



Gospel Films Archive Seeks Support to Establish Gospel Films Museum

The Urgency of Preserving Christian Film Heritage

A vast resource documenting 20th-century Christian filmmaking is currently at risk of being lost forever. These films offer a unique lens into how the Bible and Christian beliefs were presented to audiences through film and television over the past century. The Gospel Films Archive (GFA) is committed to rescuing and reissuing thousands of religious films produced during this period. Bob Campbell, a film preservationist and co-founder of GFA, is leading the initiative to save these vital resources. Campbell stresses the unparalleled urgency of this mission, noting, "Much of the content cannot be found anywhere else on the planet, and the cultural, historical and spiritual value is simply priceless."

The Mission of Gospel Films Archive

The core mission of GFA is to rescue and preserve a century's worth of inspired film works while preservation is still possible. Even with proper storage, 16 mm film prints inevitably deteriorate over time, making digitization increasingly difficult. Without timely intervention using advanced technology, this irreplaceable celluloid history that exists faces destruction by time and decay, threatening to erase a significant part of our religious and cultural heritage.

A Unique Preservation Challenge

Unlike mainstream Hollywood productions, which benefit from preservation by secular studios, the films targeted by GFA were originally created for church, television, and theatrical audiences. As the digital age arrived, these works lacked a clear path to preservation and gradually faded from public view. To address this gap, GFA launched the [Gospel Films Library](#) website - a cost and ad-free

collection of hundreds of faith-based films. Open to all, the site serves as a valuable resource for exploring this rich tradition.

Creating the Gospel Films Museum

With the Gospel Films Library now freely available, GFA is advancing plans for a much-needed virtual online Gospel Films Museum to serve as a permanent repository for this forgotten history. This museum will act as a bridge between 20th-century faith and 21st-century audiences, documenting and permanently preserving the history of Christian filmmaking from the last century.

Museum Exhibit Resources

Over the years, GFA has assembled an extensive collection of museum-quality materials, such as oral histories, interviews, scripts, articles, filmographies, posters, stills, screenshots, and more. These resources will form the foundation for the planned museum. Sample exhibit topics and materials can be explored at the [Gospel Films Archive](#) website.

A Living Testament to Faith and Film

As the Gospel Films Museum develops, it will serve as a living testament to the countless artists, storytellers, visionaries, and filmmakers who shaped the spiritual landscape of the previous century. Future generations will be invited to explore the intersection of faith and film, gaining insights into this rich and often overlooked aspect of cultural history.

Funding and Support

To launch the museum's first year of operations and foster ongoing growth, GFA requires \$300,000 in funding. This is roughly one-third the cost of producing a small feature film. The organization welcomes donations of any amount and is especially seeking "Angel" donors and "Founder" donors. Once the non-profit museum is operational, continued support will be sought through memberships, philanthropies, grants, sponsorships and endowments. Also, from the sale of Gospel Films merchandise featuring the organization's logo. International Christian Visual Media Association ([ICVM](#)) is GFA's fiscal sponsor. Donations are tax deductible.

Founders of Gospel Films Archive

Founded in 2012 by Bob Campbell, Ron Hall, and Derek Myers, GFA began when these three 16mm film collectors, preservationists and friends uncovered numerous neglected religious films from the past century. Their mission became to track down and preserve as many of these films and television series as possible. Campbell's expertise in film preservation began in 1979, when he proposed to PBS the concept of recreating the movie-going experiences of the 1930s-50s. PBS gave the green light and Campbell and his team created the highly successful series "[Matinee at the Bijou](#) ." In 2024, Campbell, Hall, and Myers extended their preservation efforts to *religious* films, applying the same dedication as they had to *secular* works.

Current Offerings of the Gospel Films Library

The Gospel Films Library currently features nearly 500 titles in 23 categories of film content. These include stories from the Old and New Testaments, documentaries, biographies, movies, episodic series, children's programs, and seasonal films for Christmas and Easter.

Hollywood's Contribution to Faith-Based Films

Throughout film history, many well-known Hollywood figures have contributed to faith-based films. The Gospel Films Archive has uncovered works featuring such names as James Cagney, Joanne Dru, DeForest Kelley, James Mason, Angie Dickinson, James Dean, Thomas Mitchell, Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Hugh Beaumont, Jerry Mathers, and many others from the Golden Age of Hollywood and Television.



Donations are welcome at the [Gospel Films Library](#) and the [Gospel Films Archive](#) websites.

For further information contact Bob Campbell at: gospelfilmsarchive@hotmail.com