



CASE STUDY: DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

From pacifist to participant in a plot to kill





TEEN MINISTRY, 1932



PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, BERLIN, 1931



RADIO BROADCAST, FEBRUARY 1, 1933

People, and especially young people, will feel the need to give a leader authority over them as long as they themselves do not feel mature, strong and responsible enough to realize the claim placed in this authority themselves.

The Führer will have to be aware of this clear limitation of his authority.

If he understands his function differently than it is justified in the matter, then the image of the leader slips over into that of the seducer.



LECTURE „THE CHURCH BEFORE THE JEWISH QUESTION“, APRIL 1933

Bonhoeffer thought it was wrong to discriminate against Christians with a Jewish background and to exclude them from the church.

The last option the church has is to *"fall into the spokes of the wheel itself"*.

Aryan Paragraph (1933): a clause in the statutes of an organization, corporation, or real estate deed that reserved membership or right of residence solely for members of the „Aryan race“ and excluded from such rights any non-Aryans, particularly those of Jewish and Slavic descent.



ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE, FANØ, AUGUST 1934

„There is no path to peace on the path of security... For peace must be ventured, is the one great venture, and can never ever be secured. Peace is the opposite of security. Demanding securities means having mistrust, and this mistrust in turn breeds war.“

“Brothers ... cannot turn their weapons against each other because they know that in doing so they are turning their weapons on Christ himself.”



THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP, 1937

“Cheap grace means grace as a bargain, ... grace without price, without cost ..., grace without discipleship, grace without the cross”



AS EARLY AS 1933

“When the government doesn't maintain the right amount of order and justice, the church finds itself in a difficult position. It can either stand by while people suffer, or it can try to stop the injustice, even if that means breaking the law. In situations where the law is constantly being broken, a Christian can't just worry about keeping a clear conscience; he has to take action.”



JOINING THE RESISTANCE MEANS TO BECOME DECEIVING

“We have been silent witnesses of evil deeds, we have been washed with many waters, we have learned the arts of dissimulation and ambiguous speech, we have become suspicious of people through experience and have often had to owe them the truth and the free word, we have become weary or perhaps even cynical through unbearable conflicts.”



PRISON LETTERS

- The guidelines of Christian teachings are really important and should never be taken tightly. But sometimes, in real life situations, we might have to break these rules for the greater good. However, it is dangerous to say that things like lying, betraying, or using violence are okay just because they lead to positive outcomes.



ETHICS (COMPILED BY EBERHARD BETHGE, 1949)

“Freedom of the responsible person”

“One way or another, man becomes guilty and one way or another, he can only live by divine grace and forgiveness.”





WESTMINSTER ABBEY

West front:
20th century martyrs





Source: Wikimedia Commons, License CC-BY-SA 3.0)

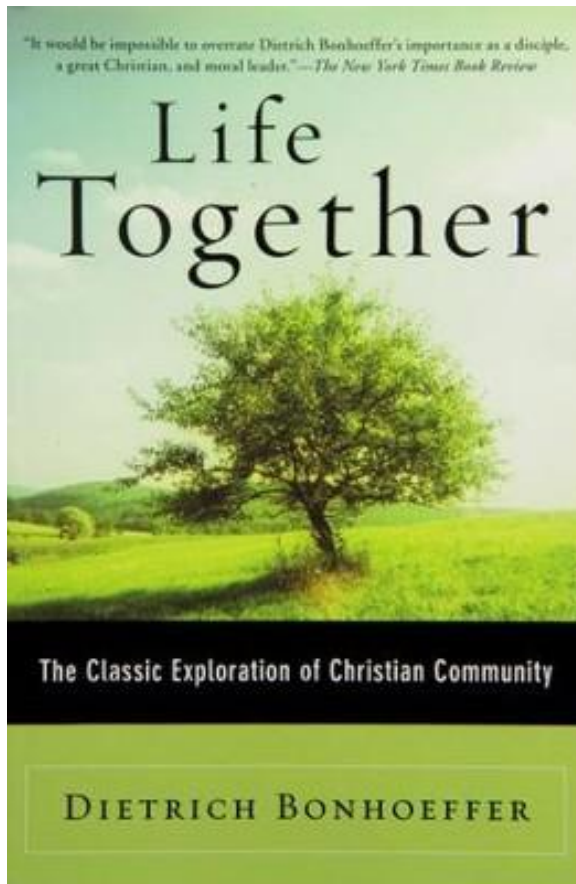


RIGHT OR WRONG?

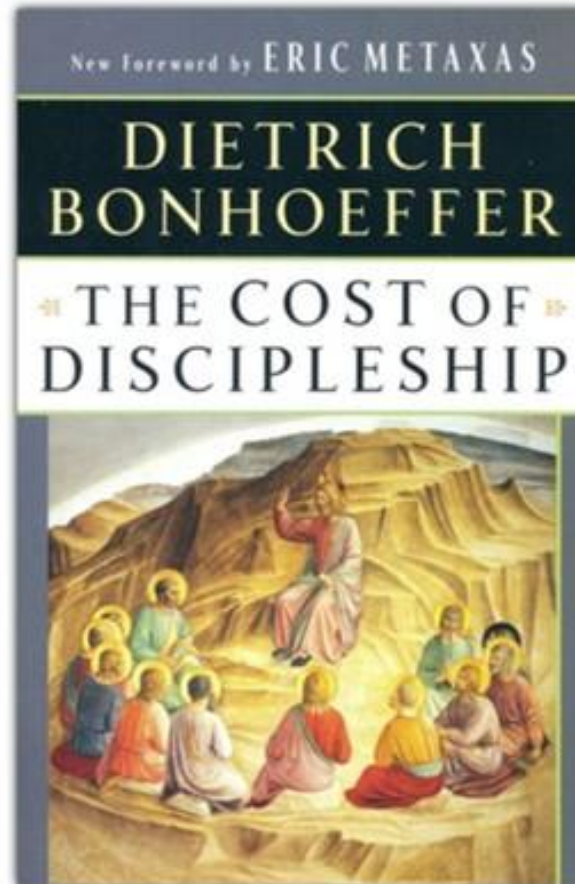


LITERATURE

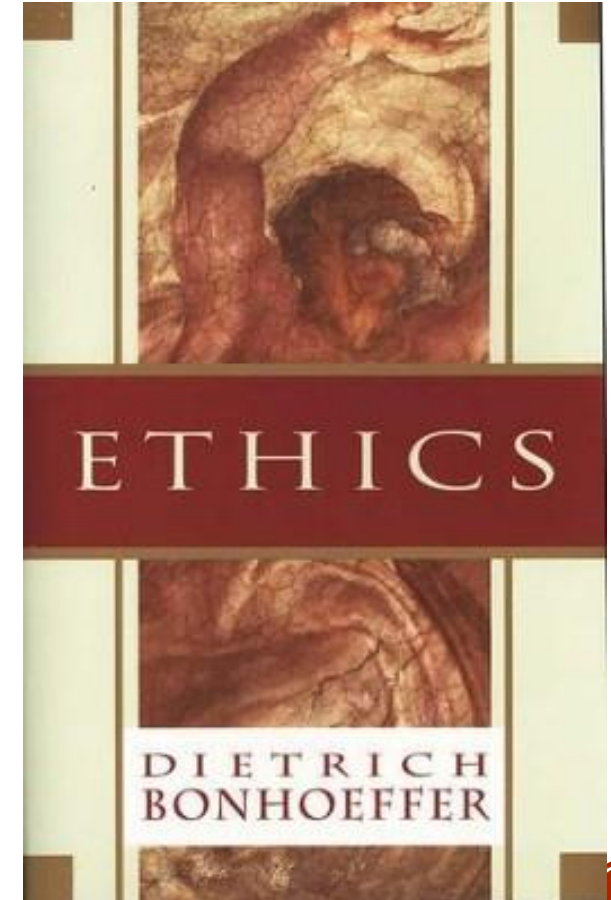
Gemeinsames Leben



Nachfolge

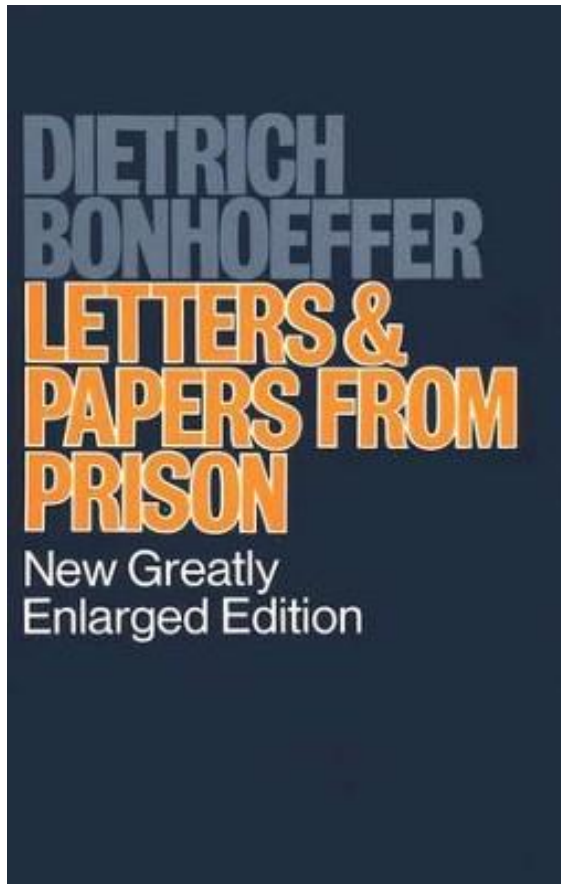


Ethik

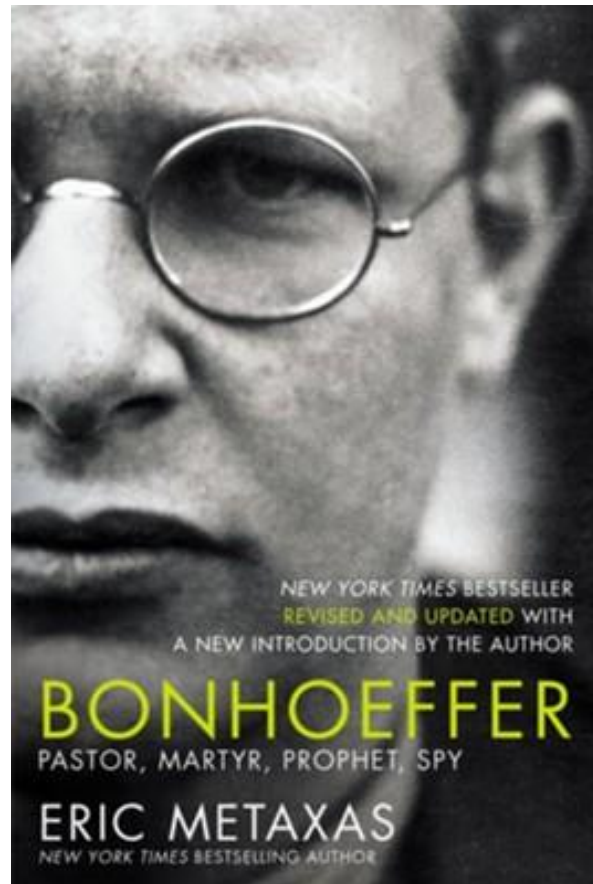


LITERATURE

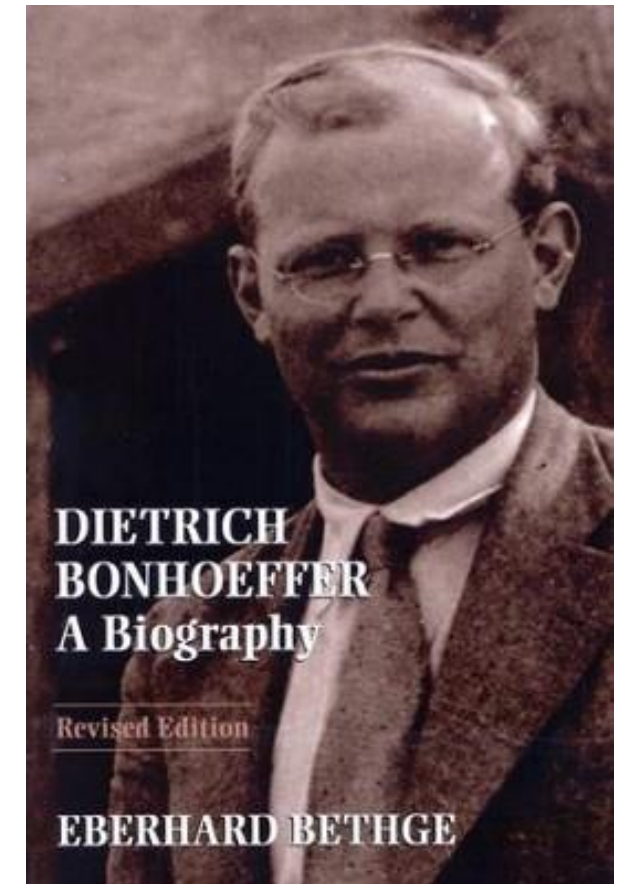
Widerstand & Ergebung



Eric Metaxas



Eberhard Bethge



Wer bin ich?

Wer bin ich? Sie sagen mir oft,
ich träte aus meiner Jelle
gelassen und heiter und fest
wie ein Spross aus seinem Spross.

Wer bin ich? Sie sagen mir oft,
ich spräche mit meinen Betrachtern
frei und freundlich und klar,
als hätte ich zu gebieten.

Wer bin ich? Sie sagen mir auch,
ich trüge die Tage des Unglücks
gleichmütig, lächelnd und stolz
wie einer, der Siegen gewohnt ist.

Bin ich das wirklich, was andere um mich sagen?

Oder bin ich nur das, was ich selbst um mich weis?

Unruhig, schmerzhaft, bewegt wie ein Vogel im Käfig,
ringend nach Atem, als hänge unter einer dicken
Kugelfarnschicht, nach Farben, nach Blumen, nach Vogelstimmen,
dürstend nach guten Worten, nach menschlicher Nähe,

Who am I?

They often tell me I step out of my cell calm and serene and firm
Like a lord of the manor from his castle.

Who am I? They often tell me I speak to my guards
Free and friendly and clear, as if I had authority.

Who am I? They also tell me I bear the days of misfortune
with equanimity, smiling and proud, like someone who is used to winning.

Am I really what others say I am? Or am I only what I know myself to be?
Restless, longing, sick, like a bird in a cage, struggling for the breath of life,
as if someone were choking my throat, hungry for colors, for flowers, for
birdsong, thirsting for good words, for human closeness,
trembling with anger at arbitrariness and the most petty insults,
driven by waiting for great things,
faintly fearing for friends in the endless distance,
tired and empty to pray, to think, to create,
weary and ready to say goodbye to everything?

Who am I? This one or that one?

Am I this one today and another tomorrow?

Am I both at the same time? A hypocrite in front of people
and before myself a contemptibly snivelling weakling?

Or is what is still in me like a defeated army,
that gives way in disorder to a victory already won?

Who am I? Lonely questions mock me,

Whoever I am, you know me, I am yours, O God.



VON GUTEN MÄCHTEN WUNDERBAR GEBORGEN

Von guten Mächten treu und still umgeben,
behütet und getröstet wunderbar,
so will ich diese Tage mit euch leben
und mit euch gehen in ein neues Jahr.

*Faithfully and quietly surrounded by good powers,
wonderfully protected and comforted,
I want to live these days with you
and go with you into a new year.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*



Noch will das alte unsre Herzen quälen,
noch drückt uns böser Tage schwere Last,
ach, Herr, gib unsern aufgescheuchten Seelen
das Heil, für das Du uns bereitet hast.

*The old will still torment our hearts,
the heavy burden of evil days still weighs us down,
O Lord, give our troubled souls
the salvation for which You have prepared us.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*



Und reichst Du uns den schweren Kelch, den bittern
des Leids, gefüllt bis an den höchsten Rand,
so nehmen wir ihn dankbar ohne Zittern
aus Deiner guten und geliebten Hand.

*And when You give us the heavy cup,
the bitter cup of suffering, filled to the brim,
we will take it gratefully and without trembling
from Your good and loving hand.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*



Doch willst Du uns noch einmal Freude schenken
an dieser Welt und ihrer Sonne Glanz,
dann wolln wir des Vergangenen gedenken,
und dann gehört Dir unser Leben ganz.

*But if You want to give us joy again
in this world and its sunshine,
then let us remember the past,
and then our lives will belong entirely to You.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*



Laß warm und still die Kerzen heute flammen,
die Du in unsre Dunkelheit gebracht,
führ, wenn es sein kann, wieder uns zusammen.
Wir wissen es, Dein Licht scheint in der Nacht.

*Let the candles you have brought into our darkness
burn warmly and quietly today,
bring us together again if it is possible.
We know that your light is shining in the night.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*



Wenn sich die Stille nun tief um uns breitet,
so laß uns hören jenen vollen Klang
der Welt, die unsichtbar sich um uns weitet,
all Deiner Kinder hohen Lobgesang.

*As silence now spreads deep around us,
let us hear the full sound
of the world expanding invisibly around us,
the high song of praise of all your children.*



Von guten Mächten wunderbar geborgen,
erwarten wir getrost, was kommen mag.
Gott ist bei uns am Abend und am Morgen
und ganz gewiß an jedem neuen Tag.

*Wonderfully protected by good forces,
we await with confidence what may come.
God is with us in the evening and in the morning,
and certainly with each new day.*

