

I'm a Hard-Shelled Fundamentalist

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A recent newspaper carried a column by Dick Kleiner, a Hollywood reporter, announcing the upcoming release of a new film entitled, *The Rebel Jesus*. It purports to be the story of Jesus after his crucifixion. "It . . . advances the theory that He survived the cross, was healed, went back to his ministry and lived for years...." I am aware of the danger of hasty criticism of an unseen product, but if the news story is correct, *The Rebel Jesus* will out-blaspheme even the super-blasphemous *Jesus Christ Superstar* and its companion, *Godspell*.

Kleiner begins his article by saying, "There's bound to be some angry words from some nervous pulpits when *The Rebel Jesus* is released." I can't speak for my pulpit, but for myself I can say that it indeed makes me angry to see such profane and intellectually bankrupt commercialization of the life of my Lord, the Son of God. If Kleiner is suggesting by "nervous pulpits," that preachers will fear the effects the film will have on believers, he can forget it. Houston and Buchanan, producers of the film, should be nervous, however, for tampering with inspired history.

Buchanan predicts, "Hard-shelled fundamentalists will be offended, because we differ from what is in the Bible." That makes me a "hard-shelled fundamentalist," a rather prejudicial label, to say the least. The movie's theme offends me because it offends my Lord.

"It's all our own story, although lots of people have postulated the thesis that Jesus survived the cross," Buchanan admitted. Yes, and had they done their homework, they would know that the "swoon" theory (that Jesus did not die, but only "swooned" on the cross), invented a number of years ago by infidels to explain the resurrection accounts, has been abandoned by most of them long since. It required more faith than the resurrection.

Maybe I am being a bit too hard on Buchanan and Houston. After all, what can one expect from men who have never produced anything more artistic than exploitation films of hoodlums and motorcycle gangs? Excellent qualifications for a film about our Lord, agreed?

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in the November 14, 1972, edition of *Sentinel*, weekly bulletin of the Sunset Church of Christ, Carlsbad, New Mexico, of which I was editor.

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