

Harry potter and the gospel

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The story of Harry Potter is one of the most celebrated stories in the world, but has also been the subject of much controversy, especially among Christians.

Some claim that it promotes witchcraft, a few even going so far as to say that the author of the stories, J. K. Rowling, is a witch herself. “ J. K.

Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series, is a witch and in league with Lucifer himself. She is a lunatic and freak straight out of the pits of Hell ...” (Author unknown) Far too many have the audacity to claim these things without having even read the books. Despite what many Christians may say, Harry Potter does quite the opposite of encouraging witchcraft: it presents Christian ideas to the world.

Love for enemies, self-sacrifice, courage, and repentance from past wrongs are just a few of these ideas. It is not, however, only the prevailing themes of the books that promote Christianity. The characters themselves often represent biblical figures. Some of the figures represented are Jesus Christ, God the Father, the Holy Spirit, Satan, Jesus’ disciples, the Pharisees, atheists, and followers of Jesus. Harry Potter is often portrayed as a figure of Jesus throughout the series. When reading the books that bear his name, however, one should remember that Harry does not always represent a figure of Christ.

Harry is very much like anyone else in the world. He suffers all the struggles everyone else goes through. He doesn’t always handle them well. It is for this reason that Harry is not a true representation of Jesus Christ, but there are times that he displays very Christ-like attitudes and actions. Even though

Harry is not at all perfect, he does have quite a few similarities with the Savior (Neal 179-181). When Harry Potter was just a baby, his parents were killed by Lord Voldemort, the evil dark wizard who wanted immortality and would go to any lengths to get it.

The infant Harry was placed in the care of his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Dursley. He grew up quietly, hidden from the world, unrepresented in the pictures on the mantle, deprived of love from his only family. Jesus also had a very quiet existence as a child, though as far as the modern world knows, he was neither hidden nor unloved by his own family. When his ministry on earth began, he was suddenly in the spotlight.

People flocked to hear the great teacher, hoping for a revolution, coming away disappointed when all they heard were expressions of love toward enemies, or impending doom, depending on the day. This was the much-anticipated Messiah? This man would save them from their oppressors? Harry Potter got much the same reaction when people heard that a little baby had destroyed You-Know-Who. Ten years later, he returned to the magical world, full of expectancy at what it could show him, but he never imagined it would show him fame and fortune. He was suddenly thrust upon the stage, unsure of what to do in front of millions of people. All he wanted was a normal life. At least, as normal as life could be for a wizard.

The magical world, however, had other ideas. At Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, students whispered, stared, and pointed. Harry could have been one of the most popular kids in school. He could have used his fame to become popular among the other students. However, when the

time came to decide what crowd to fall into, Harry chose the outcasts (Kimbrough).

He refused to shake the hand of Draco Malfoy, son of a wealthy and influential wizard, and instead chose to offer his own hand to poor Ron Weasley, Muggle-born Hermione Granger, somewhat-less-than-genius Neville Longbottom, eccentric Luna Lovegood, and many others. Jesus himself did the very same thing, befriending despised tax collectors, uneducated fishermen, hated Samaritans, disabled beggars: the outcasts of society. In doing so Jesus made an enemy of the “popular” crowd: the Pharisees and other religious leaders. In the end, it was those very people who killed him. He willingly gave himself up to die for the same people to whom he had extended the hand of friendship. It was Jesus’ willing sacrifice that truly saved people from oppression.

Harry also gave himself up for those he had befriended, knowing it was the only way to destroy Voldemort. “I didn’t defend myself! I meant to let him kill me!” as Harry says right after his death (Rowling, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, 708). He made a willing sacrifice: a sacrifice of his own life in order to destroy Voldemort. In most cases, that would be the end of Harry’s story, but as he has shown through the years, Harry is not like most cases. He returned from among the dead, healthy and whole. One does not have to be a Christian to see how that resembles Jesus Christ.

It is also worth noting that both Harry’s followers at Hogwarts and Jesus’ disciples wanted and expected revolution and the destruction of tyrants. Jesus knew revolution would ultimately do nothing. He knew that sacrifice

was needed (Neal 254-255). By the time Harry arrived at the Battle of Hogwarts, he did not yet know what he would have to do, but he knew that fighting back wasn't what was really needed. He left the fighting to the others while he carried out Dumbledore's plan. Albus Dumbledore is the infallible picture of God the Father, until one reads the seventh book in the series.

It is there that his dark and very human past is revealed, and Harry begins to doubt his headmaster. Up to that point, however, his actions are much like that of God. Even in Harry's first year one sees the similarity. At the Feast at the beginning of the year, Dumbledore tells the students, " I must tell you that this year, the third-floor corridor on the right-hand side is out of bounds to everyone who does not wish to die a very painful death." (Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, 127).

He said this because of Fluffy, the giant three-headed dog that guarded the way to the Sorcerer's Stone. He said it to protect his students, but he was under no obligation to tell them why they could not go there. Dumbledore didn't have to tell them about Fluffy (Neal 21-22). If he had, the students would have wondered why there was an enormous dog hidden in a school and then would have grown curious. Much the same thing happened in the Garden of Eden.

God told Adam and Eve not to eat of one tree in the garden because he wanted to protect them from the evils and dangers it would bring. He assured them that if they ate the fruit from that tree they would die. God didn't tell them about sin, however, or curiosity would have shown its face,

just as it would have for the students of Hogwarts. At the end of Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, the race for the House Cup was won. Slytherin House had the most points, and certainly the most pride.

Dumbledore, however, had not finished giving out points. At literally the last minute, he awarded Gryffindor House 170 points, which boosted the House from last place to first. God does this quite a lot, holding his followers in suspense until all seems lost, seeing how long their faith will hold, and then in less time than it takes to blink, changes one factor, and the tables are flipped upside-down. Jesus, while on earth, healed many who were beyond help, changing their lives forever. He calmed a storm that could have killed His disciples, raised people from the dead, came back from the dead himself when His disciples were despairing.

God rescued Peter, Paul, and Silas from prison. Everyday He changes a small factor in the life of one of His followers that radically changes that believer's life (Neal 41). Dumbledore is undoubtedly a kind person, one of the kindest people in the entire series, but, like God, he can also display wrath (Neal 118-121). Harry first saw this wrath when Dumbledore burst into Professor Moody's office at the end of Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. At least, everyone thought it was Professor Moody's office.

It was really Barty Crouch Jr. who occupied the office and taught for a year at the school, disguised as Professor Moody by Polyjuice potion. One can easily see why Dumbledore was angry to discover that there had been an impostor, a Death Eater no less, at Hogwarts right under his crooked nose for an entire year. However, Harry was still shocked to see Dumbledore furious. At that

moment, Harry fully understood for the first time why people said Dumbledore was the only wizard Voldemort had ever feared. The look upon Dumbledore's face as he stared down at the unconscious form of Mad-Eye Moody was more terrible than Harry could ever have imagined.

There was no benign smile upon Dumbledore's face, no twinkle in the eyes behind the spectacles. There was cold fury in every line of the ancient face; a sense of power radiated from Dumbledore as though he were giving off burning heat. (Rowling, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, 679) This rage is one of the last things one would expect from the merry, considerate, and understanding old man from the preceding books; yet it is not at all contradictory to Dumbledore's kind nature. He was angry at the deception of evil, how it tricked and used his students, the fact that it felt no remorse, even enjoyed its ruse. Dumbledore's anger was righteous anger. God displays righteous anger many times throughout the Old Testament.

Whenever his people rebelled against him, he let them be enslaved by other nations. When Jesus was on earth, he too showed righteous anger when he cleared the temple in Jerusalem of the money changers. Whenever God gets angry, it is because evil is blinding his people. The evil they practiced blinded the Israelites several times in the Old Testament, and the evil in the temple distracted those who had come to worship from their original purpose. God seeks to open the eyes of his people, and to do that he must help them banish the evil that blinds them. Because of the evil that controls the world, all will give an account of their actions to God.

Barty Crouch Jr. was likewise forced by the truth-telling potion Veritaserum to tell Dumbledore exactly what he had done and why he had done it (Neal 121-122). In the Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Dumbledore, this time representing Jesus, drank a potion that caused him extreme pain, both physical and emotional (Neal 190). He drank a literal cup of suffering in order to help destroy evil. Jesus drank a figurative cup of suffering on the cross to overthrow evil, and it, too, was both physical and emotional.

More noteworthy, however, is the fact that both Jesus and Dumbledore pushed away bigotry at their deaths, one of the last things most people would worry about if they knew they were going to die (Neal 191-192). Jesus invited a thief into heaven as they both hung on their crosses. Dumbledore asked Draco Malfoy, his potential killer, not to use the word “Mudblood” in front of him. It is not obvious that all three aspects of the Trinity are represented in the Harry Potter series. Fawkes, Dumbledore’s pet phoenix, represents the Holy Spirit.

Fawkes is perhaps the best representation of part of the Trinity, having no flaws whatsoever. Fawkes’ phoenix song often gave Harry strength as the Holy Spirit often gives believers strength (Cherrett). When Harry is in the Chamber of Secrets, Fawkes brings him the Sorting Hat, which in turn gives him the sword of Godric Gryffindor so that he can kill the deadly Basilisk. Before he knows what to do with these unexpected gifts, Fawkes’ mere presence gives Harry courage: He might not see what use Fawkes or the Sorting Hat were, but he was no longer alone, and he waited for Riddle to stop laughing with his courage mounting. (Rowling, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, 400) In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, when <https://assignbuster.com/harry-potter-and-the-gospel/>

Harry's wand connected with Voldemort's, he heard phoenix song: And then an unearthly and beautiful sound filled the air.

. . . It was coming from every thread of the light-spun web vibrating around Harry and Voldemort. It was a sound Harry recognized, though he had only heard it once before in his life: phoenix song.

It was the sound of hope to Harry . . . the most beautiful and welcome thing he had ever heard in his life. .

. . He felt as though the song were inside him instead of just around him. . .

. It was the sound he connected with Dumbledore, and it was almost as though a friend were speaking in his ear. . . .

(Rowling 664) The song of Fawkes emanating from his wand gave Harry hope and strength enough to not break the connection between his and Voldemort's wands. The Holy Spirit gives hope and strength to God's followers, whispering to them to not give up. Fawkes bears another resemblance to the Trinity, Christ specifically: he swallowed a death curse to protect Dumbledore (Granger 20). In the Harry Potter and the Order of Phoenix, Dumbledore comes to help the Order of the Phoenix, where he fights Voldemort. Voldemort sends a Killing Curse at Dumbledore, but just at the last minute, Fawkes appears and literally eats the curse, saving Dumbledore.

Since Fawkes is a phoenix, he would soon be resurrected. Jesus too, took the hit of the death curse for his people, and was resurrected. Unsurprising, then, that the phoenix, which traditionally dies and is then resurrected, is a <https://assignbuster.com/harry-potter-and-the-gospel/>

symbol of Christ. Lord Voldemort, or You-Know-Who as most call him, is most definitely a picture of Satan. Even his appearance is described as snake-like.

Because a snake was the form Satan took to tempt Eve, it has become a symbol of Satan. Voldemort is a master of lies. He knows, just as Satan knows, that the best and most convincing lies are sprinkled with a bit of truth. In Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Voldemort's lies got inside Harry's head, the most prominent of which was the lie that lured Harry to the Department of Mysteries. Voldemort knew that the best way to get Harry to do what he wanted was to make it appear as though someone he loved was in danger. Voldemort used Harry's great qualities to lead him into his clutches.

Twisting people's thoughts is one of his favorite pastimes. Satan, even called the Father of Lies, does this very thing daily, planting ideas and warping thoughts so that people do what he wants them to. He makes it seem as if they are doing something great, noble even, when they really are acting on a lie: a well conceived lie veiled with truth and seemingly good intentions. Not only is he a liar, but Voldemort is also a tempter. Disguised as a dragon-egg dealer, he tempted Hagrid with a dragon to get information on the Sorcerer's Stone (Neal 27). He tempted his followers with power and glory, then expected them to do his bidding.

Satan is of course, the master tempter, waving pleasure, power, and money in people's faces, promising more than he would ever really give them. As soon as they make a grab for what is being offered, Satan jerks it away, letting them fall. They all fell, showing just how convincing Voldemort could

be, and how destructive the results were. Hagrid put himself and the rest of the school in danger, while the Death Eaters lived in fear of their master and ravaged the magical world, all the time thinking they were on their way to power and glory. Whenever someone bends to temptation, they hurt others, as Hagrid and the Death Eaters show.

There are at least three of the twelve disciples represented in Harry Potter: Judas Iscariot, Simon Peter, and Thomas. Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus to his killers, an act mimicked by Peter Pettigrew. Pettigrew was one of James Potter's closest friends at Hogwarts, along with Remus Lupin and Sirius Black. Even after school they were close friends. Pettigrew was a weak personality, however, following James like a puppy. When Voldemort found him, Pettigrew was so afraid that he gave in to Voldemort's evil plans.

At the time, Sirius was the only person who knew where the Potters lived, and being their Secret-Keeper, was also the only one who could tell anyone where they were. Hoping to keep Voldemort from knowing who the Secret-Keeper was, Sirius suggested to the Potters that they make Pettigrew their Secret-Keeper instead. When they did, Pettigrew ran to tell Voldemort where they lived. Voldemort, intent on killing Harry, went to their house, killed the Potters, and attempted to kill Harry. The resemblance of Peter Pettigrew to Judas Iscariot is remarkable. Judas Iscariot was not the only person who could tell Jesus' enemies where he was, but none of the other disciples would have.

His betrayal resulted in the death of Jesus, who would rise from the grave and thus defeat Satan, just as Harry would defeat Voldemort. Another character who could represent Judas Iscariot is Marietta Edgecombe. Not a

central character, Marietta was Cho Chang's friend, Cho being Harry's first crush. In Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Harry and his friends formed the D. A.

(Dumbledore's Army) in an unknown protest against notorious Professor Umbridge. Marietta was an unwilling participant of the underground student society, brought to a meeting by Cho. She told Umbridge where the D. A. was meeting so that her mother wouldn't lose her job under Umbridge at the Ministry of Magic.

Umbridge put a stop to the meetings, in a way killing the society. There is another similarity between the three betrayers: a demise brought on by their own actions. Marietta, unaware of the curse that resulted in betrayal of the D. A., ended up with the word "sneak" written across her face in pimples for the rest of her life.

Pettigrew was killed by his own silver hand that had been a reward for service to Voldemort. Judas, overcome with guilt, hanged himself, after being rewarded with 30 pieces of silver. Despite his failings and mistakes, most people would rather be compared to Simon Peter than to Judas Iscariot. Peter was the disciple who protested when the soldiers came to take Jesus away to his death. "Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear.

" (John 18: 10) This was his form of protest against the soldiers. He didn't want Jesus arrested, so he struck out at his enemies, but Jesus knew that he had to go with them. "Jesus commanded Peter, 'Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?'" (John 18: 11) Likewise, Hagrid
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protested Harry's death, though with words instead of a sword. Voldemort had frozen where he stood, but his red eyes had found Harry, and he stared as Harry moved toward him, with nothing but the fire between them. Then a voice yelled: " HARRY! NO!" He turned: Hagrid was bound and trussed, tied to a tree nearby.

His massive body shook the branches overhead as he struggled, desperate. " NO! NO! HARRY, WHAT'RE YEH - ?" " QUIET!" shouted Rowle, and with a flick of his wand Hagrid was silenced. (Rowling Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, 703) Hagrid's protest, though quite different in appearance from Peter's, was the same in intent. He thought Harry was giving up, and he wanted him to keep fighting, just as Peter wanted Jesus to keep going instead of letting himself be arrested. Later, Peter denied having ever known Jesus.

After Peter repented, Jesus forgave him and welcomed him with open arms. Similarly, Ron left Harry and Hermione when he got sick of not finding enough horcruxes for his taste. However, as soon as he could, Ron returned to them and apologized (Neal 236-239), and Harry gladly welcomed his friend back, showing Christ-like forgiveness. Most people have heard the name " Doubting Thomas," referring to one of Jesus' disciples. Thomas, unlike the other disciples, did not immediately believe that Jesus had returned from the dead. He wanted proof.

" Unless I see the nail marks in his hand and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." (John 20: 25) Jesus soon gave him that proof, but scolded him for not believing without having

first seen. “ Then he [Jesus] said to Thomas, ‘ Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’ Thomas said to him, ‘ My Lord and my God!’ Then Jesus told him, ‘ Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

” [John 20: 27-29] Hermione was certainly a “ doubting Thomas” when it came to the Deathly Hallows (Neal 243-245). The idea of a wand that was more powerful than any other wand was simply ludicrous to her. “ The Deathstick, the Wand of Destiny, they crop up under different names throughout the centuries, usually in the possession of some Dark wizard who’s boasting about them. Professor Binns mentioned some of them, but – oh, it’s all nonsense. Wands are only as powerful as the wizards who use them. Some wizards just like to boast that theirs are bigger and better than other people’s.

” (Rowling, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, 415) Another Hallow, for which Hermione even had evidence, was the Cloak of Invisibility. The trio was almost certain that Harry owned it. Yet even with evidence, Hermione stood firm in her disbelief. She was a rigid believer in the fact that no spell or magic could bring back the dead, which was what one of the Hallows, the Resurrection Stone, claimed to do. It brought back the souls of those who had passed on, but they did not belong to the world of the living and were miserable. Hermione refused to believe it existed.

She was proven wrong when Harry realized that a former horcrux was actually the Resurrection Stone. Pharisees were the major opposition Jesus

faced in his ministry, and Harry too had Pharisee figures in his life: pure-bloods who were in Slytherin House at Hogwarts. They were proud to say that there was no Muggle blood in their families, and they hated those who did have Muggle blood. They even hated those who liked Muggles. There were, of course, exceptions, such as the Weasleys and others who were not in Slytherin at Hogwarts.

Mr. Weasley was fascinated by Muggles, and his children had Muggle-born and half-blood friends. The Weasleys' opposites were the Malfoys, some of the proudest Slytherin pure-bloods Harry ever met. The Malfoys despised the Weasleys for their tolerance of Muggles. They refused to so much as talk to Muggle-borns, unless it was to taunt them. Many other Slytherins, most of whom were pure-bloods, though there were some half-bloods, hated Muggle-borns as well.

Almost all Slytherin pure-bloods hated Harry, some because he had Muggle-born friends, and some because he defeated Voldemort when he was just a baby. Voldemort himself hated Muggles and Muggle-borns, and anyone with Muggle blood in their family, despite the fact, or perhaps because of it, that he himself had a Muggle father. Voldemort was very dignified about his hatred, however, whereas his followers were simply barbaric. The Death Eaters tortured and ridiculed Muggles in Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire: A crowd of wizards, tightly packed and moving together with wands pointing straight upward, was marching slowly across the field. .

. . High above them, floating along in midair, four struggling figures were being contorted into grotesque shapes. It was as though the masked wizards

on the ground were puppeteers, and the people above them were marionettes operated by invisible strings that rose from the wands into the air. Two of the figures were very small. .

. . The floating people were suddenly illuminated as they passed over a burning tent and Harry recognized one of them: Mr. Roberts, the campsite manager. The other three looked as though they might be his wife and children.

One of the marchers below flipped Mrs. Roberts upside down with his wand; her nightdress fell down to reveal voluminous drawers as she struggled to cover herself up as the crowd below her screeched and hooted with glee. “ That’s sick,” Ron muttered, watching the smallest Muggle child, who had begun to spin like a top, sixty feet above the ground, his head flopping limply from side to side. “ That is really sick. .

. .” (Rowling 119-120) Ron summed the situation up quite well, but the Death Eaters didn’t stop there. They killed Muggles and Muggle-borns for no reason whatsoever, except unexplainable hatred. At the beginning of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Voldemort killed Charity Burbage, who had been the Muggle Studies teacher at Hogwarts up until that time, and then let his pet snake, Nagini, clean up the body with the chilling words, “ Dinner, Nagini.

” (Rowling 12). Voldemort and his Death Eaters could most definitely be said to greatly surpass the status of Pharisees, but the presence of hatred and pride over race is the same. The Pharisees were proud to be Israelites, were proud of their law and their prophets. Other races, if not considered inferior

to the Israelites, were at least considered impure. Only the Israelites were God's chosen people, and they were proud of that fact.

The only race they explicitly hated was the race of Samaritans. Israelites were forbidden to associate with Samaritans, instantly becoming unworthy of Israelite blood if they so much as talked to one. The Pharisees were in constant conflict with Jesus, challenging him, trying to catch him in his words, trying to arrest him, and failing miserably. If one good thing can be said for both Pharisees and pure-bloods, it's that they were very persistent in their campaign against "impurity." There is one very prominent character in the books that was very much like a Pharisee: Dolores Umbridge. She enforced rules at Hogwarts that were not only ridiculous, but also extremely restricting on the students and even the teachers of Hogwarts.

One rule said that teachers could not tell students anything that didn't strictly deal with their subject. Another banned *The Quibbler*, the only magazine that told the truth about Harry. Any student found with a copy would immediately be expelled. The Pharisees also made extravagant and utterly ridiculous laws, the most talked about during Jesus' ministry relating to what one could or could not do on the Sabbath. The Harry Potter books even contain characters that represent modern-day groups. Atheists are represented by Uncle Vernon and Cornelius Fudge.

Uncle Vernon refused to acknowledge the magical world; atheists refuse to believe in the spiritual world, much less acknowledge it. However, Uncle Vernon resembles an atheist in another way as well: no matter how hard he tried, he could not stop Dumbledore from inviting Harry to Hogwarts (Neal

11-13). He burned and ripped Harry's letters to shreds, even moved his own family away. He took them to a little hut in the middle of the sea, and that still didn't stop Dumbledore's invitation from reaching Harry. Much the same thing happens to atheists. They do everything in their power to blot God out, but it never works.

God always wins the fight, and they can't do anything about it. Cornelius Fudge also tried to shut something out: the return of Lord Voldemort. He denied that Voldemort was back, denied that his power was growing, and attacked those who believed the truth. The second group represented in Harry Potter is believers in Jesus Christ. This group is represented throughout the entire series by all those on the side of good.

All their struggles, failings, hardships, triumphs, and loyalties show what believers experience in their lifetimes. As has already been stated, Harry is both a Christ figure and a believer figure. One of the first times that he showed himself to be a figure of a believer was during his first feast at Hogwarts. He was Sorted that day, and at that point the reader undoubtedly wants him in Gryffindor, or at least not in Slytherin. Draco Malfoy had already been Sorted into Slytherin, and Harry had recently made an enemy of him.

When the Sorting Hat suggested Slytherin to Harry, he immediately told it no. Harry made a choice, but at the same time the Sorting Hat chose to place him in Gryffindor. It is the same with believers. A choice must be made by them, but at the same time they are predestined to follow Christ (Neal 19-20). All believers have hard times after they accept Christ, and one of the hardest is when they have doubts: doubts about God, about themselves,

about others, about their abilities, about their own salvation. Harry also experienced doubts.

He doubted Dumbledore, his intentions, and plans. Harry wanted many times to simply give up and hide away forever, but he kept going (Neal 252-253). Harry did what he knew Dumbledore had told him to do, find and destroy Voldemort's horcruxes, even though there was another option: finding and using the Deathly Hallows. This happens to believers too. They receive a clear call from God to do something, but after they've responded to the call, other ideas show themselves.

The believer doesn't know what to do. Is the new idea also from God? The best results usually stem from the believer following what they know God told them to do. That's what Harry did, and it paid off even better than he had expected: Voldemort was destroyed. Ron is also a believer figure. After his return to Harry and Hermione, Ron told them how he'd found them. The Deluminator, which Dumbledore had passed on to him after his death, had taken him to the forest Harry and Hermione were hiding in.

Ron described a light that had entered his heart and taken him back to his friends. This is an illustration of what happens when a person accepts Christ. God's light enters their heart and leads them where they need to go. The light guides and directs them throughout the rest of their lives (Neal 239-241). Lily Potter is one of the best examples of a true believer.

In her childhood, she befriended unpopular Severus Snape, yet when he strayed and she could not bring him back, she severed ties with him. If one knew more about Lily, one could probably find many other Christian

characteristics in her, but her most famous act was her last. Though Voldemort would not have killed Lily, even told her to move out of the way, she refused to leave her child unprotected. Instead of saving her own life, she sacrificed it for another. Though it could be argued that because of her sacrifice she is a Christ figure, Lily did not return from the dead.

Instead, she became a martyr the moment the killing curse hit her. This is obviously a Christian attitude. There are many other examples of the Gospel in the Harry Potter series, but the point has been made: Harry Potter is anything but a series that promotes witchcraft. It is quite the opposite. Through strong characterization, J. K.

Rowling quietly slips Christian ideas, attitudes, and behaviors into people's minds. One must wonder why any Christian would protest that. It would make more sense for a Christian to encourage people to read it. However, God is full of surprises. Who knows? Perhaps the controversy is a good thing. Some people could be easily drawn to witchcraft and need Christians to keep them away from anything that could potentially lead them into occult practices.

Nevertheless, Christian ideas are the foundation for the Harry Potter books, and the ruthless attacks on the series are unfounded. Christ's love is shown far more in the series than in the assaults against it. His love is shown in the friendship the characters have for each other, the affection they show for the less fortunate people they encounter, the things they do for even their worst enemies, and the sacrifices they make for each other. " Greater love has no

one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus Christ, John 15: 13 Works Cited Author unknown.

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