



The True Golden Compass

Warning! A New "Family" Movie Coming Out this Christmas Proves that All That Glitters is Not Gold

by Heidi and Michael Martin · more articles and resources available at <http://truthquest.net>

Have you heard the buzz? There's a "cool" new movie coming to theatres, and it's poised to become the next family blockbuster. With all the magic of Harry Potter and all the fantasy of the Chronicles of Narnia, this slick, high-production film has a good shot at capturing the imaginations of children throughout the world. Alas, that is the problem, because as this film "wows" and entertains children and their families, it's also slyly advancing a very calculated and dangerous agenda.

I'm talking about "The Golden Compass," the feature film that is adapted from the much acclaimed trilogy, "His Dark Materials" by Philip Pullman. While this film has the appeal to become a blockbuster movie, it also seeks to subtly draw children into the atheistic mindset promoted in the books.

The Golden Compass is the first tale in a trilogy, and while the book is geared for children, many themes are very adult. According to a review by MTV, -yes, MTV- "This is no mere children's story; as actress Eva Green, who plays the witch Serafina, puts it, 'It's more for adults.'" If MTV, of all sources, is saying that parents should beware, then you know there has to be something to the controversy surrounding this film.

In the story, a girl named Lyra "gets caught up in a conspiracy to kidnap children and sever them from their souls."² If this is not disturbing enough to you as a parent, understand that in this movie, a "soul" is manifested outside of the body in an animal form called a daemon (pronounced dee-mon, sound familiar?) that is the person's guide to true wisdom. We'll discuss this further a little later.

But we're just getting started. The villains of this movie are part of the Magisterium, the organized religion or church of this world. That's right; the bad guys are the church people. In the trilogy, God is portrayed as oppressive and senile, needing to be overthrown and killed. Pullman even says, "the book depicts the Temptation and Fall not as the source of all woe and misery, as in traditional Christian teaching, but as the beginning of true human freedom something to be celebrated, not lamented. And the Tempter is not an evil being like Satan, prompted by malice and envy, but a figure who might stand for Wisdom."⁸ These are Pullman's own words. To him our view of good is evil, and evil is really good. Isaiah warns us in chapter five, verse twenty, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." Pullman is headed down a slippery path, and many will follow his views if they are unaware of his teaching.

Consider the prop for which the first film is named, the golden compass. It is a guide to find ultimate truth. This "ultimate truth", however, is found not in God, but in man himself. Unlike the book, the film version of the Golden Compass has been watered-down so as not to offend Christians, but the subtle atheistic themes are still there. One has to wonder, though, how future films in this series will be able to remain faithful to the books unless the atheistic message is allowed its full voice. After all, the plot of the final book in the series is about the defeat and destruction of God by

the story's heroine, Lyra.³

Atheists are excited to welcome this film because it is so anti-god. Annie Laurie Gaylor, co-president of the atheist advocacy group, the "Freedom From Religion Foundation" has said, "Philip Pullman and I would say it is religion that poisons everything... What this book is about is casting off Church authority. I think it's very, very positive. There should be something for free-thinking children. It's a very good yarn."³

Free thinking children? Have you ever noticed how difficult it is for the world to comprehend that those of us who trust the Bible have freely thought about it and freely think the Bible is God's Word? Nevertheless, as a parent, I am very concerned about this movie and these books. Many are unaware of the messages this series will advance, and as children see the film, many will become interested in the less subtle books, falling under the story's anti-God influence without their parents even being aware of it.

As Christians, we need to know what the Bible has to say about these matters. What does God's Word have to say about daemons? What does the Bible have to say about those who say there is no God?

In all my research for this article, I never once saw God's Word quoted. I read many articles that warn people about the Golden Compass, and I saw the "Red Alert!" coming from Christian organizations, but didn't see any Scripture being used as a weapon of truth. If our source of truth is the Bible, then why are we not looking to it for the answers? We are told in the Bible that the Word of God is our sword, our only weapon of offense. People are going to ask questions about this movie, and we had better be prepared to answer. While the movie may be called "The Golden Compass," the true golden compass of truth is the Bible. God's Word leads us in the way we should go, so let's see what the Bible has to say.

First of all, Psalms 53:1 says, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does good." While Philip Pullman considers himself to be a moral and educated man, in God's eyes, he is a foolish and evil man. Too harsh? Remember, those aren't my words, it is God's truth. Pullman believes he is spreading wisdom and enlightened thinking. In reality, however, he is spreading lies and foolishness.

The truth is, I pity Pullman. He has been blinded by the god of this age and is being used as a pawn to spread deception. He scoffs at those who believe in God and Christianity, thinking we are fools, but God says in First Corinthians 1:19-21, "For it is written: 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.' Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe."

I write this because we will surely be scoffed at for standing against this movie. We will be seen by some as crazy fanatics that should be ignored. They will say we have just proved their point by standing up against this movie, marching in lockstep with the

dogma of our naive religion. Be prepared for the onslaught of anti-Christian support for "The Golden Compass."

I also want to further address the idea of daemons. While Pullman's daemons are based in Greek mythology, and are supposedly different from Judeo-Christian demons, I believe they are a subtle attempt by Satan to convince children that demons are harmless, friendly creatures who are there to guide them to real truth and wisdom. If you think I'm being paranoid, check out the official website of "The Golden Compass." There you will find a link to learn more about daemons and how you can discover what YOUR daemon is. Furthermore, Pullman himself says, "the daemon is that part of you that helps you grow towards wisdom."⁸ As I researched for this article, I sensed such a darkness surrounding this movie that it left me with a sick feeling in my stomach. While Pullman may be portraying daemons in a positive light, these daemons are really demons out to deceive.

According to the Bible, demons are not spirit guides, not our conscience, and certainly not our souls. The truth is, demons are spirits bent on destroying us. They are menacing, destructive, deceptive, deadly, and oppressive. They are, without a doubt, our enemies. There are no "positive" demon possession stories in the Bible. In fact, we are warned to resist the devil, to stand against the dark powers of this world, and to be alert for these attacks. Ephesians 6:11-12 warns us that our struggle here on earth is not against flesh and blood but "against this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil."

In light of God's Word, what should our response be? We must stand against the enemy's attempts to deceive us. Of course, some will assert that we should keep an "open mind" and go see the movie anyway. They'll say we should go see the film and decide for ourselves; maybe even find some good teaching and discussion points to consider. Sounds reasonable, doesn't it? The trouble is, the logic doesn't work. Do you really want your money to support this anti-God agenda? What do you need to know? The books this film is based on are written by a self-proclaimed atheist. Really, now, do you need any more reason not to support this film? This movie may well be a Hollywood hit, but do you, as a follower of Christ, want your time and money to *contribute* to its success? Do you really want to *help* push its anti-God message? If you're interested in the movie, do some research. Google it. Whatever. It won't take long for you to find for yourself that the "Golden Compass" and its successors push an anti-God agenda, and that there is a calculated purpose for bringing the films to the big screen. I believe that trying to find something good in this movie to use for the kingdom is dangerous and foolhardy. Children and many adults will not have the discernment to take the good and sift out the evil. I believe it is better to avoid it altogether.

How do we respond, then, when our children beg to see this movie? I say, tell them the truth. Tell them what the overall message of the books are. Next, ask them, "Would God be pleased for us to take part in this story?" Then, explain why you and your family have chosen to avoid this movie.

Most importantly, open God's Word. Show them from God's Word what it says about Satan, demons, evil, and the like. Then, it won't merely be our parental authority that the children must obey, they will also see that your decision is based on God's authority as stated in His Word. Good passages to study include Ephesians 2:1-2; 2 Corinthians 2:11, 11:3, 14-15; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 Timothy 4:1; and 1 John 5:19. Show your children that we are to resist the devil and stand against evil. (See Ephesians 6:10-12, James 4:7-8, etc.) Take them to

passages such as Psalm 101:3-5, which tells us to avoid what is evil. Children will then be equipped with the answers they need when friends invite them to see the "Golden Compass," or when other children begin talking about it. It may even cause unsuspecting children who have seen the movie to rethink its message.

To be sure, there will be plenty more dark and atheistic films and media as we move closer and closer to the end times. The more money a movie like this makes, the more movies will be made in the same genre, not to mention toys and video games. I believe in the end that Harry Potter will seem tame compared to the movies of the future. The Golden Compass illustrates this downward spiral into spiritual darkness.

As I conclude, I must point out how ironic it is that this book trilogy is titled "His Dark Materials." Here is a self-proclaimed atheist being used to promote darkness. His books are Satan's dark materials. Some may say I'm being overly dramatic and dogmatic. Yet, I am only saying what Pullman has said of himself. In a story from the Guardian, Pullman was quoted as saying, "Blake once wrote of Milton that he was a 'true poet, and of the Devil's party, without knowing it.' I am one of the Devil's party, and I know it."⁷

Still, some will say, "What's the big deal? Why make such a fuss? He's entitled to his own beliefs." True, Pullman is entitled to his own beliefs, but that doesn't mean I have to give up my own right to stand up for what I believe. Pullman is obviously pushing his agenda. Why should we, as Christians, be silent about what we believe? For far too long we have been silent and have not spoken out enough. Psalm 40:9-10 says, "I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly." We are supposed to speak righteousness to the nations. We are supposed to stand up for what is right and to denounce evil. So, I will not remain silent about this movie.

Still, others will say, "See, there's another Bible-thumping fanatic who doesn't know anything." Yes, those who stand against this film will be called fools, but as it says in First Corinthians 3:18, "Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a 'fool' so that he may become wise." I choose to be a godly fool then a sage of worldly wisdom. I choose to follow Christ and be a "fool" for Him. I hope you will do the same.

If you're looking for a REAL Golden Compass, there's only one. It's God's perfect Word.

1. MTV Website:

<http://mtv.com/movies/news/articles/1551573/20070205/story.jhtml>

2. FoxNews.com:

http://www.foxnews.com/printer_friendly_story/0,3566,30548700html

3. Snopes.com:

<http://snopes.com/politics/religion/compass.asp>

4. Golden Compass Official Movie Website:

<http://goldencompassmovie.com>

5. About the Author of the Book Series, Phillip Pullman:

<http://philip-pullman.com>

6. A Study in "Daemons," Wikipedia:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daemon_\(mythology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daemon_(mythology))

7. Article from Hutchinson Leader:

www.hutchinsonleader.com/node/5180

8. Question and Answer Session with Philip Pullman:

www.randomhouse.com/features/pullman/author/qa.html

9. "Far From Narnia":

www.newyorker.com/archive/2005/12/26/05i226fa_fact?printable=true