

movies are *extremely* well done, many have *strong under currents* that impress concepts upon children's minds that are *completely* opposed to the Bible and its teachings. The movies *seem* well and good on the surface. They are *exceptionally* entertaining and often even *appear* to have Christian overtones — but a parent who is alert and *listening* for the rustling of a lion may hear Satan prowling in the brush of a movie that has New Age/Buddhism/Pantheism/ Humanism/ Occultism/Earth Worship/etc. propaganda *very subtly woven* into the story line. Young children who ingest these *seemingly* harmless movies, are likely — as they mature — to relate Christianity to the miscreant concepts they absorbed very early in their life from cute and lovable cartoon characters who craftily implanted dangerous theological ideas into their sponge-like young minds. The God in the Bible is *nothing* like the “power” depicted in some of these movies. The masked message in many children's movies is that *all* is god and strength comes from *self-illumination* of the god that is ones *self*. There is no Biblical God — only their *own* enlightenment from within — an enlightenment that “assembles” a faith of their *own* making. Sheilatism at its *worst!* While there are many children's movies with *various* perverted messages, one example we might use is *Kung Fu Panda* and its Buddhist teachings. Do some research on the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. Then note that the movie begins with Po living in the state of *Dukkha*. By the end of the movie Po has moved *through* all Four Truths and followed the Eightfold Path — reaching Nirvana. He learns that the *power* for his Dragon Warrior self is indeed *himself*. When Po *finally* gets the Dragon Scroll which is said to hold the secret to limitless power — what does he find? Think about it! While children embrace the entertaining nature of these kinds of movies, they're being fed a *very subtle* poisonous diet of religion that is built on unbiblical foundations and deceptive philosophies — and the parents often don't even *realize* what they're letting their children watch. They don't even *think* to listen for a lion rustling in the brush of a G or PG rated movie. Meanwhile, Satan is creeping closer and closer to their *very* impressionable young child. If “*Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light*” (II Cor. 11:14), why not as a lovable cartoon character — stalking — patiently waiting in the brush to get a visual lock on your child?

These are just a few suggestions of the places where we need to keep a constant eye on the brush around us. Satan *is* everywhere but Christians often fail to look beyond the *surface* layer of life. They diligently scan the horizon but fail to listen for rustling in the brush right beside them. The prowling lion won't *be* visible once he gets a visual lock on his target prey. He'll stay low to the ground and creep a bit closer each time the prey looks away. As Christians, we have to be *so* knowledgeable of God's Word that we *instinctively* see *through* the brush — undistracted by the cover it provides for Satan. The *obvious* is *easy* to see — Christians need to look *below* the surface layer and constantly *listen* for a lion rustling in the brush.

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# DILIGENCE

*“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11*

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## The Lion And Bible Illiteracy

“Christians can acknowledge higher realities but they cannot grasp them effectively and explain them in the form of tidy articulate dogmas. This is why searchers are characteristically tolerant of other religious viewpoints. It's not so much a great desire to be tolerant as it is an uncertainty about what they actually believe in comparison to what another believes. So they smile and accept them all so as not to be questioned further.” (*Western Hills Press*; January 14, 2009, *Perspectives* by Father Lou Guntzelman)

“So they smile and accept [all religions] so as not to be questioned further.” He's probably right! Has tolerance become the cover up for a lack of commitment to study enough to know *why* we believe what we believe? Has tolerance become the cover up for a lack of desire to know and understand the Word of God?

*“Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.” (I Cor. 5:34 NIV)*

In the book *Habits of the Heart*, the authors tell of a young nurse named Sheila Larson who professed no allegiance to any particular church or denomination. She stated:

“I believe in God. I'm not a religious fanatic. I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's Sheilatism. Just my own little voice.”

“My *faith*??...Sheilatism??” Unfortunately however, Miss Larson isn't *that* much different than some who sit in the pews of many churches every Sunday morning. Christianity is being redefined into a journey of self-discovery that “assembles” a faith completely inconsistent with the Scriptures — a “faith” that has absolutely *no* dependence on knowledge of the Bible. Why be concerned about what the Bible has to say about any given subject when “my own little voice” is all that matters?

This new (and unbiblical) form of “Christianity” is of course causing Bible illiteracy to be at an all time high — even in the New Testament Church. That's a shame! There *are many* in the Church today who — when faced with false religions or false teachings just — “smile and accept them all so as not to be questioned further.” Why would they do that? Because of Bible illiteracy. They have become comfortable with *their* own brand of “Sheilatism” — so whatever the Bible says, doesn't matter. It's much *easier* to just “smile and accept them all.”

The real danger of Bible illiteracy however, comes when so called Christians fail to even *recognize* that by doing this — they have in fact, *embraced a false* religion. Their lack of Bible knowledge has been used by Satan to lure them away from

God and they don't even know it. We often hear members of the Church complain about the world's rejection of the Bible and its teachings. Perhaps we should be giving the *most* attention to the rejection of the Bible right in our own churches — i.e. illiteracy *so severe* that it's often covered up by using terms like “tolerance,” “love,” “peace,” “getting along with others.” When those words are used as a cover up for a lack of knowledge of God's Word, they are straight from Satan.

*“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith,...” (1 Peter 5:8-9 NIV).*

“A roaring lion?” Christians would surely *see* a roaring lion before it could harm them! No — they wouldn't! The lion ceases to roar when it draws near to a possible prey. While lions are armed with all the appropriate tools to be great hunters (sharp teeth and claws, incredible strength, etc.), their one weakness is their lack of stamina in chasing prey. Lions have excellent acceleration, but they are unable to chase their prey for long distances. So this means that they are extremely adept at getting *very close* to the prey *before* the prey even knows the lion is there.

The ability to hide and intently watch the prey as the lion sneaks in very close is vital to its success. That's why grasslands and brush provide excellent cover for lions to sneak up on their prey. When stalking prey, the lion changes its posture by lowering its head and body, staying low to the ground while keeping a visual lock on the target. Whenever the prey looks away or looks down to eat, the lion creeps just a bit closer. If the prey however, looks in the direction of the lion, the lion will cease all movement and remain *absolutely* still. This “red light-green light” type of interplay continues until the lion gets within striking distance. Once the lion gets close enough, it pounces — and the chase is abruptly over.

Hum-m-m — let's think about this a minute since the Bible says the devil prowls around *like* a roaring lion. Remember, we stated that when the prey looks toward the lion, the lion stops moving so as not to be spotted. He only creeps closer to his prey when the prey is *not* looking his way. Hence, the lion is eventually close enough to pounce and kill the prey — because the prey never saw him coming.

That *is* the way it works with Satan, isn't it? He's so good at hiding in the brush that we don't even know he's there. It's only when he has maneuvered in close enough to be *successful* with his capture, that he will then pounce and kill. So how do we guard against that kind of stalking behavior? Well, since he only creeps closer when we're not looking, we have to assume he's *always* there — stalking — moving in closer — just waiting to pounce. That's why the verse we read says to be self-controlled and *alert*. We have to *assume* he's *always* there and know the Word *well* enough to hear the rustling in the brush wa-a-a-y before we *see* the lion — or Satan. If we wait until we *see* him, it will be too late.

Being alert means that we are *always* watching *everywhere* for Satan — even in the places we would never expect him to be. He's *going* to be hiding in the brush all around us. If we fail to *recognize* even a *slight* rustling in the brush

because we don't know the Scriptures well enough to know what to listen for, we'll not recognize Satan's “red light-green light” type of interplay and he'll be successful in capturing us — his prey. When we think our daily, routine activities exist in a zone that we consider to be fairly safe, we stop keeping a close eye on the nearby brush of everyday life. *That* puts us in danger of being captured.

The world we live in today is *filled* with places and things that will lull us into thinking we're safe. The most obvious one is within our own churches. We're even warned about that in the Scriptures.

*“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.” (Acts 20:29-31 NIV)*

We're all very familiar with the Scriptures that warn about Satan stalking our churches. We've done several articles in the past on that subject, so we'll not dwell on that any further.

We've also done some articles concerning the so called “documentaries” on television about Christ, the Gospels, Bible stories, Bible characters, etc.. Most are presented in a manner that would convince many that the Bible is nothing more than a book of fables. Those Christians who are alert *because* they know the Scriptures well enough to hear the rustling in the brush *before* they see the lion, will quickly recognize that many of those TV specials are in direct opposition to the Scriptures and are in fact quite ridiculous. The *unsuspecting* prey however (the Christian who knows very little about the Bible and therefore practices his or her own brand of “Sheilaism”) is likely to become dinner for the roaring lion — the devil, when he or she believes the “documentaries” instead of the Bible.

The lion is also hiding in the brush of many mega-churches. Their doctrine is often one of tolerance — accepting *all* beliefs and *all* practices. “*Standing firm in the faith*” is not on their radar. Their goal is generally one of making everyone present feel “comfortable” — regardless of what the Scriptures teach. Only positive messages from the Bible are taught. There are few (if any) sermons on sin and obedience to the Word, or concerning subjects considered to be politically incorrect. The lion will pounce when those in attendance start to believe they can live any way they want and still be right with God — or when those in attendance believe salvation is obtained in any way other than being buried in the watery grave of baptism — or when any other false doctrine is taught with the intention of never offending anyone or making them feel bad about their sins.

The lion is also waiting in the brush to lure our children away from God. Hollywood is particularly interested in drawing them away from Christianity and into New Age beliefs that encompass Eastern religions, Occultism, Humanism, worship of Mother Earth, etc.. Many of the G and PG rated children's movies have veiled messages that will have a lasting influence on receptive young minds. While the