

## On Faith, Fantasy and the Occult

As a young child I was introduced to the children's novels by C.S. Lewis called The Chronicles of Narnia. The most famous is titled The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Christians across the land embraced these books as wonderful stories depicting the gospel in mythological form. The author was embraced as a deep theologian whose writings and quotes permeate the sermons and writings of numerous Christian authors to this day. Being an avid reader and a highly imaginative child I was inspired and did not connect these books with the words in 1 Timothy 4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

However, several years ago I was reading a book by John MacArthur which explained that the atonement of Jesus Christ was to satisfy the wrath of God against our sins.

**Ephesians 2:1-3(KJV)** "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

When Jesus bore the wrath of God for our sins at the cross, He covered all the sins of all men for all time. His gift was for anyone who would receive Him as Lord and Savior and accept Jesus as the substitute who bore God's wrath in his place. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." **John 3:16**

Through this revelation I suddenly understood the difficulty with seeing The Chronicles of Narnia as an allegory of the Christian faith. In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Aslan must pay the White Witch for Edmund's treachery through his own death. The deceptions laid in this book include:

- In the novel The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, Edmund's treachery was a debt owed to the Witch requiring the blood sacrifice of his life. The only way to save Edmund's life was for Aslan to sacrifice himself to the Witch. This story, if translated as an allegory of the Christian faith, depicts that Jesus had to give His life to pay Satan for mans' sins so that man could be freed. This is a lie. The Bible tells us that the wrath of God is upon all sinners for their sins and that Jesus bore the wrath of God upon Himself so that anyone who would believe in Him could be forgiven and united with the Father.

**Ephesians 5:6** "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."

**1 Peter 3:18** "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,"

**Romans 5:9** "Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his (Jesus') blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."

• Thus C.S. Lewis' novel depicts Aslan and the White Witch as equal in power. To translate this to faith in the Bible, it makes one believe that Jesus and Satan are also equal in power. This can lead to fearing the devil as much as fearing Father God. This in turn can lead to fearing men equally with fearing God. In contrast, the scripture says:

**Matthew 10:28** "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Only God has the power over man's eternal destiny.

Shortly after this, the Holy Spirit helped me to see the way that my faith had also been compromised by Lord of the Rings. This fantasy novel makes it seem as though it is man's job to save the world from evil. Frodo's quest to save Middle Earth is complicated by the fact that he has only himself and his friends to rely on for help. How contrary to the scripture! Jesus has already saved the world before we were born. We walk with Him and we are never alone. We have the guidance of the dear Holy Spirit, the grace of Jesus and the love and resources of almighty God when we abide in Him and He abides in us. None of us are on a quest to save the world. The Bible teaches that Jesus has come to seek and to save that which was lost and to bring all who will receive Him into right relationship with the Father through His propitiation and atonement for our sins.

See this article:

Christian Romanticism, the INKLINGS and the Elevation of Mythology by Richard and Linda Nathan

<http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/006/nathan/romanticism.htm>

This article not only clarified these issues but showed the tremendous damage done to both children and adults when books of fantasy are mixed with faith. The mixing of the two can lead to a faith based on dualism. For those who know nothing of the occult it opens the door to absorbing lies into their faith. For those who come from an occult background, seeing Christians embrace fantasy novels based on occultism can result in the belief that they can have both worlds. The practical outworking is that people use both their understanding of the Bible and of the occult to deal with the problems in their lives. One major issue documented by Rene Girard shows how communities historically used scapegoating to deal with their problems. Embracing dualism allows the practice of scapegoating to continue alongside asking the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. Rene Girard's research embraces the Biblical view which tells us that Jesus Christ became our substitute at the cross and put an end to the practice of scapegoating by bearing God's wrath for the sins we have committed against Him. See <https://www.iep.utm.edu/girard/>

When dualism is embraced this practice of taking justice into a community's own hands through scapegoating rejects the complete work of Jesus Christ to meet all our needs for forgiveness.

And so the issue is not whether you have sinned and are a sinner, but rather what you choose to do with your sins.