

Grace Notes

Paranormal Activity

10.27.09



The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons....Watch your life and doctrine closely. (1 Timothy 4:1 & 16)

I had a conversation the other day with a student about the recently released movie, *Paranormal Activity*. For those of you who don't know, *Paranormal Activity* (phenomena unexplained by normal experience) was produced along the lines of 1999's hugely successful *Blair Witch Project*. Simply put, it's filmed more in the genre of a documentary filled with raw footage. In other words, it's hard to tell what's fact—and what's fake.

I've not seen the movie, but I've read some very good interviews with its director, Oren Peli. The movie centers around a young couple who begin to try and find out what all the creepy stuff is that keeps happening at night. Little does the guy know that the girl has dealt with this creepy stuff most of her life. The guy gets curious and sets up a video camera during the night to try and "catch a ghost in the act" of pulling some kind of prank—much like you see on popular shows like SyFy's *Ghost Hunters*. But, things go from mischievous to terrifying very quickly as this dark entity becomes more and more hostile and possessive. This led to some great dialogue between that student—who is a born-again believer—and me regarding what the Bible teaches about "paranormal activity." And, in light of Halloween, I thought I'd share some of that dialogue with you.



According to the Bible, there are no "disembodied human spirits" (a.k.a. ghosts) roaming this earth. 2 Corinthians 5 reminds us that *"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."* Jesus told the repentant thief, *"TODAY, you shall be with Me in paradise."* Furthermore, in the only parable in Scripture that includes a proper name, Jesus describes the Rich Man in Luke 16 as going immediately to hell after he died. In other words, there's no "roaming period" between life & the after-life. *"But,"* you ask, *"what's causing all the 'paranormal activity' that cameras catch on film on television?"* The same thing that caused paranormal activity in the New Testament: demons. And they would love for believers to base their understanding of what demons can and can't do on movies like *Paranormal Activity* which, in turn, can plant within a believer a *"spirit of fear"* which, we know, is not from God (2 Timothy 1:7)



In addition to reminding the student of their position/authority in Christ (1 John 4:4), I said, "Be very, very careful not to develop your doctrine of demons/evil spirits on anything other than Scripture. When we do that—and a lot of believers do—we open our minds up to what the Bible calls *"every wind of doctrine"*. (Eph. 4:14) Movies dealing with paranormal (a.k.a. demonic activity) like *The Exorcist*,

The Exorcism of Emily Rose & *Paranormal Activity* are filtered through the minds of Hollywood directors and producers. Stick to the one true Script—the Bible."

Soli Deo Gloria, Nick