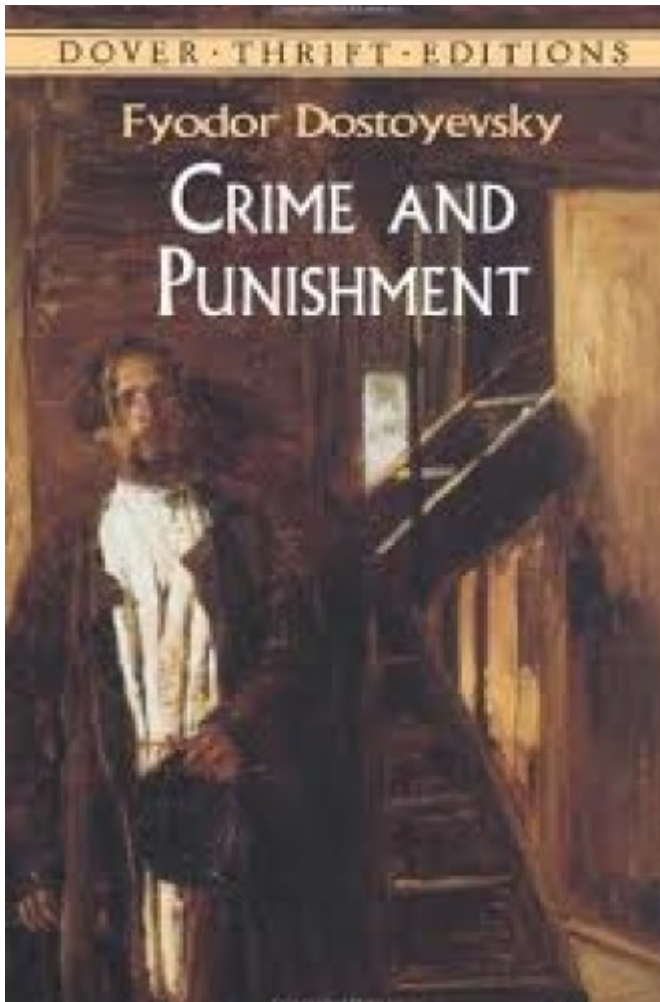


Crime and Punishment, by Fyodor Dostoevsky

selected by [Laura Sumner Truax](#) in the [April 30, 2014](#) issue

In Review



Crime and Punishment

by Fyodor Dostoevsky

Penguin Classics

"If you had to choose one book to help a person embarking on pastoral ministry, what would it be?" We posed that question to some pastors and professors. Here are their choices. —Ed.

With characters like the conscience-stricken Raskolnikov and the messed-up Svidrigailov, Dostoevsky provides an unforgettable meditation on what it means to be human. He shows us the aches of the human heart, the deceptions we create, often unknowingly, and the hopes we have to be better people.

It's sometimes said that fiction is truer than fact because fiction pulls out the threads of who we are and magnifies them in ways we can explore and dissect. This is why I suggest reading fiction regularly. The messiness of people's lives wears on ministers, and it is easy to become hardened to the strings of excuses, the alligator tears of remorse, and the half-lived lives. A book like *Crime and Punishment* allows us to see the bigger picture and the bolder promise of humanity.

Read [all reflections](#).