

Twelve Reasons Not To See Harry Potter Movies

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"The premiere of Harry Potter the movie will lead to a whole new generation of youngsters discovering witchcraft and wizardry... ncreasing numbers of children are spending hours alone browsing the internet in search of Satanic websites and we are concerned that nobody is monitoring this growing fascination."

Peter Smith, general secretary of the British Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone opened recently at a record-breaking number of theaters across the country. "Christian" as well as public schools bussed their students to see the long awaited movie based on the first book in J. K. Rowling's ground-breaking series. Teachers are facilitating classroom discussions that train students to seek "common ground" and conform to an ever-changing group consensus. While forbidding prayer in the name of Jesus, most schools seem to welcome spells and sorcery in the name of Harry Potter.

The pressure to participate in the fun and frenzy is intense. So what can a Christian child do in the midst of such hype, hypocrisy and popular wizardry?! Those who know God can find answers in His Word. Consider this list of Biblical warnings and wisdom, then put on the Armor of God and pray that He lead you in His way!

1. God shows us that witchcraft, sorcery, spells, divination and magic are evil. He hates those practices because they blind us to His loving ways, then turn our hearts to a deceptive quest for self-empowerment and deadly thrills. Harry Potter's world may be fictional, but the timeless pagan practices it promotes are real and deadly. Well aware that the final result is spiritual bondage and oppression, He warns us:

"There shall not be found among you anyone who... practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord..."
Deuteronomy 18:9-12

2. The movie's foundation in fantasy, not reality, doesn't diminish its power to change beliefs and values. Imaginary (or virtual) experiences and well-written fantasies can affect the mind and memories as much, if not more, than actual experiences. Designed to stir feelings and produce strong emotional responses, a well-planned myth with likeable characters can be far more memorable than the less exciting daily reality — especially when reinforced through books, toys and games as well as movies. Small wonder Harry's fans have been counting the days until their next fantastic journey into Hogwart's classes on sorcery, divination, potions and spells.

"But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jeremiah 7:24

3. Each occult image and enticing suggestion prompts the audience to feel more at home in the dark, paranormal setting. Children identify with their favorite characters and learn to see wizards and witches from a popular peer perspective rather than from God's perspective! Those who sense that the occult world is evil face a choice: Resist peer pressure or rationalize their imagined participation in Harry's supernatural adventures.

The second choice may quiet the nagging doubts, but rationalizing evil and justifying sin will sear the conscience and shift the child's perception of values from God's perspective to a more "comfortable" cultural adaptation. Even Christian children can easily learn to conform truth to multicultural ideals and turn God's values upside down - just as did God's people in Old Testament days:

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness... Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!”
Isaiah 5:2-21

4. God tells us to “abhor what is evil” and “cling to what is good.” (Romans 12:9) But when Christian children and teens love the Harry Potter myths, delight in the movie and read the books again and again, they are desensitizing their hearts and minds to its evil. Turning God’s truth upside down, they are learning to “love” what is evil. The natural next step is to reject God’s wise boundaries and “abhor” what He calls good.

5. Immersed in the values taught at Hogwart’s School for Witchcraft and Wizardry, children become spiritually blind. They lose their natural aversion for the devious spirits represented by the creatures and symbols in this eerie world. Caught up in the exciting story, they absorb the suggested values and store the fascinating images in their minds — making the forbidden world of the occult seem more normal than the Kingdom of God.

“Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.” Colossians 2:6-9

6. This inner change is usually unconscious, for the occult lessons and impressions tend to bypass rational scrutiny. After all, who will stop, think and weigh the evidence when caught up in such a fast-moving visual adventure?! Fun fantasies and strategic entertainment has a special way of altering values, compromising beliefs and changing behavior in adults as well as in children.! This learning process has been named “edutainment” — a favored way to train multicultural citizens for the envisioned 21st century community.! Its power to influence beliefs and behavior is illustrated by today’s marketing firms which spend billions on entertaining ads that touch emotions, ignore the facts, yet motivate people to buy the product.!

“Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things...” Psalm 119:37

7. The main product marketed through this movie is a belief system that clashes with everything God offers us for our peace and security. This pagan ideology comes complete with trading cards, computer and other wizardly games, clothes and decorations stamped with HP symbols, action figures and cuddly dolls and audio cassettes that could keep the child’s minds focused on the occult all day and into night. But in God’s eyes, such paraphernalia become little more than lures and doorways to deeper involvement with the occult. In contrast to that, He calls a person “blessed” who...

“Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful [mockers]; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. Whatever he does shall prosper.” Psalm 1:1-3

It might be hard to escape the symbols that remind people of Harry. His words and phrases help fuel today’s cultural transformation:

- The mainstream media uses the word “muggles” to deride those who don’t want children to read Harry Potter books.
- “A columnist from the Chicago Daily Herald used Harry-Speak.... He said that a particular NBC Olympics commentator was the ‘dementor of the sports commentators.’”
- “Coeur d’Alene, Idaho is going to name this year’s snowstorms after the Harry Potter characters. The first blizzard of the year will be called Albus....”

8. The implied source of power behind Harry’s magical feats tend to distort a child’s understanding of God. In the movie as in the books, words traditionally used to refer to occult practices become so familiar that children begin to apply the same terms to God and His promised strength. Many learn to see God as a power source that can be manipulated with the right kind of prayers and rituals — and view his miracles as just another form of magic. They base their understanding of God on their own feelings and wants, not on His revelation of Himself.

"You thought that I was altogether like you; but I will rebuke you..." Psalm 50:21

9. Blind to the true nature of God, children will synthesize or blend Biblical truth with the pagan beliefs and magical practices demonstrated in the Harry Potter movie. In the end, you distort and destroy any remnant of true Christian faith. For our God cannot be molded to match pagan gods.

"For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water." Jeremiah 2:1

10. God tells us to "train up a child in the way He should go." It starts with teaching them God's truths and training them all day long to see reality from His, not the world's perspective. To succeed, we need to shield them from contrary values until they know His Word and have memorized enough Scriptures to be able to recognize and resist deception. Once they have learned to love what God loves and see from His perspective, they will demonstrate their wisdom by choosing to say "no" to Harry Potter.

"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up." Deut 6:6-7

11. While some argue that Harry Potter and his friends demonstrate friendship, integrity and honesty, they actually model how to lie and steal and get away with it. Their examples only add to the cultural relativism embraced by most children today who are honest when it doesn't cost anything, but who lie and cheat when it serves their purpose.

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased [depraved] mind, to do those things which are not fitting.... They are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning.....who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them." Romans 1:28-32

12. God has a better way. When His children choose to follow His ways, He gives them a heart to love Him, spiritual eyes that can understand and delight in His Word, a sense of His presence and a confidence in His constant care — no matter what happens around us. Harry Potter's deceptive thrills are worse than worthless when compared to the wonderful riches our Shepherd promises those who will ignore evil and walk with Him.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." Phil 4:6-8

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