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Grace

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Abstract

This is a film review of *Grace* (2023), directed by Natalie Jasmine Harris.

Keywords

LGBTQ, Coming of Age

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Grace (2023), dir. Natalie Jasmine Harris

This is a coming-of-age story in which coming-of-age finds itself in conflict with religious tradition. Sixteen-year-old Grace lives in a family where religious tradition dominates family life. Almost every element of family life is obedient to some form of religious control. Grace is told not to question God in her grandfather's house when she asks why she must be baptized twice. Grace is told that she must repent before she can be baptized. To repent is to apologize to God for your sins. Grace is told that God sees everything and knows all of Grace's sins.

Part of coming-of-age for Grace is experiencing sexual feelings for her friend, feelings that lead to a kiss. She is seen kissing her friend by her sister and it is clear that the kiss is forbidden. Grace has sinned and must repent. In the end Grace is baptized for a second time.

While this is a specific story about Grace, her human nature and religious tradition, the film raises obvious questions about how much of our human nature is in conflict with some religious tradition, why religious traditions should be in conflict with our human nature, and what should we do when our human nature comes into conflict with religious traditions.