



Laureate: Students Should be Taught the Bible's "Great Stories"

Children should be taught the Bible throughout their education because it is an "essential piece of cultural luggage" without which they will struggle to fully understand literature, according to the UK's poet laureate, Andrew Motion. People cannot expect to understand much of literature—from John Milton to T.S. Eliot—without learning the Bible first, he said. The Sermon on the Mount and the Crucifixion are stories which have influenced story structures ever since, while the book of Ruth is essential because of "the beauty of the writing." Children should read the Bible, he said, "simply because it is full of terrific stories. They speak to us about human nature and the recurring patterns of human behavior." Motion, who is professor of creative writing at Royal Holloway, University of London, said that all humanities undergraduates at university level should be given crash courses in the great stories. Keith Porteous Wood, executive director and former general secretary of the National Secular Society, called the recommendation "a bit excessive."

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