



*"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).*

It has been brought to my attention that the movie, "**The Golden Compass**" will be released in theaters this December. It is taken from a trilogy written by English atheist Philip Pullman. It is about a 12 year old girl named Lyra who sets on a quest in search of answers after her best friend is kidnapped. In the story, a malevolent governing body called "the Church", which answers to the "Vatican Council", is known to kidnap children for experimentation. With the help of a golden compass that reveals a coded answer to any question asked by the user, Lyra, by the trilogy's end, gets to the bottom of the missing children and kills a character called "God".

Often theatrics produce pictures and images in direct conflict with Biblical teachings and should be strictly avoided. Attending any type of earthly entertainment should be done with great discernment. Early church teachings recognized this as a form of idol worship. The idol of sorts here being cloaking good with evil. Teaching a little evil is worth alot of good.

St. Clement of Alexandria warns, "It is with a different kind of spell that are deludes you...It leads you to pay religious honor and worship to images and pictures" (c. 195).

After having read many articles regarding this controversial film, I have come to the conclusion that Satan's presence and cleverness are quite evident. There are many arguments that the film is a mellowed version of the trilogy series. If we accept this argument, what prevents a person from reading the actual book, which directly fantasizes about unbiblical concepts regarding the Creator? More importantly, this film is geared towards our children; the most vulnerable and innocent.

How can one even fathom of killing the Creator, our God, who created us in His image, "*So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them*" (Genesis 1:27). He gave us life and when Adam and Eve's fall cursed us to death, He saved us through His blood.

Some may argue that this film is just a fantasy film and by no means is it real. Thus our children would never think about killing God. If we accept this argument, let us define 'fantasy'. According to the Webster dictionary, the adjective form of 'fantasy'

means 'fantasize' which means 'to portray in the mind'. Our Lord commanded us "*And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*" This is the first commandment" (Mark 12:30). It is clearly stated that our mind should be filled with love for God. Since "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8), then our minds should be filled with God; not with thoughts displeasing to Him but with thoughts of love. "*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome*" (1 John 5:3).

Our children are precious gifts, so why expose them to such films? Some may argue that it is just entertainment. Then why promote something offensive to God for mere entertainment? Acceptable standards must be set and we should protect the innocence of our children. Solomon tells us, "*Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards his soul will be far from them*" (Proverbs 22:5). Child psychologists all agree that childhood affects a whole person's life and has a great effect on one's personality. "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*" (Proverbs 22:6).

Are we training our children to carefully analyze what is beneficial and good or what is pleasing to their senses for entertainment?

St. Clement of Alexandria specifically asserts that "...When images are set up, we know well enough, too, who carry on their wicked work under these names. We know who exult in the homage rendered to the images...It is none other than the accursed spirits" (c. 197).

What are our children spiritually benefitting from sorcery, trickery, killings and kidnapping? What is beneficial about using God's name in vain?

We are exposed to a variety means of communication. Be vigilant in discerning what is edifying. St. Paul tells us, "*All things are lawful for me but all things do not edify*" (I Corinthians 10:23). Do not be misguided by Satan's deception. St. Paul urges us, "*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them*" (Ephesians 5:6-7).

Satan's treachery is even evident in the title of this film, "*The Golden Compass*". According to the storyline, it is this compass, a golden one, that provides answers. The Webster dictionary defines

compass as 'a device for determining directions by means of a magnetic needle or group of needles turning freely on a pivot and pointing to the magnetic north' or as 'direction (his moral compass) a guiding, governing, or motivating purpose'. What direction are we taking by supporting this film? What is our compass in life?

Our Lord Jesus Christ clearly told us "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*" (John 14:6). He is our compass, our direction. St. Paul tells us "*Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord*" (Ephesians 5:8-10). Through His love, He saved us out of darkness and brought us to light and is asking us to find out what is acceptable to Him. Let us fill our heart with His love and remember what St. Paul said, "*Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain*" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Our Church will begin her preparation for the Nativity Feast through fasting and prayers. She teaches her children to be ready for the birth of our Savior and to feel the joy and happiness through the Kioahk praises. Let this be an opportunity to train

our children to be focused on Him; for He is the true compass.

May our steadfastness help us as we await the birth of our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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