

Prayer Bridges into the Entertainment Industry

By Karen Covell



I have worked in Hollywood as a producer for 35 years, and for the past 18 years I've led the Hollywood Prayer Network (HPN), a ministry that seeks to build bridges between the Church and Hollywood through prayer. In all those years I've rarely had a problem with nonbelievers in Hollywood who learn about my faith. The greatest pushback has come from the Church across America. There is a tremendous, long-lasting spiritual battle between the Church and Hollywood.

Christians outside our industry who learn that I'm a Christian working in Hollywood often respond with disdain, pity, and even anger. I believe Satan doesn't want Christians to understand the power of media, arts, and entertainment—and he doesn't want Christians working in those industries!

Why? Because there is power in the word and power in visuals and music. God's beauty, truth, and love are found in creative projects. If Christians held more decision-making positions in Hollywood, the content of TV shows, films, songs, video games, and the Internet would reflect more of Jesus and of God's loving truth and salvation. The enemy wants to stop that at all costs.

Released from Fear

Decades ago, Christians grew afraid of Hollywood. They became angry and judgmental, believing Hollywood is more evil than any other marketplace. Many thought it better for Christians to flee from evil, staying away from the entertainment industry.

As a result, believers left Hollywood and took the light of Christ with them. Hollywood became darker, and the content became more questionable, violent, sexual, and compromising. We expected the nonbelievers who remained to act, think, and create like Christians.

Jesus was not only the greatest storyteller of all time, but He went into places and formed relationships that religious leaders thought were inappropriate, compromising, and foolish. In contrast, Christians today distance themselves from the most powerful and influential industry of storytellers in the world.

Since I founded HPN in 2001, people have placed me on Christian “hate” lists. They have hung up on me during live radio interviews. They have uninvited me to Christian events. The good news is that the situation is getting better. More Christians are willing to give us a chance—praying instead of judging. Some are even sending their young people here instead of refusing to allow them to pursue a career in the arts.

Many Christians are wary or afraid of Hollywood. They talk against industry people and think it’s holier to throw out their TV than to watch it. But this is not biblical. Christians need to free themselves of their fear and judgment of people, created in God’s image, who are shaping culture through telling stories.

The giants are not too big in Hollywood. It’s important to understand that the reason we don’t agree with Hollywood decisionmakers’ choices is that their choices are based on

their own personal worldview—not ours. They aren't bad people. They are actually very intelligent, passionate, and heart-felt people. They just don't yet know Jesus!

Empowered to Pray

We need to empower Christians to pray for entertainment industry leaders. We also need to train young, talented Christians to be strong in their faith, then send them to Hollywood to join the growing ranks of believers working, living, and ministering in the world's most influential mission field.

Encourage young Christians who have a passion to work in film, television, music, news, Internet, social media, or video games to come here. The Hollywood Prayer Network will embrace them, plug them into our wonderful community, pray for them, and offer them opportunities to make an eternal difference!

I founded HPN to challenge the Church to pray because I believe that when we pray for people, we can't hate them. And we can't get angry about the content produced in Hollywood if we don't pray for the people creating it. Their content won't change until their hearts change. Once they are spiritually free, their work will reflect that freedom.

The Hollywood Prayer Network has local chapters in 143 cities. The website, hollywoodprayernetwork.org, offers many prayer resources, including one-to-one prayer partnerships, where intercessors are matched with Hollywood industry professionals to pray for them. You can also sign up for a "Call Sheet" prayer newsletter that lists prayer needs for people, projects, and issues in Hollywood.

God is moving in Hollywood and we want the Church to join Him.

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