

Baptist pastor writes Bible study for Harry Potter movies

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HUSTONVILLE, Ky. (ABP)—With the recent DVD and Blu-ray release of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, the eighth and final film in the long-running series based on books by J.K. Rowling, a Southern Baptist pastor has written a Bible study to help young people discern between the series' mixed messages about good and evil.

"Depending on who you talk with in the evangelical community, you'll receive a variety of opinions concerning Harry Potter: 'Christians shouldn't watch it,' 'Christians can enjoy God through it' and even, 'It's of the devil!'" author Jared Moore writes in [The Harry Potter Bible Study](#).



Moore, pastor of New Salem Baptist Church in Hustonville, Ky., and a Baptist blogger who contributes to SBC Voices, admits the stories contain "some evil elements," but he believes they are "still an avenue through which Christians can enjoy God."

Moore, a graduate of Liberty University and [Southern Baptist Theological Seminary](#), contends that instead of trying to shield their children from all worldly influences, parents should teach them to discern between truth and lies. "One way to help our children cultivate discernment in this wicked world is to engage in the media wars with them as a guide," he writes.

In the study, Moore confronts some parts of the Harry Potter series that some evangelicals find objectionable—the element of witchcraft and wizardry, occasional inappropriate language and the central role of revenge.

He then draws out other positive messages for discussion, such as "Are we willing to lay down our lives for our enemies?" "Should Christians stand up for truth?" and "Are all humans equally valuable?"

He even finds fodder for current issues, including "Should Christians use performance-enhancing drugs as they participate in sports?" and situation ethics in "Is telling untruth ever permitted by God?"

"In God's world, all truth is God's truth and all lies are Satan's lies," says a description on the book's dust jacket.

"The Harry Potter series, like all forms of media, presents truth and lies interwoven into a complicated web. The purpose of this Bible study is to help Christians take every thought captive to obey Christ as they untangle this web."

Moore writes in an appendix that some Christians avoid watching scary movies because they fear it will cause them to doubt that God is in control.

"First, if you doubt God, scary movies are not the reason; rather, scary movies merely bring to the surface the doubt that is already there in your heart," he asserts.

"The answer to your sin problem is not attempting to minimize your outside influences," he writes. "You should be able to face scary situations, whether voluntary or involuntary, without doubting God. Rather, your answer should be to pray, memorize Scripture and face voluntary fears while believing what God has said in his perfect word."