## The Dark World of the "Goths"

by Tal Davis



"Give me the remote," Jody said to his sister, Lindsay. He eventually landed on a TV channel featuring a special series of "Gothic" movies. It was showing an old classic 1930s vampire film called Dracula. They were amused as they watched the main character, Count Dracula, parade across the screen wearing a black cape, showing off his sharp teeth, and threatening to

Lindsay said, "That sure is funny, I don't know why people years ago thought it was so scary."

While old horror movies don't seem so scary anymore, they once reflected people's interest in the darker sides of life, including fear and death. Many

## **Goths are SEARCHING** for a place to belong.

kids today still express that interest dramatically by the ways they dress and look. They often wear black clothes, black lipstick and nail polish, have pierced noses and eyelids, dyed and spiked hair, and bizarre-looking tattoos. Onlookers may think they are trying to look like vampires, witches, or Dracula. You may have seen them in your town or school.

These kids are part of a cultural and fashion movement that started in England about 25 years ago by people who called themselves "Goths." The word "Goths" originally referred to an ancient nation that attacked the Roman Empire, but later became a term for books, stories, and movies. like Dracula, with themes about darkness and death.

## What DO They Believe?

The continued popularity of the Goth movement is not easy to explain. Goths do not have any basic beliefs other than their common interest in going against the grain of normal society. Goths are not witches or Satanists (a few may hold those beliefs). Most Goths do not really

know what to believe but are searching for something to live for and a place to belong. Goths are not violent, though many of the images they use have violent or frightening themes. Many are interested in music and art and most just want to be left alone to do as they please.

## What CAN Christians Do?

So how should you, as a follower of Jesus, respond to Goths you may encounter at school, the mall, or in your neighborhood? The answer, of course, is to treat them just like we should treat anyone else: with respect, and not with fear, rejection, or laughter (even if they look like Count Dracula). You may think Goths are strange or weird (or you may think they are cool). In any case, if you are a follower of Jesus, you should remember they are people whom God loves. Be willing to talk to them and make friends with them. You may find an opportunity to share what Jesus means to you and help them find the answers to their questions about life in Him.