

Delivered By Grace
Colossians 1:12-13
Rev. Josh Buice

The Potter's Word Vs. Potter's Wand
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Several years ago a woman named J.K. Rowling decided to start a fictional series named Harry Potter. J.K. Rowling, a teacher in London England, had a serious desire to be a writer. She wrote constantly from age six, but was not successful at anything she penned. It was on a train outside of Manchester England that she thought of the idea of Harry Potter. According to Rowling, she sat on the train and thought about the entire idea of Harry Potter for four hours because she didn't have a pen to write down her ideas.

After introducing her initial idea to several publishing houses, they all rejected her manuscript. It was a small publishing house in London that accepted her manuscript due to influences from the owner's daughter, and the rest is history. The rights to publish the book series in the United States were auctioned off and won by **Scholastic inc.** They paid an astounding \$105,000 for the rights to publish the book in the United States.

After the first book was published (*Philosopher's Stone*) in 1997, each printing of the book since the first publication has broken records making the series the fastest selling book series in history. According to Scholastic inc.– the last book in the series – *Deathly Hallows* sold 8.3 million in the first 24 hours!

Since day one, children have lined up at book stores with parents in hand in order to buy the latest Harry Potter book. The entire series equals a massive 4,195 pages. The sorcery and magical mystique of the series keep children on the edge of their seats as they inhale the pages of their latest Harry Potter treat. From the perspective of Scholastic inc., J.K. Rowling, film makers, and everyone else who is making money on the series – Harry Potter is a slam dunk success, but to many in the Christian community – it has turned into a nightmare where much parental explanation is necessary. According to author J.K. Rowling, *Albus Dumbledore*, head wizard over the Hogwarts school, is gay. This revelation was given by Rowling in New York during a question and answer period after Rowling read from her book on stage in Carnegie Hall. Although it is not explicitly revealed in the pages of the book, children all over the world are hearing the news through television media, internet publications, and other news channels. What does this do for the children? According to many parents, it confuses children and causes major hurdles that should not be crossed in a Harry Potter series.

The gay community is celebrating this revelation as a step in the “right direction” and as an opportunity for gay education, but Christians are calling it a bad publicity stunt that should have been avoided due to the fact that children are involved. What should be the response to this latest revelation in the Christian community? Are these Christians over reacting a bit? Is this a great tool to teach children about the issue of Homosexuality? The correct response from the Christian community should be outrage and opposition to this revelation. It is a bad publicity stunt that was most likely planned before the New York appearance of Rowling. This provided an extra spark in news attention for the latest book – which is the last one in the series. Listed below are several reasons why the Harry Potter series should be avoided by all Christians.

Christians Should Oppose Witchcraft: Rather than being involved with witchcraft, sorcery, magic, and other issues contained in the Harry Potter series, Christians should remain opposed. Many Christians have purchased the series for their children over the years since the first publication. Most Christians who have purchased the series have claimed that the series is only “make believe” and that other Christian parents should not over react on the issue. Others have claimed that the series does not pose any threat to their children because it is not “real” witchcraft or sorcery. Where does the Christian go for advice on Harry Potter? The answer to that question is the source for all truth – Holy Scripture.

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 – This passage of Scripture addresses the issue of Christian living. The issue addressed by Paul in this text is separation from the wickedness of the world. According to Paul, light and darkness do not have any fellowship together. The imagery of this passage paints a vivid picture for the Christian. Although we are called to evangelize and reach the lost culture with the message of Christ, we are not to continue in the same paths that we once walked as a non-Christian. Those ways of life and entertainment are completely opposed to the ways of Christ. The sorcery, magic, and wizardry of Harry Potter is directly connected to the Wicca movement (witchcraft organization). Wicca is directly opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ – and it is also connected to Satanic practices. Therefore, it should be abundantly clear that Christians should not have anything to do with Harry Potter for that reason alone.

Ephesians 6:10-20 – Paul speaks to the Christians in Ephesus about the spiritual battle of the Christian life. While the Christian does not truly believe in ghosts and goblins walking down the street on Halloween, we do realize that a spiritual battle rages beyond the visible world all around us. Paul calls these spirits “rulers of darkness.” We must realize that a real battle is raging spiritually – and we have a responsibility to oppose the “rulers of darkness” with the gospel. Harry Potter embodies a “dark” feel as everything is mysteriously built upon the foundation of witchcraft. Christians should not purchase or allow their children to read such literature since this entire movement is opposed to the gospel. John MacArthur (pastor and author) said the following about the issue of Christian involvement in Halloween. “If we as Christian parents simply disregard the unChristian aspects of such practices as mere fantasy or superstition and then encourage

our children to participate in them, we run the risk of communicating the message that the spiritual battle waged by the rulers of darkness (Ephesians 6:10) is not to be taken seriously (<http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/HALOWEEN.HTM>).” I think the same counsel should be given in regard to Harry Potter – which is closely connected to the Halloween.

Practical Reason: Unfortunately, it has taken this incident with Rowling to allow everyone to see her agenda. Although she may not have a clear gay agenda, she does have an agenda that is opposed to God. Christians should pray for her salvation while opposing her book. All wickedness has an agenda that seeks to drive people away from a Christian worldview – and Harry Potter is no different. From sorcery, witchcraft, and now the latest development with a homosexual twist – Harry Potter is a “hat full of problems” rather than rabbits. The correct response to the Harry Potter is complete opposition with the goal of communicating to others that Harry Potter opposes everything that Christians stand for.

Conclusion: Christians should teach children to read the Bible rather than Harry Potter. Imagine if parents would teach their children the wonderful stories (which are truthful) found in Holy Scripture. Stories about miracles in the Old Testament (parting of the red sea) and New Testament (healings of diseased people) seem much more power packed than those found in the Harry Potter series. The excuse of language barriers regarding the Bible and children are only excuses and not reality. Many more difficult words are found in Harry Potter than in Holy Scripture. Below are some words found in the pages of Harry Potter:

1. Hippogriff Buckbeak
2. Animagus
3. Expelliarmus
4. Squib
5. Quaffle
6. Centaur

The children reading Harry Potter would have no problem reading the Bible – in fact, they could read through the King James Version without any problems at all! It is important for Christian parents to teach their children to fall in love with Holy Scripture rather than Harry Potter. How should parents teach their children to be engulfed with the pages of Scripture like others are with Harry Potter? By demonstrating the same love and passion for Scripture as the world has for Harry Potter, parents can set a marvelous example for their children. Imagine the wonderful results that would be visible in the lives of children and families if they were all saturated with The Potter’s Word rather than Potter and his wand!

All for the glory of God!

Rev. Josh Buice