



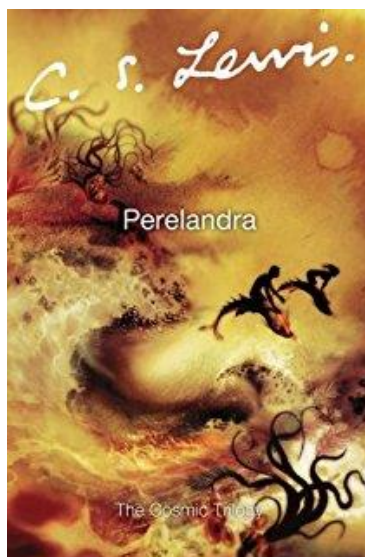
The holidays have started! -- Well, at least for those of us who work in schools. And to celebrate, CVE Scotland's Facebook page will be posting suggestions for your holiday reading throughout July. Detective novels, historical fiction, autobiography, science fiction, romance -- we'll cover it all.

Let's be honest: just because a novel carries the label "Christian" doesn't make it worth reading. So we'll try to sort out the wheat from the chaff.

Sadly, some "Christian" novels may be theologically correct, but they're far from truthful about human nature - Christian characters have it all together, and the main interest in reading seems to be "spot the non-Christian who's just waiting to convert in the last chapter". They're a platform for a message, not an exploration of three-dimensional characters and their interactions.

And equally, there are Christian novelists out there (Victoria Hislop today, Solzhenitsyn or Golding in the 20th Century) who don't preach but their beliefs and values permeate their novels.

Imagine a universe....



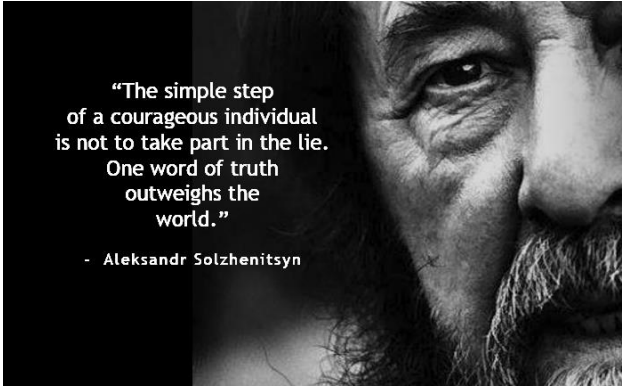
....where every habitable planet has its own Adam and Eve. Each will face temptation; how they react is in the balance. That's the premise behind CS Lewis's "Perelandra: Voyage to Venus". Life is just starting as we arrive on the planet. We are aghast to find that Eve has already met her Tempter -- but also puzzled, because all he seems to be doing is telling her fascinating stories. They aren't overtly immoral but (as we listen) we realise that these stories all cast her as a victim or put-upon heroine, so she'll feel sorry for herself, and emotionally isolated - and therefore justified in making decisions which solely serve her own interests.

CS Lewis was Professor of English Lit at Cambridge so he knew what he was talking about: how accurate his predictions were about the themes of so many of the novels of the last 50 years! No novel/ TV

drama etc is neutral - they all convey values and beliefs about the world, about the nature of relationship, about our identity. Make no mistake, every story you read, everything you watch on TV, is written with an agenda, a worldview into which it seeks to enlist you. Working with children and young people, there are few more important challenges than giving them the tools to spot what is going on and make their own decisions.

One Word of Truth....

But never forget who has the greatest power. Never get so focused on what evil is doing that we end up demoralised and disorientated -- exactly what Eve's Tempter on Venus was aiming for. In Soviet Russia, Solzhenitsyn had endured the worst that secular Communism could throw at him. But he called his Nobel Prize speech: "One Word of Truth" (based on the Russian saying "One word of truth outweighs the world"). Look for truth in stories, he said - truth about the world, the nature of relationship, about our identity. All truth comes from God and ultimately points to Christ and "The truth will set you free" (John 8:32).



"The simple step
of a courageous individual
is not to take part in the lie.
One word of truth
outweighs the
world."
- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

God gives to the truth power beyond itself (and beyond those who write it/speak it). So wherever writers wrestle with reality, they'll discover parts of God's truth whether they recognise it or not.

The Truth, Solzhenitsyn said, will always win out. It will always -- ultimately -- defeat the lie.



Please.....

If you like our reviews, please share them with your Facebook friends. Can we double our CVE Scotland Facebook followers by the end of the holidays? All it takes is for each of us to get one more person involved!

Can you help get the message out?