

INTRODUCTION

In today's world filled with hectic lives and busy schedules, parents have relied more heavily on media as a tool to help them in their parenting. You'll see it all around you as you stroll into a restaurant and see a young kid staring quietly into his or her tablet (or phone). You'll see it in homes when kids are watching movies so their parents can find time to do chores or cook. And while there is nothing wrong with parents utilizing tools to give them time to attend to daily life chores, it is the things that kids are consuming that has become a greater source of concern.

On the surface, it may seem as if the content available to us (from YouTube to Netflix) appears to be safe, especially with parent's trust on the rating system. But it is still essentially a very flawed system as demonstrated in research from the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Police Center that shows there is more gun violence in PG rated movies than R rated movies.

The media world constantly vies for our attention, eyeballs and pockets. This has led to a growing desensitization of audiences that has begun to create a distorted view of reality and aggressive behavior. By comparison, R rated film in the 1970s are very tame compared to PG versions of today's films.

At the same time, parents have found that banning children from media is not the solution either. Children will always find ways to consume media, whether through schools or at their friend's houses, so the question for Christian families still lingers, "*What can I do to make sure my child consumes the right kind of media?*"

This is why we've created Bible VR. The world of movies, TV and computer games has grown so large that it is all around us and we cannot ignore it. We wanted a safe alternative that is not only fun and educational, but one in which children can also learn more about the history of the Bible in a safe and non-hostile environment.

I started my foray into Virtual Reality during my tenure as a writer, producer and director of over 20 feature films in a 16 year period. Although VR really

began in the 1960s, it was only recently that optical advances and pioneering inventors in the past 6 decades paved the way for low-cost and high quality devices. But it was really the advent of 360 cameras that birthed the idea of Bible VR beginning in 2012. Because Virtual Reality is still a very new technology, we are learning more and more everyday about creating content for the Christian parent and/or student in order to provide them with tools to help them understand the Bible a little bit better.

It has been over 50 years since the Supreme Court decided in *Engel v. Vitale* that prayers were no longer allowed to be practiced in public schools and the Bible could no longer to be taught. In the subsequent years, Christianity has experiences a sharp decline because fewer and fewer people are educated on the Bible in favor of secular sciences.

You do not see this problem in Israel, for example, because their faith is grounded in history and the environment around them. It would only make sense then, that Christians need to be exposed to The Holy Land and understand where historical events, miracles and stories of the Bible took place.

This would have been very cost prohibitive had it not been for the advent of Virtual Reality (VR) that has not only allowed for 360° immersive videos, but also transported the viewers straight into The Holy Land from the comfort of their own home.

Because VR is a relatively new technology in media, many people do not understand how to maximize its use. So, with this book I will not only shed some light into using and understanding VR, but how to use it properly.

VR, like any media, can be used for both good or bad. It is, therefore, important that we properly understand the tools at our disposal so that we can best utilize them. Give a man a hammer and he can pound on a nail, give that same hammer to a carpenter, and he can build you a table. It is my hope that this book can turn you into a ‘carpenter’.

I want to thank you for taking on this exciting journey with me. As a student of learning, I hope that we can all discover this new and exciting world of VR together and utilize it to develop a greater understanding of the Bible, not only for ourselves, but to share with the rest of the world.

I pray everyday for the wisdom and knowledge to continue improving this new technology. I trust we can all pray that the Lord will guide us and provide us with the strength and confidence to enjoy this new technology.

Amen.

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