SUMMER READING 2

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The Guardian called this book *chic-lit on steroids* and one of my friends described it as *Dan Brown for intelligent people*. I don't think I've ever read *chic-lit* before, but I very much enjoyed Labyrinth by Kate Mosse (not the model). It is a love/time-travel/conspiracy/superantural/historical story set in the South of France. Two stories run in paralell; one in modern times and one at the time of the crusades against the Cathars. The two themes are brought together in a fascinating (if somewhat unbelievable) denoument. There is a *DaVinci Code-ish* suggestion that there is a huge conspiracy theory lying behind the Christian Gospel. It makes you wonder how someone can do such excellent historical research for most of the book and then end up writing such tripe about the history of the Bible/Christian faith. Still, it doesn't detract from a good read.

One thing that struck me very forcibly in reading this book was the depiction of the military forces of Christendom forcing their religion upon the Cathars. Mosse depicted the Christian faith being used as a pretext to cause people horrible suffering. I read this in a week when the news agenda was dominated by the renewed war in the Middle East and a number of Christian commentators were defending the bombing of civilians from the Bible, it was all rather depressing. Why do people still think that you can advance the cause of the Prince of Peace by waging war?

> *The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. (2 Corinthians 10:4)*