

**Summer Reading for Incoming  
9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Grade College Preparatory**

“I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” – 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

Parents and Students,

The connection between reading and academic success -- both now and on standardized tests, writing, post secondary learning, and in life -- is overwhelmingly correlated! I recommend (and this is advice I have to take myself!) branching out from one's favorite genre for variety and to discover additional types of writing to enjoy. **If you want to read something not on this list, just email me and let me know what you are reading.** (It probably will be fine.)

**Assignment:**

1. During the first week of your English semester (August or January), you will give a 4-6 minute oral presentation consisting of a short summary (unless someone else has already summarized your book), an analysis, and a review. You may use notes if you'd like.
2. During the first week of your English semester (August or January), you will write a paragraph about the book that deals with universal themes and the meaning of the work as a whole. **(Do not do this during the summer; we will talk about it in class!)**

**•The book choices, a mixture of fiction and non-fiction, biblically based, classic, and contemporary, are the following:**

- *And the Word Came With Power* by Joanne Shetler - The 20 year story of how Joanne Shetler gave of herself to move far away and live among the Balangao people group in the Philippines and translate the Scriptures into their language. It's full of twists and turns, spiritual power encounters with the spirits and shamans, and even displays the power in a genealogy.
- *I Dared to Call Him Father* - This is the fascinating true story of Bilquis Sheikh, a prominent Muslim woman. Her unusual journey to a personal relationship with God (that all started with a dream) turned her world upside down-and put her life in danger.
- *Crazy Love* by Francis Chan (an oldie, but goodie if your student has not read it). The God of the universe—the Creator of nitrogen and pine needles, galaxies and E-minor—loves us with a radical, unconditional, self-sacrificing love. And what is our typical response? We go to church, sing songs, and try not to cuss. Whether you've verbalized it yet or not, we all know something's wrong.
- *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Victor Hugo ISBN 0811468275 Retells in simple language the hunchback bell ringer of medieval Notre Dame, Quasimodo, whose love for the gypsy dancer, Esmeralda, had tragic consequences. If your student likes *Les Miserables*, he may enjoy this classic by the same author.
- *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall* by Misty Bernall, ISBN #0743400526 A moving memoir by Cassie's mother, Misty, we meet the real Cassie, a typical adolescent who struggles with peer pressure and her relationship with her parents. Regardless of what happened at Columbine, this is a moving tribute to an extraordinary young woman and a lesson for both parents and teenagers alike.
- *He Chose You* by Max Lucado ISBN 084977894 Adolescence can be very difficult. You struggle to find your identity,

you're pushed and pulled in many different directions by friends, peers, as well as your own desire to fit in. We have good news – you can know the incredible value God places on you while you grow through these turbulent years. God's perfect love is shown in the very details of Jesus' life.

- *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Holmes and Watson are faced with their most terrifying case yet. The legend of the devil-beast that haunts the moors around the Baskerville families home warns the descendants of that ancient clan never to venture out in those dark hours when the power of evil is exalted. Now, the most recent Baskerville, Sir Charles, is dead and the footprints of a giant hound have been found near his body. Will the new heir meet the same fate?

- *Story of Esther* by Joan Wolf She was a simple girl faced with an impossible choice. He was a magnificent king with a lonely heart. Their love was the divine surprise that changed the course of history. The beloved story of Esther springs to fresh life in this inspired novel that vibrates with mystery, intrigue, and romance.

- *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho continues to change the lives of its readers forever with the magical story of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who yearns to travel in search of a worldly treasure as extravagant as any ever found. The story of the treasures Santiago finds along the way teaches us, as only a few stories can, about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts, learning to read the trials strewn along life's path, and, above all, following our dreams.

Additional Choices::

- *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel- It's a combination of dystopia, poetic language, and the ironic way that people's lives intertwine. It involves a global pandemic (much worse than our current situation - yet, some might want to steer clear for this reason) that changes the course of the characters' future. Though the world is changed irrevocably, it's ultimately about hope and the fact that "survival is insufficient." Though it's powerful in its words, the novel is easy to read. Minor language/situations - I'd rate it a PG
- *The Glass Hotel*- by Emily St. John Mandel (the same author as Station Eleven). While I don't like it as well as SE, the characters are believable, and the interweaving of characters' lives is deftly written.
- Those interested in legal thrillers will like John Grisham. I don't love all his novels (and he's written many through the decades!), but my favorite is *The Testament*, which follows a lawyer searching for a missing missionary in Brazil, with a clever plot and a twist ending. Grisham's books are not religious, but this one definitely has subtle Christian themes. Also great are *The Firm* (his second novel that "put him on the map") and *A Time to Kill* (his first novel). *The Guardians*, *Camino Island*, and *Camino Wind* are three of his most recent novels that were enjoyable.
- *A Thousand Splendid Suns* - by Khaled Hosseini is a beautiful but sometimes harsh story set against the volatile events of Afghanistan's last thirty years, so historical fiction. Again, much literary merit but not difficult (this is the author of *The Kite Runner*, which I have not read). Some mature themes
- *Educated* by Tara Westover (an autobiography) Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, Tara Westover was seventeen the first time she set foot in a classroom. Her family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education, and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent. When another brother got himself into college, Tara decided to try a new kind of life. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge University. Only then would she wonder if

she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

- Some great historical fiction I've read that doesn't fall into the cliches and copycats of recent years:
  - *All the Light We Cannot See* - Anthony Doerr. Mrs. Miles recommended this to me, and now it's probably in my top 25 novels of all time!
  - *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* - Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows is delightful (I think it's a Netflix movie now, too).
  - *The Help* - by Kathryn Stockett
  - *The Alice Network*- about women spies in WW2
  - *The Lost Girls of Paris*
  
- IThank you,

Mrs. Lewellyn

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