



## Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter

*Nicole L. Rivera*

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## **Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter** Nicole L. Rivera

The Harry Potter story as a guide to life's deepest truths, offering inspiration about faith, friendship, courage, loyalty, love, and other wisdom of the Bible. Advice on how to live like Christ and Harry Potter heroes.

### **Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter Details**

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Author : Nicole L. Rivera

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## From Reader Review Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter for online ebook

### Kathleen (Kat) Smith says

I used to look at certain things and decide if they were of this world or heaven sent. Yet the one thing I realized is that while the enemy can use everything to bring about our own fall and for his purpose, the God of Heaven can do the same thing. While there has been an ongoing debate over whether Christians should watch Harry Potter or not based on their ability to cast spells and battle the darkness as witches and wizards, I firmly believe goodness can come from the dark if we are willing to use spiritual discernment and biblical wisdom. The very best thing that can come from it is a conversation starter about our faith which is always a great open door to take.

In Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter by Nicole L. Rivera, a Devotion for the Wizarding World, that incorporates parts of the books from the entire Harry Potter series and finds a life application for its use from the Bible to help draw the positive points to the light. "I originally entitled this book, The Parable of Harry Potter, because I believe the Harry Potter story is a parable of Christian values and of the Christ-story, whether intended by the author or not. I hope this book will act as a tool for Harry Potter fans to grow deeper in their faith and explore faith in Christ for the first time. All are welcome!" (Note on Parables).

With over 80 different devotions from all of the books in the Harry Potter series, you are bound to find something that you can relate to, from Harry being chosen to attend Hogwarts while living as an unwanted orphan in the Dursley's home, we find that God has a true purpose in all of our lives that only we can fulfill. Each devotions captures dialogue from the books along with the general idea of the story at that point and how the character is dealing with issues. It then finds a great biblical scripture or scriptures to point out how God's Word offers comfort to those who are seeking to find greatness and light in their own lives. Such devotion titles include: "Becoming a Friend," "Nearly Headless Nick's Longing to Belong," "The Time Turner," "Hermoine's Advice," "Lupin's Act of Love," "Power the Dark Lord Knows Not," "The Parable of Severus Snape," are just some of what you will find inside.

I received Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter by Nicole L. Rivera, compliments of Hickey's Books and Potter Wars for my honest review. I did not receive any monetary compensation aside from a free copy of this book, in exchange for my personal honest review of the product. Being a huge fan of not only the Harry Potter movies but more so the books, I love that Nicole found a way to use the lessons we can find in the series, to showcase the very parables and lessons the Bible teaches. With scripture to back it up as well as applicable lessons from the Bible we can see how you can put the two together and come away with something great! For me, I'd rate this one a 4 out of 5 stars in my opinion and would make an exceptional gift for any Harry Potter fan!

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### Rachel says

3.5 Stars

When I first heard of this book, I was interested. I have read devotionals in the past the centered on a popular book but Harry Potter was unique because of the controversy concerning the series. Also, upon seeing the movies and currently reading the series, I can see where more can be taken from the books than just a great

story but something deeper. And the author worked really hard on it. Unfortunately, I did not find it that engaging. Sometimes the message was really quick or quoted the Bible verse associated with it more than discussing it and connecting it. Early on, some of the chapters seemed like a stretch to connect Christian scripture and the series (but, I do think the early books set up for the deeper stuff so that shouldn't be unexpected). I think this book could've had more editing as well. While I liked the book being broken up into the Harry Potter books and covering the messages in each one, the chapters could have been much more impactful and insightful if condensed together. While covering one of the books, I believe two chapters covered love that were the same kind of love. This made it almost over kill and would have made the message better had those two chapters been combined. Several times, I also became confused on what the author was trying to say. As an example, the message it seemed like she was saying that was should separate ourselves from people who don't believe what we do, yet I couldn't help but think that Jesus said to go and make disciples of all people, which means we would have to be around others who disagree with us. Lastly, but this is personal taste, I wasn't fond of the version of Bible she was using. The language was too modern and I felt lost some of the message. In the end, I could see someone who really likes Harry Potter and is a Christian interested in this book but not someone who has issues with the series.

In exchange for an honest review, I received this book for free from the author.

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### **Ashley Dawn says**

I was completely intrigued when I saw this book and have to say that it didn't disappoint in the least! Nicole Rivera's book takes the Harry Potter books and links them to Bible Passages in a devotional book. The devotional is easy to read and follow. There are links between scripture and what she is telling. While this is a devotional, it is not written from a 'high and mighty' standpoint but from a humble one and I completely and thoroughly enjoyed it.

I adore the Harry Potter books and while there was a lot of controversy and such, I had never read any of the books about it one way or the other. I had seen the good qualities of the characters but I had never actually linked it to the Bible. That being said, now that I've read this book, I can completely agree with the author (Nicole Rivera) in her comparisons. I love the passages of the stories (yes she uses all the HP books) and then follows it up with scriptures that make you say 'oh, yeah'! I think everyone needs to read this devotional because 1. you will enjoy it and 2. it will make you take a look at yourself and the world around you.

Absolutely a 5/5. This is staying on my bookshelf!

Thank you to the author for the review copy of this book. I received this book in exchange for an honest review and the opinions stated above are 100% mine.

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### **Kath says**

An interesting view on the series reminding us to also follow our dreams!

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### **J.C. Morrows says**

OK . . . WOW!

And I really mean WOW!

Nicole Rivera has a gold mine in this wonderful devotional! This book has not only given me a new appreciation for one of my all-time favorite book series, it has shown me a wonderful new look into the story behind the story!

I don't know if I ever would have connected all of those dots. Of course, I never saw the Biblical significance in the Narnia stories either – until someone pointed them out to me. That is the brilliance of such stories (or rather – parables).

God has truly given Nicole a vision and I am thrilled she is sharing it with the world!

Review ©JCMorrows 2015

Don't miss Nicole's further posts about finding faith in the fandoms on her blogsite: [potterwars.wordpress.com!](http://potterwars.wordpress.com)

And check out her awesome posts on MUGGLENET.COM too!

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### **Danielle says**

Harry Potter. There isn't a muggle in our world who doesn't know his name. He took over bookshelves, the box office and, and has now branched out even further as academic and analytical texts are sprouting up to discuss the boy who lived.

A large portion of these texts revolve around the role of religion in the series, specifically Christianity, and where readers can learn about faith through this boy wizard. Indeed I can attest to being a huge supporter of the theory that the Potter books carry a lot of Christian symbolism.

Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter dives into this subject in the form of a devotional. Author Nicole Rivera, Creative Team Member of MuggleNet.com and blogger on Potterwars.wordpress.com, splits her book into seven parts -- one for every book in the Potter series. Each part contains a collection of passages found in its properly aligned book and takes a look at the books with a Christian lens. What follows, and please forgive my cliche choice of words, is simply magical.

Rivera's Harry Potter devotional succeeds on multiple levels. It is hard to decide what to praise first! The overall format of the book is simple and to the point. The reader never feels overwhelmed with information or unorganized. Within each part of the book there are chapters which focus on one or a few passages from the text. The passages are then dissected by Nicole and she provides a Bible verse, a prayer, and a thought at the end.

Let's move beyond the format now and talk about the content and the writing. When it comes to a book under the "Christian" label it is very easy to fall into a preachy camp or a happy-go-lucky camp...or BOTH! Luckily Nicole did not fall under either of these. She didn't tower over her readers and act high and mighty but humbled herself and was the first to admit to being a sinner. This, in my opinion, is the key that truly allows this book's message to be heard. If Nicole had been preachy and never talked of her own mistakes, this book would easily come off as contrived.

The book's content is wonderfully engaging. Devotionals can often be very repetitive which is one reason I usually stay away from them. This book managed to contain refreshing content in every chapter yet remain consistent in its purpose. That isn't an easy task considering the Potter books have overlapping themes. This is once again an example of something that could easily have gone wrong but Nicole managed to execute

with ease.

To say I enjoyed this book is an understatement. I loved this book! It is the first devotional that I truly engaged with and plan to reread. I was able to have a conversation with Nicole (listen to that here - <http://www.keepcalmandreadon.net/podc...>) and I pondered why it is that Potter has engaged me in further studies and she replied that it all comes back to the power of story. Jesus spoke in parables. He told stories because stories inspire us and resonate with us. I couldn't have said it better myself. 5 out of 5 stars. Also, listen to my review of this book at this link - <http://www.keepcalmandreadon.net/podc...>

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### **Sue says**

This started as an academic thesis, and has been adapted into a series of short devotions based on quotations from the Harry Potter books. I was delighted to be offered a coupon for a free pre-publication version for my Kindle.

There are about ninety sections in all, each focusing on one scene or conversation from the books, pointing to different steps in the Christian walk. There are at least as many Scriptural quotations as there are from JK Rowling's works, which point to or complement the narrative. The author takes us through Harry's life, showing his growth as a person, his understanding of his purpose, and his many battles against evil.

It's taken as read that Harry is the allegorical 'Christ figure' of the series. Despite having written, myself, about the Christian connections, I found new insights about Harry's life in this ebook. More importantly, it shows how the story of Jesus is relevant today.

The writing is excellent and I found it a thought-provoking book: so much so that I didn't want to read more than two or three sections at a time. It inspired me to think in new ways about my own Christian journey.

Highly recommended to anyone who has enjoyed the Harry Potter books and has pondered their Christian significance. I would strongly recommend reading the series first, however; without some background understanding of Harry's story, this book would make little sense.

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### **Jordan Bates says**

Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter by Nicole L. Rivera

Purchased: Received ARC from Author for honest review

My Rating: 2 of 5 Stars

What's it all about:

So... I don't really know how to describe this book. It is about God and Harry Potter. That is about as much as I can say. This is the press release that the author put out in regards to her book. It gives a little more detail that maybe I can't describe as well.

"Nicole L Rivera, Creative Team Manager for the Harry Potter fansite, MuggleNet, marries faith with fandom in *Finding Unauthorized Faith in Harry Potter*. A Christ-follower for ten years and Potter-fan for

fourteen years, Nicole set out to write a thesis exploring the parallels between the Bible and the Harry Potter series for her Master of Arts in creative writing. She didn't expect the four-hundred-plus page essay to become a series of ebooks and now a book in a variety of formats.

Nicole has been fascinated with Harry Potter since the summer before her Junior year in High School. By now, she's re-read the series many times. Once she discovered Christ and began to study the Bible, the parallels between her favorite story and her new favorite story sparked her interest in seeking the Christ-narrative and messages in modern-day tales and using those tales as a way to better understand the Christian faith.

Nicole explains, "I originally entitled this book, The Parable of Harry Potter, because I believe the Harry Potter story is a parable of Christian values and of the Christ-story, whether intended by the author or not. I hope my book will serve as a tool for Harry Potter fans to grow deeper in their faith, or explore faith in Christ for the first time. I consider this book like the great house of Hufflepuff. All are welcome."

So when going into this story I thought it was going to be about comparing Harry Potter and the Bible and going in depth on the parallels, but it's not. Read on to find out what the story is actually about.

\*\*\*\*\*Disclaimer: So I'm going to say this right now. I believe in Jesus. I full heartedly do, but my beliefs are skewed based on what has happened in my life. I went into reading this book because I love reading about the parallels of religion and literature. I have taken many classes where I had to do the same thing, but unfortunately this isn't what I was expecting. I don't like shoving my beliefs down people through and that is exactly what this book does. I will talk about the very few sections that I actually liked, and one that I loved. Then I will talk about what this book does all wrong, and how the beliefs of the author are shoved onto the reader.

Read at your own risk with this. If you aren't comfortable talking about religion or stepping on someones toes then this isn't the review that you should read. I have thought about how I was going to go about this for days and I'm sorry but I can't hold back my feelings and angry about this book. So here it is, my review.\*\*\*\*\*

#### The Best Parts:

There were only a few sections within this novels that I found some what enlightening in one way or another.

The first one is Gilderoy's Gloating. This part talks about selfishness and the glory of ones self, and how Gilderoy only focuses on himself. Which is true when he only teaches his books in his class, and actually lies about his stories and has never done anything in his life. He just wants to be famous. The scripture that is talked about in this Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18. Talking about the use of ones gift in private and comparing Gilderoy's actions to Harry, since Harry has been famous since birth but does not want the fame as he hides who he is from most people and only sticks with those that don't fawn over him. This section does exactly what I wanted this book to be. Mention a quote or passage from the HP books and then bring in a scripture and discuss it. It could have gone more in depth, but for a surface talk it was perfect. Most everything that needed to be said was said. My next section that I liked is one that ended a little differently.

The second one is The Black Family. This is the part of the story where Sirius talks to Harry about his family history and how he is related to Bellatrix, but does not consider her family. Sirius' family were those of his friends that were there for him in his time of need, just like the Weasley's were for Harry. This message is one of importance to kids growing up, that they have more family than blood family. There are those that will be in their lives for a long time that can change it just as much as their parents or siblings. There were

about three scriptures in this section so I'm not going to say what they all were, but it basically talked about God and Jesus being a part of your extended family. Now this section was good, not great, but good. There was great in depth discussion about the passages and connection to HP, but then the last paragraph rubbed me the wrong way. The last sentence is "All that is left is for us to choose to receive his adoption - to put our name down and join his family" (pg.120.) This isn't the first time in this book where it has been suggested for us to join God and his endeavors. I read this part and I finally hit the point where I didn't care to read any more. I was done being told to believe in God and follow his path. [More about that in the next part of the review]

So with all of that said, those were the only two parts that I kind of like, but among those and the ones I didn't like or even hated I found one spark. I found a section that I loved. I read it, stopped, reflected, and let it all sink in. It was beautifully written and had all the right intentions. This section is The Parable of Severus Snape. This is the section where Severus and Dumbledore discuss Snape's love for Lily and his expression of that love by guarding Harry when she is dead. When Voldemort kills Lily that is Snape's solidifying moment where he would never be able to trust the Dark Lord again. His alliances changed and his views on love and life became adamant through his actions. This part talks about the love we have for someone and how it changes us in life, and the truth of that brought in together with the scripture from John 18-21. It is only a quick connection, but just what this section needed. What this whole novel needed. The author broke down what the passage from the book was saying and brought it together with the text from the bible, but not by pasting in a whole block of text, but just the passage to read and a quick summary of what it entails. This subtlety was refreshing and made this section that was heavy on the heart light and friendly to those who know just what that kind of love is. I was very happy to have read at least one section where it wasn't almost all bible versus and actually discussed the book in an non opinionated kind of way.

#### The Worst Parts:

So like I said earlier I am now going to talk about my anger and frustration with this book and how it is basically shoving God down the reader's throat. I understand using Bible scriptures to back things up, but there was an entire section that was a HP passage, and then 11 different Bible scriptures. This section was Sir Nicholas & Luna On Death. The author doesn't know what to say on death and so she doesn't. My opinion? If you don't have anything to say yourself then leave it out. If I wanted to read Bible scriptures I would have picked up my own Bible. I have plenty of them marked on death, most that are mentioned in the book, so I don't need the reiterated to me. Some of the other sections are like this as well. Most of them consist of at least 3-4 scriptures and very little discussion. I was thinking that these sections were going to be filled with great discussions about how these passages from HP connected with the Bible and the authors arguments on how they connected. What I also received a lot of in this book was personally life problems from the author. I'm sorry, and this is going to sound super harsh especially since the author contacted me for an honest review, but I just can't not say anything about it, but it did absolutely nothing for me when inputting your own life stories. I don't need to hear about your financial struggles, or your business decisions, or how difficult it was to publish this book and how you were scared to tell your family, and I also DO NOT want to hear about your social media accounts while in the middle of reading a passage. I don't want to hear about other authors you have read and that we should read. I don't care that your definitions came from your MacBook, just say dictionary; you know that complex that Gilderoy has? That is what I feel is going on with this book. Also I don't need financial advice from Dave Ramsey, so stop suggesting me to read his book or go to his website. Do you understand that that takes away from the reader's experience. I felt like the story completely started away from HP at points where there was only a passage from the books, and then all that was talked about was God. My frustration with this was so real to the point that I went to work fuming about how much I couldn't stand reading the book right now. I even talked to another friend about it and told her and showed her what I read and we talked about it for hours on how this book isn't what it implies.

At the end of EVERY, -- , section there is a three step process for after you read it. First the question - This part asks you questions about your life and how you are leading it towards God. The second is the verse - as if there isn't enough scriptures in the sections there is ALWAYS one at the end as well, and it is always different from the ones in that section. It feels like a game of how many Bible scriptures can I fit into one book. The last is the one I have a very hard time with and that is the prayer section - this part is where I feel most that God is being shoved down our throats. There are parts with instructions to get your bible read scriptures and then let "God's gentle whisper" in (pg. 201). There is even a part where it says go turn on Christian music and read Psalms out loud so that you "sing songs of praise to the Lord" (pg. 142). I listen to plenty of music that fills my heart with love for my friends and family, and even Jesus, and trust me, none of them are Christian music.

I just wanted to read a book that connected Bible versus to HP passages and learned how the author thought that they connected, not have it shoved down my throat that this is how I needed to lead my life in the direction of God. I have had plenty of churches and christian friends try to do that and I have grown away from all of them. This isn't how you go about showing your love for God. Do it humbly and silently.

#### Final Thoughts:

So once I finished the Order of the Phoenix portion of this novel it was basically an auto read for me. I just needed to finish this so that I could be done with it. I sort of feel bad and don't at the same time for how harsh this review is, but I'm not going to lie to say that it is good when I personally don't think that it is. It was a little intimidating not liking this book especially when the rest of the author's reviews are all 5 star reviews, but I'm sorry. This book automatically started at a 3 for me when I read the Sorcerer's Stone portion of the book. It started off bad, and ended just as badly. I wouldn't recommend this book to any of my friends, but some of them do want to read it since I have talked so much about it and see just what has been written so we can discuss it more. It would be a great book for college classes to be able to dissect, but in all truth this book started off as a Thesis paper, and it never left that. There isn't enough support from the author in these sections to qualify it as a finished Thesis paper, if that. It is the start to something that could possibly be great, but to me it's just a bunch of scriptures taken from the bible and passages from HP. There is hardly any words from the author themselves. That's what this needs. The author's touch, not her past or present endeavors, but her opinions on the similarities in the stories and passages that she has chose, and that is what this is lacking.

I'm sorry for such a long book review! These things have been in my head all week and I have been trying to find a way to put them down in the politest way possible, so I'm sorry if anything came out too harsh for your liking, but it's all the truth from my perspective. Some of you may want to read this and find that you love it, great. But I didn't. Thanks for your time today! :]

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