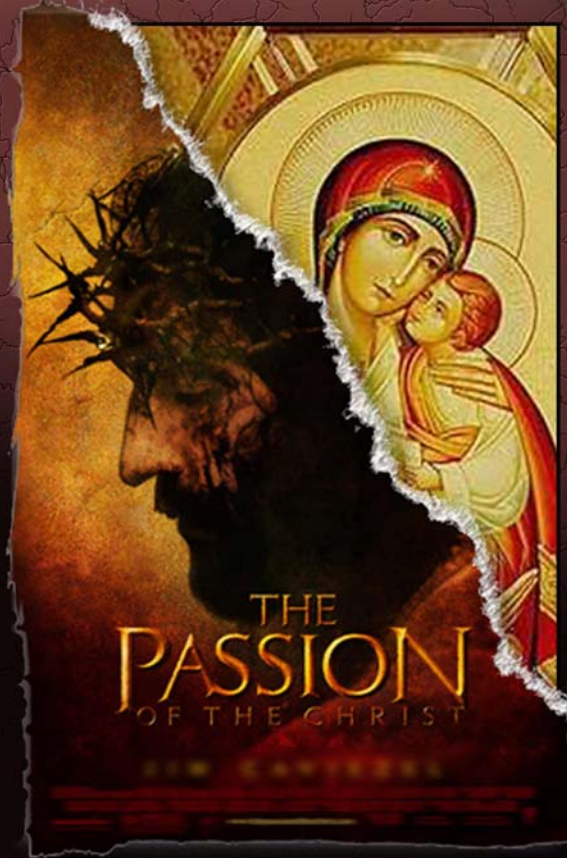


BEHIND THE PASSION



ANDREW JONES

“Behind the *Passion*” – A Study Guide

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Passion:

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Middle English, from Old French, from Late Latin *passion-*, *passio* suffering, being acted upon, from Latin *pati* to suffer

1 often capitalized a : the sufferings of Christ between the night of the Last Supper and his death

Background on the film:

- Film made by Mel Gibson, a conservative Catholic, using \$30 million of his own money which focuses on the last 12 hours of Christ's life
- Done in “street Latin” and Aramaic with English subtitles
- Controversial in some quarters for having the potential to stir up hate and anti-Semitism and for its graphic depiction of Christ’s suffering
- Rated R “for sequences of graphic violence”
- Biggest opening day ticket totals for a Wednesday opener outside of the summer and Holiday seasons (\$23.6 million minus pre screening totals). Grossed over \$125 million in its first 5 days.
- Number 3 of all Wednesday openers (behind “*The Return of the King*” and “*Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace's*”)
- Praised by many Protestant and Catholic leaders! Many using it for evangelistic purposes

Introduction:

Pilot asked Christ during his interview of Him before having Him crucified, “What is truth?” Today millions of Christians and non-believers are talking about a new controversial film on the last 12 hours Jesus Christ. Does this film reflect what really happened at the cross? Is it faithful to the Biblical record? Are we being deceived by Christian leaders who are calling this the best witnessing tool ever?

Part I: The Theology “*Behind the Passion*”

“I want to show the humanity of Christ as well as the divine aspect. It's a rendering that for me is very realistic and as close as possible to what I perceive the truth to be.” “It reflects my beliefs-I've never done that before” – Mel Gibson, film’s director

“A faith in the most Catholic version -- no accident that it was pleasing to the Pope and to so many cardinals, not excluding Ratzinger, for whom “The Passion” is a manifesto that abounds in symbols that only a competent eye can fully discern.” – Vittorio Messori, first journalist in history to publish a book-length interview with a pope

“I don't think they would be well-founded criticisms because all the material in the film comes directly from the Gospel accounts. There's nothing in the film that doesn't come from the Gospel accounts. So, if they're critical of the film, they would be critical of the Gospel.” – Archbishop John Foley, President, Pontifical Council for Social Communications, The Vatican

Christ’s suffering

*“But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5*

“It is deeply moving, powerful, and disturbing. A film that must be seen - although the graphic scenes of the scourging of Jesus are emotionally wrenching.” – James Dobson, Chairman, Focus on the Family

The Biblical Record:

What does the Bible say about Christ’s physical suffering? Does the Bible focus on the physical suffering of Christ? (Look up Matthew 26:67, 27:26, 29-31, 35; Luke 23:11)

The film's focus on the violence against Christ:

- Right from the point of Christ's arrest He's punched, slapped, beaten and bloodied and this continues throughout the film
- Shows minute after minute of Christ being beaten and His back and front being ripped apart by the Roman scourging
- The crucifixion scene shows a close up of Christ's left hand being nailed to the cross and blood dripping from the end of the nail that just went through His right hand
- Shows the Roman soldier piercing Christ's side and getting covered/sprayed by His blood

Questions:

1. Is brutal and bloody violence in a movie justified or needed to show Christ's sacrifice?
2. Does focusing on the *physical* violence against Christ and His *physical* suffering distort Christ's real sacrifice?
3. Is suffering the same as sacrifice?
4. Is focusing on *HOW* Christ died the same as *WHY* He died?
5. Is Christ's

Ellen White quotes on Christ's real suffering:

"It was not the dread of death that weighed upon Him. It was not the pain and ignominy of the cross that caused His inexpressible agony." {Desire of Ages 752.4}

"It was not a dread of the physical suffering he was soon to endure that brought this agony upon the Son of God." {PrT, November 19, 1885 par. 10}

"We should take broader and deeper views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. When the atonement is viewed correctly, the salvation of souls will be felt to be of infinite value. In comparison with the enterprise of everlasting life, every other sinks into insignificance" (Testimonies, vol. 2, pp. 212-215)

Ellen White quotes on Christ's real suffering continued:

"Heaven had viewed with grief and horror Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from his wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon his brow. From his hands and feet the blood had fallen, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails had gaped as the weight of his body dragged upon his hands. His laboured breath had grown quick and deep, as his soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All Heaven had been filled with amazement when the prayer of Christ was offered in the midst of his terrible suffering,--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."" {PrT, February 18, 1886 par. 5}

Other Scholars Quotes (this isn't an endorsement of these scholars' views on everything):

"But the problem is that sacrifice and suffering are not exactly synonymous. To suggest that they are is to suggest that the greatest sacrifice required the greatest suffering and, therefore, the greatest and most graphic violence in the portrayal of that suffering-sacrifice." – John Dominic Crossan, Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies, DePaul University, Chicago

"Gibson's preoccupation with Christ's shed blood and agony threatens to distract us from another crucial dimension of his death. Survey any Roman legion in the reign of Tiberius and they'll probably say that crucifixion was as much about shame as it was about pain. Ask Paul about the scandal at the heart of his Gospel and he'll point, not to whips and nails, but to the sheer embarrassment and absurd foolishness of a crucified savior. Hebrews says Christ "endured the cross, disregarding its shame" (Heb 12:2; cf. 6:6). So the cross was not only about cruelty but also about degradation and defilement, exclusion and ridicule, which is why, by the way, it proved such an obstacle to early Christian preaching." – Bruce N. Fisk, New Testament scholar

Further study on Christ's suffering:

Read "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ" by William D. Edwards, MD; Wesley J. Gabel, MDiv; Floyd E. Hosmer, MS, AMI - Published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, March 21, 1986, Volume 225

Read "The Sufferings of Christ" by Ellen White (The Present Truth, December 17, 1885) (cf Chapters 74 – 80 in "Desire of Ages" by Ellen White)

Part II: Mystics' Influences "Behind the Passion"

"Brilliant, biblical - a masterpiece... It is not just a dramatization. It's a historic description" - Rick Warren, Pastor, Saddleback Church and Author of "The Purpose Driven Life"

"It is an accurate account of Jesus' real sufferings for the sins of the whole world. This is not a film anyone should miss." - Dr. Robert Schuller, Crystal Cathedral / Hour of Power

"The film is extremely true to the biblical narrative, to the point of using Aramaic dialogue with English subtitles." - Lincoln E. Steed, associate director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department of the North American Division of SDAs and editor of "Liberty" magazine.

"We all thought it was a magnificent work. There's really nothing like it. It's true to the Bible. The faith we've all had comes alive." - Pat Robertson

The Catholic Mystics

Questions:

1. Do you think it's harmless to use Catholic mystics as some of your sources for this Biblical based movie?
2. How much did the "Virgin Mary" influence this film and those involved?
3. Are we being deceived by these Catholic mystics' view of Christ's suffering?

Quotes about the film's use of mystics, etc.:

"Mel has said it with pride tempered by humility, **with pragmatism kneaded with mysticism** which becomes in him a singular mixture: "If this work was to fail, for 50 years there will be no future for religious films. We threw the best in here: as much money as we wished, prestige, time, rigor, the charism of great actors, the science of the learned, **inspirations of the mystics**, experience, advanced technology. Above all, we threw in our conviction that it was worthwhile, that what takes place in those hours concerns every man. Our eternity is bound up forever with this Jew. If we don't point this out, who will be able to do so? But we will point it out, I am sure of it: **Our work was accompanied by too many signs that confirm it.**"

"In fact, on the set much more happened than what is known; much will remain in the secret of consciences: conversions, release from drugs, reconciliation between enemies, giving up of adulterous ties, **apparitions of mysterious personages**, extraordinary explosions of energy, enigmatic figures who knelt down as the extraordinary Caviezel-Jesus passed by, even two flashes of lightning, one of which struck the cross, but did not hurt anyone." – Vittorio Messori, Italian reporter/writer

The "Historical" Record about the Mystics:

Anne Catherine Emmerich - Who was she? (Quotes below from a web site)

- Wrote the book "The Dolorous Passion of Christ" which is used by Mel Gibson in the film.
- Mystic, Visionary, Stigmatist, Prophet The greatest visionary in the history of the Church...
- Was told by Our Lord that her gift of seeing the past, present, and future in mystic vision was greater than that possessed by anyone else in history.

- Born at Flamske in Westphalia, Germany, on September 8, 1774, she became a nun of the Augustinian Order at Dulmen. She had the use of reason from her birth and could understand liturgical Latin from her first time at Mass.
- During the last 12 years of her life, she could eat no food except Holy Communion, nor take any drink except water, subsisting entirely on the Holy Eucharist.
- From 1802 until her death, she bore the wounds of the Crown of Thorns, and from 1812, the full stigmata of Our Lord, including a cross over her heart and the wound from the lance.
- Possessed the gift of reading hearts, and she saw, in actual, visual detail, the facts of Catholic belief which most of us simply have to accept on faith. The basic truths of the catechism--angels, devils, Purgatory, the life of Our Lord and the Blessed Mother, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the grace of the Sacraments--all these truths were as real to her as the material world.

Mary of Agreda – Who was she?

- 17th – century mystic Franciscan nun (1602-1665 AD)
- Wrote “The Mystical City of God: the Divine History of the Virgin Mother of God” – a book on the whole life of Mary from birth to death
- Book showed how God had a part in the miraculous birth of Mary

The film’s scenes that come from the mystics’ writings:

- Shows a scene where the Virgin Mary is using a towel from Pilot’s wife to wipe up the blood of Christ from the pavement after His scourging
- Peter falling at the feet of the Virgin Mary asking her for forgiveness after he just denied Christ
- Gaius Cassius, the Roman soldier pierces Christ’s side to see if He’s dead and the blood and water gush out and “baptizes” (sprays) the soldier – he’s converted on the spot. (History: His spear becomes known as the “Spear of Destiny” or the “Spear Longinus” (his Christian name) and supposedly is passed down until Hitler, a believer in the occult posses it. April 30, 1945 General Patton takes possession of it and today it’s in the Hofburg Treasure House in Germany.)

More quotes about the use of mystics:

"When Gibson returned to his faith, he acquired, from a nunnery that had closed down, a library of books, many of them quite old," noted The New Yorker last September. "He says that while he was researching The Passion one evening he reached up for a book, and Brentano's volume tumbled out of the shelf into his hands. He sat down and read it, and was flabbergasted by the vivid imagery of Emmerich's visions. '**Amazing images,**' he said. '**She supplied me with stuff I never would have thought of.**'" – Michael Brown, Catholic reporter, runs spiritdaily.com a Catholic news web site

“From Anne Catherine Emmerich, the stigmatized visionary, Gibson has taken extraordinary intuitions: Claudia Procula, Pilate's wife, who offers, weeping, to Mary the cloths to soak up the blood of the Son is among the scenes of greatest delicacy in a film that, more than violent, is brutal. Brutal as, in fact, the Passion was. The desperate Peter after the denial, falls at the feet of the Blessed Virgin to obtain pardon. I believe, however, that the theological importance attributed to the Madonna, as well as to the Eucharist -- an importance not spiritualized, not reduced to a "memorial" but seen in the most material, and therefore Catholic, way (the Transubstantiation) -- will create some uneasiness in American Protestant churches which, without having seen the film, have already organized themselves to support its distribution.” – Vittorio Messori, Italian reporter/writer

“This use of extra-biblical material, emphasis on physical suffering, exaggeration of the role of Mary, and explicitly Roman Catholic theology should not surprise us, however, as these are all hallmarks of the primary inspiration for this movie: *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ.*” – Andrew J. Webb, Pastor of Providence PCA Mission Church and critic of the film

Gibson "made practical use of Emmerich in the movie. A lot of the details that you see visually in the movie are in the Emmerich book." – Father Stephen F. Somerville of Queensville, Ontario who presided over the Mass most of the time on the set of the film

Part III: Catholic Traditions “Behind the Passion”

“Stations of the Cross” (“Way of the Cross”):

What are they? They are 14 locations from Christ’s Passion that Catholics meditate on. The list can change but the traditional list is as follows:

1. The First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Die.
2. The Second Station: Jesus Carries His Cross.
3. The Third Station: Jesus Falls the First Time.
4. **The Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Mother.**
5. The Fifth Station: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross.
6. **The Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face.**
7. The Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time.
8. The Eighth Station: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem.
9. The Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time.
10. The Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped.
11. The Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.
12. The Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross.
13. The Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross.
14. The Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb.

The Film’s use of the non-Biblical “Stations of the Cross”:

- Has Veronica wiping Jesus’ face (there are many Catholic legends about this girl)
- The Virgin Mary meeting Jesus along the way and talking to him

Side note: Emmerich’s book describes how the Virgin Mary “*counted each footstep, and being interiorly enlightened, pointed out to her companions those places which had been consecrated by peculiar sufferings*” and thus came up with these “Stations of the Cross”.

“Blessed Sacrament of the Altar” (Eucharist) Theology:

Questions:

1. Why in the movie during the Crucifixion scene does Mel Gibson flashback to the Last Supper?

2. Is the Catholic Mass Biblical?

Quotes about the film or the Eucharist (Lord’s Supper):

“There is power and **mystery** in these dead languages, and this is what was spoken at the time,” – Mel Gibson on why he shot the film in Latin and Aramaic (Note: Latin is used in the Tridentine Rite (Latin Mass) that he celebrates)

“The goal of the movie is to shake modern audiences by brashly juxtaposing the “**sacrifice of the cross with the sacrifice of the altar - which is the same thing,**” said Gibson. This ancient union of symbols and sounds has never lost its hold on him. There is, he stressed, “a lot of power in these dead languages.”” – Mel Gibson interview quoted on www.providencepca.com/essays/passion.html

“I juxtapose the Last Supper with the Crucifixion to point out what it is, how it was instituted, and why.” – Mel Gibson interview with Christianity Today, 2/23/04

“**This film, for its author, is a Mass: Let it be, then, in an obscure language, as it was for so many centuries. If the mind does not understand, so much the better...** The blood of the Passion is continuously intermingled with the wine of the Mass, the tortured flesh of the “*corpus Christi*” with the consecrated bread.” – Vittorio Messori, Italian reporter/writer

“Jesus was seated between Peter and John, the doors were closed, and everything was done in the **most mysterious and imposing manner.**” – Anne Catherine Emmerich’s “The Dolorous Passion of Christ”, page 48 of PDF version

Catholic Encyclopedia entry on the “**Eucharist**” (Last Supper):
“The Church honors the Eucharist as one of her **most exalted mysteries**, since for sublimity and incomprehensibility it yields in nothing to the allied mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation. These three **mysteries** constitute a wonderful triad, which causes the essential characteristic of Christianity, as a religion of **mysteries** far transcending the capabilities of reason....”

Part IV: Virgin Mary's Influence "Behind the Passion"

"This movie presents the Blessed Mother in a way that reintroduces her to Protestants. They are able to see her as someone they can relate to. She is down to earth. They will laugh with her. They will cry with her. They'll more fully appreciate (as will everyone else) what she went through. Hopefully, they'll grow to love her." - Michael Brown, Catholic reporter, runs www.spiritdaily.com a Catholic news web site

How Mary Influenced Different Participants in the Film...

John Debney, film's composer on Mary's influence:

"I felt from the very start that the key focus of the film and the music was ultimately the experience of Mary, Jesus' mother. Through her eyes we see world-changing events unfold. Finding "Mary's Lullaby," her thematic thread, was crucial. I believe that Mary had a hand in giving me her theme. I was rather stuck, yet through prayer, I came upon what is Mary's theme in the film. The flashback when Mary remembers Jesus falling down as a child is particularly powerful for me. The other [standout moment] might be the actual nailing to the cross." – John Debney interview with Mikael Carlsson

"'Finally, I just prayed to Mary, out of desperation,' says Debney. 'And she answered with a lullaby that just appeared in my head complete with lyrics: 'Don't cry my little one, if you should fall, I will cradle you.' When we first put the music to the scene, both Mel and I were crying. He asked me where it came from, and I told him, from her.'" – John Debney quoted in Detroit Free Press, 2/17/2004

Mel Gibson, film's director on Mary's influence:

"For years, my best friends were actually evangelicals, many in the business and many in professional ways. I love them. I think they really know the Book. They know the Book better than Catholics, actually. I've been actually amazed at the way I would say the evangelical audience has—hands down—responded to this film more than any other Christian group. For me the amazing thing is that the film is so Marian. But I think the way the film displays her has been kind of an eye opener for evangelicals who don't usually look at that aspect. They understand the reality of a mother and a son." – Mel Gibson interview with Christianity Today, 2/23/04

Jim Caviezel, actor who played Jesus, on Mary's influence:

"I've always made acting follow truth, and Mary has always pointed me toward that truth. I really believe that she was setting me up, getting me ready to play her Son. She architected this whole thing.

People have asked me, "Were you scared about getting this film?" And I say, "Yes, a part of me." But the other part of me says that I'm absolutely honored that He, through Mary, would pick me to play this role."

Before going to the set every day I prepared myself in meditation or through the rosary, always through Mary. I also went to confession, and the Holy Spirit would convict me of my sins. Once I'd done that, the rest was very fundamental; it really was." – Jim Caviezel interview with National Catholic Register, 1/30/04

Jim Caviezel returned to his Catholic faith after praying with "seer" Ivan Dragicevic who has visions of Mary:

"'We talked, and later when we were praying the Rosary Ivan said Mary came in the room and I felt something wonderful happening to me,' Caviezel says. 'When the apparition was over, I got up and told Ivan I wanted [Mary and Jesus] in my heart.'"

Side Note: *Ivan Dragicevic* was born on May 25th, 1965 in Bijakovici, in the parish of Medjugorje. The Virgin Mary has been appearing to him every day since June 24th 1981. He still has daily apparitions. (Medjugorje, Bosnia is a MAJOR Virgin Mary apparitions site in the world: www.medjugorjeusa.org)

"Several months ago [Jim Caviezel] ended up at Medjugorje -- where he showed pilgrims a rough cut of the movie. The actor noted that filming of "The Passion" began last year on the feast of Mary's Assumption, August 15, and finished on the feast of Our Lady of Fatima, May 13."

Further Study on Mary's role in the sufferings of Christ:

1. What does the Bible say about Mary and the crucifixion of Christ?
2. How important is her role in presenting a crucified and risen Christ to the world?

Quotes about the Virgin Mary in the film:

“The intense Mariology in the film has gone largely unremarked upon, perhaps because evangelical defenders and liberal critics don't like it or (more likely) because they don't get it. But the Virgin Mary appears in virtually every scene in the movie, and in keeping with traditional Catholic theology, we witness the horrors not so much through our own eyes as through the mediation of hers...

There are centuries of Catholic devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary packed into this scene, this movie...” - Stephen Prothero is the chairman of the Department of Religion at Boston University and is the author of *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon*.

“What was your favorite part of the film?”

Hodge: "The development of **Jesus' connection to his mother.**"

Usry: "**Mel Gibson's use of Mary, the mother of Jesus.** I know Mel is Catholic and Mary means a great deal to many Catholic people, but she was wonderfully portrayed and I was convicted during the movie by her presence. I realized that I had slighted Mary too much in my theological views by pushing her to the edge of visibility. In an unconscious effort to counter the reverence many Catholics have for Mary, I believe Protestants probably fail to give Mary and her relationship with Jesus due diligence. As I watched the movie and especially those scenes with Mary and Jesus, I thought, Jesus must have loved his mother so much—and I should love her too! She was a vessel used of God and she deserves our honor."

Ahlgrim: "**The subplot of Mary, Jesus' mother's experience of the Passion.** Those scenes brought Christ's suffering down to a very real and basic human level."

Mo Hodge, senior pastor, The Bridge Community Church, Decatur, IN; Steven Usry, lead pastor, Harvest Point UMC, McDonough, GA; Jeff Ahlgrim, executive pastor, Heartland Community Church, Normal, IL - Interviewed by Christianity Today, 2/26/04

Ellen White Quotes about Mary at the Cross:

“The mother of Jesus, supported by John the beloved disciple, had followed the steps of her Son to Calvary. **She had seen Him fainting under the burden of the cross, and had longed to place a supporting hand beneath His wounded head, and to bathe that brow which had once been pillowed upon her bosom. But she was not permitted this mournful privilege.** With the disciples she still cherished the hope that Jesus would manifest His power, and deliver Himself from His enemies. Again her heart would sink as she recalled the words in which He had foretold the very scenes that were then taking place. As the thieves were bound to the cross, she looked on with agonizing suspense. Would He who had given life to the dead suffer Himself to be crucified? Would the Son of God suffer Himself to be thus cruelly slain? Must she give up her faith that Jesus was the Messiah? Must she witness His shame and sorrow, without even the privilege of ministering to Him in His distress? She saw His hands stretched upon the cross; the hammer and the nails were brought, and as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh, the heart-stricken disciples bore away from the cruel scene the fainting form of the mother of Jesus.” {Desire of Ages 744.1}

“The eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude that had collected together to witness his death, and he saw at the foot of the cross John supporting Mary, the mother of Christ. She had returned to the terrible scene, not being able to longer remain away from her son. The last lesson of Jesus was one of filial love. He looked upon the grief-stricken face of his mother, and then upon John; said he, addressing the former: "Woman, behold thy son." Then, to the disciple: "Behold thy mother." John well understood the words of Jesus, and the sacred trust which was committed to him. He immediately removed the mother of Christ from the fearful scene of Calvary. From that hour he cared for her as would a dutiful son, taking her to his own home. O pitiful, loving Saviour! Amid all his physical pain, and mental anguish, he had a tender, thoughtful care for the mother who had borne him. He had no money to leave her, by which to insure her future comfort, but he was enshrined in the heart of John, and he gave his mother unto the beloved disciple as a sacred legacy. This trust was to prove a great blessing to John, a constant reminder of his beloved Master.” {“Redemption Or the Suffering of Christ His Trial and Crucifixion” 80.2}

Part V: Ecumenicalism “*Behind the Passion*”

Question:

1. Many Christians want to use this film to further the Gospel together. Is this film another form of ecumenicalism?

“If the intensity focused on The Passion of the Christ lasts another week or more, this will truly be a movie that has major effects. Those effects could be as varied as they are profound. **It could unite Christians. I have never seen a better possibility for ecumenical dialogue.** We all have common ground -- and though Gibson is Catholic (a traditionalist at that), his most fervent support so far has come from Baptists, Pentecostals, and Evangelicals.” - Michael Brown, Catholic reporter, runs www.spiritdaily.com a Catholic news web site

“**The ecumenism Mel Gibson has shown toward Evangelicals and others can serve as a paradigm of how the Passion of Christ (the very essence and power of theology!) unites us,** and our hearts, which are often smarter than our heads. That Passion, the Passion of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, began immediately following the Institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood which are inseparable, and which, through the apostolic succession, and confirmed in every generation by the living magisterium, has never been interrupted from that day to this.” - www.tcrnews2.com/GibsonPassion.html

“After Evangelicals see this movie they will understand why Catholics have been kneeling in front of the crucifix (Jesus on the Cross) for 1700 years. They will also understand why we love Mary so much and how she suffered.” – David MacDonald, Catholic singer

Ellen White Quote:

“How the Roman Church can clear herself from the charge of idolatry we cannot see. True, she professes to worship God through these images; so did the Israelites when they bowed before the golden calf. But the Lord's wrath was kindled against them, and many were slain. God pronounced them impious idolaters, and the same record is made today in the books of heaven against those who adore images of saints and so-called holy men.

And this is the religion which Protestants are beginning to look upon with so much favor, and which will eventually be united with Protestantism. This union will not, however, be effected by a change in Catholicism; for Rome never changes. She claims infallibility. It is Protestantism that will change. The adoption of liberal ideas on its part will bring it where it can clasp the hand of Catholicism. “The Bible, the Bible, is the foundation of our faith,” was the cry of Protestants in Luther's time, while the Catholics cried, “The Fathers, custom, tradition.” Now many Protestants find it difficult to prove their doctrines from the Bible, and yet they have not the moral courage to accept the truth which involves a cross; therefore they are fast coming to the ground of Catholics, and, using the best arguments they have to evade the truth, cite the testimony of the Fathers, and the customs and precepts of men. Yes, the Protestants of the nineteenth century are fast approaching the Catholics in their infidelity concerning the Scriptures. But there is just as wide a gulf today between Rome and the Protestantism of Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, and the noble army of martyrs, as there was when these men made the protest which gave them the name of Protestants.” {RH, June 1, 1886 par. 13}

Conclusion:

“One, Mel Gibson and Icon Productions will make a great deal of money. Those distributors who surrendered to pressure from Jewish organizations and passed on *Passion* will be kicking themselves, while Newmarket Films will laugh all the way to the bank. Theater owners are going to love this film.

Two, *Passion* will become famous as the most serious and substantive Biblical movie ever made. It will be one of the most talked-about entertainment events in history, it is currently on the cover of *Newsweek* and *Vanity Fair*.

My third prediction is that the faith of millions of Christians will become more fervent as *Passion* uplifts and inspires them. *Passion* will propel vast numbers of unreligious Americans to embrace Christianity. The movie will one day be seen as a harbinger of America's third great religious reawakening.” - Rabbi Daniel Lapin, 2/12/2004

Question:

1. So far his first two “predictions” are happening. Will his last one occur soon too?