

Images of Christ in Film

Many films have a 'Christ-like' figure – a hero or saviour; someone with a particular message who is fighting against an establishment; a central character who 'dies' for a cause, or even returns in a 'new form'. Let's explore some of them now. Such films often have a message of redemption, liberation or salvation.

Work in groups. Each group chooses a movie with which the members of the group are familiar and that fits the above description. Here are some ideas:

- E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial (1982)
- Superman: The Movie (1978)
- K-Pax (2001)
- The Matrix (1999)
- The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008)
- Twelve Monkeys (1995)
- Saving Private Ryan (1998)
- The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005)
- The Alien movies (1979, 1986, 1992, 1997)
- Blade (1998)
- Robocop (1987)
- The Lord of the Rings trilogy (2001–2003)
- The Shawshank Redemption (1994)

With the movie you have chosen in mind, answer the following questions:

Who is the Christ-like figure?

How is this figure like Jesus? Refer to characteristics, actions, life-events and so on.

Why do so many films feature characters that could be described as Christ-like?

What are the dangers of comparing Christ-like figures to the true Jesus Christ?

SECTION B | LESSON 27 | WORKSHEET 1

How can such figures influence audiences? Think of positive and negative consequences.

Imagine you are to write, produce and direct a movie about Jesus. Write about how you would portray Jesus, who you would cast for the role of Jesus, where you would locate the movie, what events from the life and times of Jesus you would emphasise and what message you would try to convey.
