

“You’re Overreacting About Harry Potter”

Dear Ms. Bohlin,

It was with great concern that I read [your article regarding the Harry Potter series](#). You said,

“But there’s one substantial difficulty with the Harry Potter series. They make sorcery and witchcraft enticing to the reader. And that is not consistent with a Christian worldview, where we are called to ‘take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.’ God gives us very strong and clear commands about witchcraft: it is a sin, it is an abomination before God, and the Old Testament penalty for sorcery or witchcraft was death. The proscription against the practice of magic is continued in the New Testament.”

Please know that in Great Britain the state religion is the very Christian Church of England. We can freely talk about God and government at the same time. There is no problem with my son’s school putting on a Nativity play, the Headmistress praying at the school assembly and his teacher teaching about the life of Jesus. England has clergymen from the Anglican (Episcopalian Church in the US) Church in Parliament as representatives. This is a very Christian country and J.K. Rawlings would never make a statement about Christ without being eaten alive and her book banned from every school in the country if it was thought to be of the occult.

The book is getting lots of questions in the US for dealing with wizards, but not here. I think that is because England has such a history of King Arthur and Knights, dragons and other lore. One more story about a wizard is not considered to entice children into witchcraft anymore than any other stories. It is not an issue in the UK. There are few occults in England and no religious right or fundamentalist. The English think the Americans’ obsession with Harry Potter and the occult is weird, unless there is the issue of American Christian’s not being as strong in their faith.

Thank you so much for your insightful letter. The difference between the UK mindset and ours in the U.S. in terms of the King Arthur and wizard mythologies provides a wonderful perspective on the whole Harry Potter phenomenon, and I am indebted to you for helping me see things more globally.

Here in the U.S., the subject of witches and magic is definitely linked to the occult and Satanism (or, at the least, the pagan religion of Wicca), whereas I see how it is probably dismissed as nothing more than mythology in the UK.

Nonetheless, God has still condemned occult practices as a form of idolatry. Perhaps Harry Potter doesn’t stir the imagination in that direction in England, but it certainly does here.

But I hear what you’re saying about how the English could look at us as wierd for our reaction to Harry.

Thank you for taking the time to write!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries