

Final 'Harry Potter' Film Dangerous, Christian Scholar Warns

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part II, the final film in the popular series, still offers audiences some dangerous, forbidden occult content and false religion. So warns family advocate and Christian media scholar Dr. Ted Baehr, chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission.

"The final chapter to the Harry Potter stories, like the books, contains some surprisingly overt Christian allegorical elements," Baehr admits, "but the movie version slightly changes the final confrontation between the hero and the villain to make it even more like a spectacular magical showdown between two sorcerers."

Baehr, a theologian and Bible scholar, pointed out that the God of the Bible strongly condemns witchcraft and sorcery as evil and loathsome in Deuteronomy 18:10-13. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ affirms all of God's law in Matthew 5:17 and other passages.

What's more, Baehr adds, God commands people not to speak to or consult dead people, yet that is exactly what happens in the final *Harry Potter* movie. And yet another problem with the movie, Baehr says, is a line of dialogue suggesting that people who deserve it will be rewarded.

"This goes against Christian teaching. The Bible says that everyone has fallen short of the glory of God and that Jesus Christ died for our sins even though all people are undeserving, evil sinners," Baehr says.

"This line of dialogue may seem to some people like a minor thing or an arcane theological point, but 50 years of research

shows that people, especially impressionable children and teenagers, are influenced by what they see in movies and television. Every Christian—and every religious Jewish person for that matter—especially parents, teachers, clergy, artists and leaders in the mass media, has a duty to guard the hearts and minds of children and teenagers from false, evil ideas that may lead to destructive behavior. Theological ideas are just as important as moral and philosophical ones.”

Baehr advised parents, grandparents, teachers and religious leaders to warn children and teenagers about the dangers of seeing movies and television programs like the *Harry Potter* movies. As Baehr sees it, guardians should teach children to choose the good and reject the bad. Instead of *Harry Potter*, Baehr recommends the *Chronicles of Narnia* movies for younger children and Peter Jackson’s *Lord of the Rings* movies for older children and teenagers.

“Better yet,” he says, “have your children read the books these movies are based on, including *The Hobbit*, which is the prequel to *Lord of the Rings* and is designed for younger children.”

Frodo & Harry, a book Baehr co-wrote with film scholar Dr. Tom Snyder, exposes the dangers in the *Harry Potter* books and movies, including the books’ political attacks on conservative, middle-class values. *Frodo & Harry*, shows how much more redemptive and biblically sound *Lord of the Rings* is compared to the *Harry Potter* books and movies.