

Raiders of the Lost Spark

I was in second grade in 1981; the year Raiders of the Lost Ark was released in movie theaters. In the mind of an eight-year-old boy from a small town, that movie was life changing. It had adventure, exotic locations, and it even had Han Solo from Star Wars in the starring role. During recess at school, my friends and I acted out entire scenes from the movie and talked about snakes and melting faces with a delight only heard by young boys who have discovered a new definition for gruesome. The movie opened up a new world to me. My interests changed overnight from Science Fiction to History and Archaeology. All this changed two years later when our family got its first VCR for Christmas.

Along with the new VCR, Santa Claus had provided my siblings and I with 2 videotapes, The Wizard of Oz, and Raiders of the Lost Ark. I was ecstatic. The problem was that these were the only movies we owned and video rental stores had not yet made their way to our little town in New Jersey. For six months I watched these movies again and again until I could quote every line. With all of this knowledge something occurred, the spark was gone. I was bored with the same film which two years earlier had changed my life.

Ten years later when I was in college one of my friends mentioned he had never seen Raiders of the Lost Ark. Watching it with someone who had never seen it before made a huge difference for me. I saw it anew through his eyes. The spark returned.

I have found that the gospel can be very similar. Many of us are initially amazed with what Christ did for us and His words and teachings are life changing to us. After several years of studying, memorizing, and exegesis of scripture, however, we forget what that spark felt like. We become numbed to the miraculous and begin to simply go through the motions of worship.

If you have ever shared the gospel with someone who has never heard it, you know that that spark is never far away. Looking through the eyes of someone who has never known Christ puts all of our knowledge in perspective and points out what is truly important. As Christ said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 18:3 RSV). When we share our faith with someone who does not know the gospel, it becomes new to us as well. We remember, like children, the amazing spark that brought us to salvation.