

Harry Potter Inspired

Andrew Peterson is one of my favourite authors and musicians.

He also blogs at The Rabbit Room and recently posted some comments about Harry Potter. I was at bible college when the Harry Potter phenomenon began to mushroom – and, in particular, the debate in Christian circles



as to whether Harry Potter was bad or good, became heated (I remember receiving a newsletter from a ministry family asking us all to pray against this evil work of the forces of darkness).

I decided that it was impossible to make a decision without reading the books. And so I did – and was instantly catapulted to my place of childhood safety and serenity, the pages of Enid Blyton (I know, I know), Willard Price, The Hardy Boys, Capt. W. E. Johns and Biggles (Yay!), Arthur C. Clarke, Asimov, Tolkein and Lewis et al. It was in those lands/seas/galaxies/moominvalleys that I first explored my own identity, pushed my own imaginary (yet real) boundaries, and faced defining challenges and conundrums. I concluded that Harry Potter was only a danger in the same sense as all the rest – the risk of escape to the imagination – which can be such a rewarding risk.

So I agree with Andrew Peterson. And here's an excerpt from his post, but read it all.

...Of course the books aren't perfect; of course, in a seven-volume saga, there will be inconsistencies, theological inaccuracies, moments of inconsistency; of course Rowling's worldview isn't going to align perfectly with yours. If you only read books that met those criteria your list would be

short indeed.

But listen: we're free to enjoy the good and the beautiful, even from the most unlikely places. We're free—and this is huge—to look for the light in people (and things!), to give them the benefit of the doubt, to laud their beauty, to outlove unloveliness—in short, to love as Christ loves us. That includes billionaire authors like J.K. Rowling. She didn't grow up in the Bible Belt of America; she grew up in England. And yet, in defiance of a culture that tends to snub its nose at Christianity, she wrote a story that contains powerful redemptive themes, stirs a longing for life after death, piques the staunchest atheist's suspicion that there just might be something beyond the veil, and plainly shows evil for what it is—and not just evil, but love's triumph over it.

*As for the witchcraft debate, I heave a weary sigh. No, God doesn't want us to practice witchcraft. Of course he doesn't. I've read arguments on both sides of this, and believe we could spar for days without doing a lick of good. (By the way, no debate is raging over Glenda the Good Witch of the East in *The Wizard of Oz*. Most Americans have probably seen that film and/or read that book, and didn't start conducting seances on the weekends—though the flying monkeys have creeped me out for years. And Oz, when compared to Potter, is practically bereft of Christian meaning.)*