

“The Young Messiah” movie

The Young Messiah, based upon Anne Rice's novel *Christ the Lord: Out of Egypt*, is a fictional account of Jesus' youth. In the movie Jesus uncovers the secrets about his Messianic identity. I am grateful for movies that attempt to bring a gospel message to the public, but we also need to be cautious about unbiblical ideas that people will now believe, because they “saw it in a movie.”



Parents who have watched screenings of *The Young Messiah* said, "I can't wait to show this to my children." And there in lies the danger. Children and adults will come away from *The Young Messiah* with definite views about Jesus – some of them very wrong. So if you see the movie, please keep in mind that the Bible trumps a film. There are a number of obvious Scriptural and chronological problems with the movie, so I list them here so that you might be aware of them:

- In the film, Jesus does not know who He is and does not understand the “powers” that He possesses. He does not realize that He is the Son of God. While some Christians have pointed to Luke 2:52 to imply that Jesus naturally had to grow and learn like all other children, there is a profound difference in Jesus needing to develop His human brain and Jesus being conscious that God is His Father. John 1:14 makes clear that “the Word became flesh and dwelled among us.” How could God not know who He was? How could Jesus’s consciousness be unaware? True, He was living in the body of a child and his brain needed to develop, but, at His core, Jesus would surely have known who He was and what His purpose was. The most disturbing element is at the end of the movie the young Jesus still professes that He does not know why He is here.
- The idea that Jesus didn’t know who He was comes from the heretical false gospel entitled *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas* which Anne Rice openly admitted to having used as source material. This document was written in the 2nd century A.D. and is “gnostic.” Gnosticism teaches that you move to higher levels of existence, even godhood, by discovering secret knowledge.
- Jesus is the wrong age. The movie has Jesus returning from Egypt at age 7. The Scriptures has Jesus returning from Egypt at age 2. It is known, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, that King Herod the Great died in 4 B.C. and that Jesus was born no earlier than 6 B.C. Prior to his death, the paranoid Herod orders the "Massacre of the Innocents" (Matt. 2:13-18) targeting males 2 years old and younger in Bethlehem. Jesus' family flees to Egypt and then are told to return to Israel after Herod’s death via dreams (Matt. 2:13, 19-20). This would place Jesus at age 2, not 7.
- Mary and Joseph worry for their son’s safety, all the while trying to shield him from the nature of his true identity. “How do we explain God to his own son?” asks Joseph. The Biblical answer is: “You don’t have to. He knows God better than any religious leader.” (See Luke 2:46-47.)
- Jesus is doing miracles as a child. The Bible is quite clear that Jesus did no miracles until He turned the water into wine at Cana (John 2:11).
- One of the episodes involves Jesus and a bird which He proceeds to bring to life. This action is also found in *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas* and in the Quran 5:110.
- Jesus accidentally kills a bully and resurrects him.
- Joseph has a prior marriage and a son (named James) before Jesus' birth.
- Joseph’s relationship with Mary is nonsexual and emotionally cold. This contradicts Mark 6:3, Matt. 13:55-56.
- A Roman soldier (who is not Jewish) enters into the Jewish section of the temple. This would have never been allowed. If it had happened, there would be a riot and the soldier put to death.