

# Redeeming the Stage and Screen: A Biblical Call for Christian Influence in the Performing Arts

## MINDSET

Baton Exchange, July 2025



In every era, art has been a mirror of society's soul. Film and the performing arts hold extraordinary power to influence minds, shape narratives, and move hearts. As Christians living in a culture increasingly saturated with relativism and brokenness, those called into these creative fields are uniquely positioned to be redemptive influences—ambassadors of the good, the true, and the beautiful in a world desperate for hope. From a biblical perspective, the artist's work is not only permissible but necessary in the mission of cultural renewal.

### **1. Understanding the Christian Artist's Calling**

In Genesis 1:1, the Bible opens with God as Creator. Made in His image (Genesis 1:27), humans are endowed with creativity and the desire to express truth and beauty. The Christian artist reflects God's nature when using their talents not for vanity or self-glory, but for cultivating beauty, telling redemptive stories, and stirring the conscience of society.

Romans 12:1-2 exhorts believers to present themselves as “living sacrifices” and to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” This transformation must extend to how Christian creatives approach their work—not conforming to the patterns of a fallen entertainment culture but setting a higher standard that honors God and edifies others.

## **2. Proclaiming the Good Through Storytelling**

The “good” in biblical terms is rooted in God’s character—His justice, mercy, faithfulness, and love. Christian filmmakers and performers have an opportunity to portray goodness not just through overtly religious content but in how characters grow, how justice is sought, how love overcomes evil, and how hope triumphs over despair.

Jesus Himself taught using parables—stories rich in human emotion, moral tension, and redemption (Matthew 13). Likewise, Christian storytellers can craft narratives that depict sacrificial love (John 15:13), the dignity of the individual (Psalm 139:14), and the consequences of sin alongside the power of grace.

Even when a Christian artist is part of a secular production, they can subtly inject moral clarity, compassion, and integrity through their roles, contributions, and interactions behind the scenes.

## **3. Upholding the True in a Post-Truth Age**

In a culture where truth is often seen as subjective, Christian creatives must anchor their work in objective reality. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6), affirming that truth is not merely conceptual but personal—found in Him.

The performing arts can challenge lies and deceptions by showing consequences of sin (Romans 6:23), exposing hypocrisy, and highlighting the longing of the human heart for something more. For example, a play about forgiveness can cut through societal bitterness. A film that shows the emptiness of fame or materialism can prompt self-reflection and repentance.

Christian creatives must be careful not to compromise biblical truth for popularity. This doesn’t mean every project must be didactic or preachy, but that truth must never be sacrificed for the sake of entertainment.

## **4. Revealing the Beautiful: Aesthetic Excellence for God’s Glory**

God’s creation is filled with beauty—from sunsets and starry skies to music and human emotion. The arts have a sacred role in echoing this beauty. Christians in film and theater should pursue excellence in craft, storytelling, cinematography, and performance not just for applause but for the glory of God (Colossians 3:23).

Theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar famously wrote, “We no longer dare to believe in beauty... We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name... can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love.” Beauty awakens the soul to transcendence. A well-written script, a moving score, a compelling performance—these can act as signposts to the divine.

In this way, Christian artists create space for audiences to encounter something beyond themselves, perhaps even preparing hearts to receive the gospel.

## **5. Personal Holiness and Professional Integrity**

A redemptive influence begins with personal holiness. Christian artists must be vigilant against the temptations prevalent in the entertainment world—pride, compromise, lust, and idolatry. Psalm 101:3 says, “I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless.” Choosing roles, collaborators, and projects that reflect Christian convictions—even at the cost of fame or fortune—is a witness in itself.

Moreover, the Christian's behavior off-stage or off-camera often speaks louder than their performance. Do they show humility in criticism? Are they generous with fellow artists? Are they reliable and honest in contracts and collaborations? A Christian's character can be a light in often dark corners of the industry (Matthew 5:16).

## **6. Being a Missionary in the Industry**

Like Daniel in Babylon or Joseph in Egypt, Christians in the arts often find themselves in foreign and sometimes hostile territory. But God can use them to influence kings and shape culture. Film and theater communities can be tight-knit and spiritually searching. Christian artists must see themselves as missionaries—loving people where they are, being ready to give an answer for the hope within them (1 Peter 3:15), and building authentic relationships that point to Christ.

This may involve prayerfully mentoring younger artists, starting prayer groups or Bible studies, or simply being a steady, peaceful presence in the chaos of auditions and productions.

## **7. Collaborating to Build God-Honoring Projects**

One of the most powerful ways Christian creatives can have redemptive influence is by forming collaborative networks of likeminded artists. Independent films, theater troupes, streaming content, and online platforms allow believers to bypass traditional gatekeepers and produce content that is thoughtful, biblically aligned, and artistically excellent.

Whether working within mainstream studios or building parallel institutions, Christian artists can pool resources to amplify the good, the true, and the beautiful. Organizations like [The Rabbit Room, Act One](#), and Christian media collectives are already doing this.

## **8. Prayer and Dependence on the Holy Spirit**

Finally, Christian artists must remember that it is not talent alone that brings redemption—it is the work of the Holy Spirit. No amount of artistry can change a heart without divine power. So prayer must undergird every script, audition, rehearsal, and production. Pray for co-workers, audiences, and cultural impact.

Jesus reminded His followers, “Apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). As artists abide in Christ, their work can bear eternal fruit.

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## **Conclusion**

To work in the performing arts as a Christian is not a compromise—it is a calling. Through truth-telling, beauty-crafting, and faithful living, believers can bring the light of Christ into one of the most influential arenas of modern culture. In a world of cynicism, spectacle, and confusion, the Christian artist can remind audiences of what is real, what is good, and what is worth hoping for. Their craft, surrendered to Christ, becomes more than performance—it becomes worship, witness, and redemptive power.

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”  
— Philippians 4:8

## **Quotes**

“Art has tremendous power to shape culture and touch the human heart. Its artifacts embody the ideas and desires of the coming generation. This means that what is happening in the arts today is prophetic of what will happen in our culture tomorrow. It also means that when Christians abandon the artistic community, we lose a significant opportunity to communicate Christ to our culture.”

**Ask Your Mentor**

1. Do you see the performing arts as a calling and as something that God wants done in this world? Why or why not?
2. What do you think is the purpose(s) of the performing arts like film and theatre?
3. What are ways that the arts can be redeemed? Do you know some who are a “class act” attempting to do it? Who are they and what are they doing?
4. What other thoughts might you have about the big ideas of this article?
5. How does one maintain their faith while working in the industry?
6. How have you seen God show up in your life as you have worked in the industry?

**Reflect & Respond/Self-Rate- A mentee moment**

*To what degree are you currently trying to live out the above in everyday life?*

1-Not at all, 5-It' what we do! Mark your rating it an x.

	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding the Christian Artist's Calling					
Proclaiming the Good Through Storytelling					
Upholding the True in a Post-Truth Age					
Revealing the Beautiful: Aesthetic Excellence for God's Glory					
Personal Holiness and Professional Integrity					
Being a Missionary in the Industry					
Collaborating to Build God-Honoring Projects					
Prayer and Dependence on the Holy Spirit					

**Creative Connection**

Think of a song, character or person from a book, movie or history, or an everyday item that personifies the main idea of this lesson and share it.

**Go Do. Action step.**

1. Ask God, “Of the behaviors in the Reflect and Respond section, which one would you like for me to focus on in the coming months?” Listen and write down what comes to mind.
2. Trust & obey. What would it look like to trust Him with that as you obey?
3. Practice. How I will practice this over the next month:

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**Go Deeper:** Further Conversation & Study for those who want to go deeper.

*Why are the performing arts something God wants done in this world?*

*Why did He create some people interested in and good at it?*

Google, “What did Francis Shaeffer say about art?” and read his insights on how to think about the arts from a biblical perspective. (If you have AI enabled, it will give you a summary.)

## Sources & Resources

Photo: rawpixel

Organization: <https://www.rabbitroom.com/>

Organization: <https://actoneprogram.com/about/>

Book: [Art for God's Sake: A Call to Recover the Arts](#), Philip Graham Ryken

Article: Is Art Good or Bad? Four Standards to Help You Decide <https://cfc.sebts.edu/faith-and-culture/is-art-good-or-bad-four-standards-to-help-you-decide>

Video: Finding God Through Art, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lKu1f3TWIQQ>

Podcast: The Challenge and Dilemma of Being a Christian in the Arts,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CgcORY15OQ>