

Christ, His Word, salvation, heaven, and the walk of the child of God, and continue to feed them the Bread of Life and streams of living water.

Hebrews 12:1, 2 "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Barb Dykstra

RESPONSE TO "READING WITH THE HEART"

After reading the article "Reading with the Heart," in the 1982, winter *Perspectives* I am very concerned and alarmed. I believe that Brother VanDerSchaaf is in error on many key points and cherishes these fantasy stories to the point that he is forcing them into a Biblical framework into which they will never fit.

On page 20, Mr. VanDerSchaaf in reply to his own question of why God is in fantasy stories states "Because in writing good fantasy, man is retelling a myth, and God is the source and subject of all great myth. What is God doing in a fantasy story? He is revealing Himself to man. He is leading man to Himself." Almighty God does not use myth to lead man to Himself, God only uses Scripture and creation. Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Lewis and Tolkien both draw heavily from the pagan mythology which the apostle Paul condemns as idolatry. How then can Lewis and Tolkien combine Christ with Belial, yoke together righteousness and unrighteousness? II Corinthians 6:16, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Mr. VanDerSchaaf goes on to show us that "high" fantasy literature is a Christian endeavor by paralleling metaphors and anthropomorphic language used in Holy Scripture with that of fantasy. Let us turn to Isaiah 40:18, "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare Him?" How dare anyone contrast the Second Person of the Trinity with a half-animal, half-human, wizard, hobbit, or a talking lion! Blasphemy against the Most Holy One. God is a consuming fire and a jealous God and will punish

such image worship. Deuteronomy 4:16-17, "Lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast."

We are not even allowed to make mental images of God or Christ in order to serve Him better. Mr. VanDerSchaaf writes that he contends "that any image, or series of images, that reveals God to me, or enables me to better appreciate my Lord and His Word is not blasphemous." This is Roman Catholicism! The metaphors used in Scripture are inspired by the Holy Spirit and cannot be compared with a "subcreator" such as Lewis or Tolkien, these men are not scriptural in their pictures of wizards and talking lions.

In Revelation 5:5 Christ is called the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." Rev. Hoeksema in his book *Behold He Cometh* describes Christ as "the symbol of royal majesty and power to conquer and to subdue, as well as to reign and to be acknowledged as sovereign." To represent Christ in all His glory and might, in a fantasy book is a violation of the second commandment. Mr. VanDerSchaaf writes that he doesn't believe these portrayals are blasphemous, but I would like to see Scriptural proof why he believes this way.

I believe fantasy literature with its appeal to philosophy and intellect and now its supposed power to help us "see anew" and have a greater understanding of Scripture, will lead us away from Scripture and toward man-centered theology. Lewis and Tolkien are full of common grace and obviously deny total depravity. Statements that the gospels are true myth and "I have just passed from believing in God to believing in Christ" sound like heresy. I believe that we should even question these men's motives for writing these books.

Mr. VanDerSchaaf refers to Holy Scripture as "the Greatest Story Ever Told." This phrase seems flippant and without reverence when referring to the Divinely Inspired Word of God.

Mr. VanDerSchaaf writes in this article "High fantasy literature is, if you will, an aid, a help, a sign pointing to and reminding us of the real power and portent of the events recorded in Scripture. . . . I believe that fantasy literature, in retelling the events of Scripture, can enable us to see anew, the awesome power and earth-moving importance of those events, can send us back to Scripture with a greater understanding and appreciation of its significance. . . . that as fallen people in a fallen world, we need all the help we can get." God in fantasy literature? Enable us to see anew? We need all the help we can get? God is not in fantasy literature any more than He is in Greek mythology. Fantasy literature with all its distortion, perversion of

creation and deformed metaphors supposedly paralleling Scripture, help us see anew? Where is the antithesis in our discernment of good literature. God's grace is sufficient help for all our needs and will not be derived from fantasy literature.

May we as brothers and sisters in the church of Christ always maintain a spirit of love and concern for one another. Mr. VanDerSchaaf's comment describing those who do not agree with him as having "the intelligence and sensitivity of a potted fern," does not promote this spirit.

I hope and pray that all teachers, parents and supporters of Christian education will try the spirits concerning this matter of God in fantasy literature and may we all remember the words of the apostle Paul in Colossians 2:8, 9: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Bernie Kamps

REPLY TO ARTICLES OF RESPONSE CONCERNING FANTASY LITERATURE

Most of this reply is directed toward Mr. Kamps' letter, and that for two reasons. First, there is considerable overlap between the remarks of Mr. Kamps and Mrs. Dykstra, and secondly, Mr. Kamps has specifically requested a response.

At the heart of both replies is the conviction that the literature of Lewis and Tolkien is a blasphemous violation of the second commandment because such literature is itself, or is inducive to, image worship. That, I believe, is the point of the scripture passages, the sections from the confessions, and the quotations from the church fathers.

The scriptures, *etc.*, condemn the creating of images for the purpose of serving God through them; that is, they all condemn image worship. A sanctified reader or a covenant child under the direction of a believing parent or teacher will not, I believe, be tempted to or actually worship God through the mental image of a lion or hobbit, anymore than we are tempted to worship God or Christ through the lilies, pictured or real, that we find in our churches and on bulletin covers in this Easter season.