

# The Grace of God



"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us..." (Titus 2:11-12).

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## **"The Golden Compass" - Know Before You Go** Daniel R. Vess

One of the most exciting movies out this Christmas season will be the highly advertised *The Golden Compass*. Scheduled to open December 7th this fantasy film looks to be a blockbuster starring Nicole Kidman and Daniel Craig. From the armored polar bears to the witches encountered by a twelve-year-old-heroine this movie is aimed at a young audience and labeled as a family movie.

All the glitters is not gold. The Catholic League has dubbed *The Golden Compass* as "atheism for kids." The movie is based on English author Philip Pullman's award-winning "His Dark Material trilogy." Pullman is a proud atheist and secular humanist who is an honorary member of Britain's National Secular Society. He hates C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* which is pro-God and pro-Christianity. Pullman hopes that his trilogy can show the other side. His books are anti-religion but mostly anti-Catholic. Mr. Pullman has gone on record to say, "I don't profess any religion; I don't think it's possible that there is a God; I have the greatest difficulty in understanding what is meant by the words 'spiritual' or 'spirituality.'" Columnist Peter Hitchens states that Pullman is the kind of writer "the atheists would have been praying for, if atheists prayed."

In a 2003 interview Philip Pullman admitted, "My books are about killing God." Each book becomes progressively more aggressive. In the third book *The Amber Spyglass* a boy and girl depicting Adam and Eve kill God, who is called YAHWEH. After which, everyone can do as they please. The villainous Church in the series is known as Magisterium [Catholicism teachers that only their "Magister" (the Pope) and his bishops can interpret the word of God properly - DH]. Christianity is described by an ex-nun character in

the book as "a very powerful and convincing mistake." The series follows the adventures of 12-year-old heroine, Lyra. She is on a quest to rescue a kidnapped friend and then to deliver the fantastical universe in which she lives. As a result she fights the forces of the Magisterium, which excuses the kidnapping of kids for experimentation. Do not be deceived into thinking Pullman is just out to attack the Catholic Church. One of the characters in the series of books explains the author's viewpoint, "Every church is the same: control, destroy, and obliterate every good feeling."

However, the movie is not as aggressively anti-Christianity as the book. In fact, Britain's National Secular Society has protested the film-makers have watered-down the book's anti-church vision. The film has been toned down to be more of a general attack on dogmatic authorities. Yet, Bill Donohue, president of The Catholic League, has warned, "We are fighting a deceitful stealth campaign on the part of the film's producers." Critics of this film believe that parents will take their children to see the apparently harmless, fairytale and later buy the books for the children for Christmas. An excellent marketing plan is to use the movie as bait for the books. This way Pullman can have his wish to kill God in the minds of a young generation of readers.

Pullman's *The Golden Compass* is just another chapter in the never ending assault on Christianity. In the 1980s we had Martin Scorsese *The Last Temptation of Christ*. More recently we have had Dan Brown's *The DaVinci Code*. Earlier this year came a documentary by James Cameron, *The Lost Tomb of Jesus*. All of these are efforts to undermine the faith of the weak and bolster the insolence of the atheists. The only difference is, now they are targeting the youth. They attempt to do this not with evidence that there is no God, but with a fairytale to kill Him. However, if parents are forewarned they will know before they go what is the motive behind the movie.

## **Pastor's Wife: Church Is a Divorce Asset**

MINEOLA, N.Y. (AP) - The estranged wife of a pastor claims her husband blended his professional and personal finances so

thoroughly that his church should be counted as an asset in their divorce.

A judge agreed in a decision published this week to hear arguments on the claim, and he ordered a financial appraisal of the church. Lawyers said it could represent the first time anyone in New York state has tried to treat a religious institution as a marital asset.

The wife argues that her husband of 31 years used his Brooklyn church as a "personal piggy bank," setting his own income, spending the congregation's tithes as he pleased and running a catering business from the building, according to the decision by state Supreme Court Judge Arthur M. Diamond. The couple's names were redacted from the decision.

The wife said \$50,000 of the couple's money went into starting the church, and that the church property is partly hers. "That church is no different than any other business he might have opened," said the wife's lawyer, Robert Pollack.

The pastor maintains he is simply a church employee, and the institution's funds should not be considered his, according to Diamond's decision. "My

client can't own the church," said the minister's lawyer, Eleanor Gery. A message left at the church was not immediately returned early Friday.

[Comments: (1) God reveals a plurality of "pastors" or "elders" for each local church (Acts 14:23), not just one. (2) It is also clear that people think godliness is a way of earthly gain (1 Tim. 6:5). (3) A true "pastor" must also have his house in order in order to be qualified (1 Tim. 3:2, 4-5). -dwh]

**PEOPLE TO REMEMBER & PRAY FOR**

White family, Sawyer Sims, Jean Gambrell (back), Johanna Fletcher, Othena Kinnard (In Nashville), Wesley Geer, Mag Bumbalough, Mary Cox, Monie Petty, Dave Poteet (NHC 230), Marilyn Poteet-Langford, Betty England, Joe Smith, Thelma Klein, Nathan Hill, DeLeesa Price, Ed Williams, Michelle Austin, Lydia Poe, Larry Bumbalough, Jake Hale, Joshua & Misty Poteet, Carolyn Williams, Kenley Streeval. Matthew Taylor (leukemia), Joyce Simmons Wagner, Lorene Myers (Rece's Grandmother).

**THINGS TO REMEMBER**

- **Radio Program** - Every Sun. 2pm, AM 1050 WSMT
- **Home Bible Study** - Sat. Nov. 24
- **Ladies Class** - 2nd & Last Sunday Each Month
- **Business Meeting** - Sun. Nov. 25
- **GM** - Ron Daly, April 2008.
- **GM** - Lanny Smith, Oct.12-17, 2008.

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