



The Grand Inquisitor

by Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881)

The Grand Inquisitor is a parable told by Ivan to Alyosha in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–1880). Ivan and Alyosha are brothers; Ivan questions the possibility of a personal, benevolent God and Alyosha is a novice monk. *The Grand Inquisitor* is one of the best-known passages in modern literature because of its ideas about human nature and freedom, and because of its fundamental ambiguity. In the tale, Christ comes back to earth in Seville at the time of the Inquisition. He performs a number of miracles (echoing miracles from the Gospels). The people recognize him and adore him, but he is arrested by Inquisition leaders and sentenced to be burnt to death the next day. The Grand Inquisitor visits him in his cell to tell him that the Church no longer needs him. The main portion of the text is the Inquisitor explaining to Jesus why his return would interfere with the mission of the church. (*Wikipedia*)

Narrator: *Ruth Golding*
Ivan Karamazov: *om123*
Aloysha Karamazov: *Martin Geeson*
The Grand Inquisitor: *Denny Sayers*

Total running time: 1:17:07

Cover design: Kathryn Delaney
Cover art: Domenichino, *Portrait of Cardinal Agucchi* (detail), 1605



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