

2023-24 GCS English Summer Reading Assignment - Grades 9 & 10

May 2023

Required Summer Reading at GCS: Methodology and Purpose

Because Grace Christian School is committed to a strong reading program for its students, classic literature is assigned throughout the year that is specifically selected to coincide with other disciplines. To further our vision for strong readers, we believe in continuing reading expectations for the summer in preparation for life in general and specifically for success in high school, pre-college testing, and college itself.

The Grace Christian School English summer reading assignment is an important aspect of the academic program, especially considering the following, as studies reveal:

- The number of books read in summer is consistently related to academic gains.
- Significant vocabulary gains take place when students read in the summer.
- Significant fluency gains take place through summer reading programs.

When selecting books for summer reading, the GCS Language Arts faculty make choices based on the works’ literary merit, complexity, and contextual significance. It is for the following reasons that reading is assigned to students over the summer:

- to foster a lifelong love of reading.
- to provide the opportunity for students to keep literacy skills sharpened.
- to motivate students to read for pleasure while guiding them to make sound choices.
- to foster the correlation between reading and writing skills.
- to encourage students to discover and develop a sense of ownership in their reading lives.

Assignment specifics:

- Each student must select works from the list below that they **have not read prior to this summer**.
- Students must read the entirety of unabridged (complete) versions of the books, not abridged or condensed versions.

There is no need to purchase the books, unless that is preferred.

- **The assignment is due on the student’s first English class day of the week of August 21, 2023.**
- **Submission of the assignment consists of submitting to the English teacher a dated, completed hard copy of this page, signed by both parent and student.**

• This assignment grade is an English class Quarter 1 major grade. Completion of the reading of 3 books earns an A grade; 2 books a B; and 1 book a C.

• Questions about the assignment should be emailed to HS Language Arts Department Chair, Kathy Kilmer (kkilmer@gcswarriors.org).

New students who enroll in GCS for the 2022-23 school after July 31, 2023, are exempt from the assignment.

I, _____, have read in full the following book(s) this summer:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Student’s Signature

Parent’s Signature

Date

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READING OPTIONS: FICTION

***Emma*, Jane Austen**

Beautiful, clever, rich—and single—Emma Woodhouse is perfectly content with her life and sees no need for either love or marriage. Nothing, however, delights her more than interfering in the romantic lives of others. But when she ignores the warnings of her good friend Mr. Knightley and attempts to arrange a suitable match for her protegee Harriet Smith, her carefully laid plans soon unravel and have consequences that she never expected.

With its imperfect but charming heroine and its witty and subtle exploration of relationships, *Emma* is often seen as Jane Austen's most flawless work. #romanticcomedy #socialsatire #19thcenturyEngland #matchmaking

***Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen**

Marianne Dashwood wears her heart on her sleeve, and when she falls in love with the dashing but unsuitable John Willoughby she ignores her sister Elinor's warning that her impulsive behavior leaves her open to gossip. Meanwhile Elinor, always sensitive to social convention, is struggling to conceal her own romantic disappointment, even from those closest to her. Through their parallel experience of love—and its threatened loss—the sisters learn that sense must mix with sensibility if they are to find personal happiness in a society where status and money govern the rules of love. #romanticcomedy #socialsatire #19thcenturyEngland

***The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan**

John Bunyan began *The Pilgrim's Progress* while he was in prison for conducting unauthorized Baptist religious services outside of the Church of England. In this classic allegory, devout everyman Christian abandons his family and the City of Destruction and sets off to find salvation. His path is straight but not easy, and he is beset by trials, including the terrible violence of the destructive Apollyon and the Giant Despair, as he pursues his pilgrimage through the Slough of Despond, the Delectable Mountains and Vanity Fair towards the Celestial City. In the second part of the narrative his wife, Christiana, is escorted by Great-Heart through the same difficult terrain. Written with the urgency of a persecuted faith and a fiery imagination, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is a spiritual as well as a literary classic. #christianallegory #symbolism #christianclassics

***Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury**

Ray Bradbury's internationally acclaimed novel is a masterwork of twentieth-century literature set in a bleak, dystopian future. Guy Montag is a fireman. In his world, where television rules and literature is on the brink of extinction, firemen start fires rather than put them out. His job is to destroy the most illegal of commodities, the printed book, along with the houses in which they are hidden. Montag never questions the destruction and ruin his actions produce, returning each day to his bland life. But then he meets an eccentric young neighbor, Clarisse, who introduces him to a past where people didn't live in fear and to a present where one sees the world through the ideas in books instead of the mindless chatter of television. When tragedy strikes, Montag begins to question everything he has ever known. He starts hiding books in his home, and when his pilfering is discovered, the fireman has to run for his life. #sciencefiction #dystopian #futuristic #allegory #adventure

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***The Good Earth*, Pearl S. Buck**

This novel tells the poignant tale of a Chinese farmer and his family in old, agrarian China. The humble Wang Lung glories in the soil he works, nurturing the land as it nurtures him and his family. Nearby, the nobles of the House of Hwang consider themselves above the land and its workers; but they will soon meet their own downfall. Hard times come upon Wang Lung and his family when flood and drought force them to seek work in the city. The working people riot, breaking into the homes of the rich and forcing them to flee. When Wang Lung shows mercy to one noble and is rewarded, he begins to rise in the world, even as the House of Hwang falls. #nobelprizewinner #China #Chineseculturaltraditions #fatherandsonthemes

***The Last of the Mohicans*, James Fenimore Cooper**

The wild rush of action in this classic frontier adventure story has made *The Last of the Mohicans* the most popular of James Fenimore Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales. Deep in the forests of upper New York State, the brave woodsman Hawkeye (Natty Bumppo) and his loyal Mohican friends Chingachgook and Uncas become embroiled in the bloody battles of the French and Indian War. The abduction of the beautiful Munro sisters by hostile savages, the treachery of the renegade brave Magua, the ambush of innocent settlers, and the thrilling events that lead to the final tragic confrontation between rival war parties create an unforgettable, spine-tingling picture of life on the frontier. And as the idyllic wilderness gives way to the forces of civilization, the novel presents a moving portrayal of a vanishing race and the end of its way of life in the great American forests. #FrenchandIndianWar #historicalfiction #NativeAmericans #action #adventure #wilderness

***David Copperfield*, Charles Dickens (Counts as 2 books.)**

David Copperfield is the story of a young man's adventures on his journey from an unhappy and impoverished childhood to the discovery of his vocation as a successful novelist. Among the gloriously vivid cast of characters he encounters are his tyrannical stepfather, Mr Murdstone; his formidable aunt, Betsey Trotwood; the eternally humble yet treacherous Uriah Heep; frivolous, enchanting Dora; and the magnificently impecunious Micawber, one of literature's great comic creations. In *David Copperfield*—the novel he described as his "favorite child"—Dickens drew revealingly on his own experiences to create one of his most exuberant & enduringly popular works, filled with tragedy and comedy in equal measure. #VictorianEngland #adventure #classic #comingofage

***Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens**

In what may be Dickens's best novel, humble, orphaned Pip is apprenticed to the dirty work of the forge but dares to dream of becoming a gentleman — and one day, under sudden and enigmatic circumstances, he finds himself in possession of "great expectations." In this gripping tale of crime and guilt, revenge and reward, the compelling characters include Magwitch, the fearful and fearsome convict; Estella, whose beauty is excelled only by her haughtiness; and the embittered Miss Havisham, an eccentric jilted bride. #VictorianEngland #classstruggle #tragicromance #classic #mystery

***Oliver Twist*, Charles Dickens**

The story of the orphan Oliver, who runs away from the workhouse only to be taken in by a den of thieves, shocked readers when it was first published. Dickens' tale of childhood innocence beset by evil depicts the

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dark criminal underworld of a London peopled by vivid and memorable characters—the arch-villain Fagin, the artful Dodger, the menacing Bill Sikes, and the lovesick Nancy. Combining elements of Gothic Romance, the Newgate Novel and popular melodrama, in *Oliver Twist* Dickens created an entirely new kind of fiction, scathing in its indictment of a cruel society and pervaded by an unforgettable sense of threat and mystery.
#VictorianLondon #comedy #mystery #classic

***The Robe*, Lloyd C. Douglas**

A Roman soldier, Marcellus, wins Christ's robe as a gambling prize. He then sets forth on a quest to find the truth about the Nazarene's robe—a quest that reaches to the very roots and heart of Christianity and is set against the vividly limned background of ancient Rome. Here is a timeless story of adventure, faith, and romance, a tale of spiritual longing and ultimate redemption. #historicalfiction #christianity #Romanempire #adventure #romance

***The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Sir Conan Doyle**

This is the first and greatest of the short story collections written by Arthur Conan Doyle featuring his famous detective. The twelve Sherlock Holmes adventures included in this anthology are the following: “A Scandal in Bohemia,” “The Adventure of the Red-Headed League,” “A Case of Identity,” “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle,” and “The Adventure of the Speckled Band.” #classiclit #mystery #suspense #shortstorycollection #1900sLondon

***The Count of Monte Cristo*, Alexandre Dumas (Counts as 2 books.)**

Thrown in prison for a crime he has not committed, Edmond Dantès is confined to the grim fortress of If. There he learns of a great hoard of treasure hidden on the Isle of Monte Cristo and he becomes determined not only to escape, but also to unearth the treasure and use it to plot the destruction of the three men responsible for his incarceration. Dumas' epic tale of suffering and retribution, inspired by a real-life case of wrongful imprisonment, was a huge popular success when it was first serialized in the 1840s. #action #adventure #revenge #France

***The Three Musketeers*, Alexandre Dumas**

One of the most celebrated and popular historical romances ever written, *The Three Musketeers* tells the story of the early adventures of the young Gascon gentleman d'Artagnan and his three friends from the regiment of the King's Musketeers: Athos, Porthos, and Aramis. Under the watchful eye of their patron M. de Treville, the four defend the honor of the regiment against the guards of the Cardinal Richelieu and the honor of the queen against the machinations of the Cardinal himself as the power struggles of 17th-century France are vividly played out in the background. But their most dangerous encounter is with the Cardinal's spy: Milady, one of literature's most memorable female villains. #17thcenturyFrance #swordfighting #action #adventure #comedy #historicalfiction

***The Man in the Iron Mask*, Alexandre Dumas**

In this sequel to *The Three Musketeers*, D'Artagnan remains in the service of the corrupt King Louis XIV after the Three Musketeers have retired and gone their separate ways. Unbeknownst to D'Artagnan, Aramis and Porthos plot to remove the inept king and place the king's twin brother on the throne of France. Meanwhile, a twenty-three-year-old prisoner known only as "Philippe" wastes away deep inside the Bastille.

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Forced to wear an iron mask, Phillippe has been imprisoned for eight years, has no knowledge of his true identity, and has not been told what crime he's committed. When the destinies of the king and Phillippe converge, the Three Musketeers and D'Artagnan find themselves caught between conflicting loyalties.

#France #historicalfiction #action #adventure #intrigue

Silas Marner, George Eliot

Embittered by a false accusation, disappointed in friendship and love, the weaver Silas Marner retreats into a long twilight life alone with his loom. . . and his gold. Silas hoards a treasure that kills his spirit until fate steals it from him and replaces it with a golden-haired founding child. Where she came from, who her parents were, and who really stole the gold are the secrets that permeate this moving tale of guilt and innocence. A moral allegory of the redemptive power of love, it is also a finely drawn picture of early nineteenth-century England in the days when spinning wheels hummed busily in the farmhouses, and of a simple way of life that was soon to disappear. #comingofage #redemption #love #classiclitt

The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Victor Hugo

In the vaulted Gothic towers of Notre-Dame lives Quasimodo, the hunchbacked bellringer. Mocked and shunned for his appearance, he is pitied only by Esmerelda, a beautiful gypsy dancer to whom he becomes completely devoted. Esmerelda, however, has also attracted the attention of the sinister archdeacon Claude Frollo, and when she rejects his lecherous approaches, Frollo hatches a plot to destroy her that only Quasimodo can prevent. Victor Hugo's sensational, evocative novel brings life to the medieval Paris he loved and mourns its passing in one of the greatest historical romances of the nineteenth century. #gothic #romance #historicalfiction #redemption #19thcenturyFrance

Rifles for Watie, Harold Keith

This novel tells the story of sixteen-year-old Jeff and his experiences during the American Civil War. Jeff's story is notable as he eventually winds up fighting for both the North and the South (while on a special undercover mission) at different times during the conflict while making new friends on each side.

#historicalfiction #civilwar #comingofage #adventure

The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis

A masterpiece of satire, this classic has entertained and enlightened readers the world over with its sly and ironic portrayal of human life from the vantage point of Screwtape, a senior tempter in the service of "Our Father Below." At once wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original, C.S. Lewis gives us the correspondence of the worldly-wise old devil to his nephew Wormwood, a novice demon in charge of securing the damnation of an ordinary young man.

The Screwtape Letters is the most engaging and humorous account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written. #play #satire #comedy #christianity #goodvsevil

The Great Divorce, C.S. Lewis

In *The Great Divorce*, C.S. Lewis's classic vision of the Afterworld, the narrator boards a bus on a drizzly English afternoon and embarks on an incredible voyage through Heaven and Hell. He meets a host of supernatural beings far removed from his expectations, and comes to some significant realizations about the nature of good and evil. #sciencefiction #fantasy #satire #christianity

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***Christy*, Catherine Marshall**

In the year 1912, nineteen-year-old Christy Huddleston leaves home to teach school in the Smoky Mountains -- and comes to know and love the resilient people of the region, with their fierce pride, their dark superstitions, their terrible poverty, and their yearning for beauty and truth. But her faith will be severely challenged by trial and tragedy, by the needs and unique strengths of two remarkable young men, and by a heart torn between true love and unwavering devotion. #christianromance #christianity

***Gone With the Wind*, Margaret Mitchell** (Counts as 2 books.)

Many novels have been written about the Civil War and its aftermath. None take us into the burning fields and cities of the American South as *Gone With the Wind* does, creating haunting scenes and thrilling portraits of characters so vivid that we remember their words and feel their fear and hunger for the rest of our lives. In the two main characters, independent, irresistible Scarlett and the flashy, contemptuous Rhett, Margaret Mitchell not only conveys a timeless story of survival under the harshest of circumstances, she also creates two of the most famous lovers in the English-speaking world since *Romeo and Juliet*. #civilwar #southernepic #romance #classicamericanlit

***Metamorphoses*, Ovid** (Must be in verse and full-length. Counts as 2 books.)

This is a translation of the Latin narrative poem in fifteen books describing the history of the world from its creation to the deification of Julius Caesar. This cohesive collection of stories from Greek and Roman mythology recounts tales of recorded transformations. Comprising over fifty stories, it chronicles the legends of King Midas, Daedalus, Icarus, Hercules, Cupid and Psyche, and the Trojan War. #classicalmythology #epic

***The Chosen*, Chaim Potok**

In 1940s Brooklyn, New York, an accident throws Reuven Malther and Danny Saunders together. Despite their differences (Reuven is a Modern Orthodox Jew with an intellectual, Zionist father; Danny is the brilliant son and rightful heir to a Hasidic rebbe), the young men form a deep, if unlikely, friendship. Together they negotiate adolescence, family conflicts, the crisis of faith engendered when Holocaust stories begin to emerge in the U.S., loss, love, and the journey to adulthood. The intellectual and spiritual clashes between fathers, between each son and his own father, and between the two young men, provide a unique backdrop for this exploration of fathers, sons, faith, loyalty, and, ultimately, the power of love. #holocaust #judaism #comingofage #malefriendship #fathersonrelationships

***Ivanhoe*, Sir Walter Scott**

Set at the time of the Norman Conquest, this novel discusses Ivanhoe's return from the Crusades to claim his inheritance and the love of Rowena and his involvement in the struggle between Richard Coeur de Lion and his Norman brother John. It is structured by a series of conflicts: Saxon versus Norman, Christian versus Jew, and men versus women. #romance #medievalEngland #war #romance #classiclit

***A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Shakespeare** (Folger edition recommended.)

This play portrays the events surrounding the marriage of Theseus, Duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. These include the adventures of four young Athenian lovers and a group of six amateur actors, who are controlled and manipulated by the fairies who inhabit the forest in which most of the play is set. The

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play is one of Shakespeare's most popular works for the stage and is widely performed across the world.
#play #comedy #romance #classiclitt

Julius Caesar, William Shakespeare (Folger edition recommended.)

Shakespeare's historical tragedy conveys the tale of Caesar's downfall at the hands of the Roman senate and even his own friends-- features Caesar's famous line, "Et tu, Brutus?" #play #tragedy #historicalfiction #classiclitt

Twelfth Night, William Shakespeare (Folger edition recommended.)

In Shakespeare's romantic comedy of disguises and confusion, Viola disguises herself as a boy so she can safely get a job—all is well until she falls in love with her master, the Duke Orsino, and he asks her to bring messages of love to *his* interest, the Lady Olivia. This play is full of hijinks and plot-twists characteristic of Shakespearean comedies. #play #comedy #romance #classiclitt

Henry V, William Shakespeare

"Once more unto the breach, dear friends!" Join this rallying battle cry of Henry the 5th, in this famous play about one of England's most famous medieval kings. #play #historicalfiction #action #classiclitt

Pygmalion, George Bernard Shaw

The original *My Fair Lady*!! Professor Henry Higgins takes Eliza Doolittle under his wing, attempting to turn her into a well-bred English lady. #play #romanticcomedy #classiclitt

Oedipus Rex, Sophocles

Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (*Oedipus the King*) has never been surpassed for the raw and terrible power with which its hero struggles to answer the eternal question, "Who am I?" The play, a story of a king who, acting entirely in ignorance, kills his father and marries his mother, unfolds with shattering power; we are helplessly carried along with Oedipus towards the final, horrific truth. #play #classicaltragedy

Antigone, Sophocles

In this sequel to *Oedipus Rex*, the city of Thebes deals with the tragic aftermath left in the wake of Oedipus' actions. Antigone, his daughter, must face the life-altering decision to follow her uncle's laws or risk death in obeying the laws of the gods. #play #classicaltragedy

The Lord of the Rings, J.R.R. Tolkien (Choose any in the trilogy. Each counts as 1 book.)

The most widely read and influential fantasy epic of all time, it is also quite simply one of the most memorable and beloved tales ever told. Originally published in 1954, *The Lord of the Rings* set the framework upon which all epic/quest fantasy since has been built.

Through the urging of the enigmatic wizard Gandalf, young hobbit Frodo Baggins embarks on an urgent, incredibly treacherous journey to destroy the One Ring. This ring—created and then lost by the Dark Lord, Sauron, centuries earlier—is a weapon of evil, one that Sauron desperately wants returned to him. With the power of the ring once again his own, the Dark Lord will unleash his wrath upon all of Middle-earth. The only way to prevent this horrible fate from becoming reality is to return the Ring to Mordor, the only place it can be destroyed. Unfortunately for our heroes, Mordor is also Sauron's lair. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is

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essential reading not only for fans of fantasy but for lovers of classic literature as well. #fantasy #action #adventure #epic #christianallegory

Around the World in Eighty Days, Jules Verne

Around the World in Eighty Days (French: *Le tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours*) is a classic adventure novel by the French writer Jules Verne, published in 1873. In the story, Phileas Fogg of London and his newly employed French valet Passepartout attempt to circumnavigate the world in 80 days on a £20,000 wager (roughly £1.6 million today) set by his friends at the Reform Club. #adventure #exploration #classiclit

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, Jules Verne

Professor Aronnax, his faithful servant, Conseil, and the Canadian harpooner, Ned Land, begin an extremely hazardous voyage to rid the seas of a little-known and terrifying sea monster. However, the "monster" turns out to be a giant submarine, commanded by the mysterious Captain Nemo, by whom they are soon held captive. So begins not only one of the great adventure classics by Jules Verne, the "Father of Science Fiction," but also a truly fantastic voyage from the lost city of Atlantis to the South Pole. #adventure #exploration #sciencefiction

El Dorado, Baroness von Orczy

The elusive Pimpernel returns for another swashbuckling adventure in this sequel to *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. The still-raging French Revolution continues to claim lives, and the shadow of the guillotine draws ever nearer to the young Dauphin, son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. No one dares to attempt to liberate the little prince—no one, that is, but the mysterious Sir Percy Blakeney. Sir Percy takes on one of Robespierre's agents, the scheming Citizen Chauvelin, in a suspenseful blend of action and political intrigue, recounted with captivating period detail. #Frenchrevolution #historicalfiction #action #adventure

The Picture of Dorian Gray, Oscar Wilde

In this celebrated work, his only novel, Wilde forged a devastating portrait of the effects of evil and debauchery on a young man in late-19th-century England. Combining elements of the Gothic horror novel and decadent French fiction, the book centers on a striking premise: As Dorian Gray sinks into a life of crime and selfish pleasure, his body retains perfect youth and vigor while his recently painted portrait grows day by day into a hideous record of evil and decay, which he must keep hidden from the world. #Victorian #goodvsevil #horror #satire

The Importance of Being Earnest, Oscar Wilde

In Wilde's most famous play satirizing stuffy Victorian conventions, Jack and Algernon both pretend to be the fictional "Ernest" character in order to woo their love interests, Cecily and Gwendolyn, and live secret lives apart from their true identities. When both ladies think they are engaged to the same "Ernest," hilarious chaos ensues! #play #comedy #satire #romance #VictorianEngland #classiclit

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READING OPTIONS: NON-FICTION

***The Abolition of Man*, C.S. Lewis**

In the classic *The Abolition of Man*, C.S. Lewis, the most important Christian writer of the 20th century, sets out to persuade his audience of the importance and relevance of universal values such as courage and honor in contemporary society. Both astonishing and prophetic, *The Abolition of Man* is one of the most debated of Lewis's extraordinary works. *National Review* chose it as number seven on their "100 Best Nonfiction Books of the Twentieth Century." #christianspirituality #nonfiction

***A Chance to Die*, Elisabeth Elliot**

A Chance to Die is a vibrant portrayal of Amy Carmichael, an Irish missionary and writer who spent fifty-three years in south India without furlough. There she became known as "Amma," or "mother," as she founded the Dohnavur Fellowship, a refuge for underprivileged children. Amy's life of obedience and courage stands as a model for all who claim the name of Christ. She was a woman with desires and dreams, faults and fears, who gave her life unconditionally to serve her Master. Bringing Amma to life through inspiring photos and compelling biographical narrative, Elisabeth Elliot urges readers to examine the depths of their own commitment to Christ. #biography #christianity #missionary #India

***A Hobbit, A Wardrobe, and a Great War*, Joseph Laconte**

World War I was supposed to be the war to end all wars; a war to cleanse humanity. Instead, it became the most deadly conflict the world had ever seen. The lives of two of the 20th century's greatest authors, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, were deeply affected by their experiences as soldiers in the war. Despite the hardships they faced, their views on good, evil, humanity, and God following the war diverged from most of western society, which emerged from the war disillusioned. These two men, through faith and friendship, refused to believe the lies of a society that turned away from Christ and put its trust in man.

***Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis**

Mere Christianity is C.S. Lewis's forceful and accessible doctrine of Christian belief. First heard as informal radio broadcasts and then published as three separate books—*The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behavior*, and *Beyond Personality*—*Mere Christianity* brings together what Lewis saw as the fundamental truths of the religion. Rejecting the boundaries that divide Christianity's many denominations, C.S. Lewis finds a common ground on which all those who have Christian faith can stand together, proving that "at the center of each there is something, or a Someone, who against all divergences of belief, all differences of temperament, all memories of mutual persecution, speaks the same voice." #nonfiction #christianity #apologetics #christianclassic

***Tortured for His Faith*, Haralan Popov**

This work is the true story of Haralan Popov, a successful minister in Bulgaria who was arrested and sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment as an American spy, at a widely publicized trial in Sofia. Enduring torture and brainwashing in communist prisons and labor camps, Haralan Popov remained faithful to God. After his release, Dr. Haralan Popov founded Door of Hope International in 1972. #biography #christianmartyr #christianity