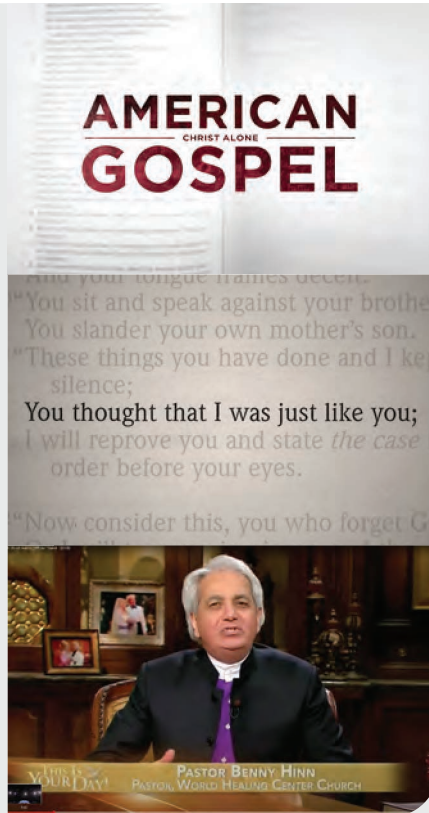


Review

TV: *The American Gospel*

At the moment, Netflix seems to be focusing on documentaries that really shock their audience – with David Attenborough’s *Life On Our Planet* forecasting the end of planet Earth as we know it, and *The Social Dilemma* exposing how social media can control our way of thinking and feeling. I thought that *The American Gospel* would be the Christian equivalent of these fear-factor documentaries. The trailer sets the scene for a two-hour film exposing the blatant hypocrisy and deception in the ‘Word of Faith’ movement in the USA – I expected to despair!

Shocking as the exposure of this movement is, however, the best thing about this documentary is how it focuses on what the gospel *is*, more than what the Word of Faith movement demonstrates it *isn’t*. The documentary is a compilation of interviews with believers who all have a powerful testimony about how the true gospel transforms lives completely. It provides a clear and exciting exposition of gospel truths – and the presentation of these truths alongside the opposing false gospel preached in Word of Faith churches only serves to amplify the awesomeness of the real truth.



Personally, lockdown and separation from church family made fighting the temptation to go into crisis-management mode and be entirely self-reliant harder than ever. I found this documentary was good medicine for my increasing prayerlessness and numb heart – it left me feeling distraught about the scandal of false gospels, but even more than that, rejoicing in the magnificence of what Jesus has achieved for us.

I would recommend this film to all believers for encouragement, but also for equipping in evangelism. It explains the gospel wonderfully clearly and in a way that is useful and

engaging for sharing with friends. It is also a powerful reminder of the urgency with which the gospel message must be shared.

This film is incredibly provocative and stimulates conversation as well as being the most thorough grounding in the gospel that most people will ever hear – why not invite some friends over who don’t know Jesus, and watch it together (COVID restrictions permitting)? ■

Helen Rimell is a medical student at Imperial College, London