthy.
6. Reckless portrayal of crime, sex, violence.
7. Crime made to seem attractive, while law and order are undermined, with the police depicted as villains.
8. Love degraded and debased, with pervasive adultery and divorce.
9. Resistance to temptation lowered.
10. Religion often twisted or presented in a blasphemous way.
11. Bible themes abused to emphasize sin in so-called good movies.
12. Sin made to appear alluring and highly desirable.
13. Strong emotions aroused without providing an outlet.
14. Standards of behavior, dress, and association undermined.
15. Mockery of the Christian home, with parents portrayed as either tyrannical or over-indulgent.
16. What is the end product? Love? Reverence? Respect? Temperance?

Conclusion: Stop reading and viewing fiction. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal. 5:24). “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (2 Pet. 3:11–13)

Adapted from a sermon preached in a South African church, during the 1960s or 1970s.