

*Can Christians enjoy legends and myths, such as the legend of King Arthur, Merlin and Camelot?*

Idolatry<sup>1</sup> (1 Co 10:14, 1 Thess 1:9, 1 Jn 5:21) occurs when anyone or anything comes between oneself and the Lord (Ex 20:1–5).

While legends may be interesting, the Lord of Hosts alone is worthy of worship<sup>2</sup>.

Peter Meister wrote:

In order to explore the relationship between courtly literature and Christianity, we...try to explain two things about the figure of Merlin: (a) Why it is tempting, but ultimately not quite satisfactory, to see him as a Christ figure? (b) What are we to make of the fact that the devil is the male partner in the supernatural union that produced him?

Our answer begins in the fifth century and was prompted by Michael P. Carroll's psychological analysis of the rise of the cult of the Virgin Mary. During the final decades of the classical world and the opening decades which succeeded it, two events of great significance here took place:

- 1) Mary, the mother of Jesus, a figure who had attracted relatively little attention in the New Testament and who had in the earlier Christian centuries been largely ignored, began to be the object of admiration, or even adoration, in her own right. The fifth century may be said to mark the beginning of the Cult of Mary (Carroll xiii).
- 2) The exploits of a particular military leader began to be celebrated in an oral tradition that would survive for about six centuries before being committed to writing by Geoffrey of Monmouth (Jackson 2). The historical captain who is thought to underlie the legend of King Arthur was double a gifted military leader. Gifted military leaders in the centuries immediately before and after his came and went, however, without becoming the stuff of a major legend."<sup>3</sup>

However the legend began, stories such as King Arthur may serve to lead men astray (2 Pe 2:1).

Christians are warned to: keep no company with (1 Co 5:11), flee from (1 Co 10:14), have no fellowship with (1 Co 10:19, 20), keep from (1 Jn 5:21), testify against (Ac 14:15) and turn from (1 Thess 1:9) idolaters<sup>4</sup> as they will not inherit the kingdom of heaven (1 Co 6:9-10).

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<sup>1</sup> Worship of idols.

<sup>2</sup> God as Lord over earthly or heavenly armies.

<sup>3</sup> Meister, Peter. "Arthurian Literature as a Distorted Model of Christianity." *Quondam Et Futurus*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1991, pp. 32–43. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/27870119](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27870119). Accessed 13 July 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Nelson Publishers. (1996). *Nelson's quick reference topical Bible index* (p. 304). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.