

EPISODE **44**

Magic & Fear in Children's Books

Guest: N.D. Wilson

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Meet N.D. Wilson

He's the author of more than fifteen books and the father of five children.

Books like *100 Cupboards* and the *Ashtown Burial* series showcase his rich use of imagery and suspense.

He was educated at New Saint Andrews College and St John's College and now is a Fellow of Literature at New Saint Andrews. You can read more [at his website](#).

In This Episode

Sarah is joined by her daughter Allison who is an N.D. Wilson super fan!

We get to hear more about the inspiration for N.D.'s wildly fantastic stories and learn what stories formed him as a boy.

We also get to hear his take on the place of fear and wonder, a conversation that started with Carolyn Leiloglou in [Episode 41](#) of the podcast!

I think a huge amount of fantasy is written out of resentment or boredom with the real world. When I write fantasy, I'm actually trying to go deeper into the world and understand the world more and specifically God's world, God's fantasy. - N.D. Wilson

The Listening Guide

Use this guide to skip to parts that most interest you, or listen to the entire podcast.

- 3:50 Sarah's podcasting partner
- 4:15 A little about Wilson family
- 6:05 N.D. Wilson—the cheater
- 7:10 The brand new book, Outlaws in Time
- 8:00 Magic in children's books
- 10:00 God's fantasy
- 11:00 One of the most common questions from kids
- 12:30 The powerful setting of 100 Cupboards
- 14:40 The fear factor in 100 Cupboards
- 17:20 Thinking through fear with David and Goliath
- 21:20 Alison's debut!
- 23:00 Childhood influences on N.D.'s writing
- 26:00 Movies from the books?
- 27:20 The trailer for Outlaws of Time
- 27:30 Wanting to write even as a young boy
- 30:05 The pleasures of re-reading
- 32:00 Favorite characters...favorite children
- 37:50 Favorite read-alouds in the Wilson family
- 43:00 Let the kids speak

Quotes and Questions

* **Even a bad movie helps a good book.**

N.D. Wilson was talking about the publicity benefits that movies can bring to books. But movies and books just go together! Movies provide a great way to compare and contrast and to see how one reader—the director—imagines the characters. Just one more way to build your family culture!

* **Dad's smart advice:**

My dad told me I was not allowed to complain anymore. I could make creative suggestions. So if I didn't like a book, I had to be able to tell him what I would do to fix it. What would make it a good book? What would turn it from a bad book to a good book?

Oh, what a brilliant play! Especially for a 12 year old boy just entering the dialectic stage when the art of the argument is at its height! This is also a great expansion on the 5 Questions. You really can ask if a child liked a book—if you follow up with these sorts of questions.

* **Finding role models in books and stories**

I can look up to them the way I'd look up to somebody in the Old Testament. And so in each book, there's kind of somebody like that. There's a character like that whether it's Reg in Leepike Ridge or Caleb in the Cupboards trilogy and Uncle Frank in some ways in the Cupboards trilogy or Rupert Greeves in Ashtown or Mack in Boys of Blur. There's a strong father figure that I always try to shape in those different stories.

In Episode 42, Greta Eskridge mentioned several strong father figures in books like Little Britches by Ralph Moody and Danny: The Champion of the World by Roald Dahl. What characters have shaped you and what characters are helping to form your children?

* **Mom's strategy**

When I was refusing to read other things, [my mom] sat me down, she read me a chapter from King Solomon's Mines. She sat me on the couch. She was an English teacher and a very wise woman...My mom was reading this to me. I'm 12. And she just stops. And she sets it down and does, "Yeah but you don't like old books." And she just left.

Do you have a reluctant or picky reader at your house? Have you tried this strategy? Sarah sometimes reads the first book in a series to her children, and then leaves the rest of the series for them to read independently.

Show Notes

Books from today's episode:

- [Death by Living](#)
- [Notes from the Tilt-A-Whirl](#)
- [The 100 Cupboards series](#)
- [The Ashton Burials series](#)
- [Outlaws of Time](#)
- [Hello Ninja](#)
- [Leepike Ridge](#)
- [The Chronicles of Narnia](#)
- [Boys of Blur](#)
- [The Return of the King](#)
- [Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire](#)
- [The Two Towers](#)
- [That Hideous Strength](#)
- [King Solomon's Mines](#)
- [The Father Brown Reader](#)
- [Books by Dorothy Sayers](#)

Other links from today's show:

- A *NEW* read-aloud challenge is coming. Find out more [here!](#)
- [N.D. Wilson's site and blog](#)
- [Outlaws of Time book trailer](#)
- [Books by N.D.'s sister, Rachel](#)
- The official Outlaws of Time [site!!](#)

To find more resources to help you build your family culture around books, visit ReadAloudRevival.com.