

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF USING REEL TO REAL

Welcome to REEL TO REAL: MAKING THE MOST OF THE MOVIES WITH YOUTH! Make no mistake, your youth are paying attention to the movies. Their gusto for the big (and little) screen presents a perfect opportunity to relate the life, lessons, and good news of Jesus Christ in a current, meaningful, and fun way. That's why REEL TO REAL is such a helpful and exciting addition to your youth ministry.

Here are some hints for incorporating the Christian images of film in your youths' lives.

1. Thou shalt always preview the entire film before showing it to thy youth group.
2. Thou shalt always get parental consent before viewing questionable movies (see the Student Movie Pass).
3. Likewise, thou shalt keep parents well informed of goings-on at all times. Honor thy fathers, mothers, and legal guardians!
4. Thou shalt never infringe upon the Federal Copyright Act (read The Fine Print).
5. Thou shalt remember—and remind skeptics in thy congregation—that a movie doesn't necessarily have to be a Christian movie to carry Christian messages and themes. Likewise, not all "religious movies" offer Christian messages and themes for thy youth.
6. Thou shalt not think that printed answers to session questions are set in stone. Sometimes there are no right or wrong answers, but REEL TO REAL often furnishes helpful responses in case the group gets stuck.
7. Thou shalt customize sessions and activities to the personality of thy youth group.
8. Thou shalt use the Video Viewing form to help thou quickly fast-forward to selected movie clips. Boredom is not fun!
9. Thou shalt always preview the entire film before showing it to thy youth group. (OK, we realize that this is also the first commandment, but it's *really* important.)
10. Thou shalt have a good time while learning the good news of Jesus Christ.

Q I understand that motion pictures are protected by federal copyright laws. Do these copyright laws apply to showing movies in our church youth group?

A Yes. Under the law, for-profit and nonprofit organizations are required to have a public performance license to show movies, which include purchased and rental videocassettes.

Q How does my church obtain rights to show full-length films and film clips for youth group and other Christian education purposes?

A You need to obtain a public performance license (sometimes called a site or umbrella license) to show movies on home video publicly, even for educational purposes. An umbrella license can be granted by The Motion Picture Licensing Corporation. The MPLC's Church Desk handles these requests. Contact Harald Bauer, Executive Vice President, at 800-515-8855 (fax 203-270-8830).

Q What is an umbrella license and what does it allow the church to do?

A An umbrella license is a 12-month license purchased by your church that enables you to use copyrighted films of your choice for preaching and teaching. If your church purchases an umbrella license, you may use entire videos or clips not only in your youth group with REEL TO REAL, but your pastor may use clips with sermons.

Q How much will an umbrella license cost?

A Generally, the umbrella license costs \$95 for a 12-month period.

Q Are there any less expensive alternatives?

A Yes. Many denominations—through conferences, jurisdictions, dioceses, and other structures—already have public performance license agreements for their churches. Under these agreements, the church office negotiates with the MPLC a much lower rate per church. If your church's jurisdiction has an umbrella license for its churches, your church can qualify for the lower rate. If you're not sure, call your church's jurisdictional offices and ask whether an umbrella license agreement exists or is being pursued.

Q Without an umbrella license, are there ways to incorporate current film and REEL TO REAL in our youth group study?

A Yes. Oftentimes a movie featured in REEL TO REAL is still playing at the theaters or at the "dollar theater." So your group can pay admission price, see the movie during an outing, and discuss the REEL TO REAL session afterward or during another group time.

Another idea is to check out the Coming Attractions on the back cover of REEL TO REAL. Many of those movies are still playing in local theaters. You can make a youth outing of the movie and then discuss it when the next REEL TO REAL comes out.

Q Are there other restrictions, even if we purchase an umbrella license?

A Yes. You may only use pre-recorded videos, such as those purchased legally by an individual or rented from video stores or the public library.

You may not dub selected clips on another cassette to show to your group—the clip must be cued from the original pre-recorded tape. No license exists for showing movies taped from television or cable.

If you have any questions about your legal rights, call The Motion Picture Licensing Corporation at 800-515-8855.

THE COPYRIGHT LAW

- The Copyright Act grants to the copyright owner the exclusive right, among others, "to perform the copyrighted work publicly" (Section 106).
- The rental or purchase of a home videocassette does not carry with it the right "to perform the copyrighted work publicly" (Section 202).
- Home videocassettes may be shown, without a license, in the home to "a normal circle of family and its social acquaintances" (Section 101) because such showings are not "public."
- Home videocassettes may also be shown, without a license, in certain narrowly defined "face-to-face teaching activities" (Section 110.1) because the law makes a specific, limited exception for such showing. *There are no other exceptions.*
- All other showings of home videocassettes are illegal unless they have been authorized by license. Even "performances in 'semipublic' places such as clubs, lodges, factories, summer camps, and schools are 'public performances' subject to copyright control" (Senate Report No. 94-473, page 60; House Report No. 94-1476, page 64).
- Institutions, organizations, companies, or individuals wishing to engage in non-home showings of home videocassettes must secure licenses to do so—regardless of whether an admission or other fee is charged (Section 501). This legal requirement applies equally to profit-making organizations and nonprofit institutions (Senate Report No. 94-473, page 59; House Report No. 94-1476, page 62).



STUDENT MOVIE PASS

Form for Parent's or Guardian's Consent

Youth Leader: It is strongly recommended that each youth in your group receive a parent's or guardian's consent before viewing entire movies that are rated PG, PG-13, or R. Make one photocopy of this page, fill in the Youth Leader section, and send a copy home with each student in the youth group.

For Youth Leader:

Our youth group will be viewing and discussing the religious themes of the movie

_____ on _____.
(name of movie) (date)

This movie is rated _____ for _____

For Parent or Guardian:

I give my consent for _____ to view this movie in a supervised youth group setting. (name of youth)

(parent's or guardian's signature)



The

RATINGS

These are the Ratings Board classifications for movies featured in REEL TO REAL.

G "General audiences—all ages admitted."

- contains nothing in theme, language, nudity and sex, or violence that would be offensive to parents whose young children see the film
- not necessarily a children's movie
- no drug use
- violence is at a minimum
- small portions of language may go beyond polite conversation but are considered common, everyday expressions

PG "Parental guidance is suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children."

- parents must inquire about the film before allowing children to attend
- may have some profanity and violence
- no drug use
- no explicit sex but may be an indication of sensuality
- brief nudity may appear, but anything more must be rated R

PG-13 "Parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13."

- may depict drug use
- may contain only one of the sexual expletives
- Ratings Board may vote for this rating if it feels that the rating more responsibly reflects the opinion of American parents

R "Restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian."

- contains some adult material—language, violence, nudity, sexuality, or other content
- explicit sex is not allowed, although nudity and love-making may be involved
- may depict drug use

It is not the policy of REEL TO REAL to feature R-rated movies. REEL TO REAL will recommend an R-rated movie only if the film deals with a subject matter that must be studied by youth. The filmmaker must also have treated the subject matter responsibly. Only appropriate scenes of an R-rated movie will be recommended.