

**“Makes an inspiring case for treating a provocative variety of films as prayers for all seasons.”**

Michael Phillips, *Chicago Tribune*

**“A rare gift to cinephiles and more casual movie viewers alike.”**

Alissa Wilkinson, *Vox.com*

**“A must-read for anyone who has ever felt the pangs of transcendence in a movie theater.”**

Brett McCracken, *Christianity Today*

**“An entirely new way of appreciating the movies I love and the art of filmmaking as a whole.”**

Aisha Harris, *Slate*

**“*Movies Are Prayers* will help Christians everywhere look at film in a whole new light.”**

David Chen, *Slashfilm.com*

**“A needed addition to the library of the prayerful, reflective, movie-loving Christian.”**

Rebecca Ver Straten-McSparran, director, L.A. Film Studies Center

**“*Movies Are Prayers* will have you reevaluating your relationship not just to the silver screen, but to story itself.”**

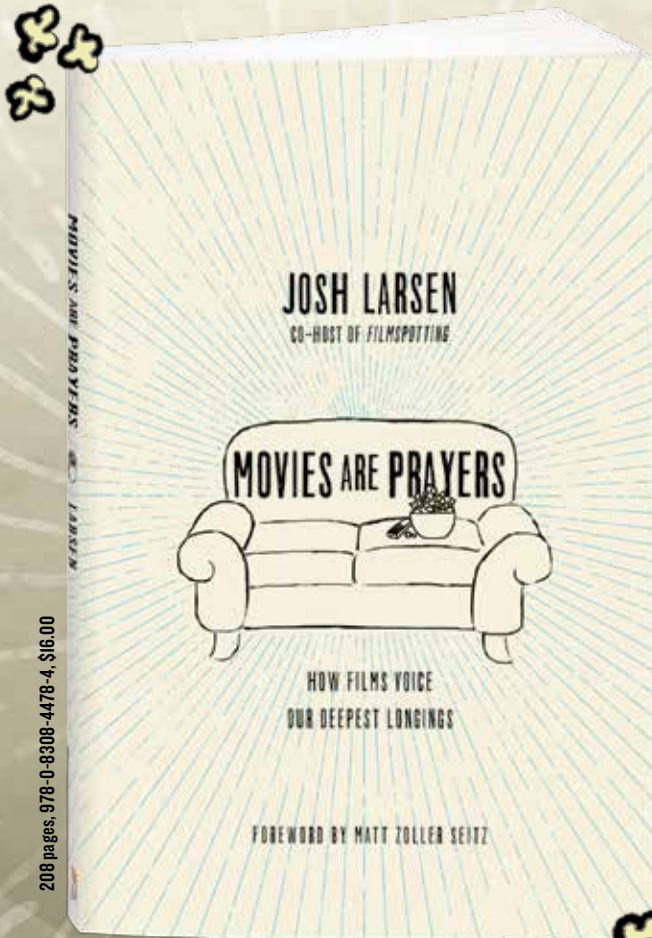
David Zahl, editor of *The Mockingbird Blog*

# MOVIES ARE PRAYERS

NEW BOOK FROM JOSH LARSEN  
co-host of WBEZ's *Filmspotting*

**“An essential book for anyone who thinks of cinema as a place of introspection as well as escapism, and believes that you can find signs and miracles anywhere if you know how to look for them.”**

From the foreword by **MATT ZOLLER SEITZ**, editor in chief of *RogerEbert.com*, TV critic for *New York* magazine



208 pages, 978-0-8308-4478-4, \$16.00

**JOSH LARSEN** is the co-host of the radio show and podcast *Filmspotting*, as well as editor and film critic at *Think Christian*, a faith and culture website. He's been writing and speaking about movies professionally for more than two decades.

Josh's career began in the mainstream newspaper business, where he started out as a beat reporter for a weekly community newspaper and went on to become the film critic for the Chicago-based Sun-Times Media for more than ten years. In 2011, he joined the Christian media landscape as editor of *Think Christian*, and in 2012 he joined the long-running weekly podcast *Filmspotting*, aired on WBEZ in Chicago.

A veteran of the Sundance, Toronto, and Chicago International Film Festivals, Josh has given talks on film and faith at various Christian colleges. He also led the "Ebert Interruptus," a tradition established by Roger Ebert that analyzes a single film scene by scene over several days, at the University of Colorado's Conference on World Affairs. Josh lives in the Chicago area with his wife and two daughters.

**CONNECT WITH JOSH**

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[FILMSPOTTING.NET](http://FILMSPOTTING.NET)

**READ**  
[THINKCHRISTIAN.NET](http://THINKCHRISTIAN.NET)

**“Prayer is exhaling the spirit of man and inhaling the spirit of God.”**

**This book examines the ways movies exhale people’s deepest spiritual longings:**

“This is one of the best books on film and theology I’ve ever read. . . . Packed with insights into how both the content and the form of films can mirror prayer, *Movies Are Prayers* is a must-read for anyone who has ever felt the pangs of transcendence in a movie theater.”

**BRETT McCracken**, film critic for *Christianity Today*

“There’s a lot of writing on film and theology, but a perspective like Larsen’s—fresh, insightful, and interesting for anyone—is a rare gift to cinephiles and more casual movie viewers alike. In *Movies Are Prayers*, Larsen encourages us to rethink movies as not just vehicles for content, but as actual expressions of the heart’s deepest longings.”

**ALISSA WILKINSON**, film critic, *Vox.com*

“*Movies Are Prayers* opened up for me an entirely new way of appreciating the movies I love and the art of filmmaking as a whole. . . . By reexamining an array of movies, including the ostensibly secular (*Trainwreck*, *The Muppets*), via the language of prayer, this engagement with the medium uncovers a different and fascinating approach to film theory.”

**AISHA HARRIS**,

Slate culture writer, editor, and host of the podcast *Represent*

“Spoiler alert: Josh Larsen’s *Movies Are Prayers* will have you reevaluating your relationship not just to the silver screen, but to story itself. . . . Expansive, gracious, and beautifully written. I’m saying a prayer of grateful awe right now.”

**DAVID ZAHL**,

editor of *The Mockingbird Blog*

## TALKING POINTS

- How does *Star Wars* breathe a prayer of obedience?
- How does *Avatar* portray a prayer of praise?
- How does *12 Years a Slave* “exhale” a prayer of lament?
- Where do we see the prayer of anger in *Rebel Without a Cause*?
- How do films such as *Do the Right Thing*, *The Interrupters*, and *Brave* stir up yearnings for reconciliation?

“Movies are our way of telling God what we think about this world and our place in it. . . . Movies can be many things: escapist experiences, historical artifacts, business ventures, and artistic expressions, to name a few. I’d like to suggest that they can also be prayers.”

JOSH LARSEN



Movies do more than tell a good story. They are expressions of raw emotion, naked vulnerability, and unbridled rage. They often function in the same way as prayers, communicating our deepest spiritual longings and joys to a God who hears each and every one.

In this captivating book, *Filmspotting* co-host Josh Larsen brings a critic’s unique perspective to how movies function as expressions to God of lament, praise, joy, confession, and more. His clear expertise and passion for the art of film, along with his thoughtful reflections on the nature of prayer, will bring you a better understanding of both.

LEARN MORE AT

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To request review copies or to schedule an interview, contact the InterVarsity Press publicity team.

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