

# The Golden Compass - Know Before You Go

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 a honorary member of Britain's National Secular Society. He hates C.S. Lewis's 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. 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 kidnaped 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 kidnaping 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, 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 books' 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's 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 about the motive behind the movie.