

Terminator Salvation (2009)

Reviewed by Eric Larsen

Rated R V – 7/8 L – 2 S/N – 2 Who is my neighbor?

Luke 10:29 (from 10:25-37) 2009 Warner Brothers

A flashback to events in 2003 opens Terminator Salvation. We witness a convicted killer offered an option as he awaits his execution. This event affects everything that follows in the two hours.

There is a Star Wars style crawl that brings viewers not familiar with the Terminator series up to speed. It describes the nuclear annihilation that occurred during the rise of the machines. A military computer system became operational in the hopes of locating and curing a computer virus. However, technology takes over and views humanity as a threat. Lots of violence follows, but in its midst, there are moments that show how those who somehow survived, interact, and try to make a life as they hide from the machines who hunt them.

How does one live in the face of sheer annihilation and in such dire consequences? I chose to focus on these moments of grace. Whereas in previous Terminator movies, someone tries to save themselves or

the future while wreaking havoc as they flee the enemies, here in this apocalyptic vision where all of society has been affected, questions arise about who receives grace. Who receives food, shelter, fuel, or the

warmth of a companion to make it through a cold night? Is the primary goal to defeat the enemy at all cost?

Or does the Resistance intervene for a rescue mission? Are soldiers called to follow commands or to use their minds and their hearts in deciding how to carry out their mission?

For Reflection/Discussion

1. What did you think of Marcus Wright in the beginning of the film, as it went on, and at the end? How do the other characters view him? Who sees him differently as they use their minds and their hearts?

2. Where do you see moments of grace within the story? How do these moments build on each other? Do they?

3. What is there, if anything, to “save” Terminator Salvation? Do the moments of grace outweigh the violence shown throughout?

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