



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 14, 2013

## Man of Steel Draws Strong Parallels Between Superman and Christ

A bird? A plane? Nope. A *Superman* remake. And a darn good one. *Man of Steel* is an exciting superhero flick with some very strong Christian elements. In fact, it is easily the most spiritual of all of the *Superman* films.

Similar to its 1970s predecessor, *Man of Steel* begins on the planet Krypton. Superman's father Jor-El (Russell Crowe) helps Superman's mother give birth to Kal-El (Superman) during the first natural birth to take place on Krypton in a long time, as Krypton's society is highly technological. (The fact that Superman is born naturally as opposed to engineered like most other Kryptonians is actually a significant element in the film, and contributes to the religious parallels).

Like in the original film, the planet Krypton is being destroyed by its own people in their quest for energy. Superman's father, recognizing that his planet is doomed, has issued several warnings to stop the planet's course to annihilation, but to no avail. Wanting a better life for their son, Superman's parents decide to send him on a spaceship to Earth.

Meanwhile, the nefarious General Zod (Michael Shannon) had been focusing his efforts on taking control of Krypton, but has been halted by Jor-El. Zod and his officers are arrested and sentenced to the Phantom Zone. Unfortunately, Jor-El is killed in the process.

The film skips forward a few years, and we find ourselves in Kansas, where the young Kal-El, who is now Clark Kent (Henry Cavill), resides with a loving set of parents, Jonathan (Kevin Costner) and Martha (Diane Lane) Kent.

Clark has had a difficult time hiding his increasingly evident superpowers in fear that he may be a pariah, advice that he received from his parents who openly articulated concerns that he would not be understood or accepted.

Learning of his Kryptonian origins is not an easy pill to swallow for Clark Kent either, adding further to his confusion and difficulties.

For Clark, the efforts to keep his abilities hidden have left him feeling confused and alone. He wanders





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often, taking on odd jobs here and there, doing his best to stay under the radar.

Still, that does not stop him from using his powers to help others, displaying his true altruistic nature.

And when General Zod shows up on Earth with an army of soldiers, Clark's selflessness and desire to aid others takes precedence over his desire to remain invisible.

It is obvious Zod is up to no good, though he attempts to deceive Superman by asking him to surrender himself and spare the human population, a proposition Superman thinks nothing of accepting. It is only when it becomes clear that Zod intends to bring harm to Earth despite Superman's surrender that Superman resorts to violence against Zod and his soldiers.

It's a very good thing for the people of Earth that Superman has learned from the fine examples set for him by both his Kryptonian parents and his Earthly parents. Superman thinks nothing of laying his life on the line for the sake of others.

Superman's natural parents risked their lives to send him to Earth, and put themselves at risk standing up to Zod. And his adoptive parents are equally selfless. His father, Jonathan Kent, risked his own life to save others during a tornado. He often discusses with Clark the importance of making good selfless choices and staying true to one's humanity.

And it's obvious from Superman's choices that the caring parental guidance he received has impacted him significantly. Even when he finds himself in rather dangerous scenarios, he allows his focus to be distracted by the human suffering surrounding him, and stops to deflect harm from innocent bystanders.

Likewise, the people with whom Superman becomes acquainted, most notably *Daily Planet* reporter Lois Lane (Amy Adams), are admirably selfless.

It is no surprise that good prevails in the end for this film. Superman is a truly good and arguably flawless hero, which is why he is often and easily characterized as Christ-like.

In fact, Warner Bros did not shy away from this parallel, having marketed specifically to Christians.

[ManofSteelResources.com](#) serves as a partnership between Warner Bros and MinistryResources.org and presents the sermon "Jesus—The Original Superhero" on its site as an available download to ministers. The site even permitted pastors to screen the film prior to opening weekend.

Warner Bros also provides family resources through the site that makes it easy for families to focus on discussion following the film.

According to Natalie Fertig of Movieguide.org, it is not difficult to see why Warner Bros is making an appeal to the Christian audiences. Fertig [writes](#), "The original writers of Superman were of Jewish decent, and biblical values like unconditional love, sacrifice, and good triumphing over evil are found in the comics."

And *Man of Steel* screenwriter David Goyer admits that biblical parallels are "baked into the DNA of the character."

The parallels between Christ and Superman in *Man of Steel* can easily be seen in the language found within the film as well as in the details.

In the film, Clark's mother tells him that the reality of his existence is a beautiful one and that he will serve as truth and hope for mankind. Likewise, Clark grows up enduring bullying and his father



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explains to him that the world is rejecting him. But like Christ, Clark continues to respond peacefully. At the age of 33, the very same age that many Christians believe Jesus was crucified, Clark learns the truth of his identity and is told by a computerized simulation of his father that he is called to lay down his life. His father also tells him that his role is to “embody both worlds,” referring to his world and that of Earth. His father calls him the “bridge” between the people of Earth and another world, which serves as an allusion for Christians to Christ being the mediator between us and God. When necessary, Clark uses his superhuman powers to heal. There are even moments in the film in which Superman levitates with his arms spread as if on a cross.

The similarities to Christ are undeniable.

There is a moment in the film when Clark visits a church to speak with a priest. In that scene, a vivid image of Christ from a stained-glass window in the background is seen just above Clark’s shoulder. In that scene, the priest discusses the importance of faith.

And there are several times in the film when God is directly invoked.

The Christian elements in the film help sell it as a positive family film. Likewise, there is a significant emphasis on positive parental relationships.

Unfortunately, some of the more harsh violence and the presence of some vulgar language, though not much, may prevent some parents from bringing their children to see the film, at least the younger children. Some of the images from the destruction of Metropolis may be difficult to watch, particularly as it is reminiscent to the attacks of September 11. Some of the violence can be scary for younger audiences, which is likely why it is rated PG-13.

*Man of Steel* possesses all of the attributes that superhero fanatics look for in a film and the credit for that likely goes to famed producer Christopher Nolan, best known for the fantastic Dark Knight trilogy. It is exciting and theatrical and boasts some spectacular effects.

It features powerful performances by some well-known actors and actresses, all of whom contribute to this heavily character-driven story.

Overall, it is one that I would recommend for all families with a small exception only for very young children.



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