

A WARNING TO THOSE WHO SEEK TO RAISE WISE CHILDREN OF GOD. PHILIP PULLMAN'S, *HIS DARK MATERIALS* TRILOGY: *THE GOLDEN COMPASS*, *THE SUBTLE KNIFE*, AND *THE AMBER SPYGLASS*, ARE DANGEROUS ATTACKS AGAINST CHRISTIANITY.

Anthony J. Sacco, Sr. Copyright, December 2007

PINE BLUFFS – Amid typical Hollywoodian fanfare, *The Golden Compass* will be released this week. It's a movie based upon Philip Pullman's book of the same name, written in 1996. Non-discriminating or uninformed parents will probably allow their kids to see it, since it's being aimed at children and billed as a wonderful follow-up to J. R. R. Tolkien's foursome, *The Hobbit*, *Lord of the Rings*, *Two Towers*, and *Return of the King*, and C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*. But those who would raise their kids as wise children of God should act quickly to throw a monkey-wrench into Hollywood's latest attempt to undermine Christianity, and Pullman's grand design of turning children off to the God of their youth with this anti-religious screed.

I'm familiar with Pullman's *His Dark Materials* Trilogy. One of these novels was enough for me. I haven't seen the movie, and do not intend to. As a writer myself, I know something about fantasy literature, so I can tell you that this author is an outspoken atheist, and the movie, if it is faithful to the novel, will be blatantly, militantly atheistic. The book, although interesting and well-written, is anti-God and anti-church. It's dark fantasy at its best. Or rather, at its worst.

There's a bigger problem here. Most of the time, our modern media, many unthinking secularists, and even ordinary people, including some Christians, act as if God didn't exist (except for the so frequent, "Oh, my God!" expression, which spews from the mouths of mindless "valley girl" types). News reports and newspapers stories

inform us about terrible disasters, but seldom say a word about praying for the victims. The accomplishments of athletes are praised, but the source of their God-given abilities is seldom mentioned, and athletes who call attention to their Christianity are often shunned. Current popular rap music? Well, we all know it's a crude moral wasteland full of references to "cop killing," and other violent mentions, "ho's, "hookin' up," "shackin' up, "momma's back," and other vulgar sexual references. Dramatic TV programs and movies tell us about what's important in fictional people's lives, but they seldom portray a character with a genuine belief in God, unless it's to subject that character to ridicule. Recently, I saw a movie which I found hilarious and enjoyable, and it was so inoffensive that it is rated PG-13. *Christianity Today* said that it was a family-oriented movie, and it is. But I don't remember a single character who said a word about religious belief of any kind, or about going to church, or about accountability to a higher power for one's actions.

It seems to me that this pervasive ignoring of the things of God is much more dangerous than occasional blatant atheism. We usually see blatant atheism, recognize it, and react to it. But if we aren't careful, we can absorb from the secular world around us, including, of course, the media, the attitude that God is non-existent or irrelevant. In effect, we might become practicing atheists.

Read what one misguided book reviewer had to say about Pullman's so-called Grand Trilogy:

"I just finished reading this grand trilogy to my kids, aged 8, 10, and 12. My wife ended up sitting in on almost the entire series, and all of us were riveted from Oxford to the World of the Dead and back again. These books are incredibly ambitious: they set out to stitch together a religio-political history of the multiverse with deep, informed reference to physics, religious history, adolescent psychology, Nietzschean heroism, etc. etc. etc. The result, as I read it, is one of the most compelling

indictments of church and state ever written for a broad audience. Author Philip Pullman concludes, without didactic hamfistedness, that the first purpose of churches and governments is self-perpetuation through maintaining the ignorance of their adherents and citizens. The greatest wisdom and joy, in Pullman's worlds, comes of full, mortal, bodily engagement with the physical world per se: with domestic comforts, food, sex, art, aesthetic involvement, work well done, craft, cleverness, etc. The well-earned consciousness of a human adult, earned through Blakean experience, is the crowning moment of all creation. Antithetical to this wisdom and consciousness is dogmatic narrowness, asceticism, monasticism, self-denial, narrowness of experience."

Many have already noticed the offensive and destructive nature of Pullman's work. On November 23, 2007, a Catholic District School Board in England pulled this and his other books from the shelves, pending a review and evaluation of the literary, not religious, merits of the books. A good thing? Well, yes and no.

Pulling these books from the shelves of a religious school's library raises the obvious question, "Why were they there to begin with? And any review of "the literary, not religious, merits" of Pullman's work will be a mere exercise in futility, since it is *precisely* the anti-religious, anti-moral, anti-church aspects of this writer's work product that is so offensive to Christians, and so destructive to Pullman's readers, especially the impressionable youth at which they're aimed.

Of course, although those in charge of public education today may not agree, I do not believe that youngsters of any age should be exposed to and indoctrinated by anyone who thinks that "there is no evidence for the existence of God." And that's one of the things so objectionable about today's public schools; something which has created a nationwide movement to home school our kids in order to instill in them a knowledge of their religion, and a firm faith in God and Jesus Christ.

It's time for us Christians to counter attack for God and Jesus. Where Hollywood is concerned, one of the best ways to force them to stop attacking us is to hit them in

the pocketbook. So, I urge you to refrain from reading Pullman's books and seeing this movie. To refuse to allow your children to do so, also seems a prudent action to take, after explaining to them the reasons for your decision. For Christian kids, a far better and more spiritually healthy choice would be C.S. Lewis's celebrated space trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, and *That Hideous Strength*, so firmly grounded in Biblical truths and solid Christian dogma.

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