

The Cost of Discipleship

I. Introduction to Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

A. Early Life

1. Born in Breslau, Germany with twin sister Sabine
2. Moved to Berlin in 1912; started Grammar school 1913
3. Decided to become a theologian in 1920 at the age of 14
4. Confirmed at Grunewald Church, Berlin in 1921
5. Began to study theology at Turbingen University
6. Received doctorate in 1927 from Berlin University - *The Communion of Saints*

B. Pastoral Ministry

1. Took an associate pastorate in Barcelona, Spain in 1928
2. Taught systematic theology at Berlin University in 1929-1930
3. Traveled to United States for a one year study at Union Theology Seminary in 1930
4. Ordained in Lutheran Church on November 15, 1931
5. Pastored in London, England from 1933 to 1935
6. Helped organize the Confessing Church in 1934
7. Declared a pacifist and enemy of the State by the Nazis in 1936

C. Confessing Church Leader

1. Wrote the *Cost of Discipleship* in 1937
2. Helped twin sister escape from Germany in 1938
3. Wrote *Life Together* in September 1938
4. Traveled to England and USA for lectures in 1939; decides to go back to Germany
5. Told to report regularly to police; wrote *Ethics* in 1940
6. Started working for the German Resistance in 1941-goes to Switzerland, Norway & Sweden
7. Engaged to Maria Von Wedemeyer on January 17, 1943
8. Arrested on April 5, 1943

II. The Cost of Discipleship - *Mark 8:31-38*

A. What Jesus Christ Said

1. The Son of Man must suffer, be rejected, killed and resurrected - not an easy faith
2. The followers of Christ must have in mind the things of God - Word of God and power of God
3. The followers of Christ must deny themselves - first step: say no to self
4. The followers of Christ must take up the cross - second step: say no to the world
5. The followers of Christ must follow the Son of Man - third step: say no to all others
6. If you want to save your life you will lose it - self investment is limited
7. If you lose your life for the sake of the gospel, you will gain it - Kingdom investment is unlimited
8. Discipleship is about following Jesus Christ

B. What Bonhoeffer Said

1. Cheap Grace
 - a. Justification of sin, not the sinner
 - b. Absence of obedience - no cross, no Christ
 - c. Forgiveness without repentance
 - d. Communion without confession
 - e. Consolation and comfort instead of confrontation and comfort
2. Costly Grace
 - a. Costly because it calls us to follow
 - b. Grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ
 - c. Costly because the price was Christ on a cross
 - d. Grace because God did it for His creation

GRACE EXPLORATION

SERIES

Men's Ministries Internatio

Christ the Centre

- I. Introduction to Bonhoeffer's Lectures on Christ
 - A. Obstacles to the 1933 Berlin Lectures - (May and June 1933 at the University of Berlin)
 1. Reconstructed from students' notes - Bonhoeffer's original text was lost
 2. Given in 1933 before any of the great events in Bonhoeffer's life had taken place
 - B. Outline to the 1933 Berlin Lectures
 1. The Consideration of Christ - Three Questions
 - a. Who is Jesus Christ? - being and doing
 - b. What is Jesus Christ? - Word, Sacrament, Order
 - c. Where is Jesus Christ? - examination of self
 2. The Incarnation of Christ - two lectures
 - a. "The Present Christ" - the Word is existence
 - b. "The Historical Christ" - the Word made flesh
 - c. "The Eternal Christ" *third lecture never given, but referenced
 3. "Where Is Christ Today?" - Dietrich Bonhoeffer
 - a. Jesus Christ is at the border of my existence - gives meaning to my life
 - b. Jesus Christ is the centre and meaning of history - requires interpretation
 - c. Jesus Christ is the heart of nature - redeems all creation
- II. The Place of Christ - *John 1:1-18*
 - A. Christ in Creation - *vv. 1-5*
 1. The pre-existent logos - with God and was God - *John 8:58*
 2. The agent of creation - all things were made - *I Corinthians 8:6*
 3. The Word of life - in Christ was life - *Hebrews 1:3*
 - B. Christ in Witness - *vv. 6-9*
 1. The light that gives faith - that all people might believe - *Ephesians 5:8-9*
 2. The light that produces witness - that all people might testify - *Matthew 5:14-16*
 3. The light that comes into the world - that all might see - *John 3:19*
 - C. Christ in Redemption - *vv. 10-13*
 1. The humble son - came into the world - *Philippians 2:5-11*
 2. The rejected son - they did not receive him - *John 12:37-40*
 3. The obedient son - fulfilled his mission - *John 17:25-26*
 4. The elder son - first born among many - *Colossians 1:15-20*
 - D. Christ in Glory - *v. 14*
 1. The Word made flesh - incarnational glory - *Colossians 2:9*
 2. The Word dwelling among us - revelational glory - *John 14:7-11*
 3. The Word full of grace and truth - conceptual glory - *I John 2:6*
 - E. Christ in Grace - *vv. 15-18*
 1. The Gift that brings blessings - over and over again - *Matthew 5:3-11*
 2. The Gift that brings truth - freedom from sin and self - *John 8:31-32*
 3. The Gift that brings knowledge - an open relationship with God - *I John 5:1-5*

Ethics

I. Introduction to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Book on Ethics

A. Difficulties with *Ethics*

1. The book *Ethics* is a compilation of lectures and writings edited by Eberhard Bethge
2. *Ethics* was considered propaganda and was hidden from the Gestapo in Bonhoeffer's garden
3. *Ethics* was written between 1940-1943 in Berlin, Ettal and Kieckow
4. Bonhoeffer felt distressed for not finishing *Ethics* - imprisoned in 1943

B. Bonhoeffer's Understanding of Christian Ethics - Freedom

1. Self-Discipline - *I Timothy 4:8*
 - a. Mastery over sense and soul and inward desires
 - b. Becoming free by keeping mind and body in control through discipline
2. Action - *I Peter 1:13*
 - a. Doing what is right, just and holy
 - b. Being brave in the moment when freedom requires action
3. Suffering - *Romans 5:3-5*
 - a. Yielding our work, our rest, our play to God
 - b. Believing that God will use our freedom for His glory
4. Death - *I Corinthians 15:54-58*
 - a. The highest feat on the way to eternal freedom
 - b. Blessing God face to face for the victory in Jesus Christ

II. The Foundation of Christian Ethics - *Matthew 5:1-48*

A. A New Way to Be Blessed - The Beatitudes - vv.1-12

1. Christians are blessed when they respond to the call of God
2. Christians are blessed when they renounce the things of the world

B. A Visible Community of Grace - Salt and Light - vv.13-16

C. The Righteousness of Christ - vv.17-20

1. Jesus Christ fulfills the law and prophets - Old Covenant
2. Jesus Christ creates a fellowship of grace - New Covenant

D. Formational Ethics

1. With your brother - vv.21-24 - look to the welfare of your brother (sister)
2. With your adversary - vv.25-26 - settle matters quickly with your adversary
3. With your sister - vv.27-30 - honor your sister (brother)
4. With your spouse - vv.31-32 - remain faithful in your marriage
5. With your words - vv.33-37 - watch closely all your words
6. With your nemesis - vv.38-42 - turn evil into good
7. With your enemy - vv.43-47 - love your enemies

E. The End of Ethics - Perfection - v.48

**Be Perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Elie Wiesel writes:

One of the Just Men came to Sodom, determined to save its inhabitants from sin and punishment. Night and day he walked the streets and markets protesting against greed and theft, falsehood and indifference. In the beginning, people listened and smiled ironically. Then they stopped listening: he no longer amused them. The killers went on killing, the wise men kept silent, as if there were no Just Man in their midst.

One day a child, moved by compassion for the unfortunate teacher, approached him with these words:

‘Poor stranger, you shout, you scream, don’t you see that it is hopeless?’

‘Yes, I see,’ answered the Just Man.

‘Then why do you go on?’

‘I’ll tell you why. In the beginning, I thought I could change man. Today, I know I cannot. If I still shout today, if I still scream, it is to prevent man from ultimately changing me.’

~From the Celtic Daily Prayer

* * *

Jesus clearly believed himself to be the Messiah the Old Testament predicted. He had come to establish the kingdom of God foretold by generations of prophets.

It is significant that the first recorded word of his public ministry was the word fulfilled,’ and his first sentence, ‘The time has been fulfilled; the kingdom of God has drawn near.’ (*Mark 1:15, KJV*) He assumed the title ‘Son of man’ which was an accepted Messianic title derived originally from one of Daniel’s visions. He accepted the description ‘Son of God’ when challenged by the high priest, which was another Messianic title taken particularly from *Psalms 2:7*. He also interpreted his mission in the light of the portrayal of the suffering servant of Jehovah in the latter part of the book of Isaiah...Simon Peter confessed his faith in Jesus as the Christ. Others might suppose him to be one of the prophets but Simon had come to recognize him as the One to whom the prophets pointed. He was not just another signpost, but the destination to which the signposts had led.

~John R.W. Stott

Basic Christianity

Life Together

I. Introduction to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Book on Community

A. The Setting for *Life Together*

1. Bonhoeffer answered a call to lead an underground and illegal seminary in 1935
2. The Seminary was located in Finkenwalde with 25 pastoral students in June 1935
3. The Gestapo closed the seminary in September 1937
4. Bonhoeffer wrote *Life Together (Gemeinsames Leben)* in 1938-considered one of his best work

B. Bonhoeffer's Understanding of Life Together

1. Community - life together under the Word - *Psalms 133:1*
 - a. Through and in Jesus Christ - sets the boundaries for all relationships
 - b. A Divine Reality - God creates community in peace
2. The Day With Others - common worship - *Colossians 3:16*
 - a. Gathering around the Psalms - Prayer
 - b. Gathering around the Gospels - Word
 - c. Gathering around the Hymn Book - Praise
 - d. Gathering around the Table - Communion
 - e. Gathering around the Work - vocation
3. The Day Alone - solitude and silence - *Psalms 46:10*
 - a. "Let him who is not in community beware of being alone"
 - b. "Let him who cannot be alone beware of community"
 - c. Individual Disciplines: meditations, prayer, intercession
4. Ministry - serving one another - *Luke 9:46*
 - a. The ministry of holding one's tongue - grace-filled silence
 - b. The ministry of meekness - grace-filled attitude
 - c. The ministry of listening - grace-filled patience
 - d. The ministry of helpfulness - grace-filled service
 - e. The ministry of bearing - grace-filled suffering
 - f. The ministry of proclaiming - grace-filled words
 - g. The ministry of authority - grace-filled leadership
5. Confession and Communion - dealing with sin - *James 5:16*
 - a. Breaking through to community - confession brings light
 - b. Breaking through to the Cross - confession brings salvation
 - c. Breaking through to New Life - confession brings hope
 - d. Breaking through to certainty - confession brings righteousness

II. The Foundation for Holy Communion

The day of the Lord's Supper is an occasion of joy for the Christian community. Reconciled in their hearts with God and their brethren, the congregation receives the gift of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and receiving that, it receives forgiveness, new life, and salvation. It is given new fellowship with God and men. The fellowship of the Lord's Supper is the superlative fulfillment of Christian fellowship. As the members of the congregation are united in body and blood at the table of the Lord so will they be together in eternity. Here the community has reached its goal. Here joy in Christ and his community has reached its goal. Here joy in Christ and his community is complete. The life of Christians together under the Word has reached its perfection in the sacrament.

Letters From Prison

I. Introduction to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Prison Letters

A. Arrest and Imprisonment

1. Arrested April 5, 1943 and held in Tegel Prison
2. Charged with "subversion of the armed forces in Berlin on April 29, 1943
3. Interrogated throughout the month of July 1943 - starts writing to Eberhard Bethge
4. Wrote first "theological" letter on April 30, 1944
5. Moved to Gestapo prison at Prinz Albrecht Strasse in Berlin on October 8, 1944
6. Wrote last letter to his fiancée (Maria) on December 19, 1944
7. Moved to Buchenwald concentration camp February 7, and Regensburg April 3, 1945
8. Hitler orders his execution on April 5, 1945
9. Moved to Schonberg (April 6); to Flossenburg (April 8); court martialed on April 8, 1945
10. Hung April 9, 1945 (Germany surrenders May 7)

B. Prison Ministry

1. Bonhoeffer wrote a play, a novel, prayers, papers, family letters and poems from prison
2. Bonhoeffers' writings were smuggled out of prison by Eberhard Bethge
3. Bonhoeffer held Sunday Worship services up until April 8, 1945
4. *Letters and Papers from Prison* was published in 1953
 - a. "Who is Jesus Christ for modern people who have 'come of age' and outgrown religion?"
 - b. "The church is only the church when it exists for others."
 - c. "The church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating but helping and serving.
 - d. "If we are to learn what God promises, and what he fulfills, we must persevere in quiet meditation on the life, sayings, deeds, sufferings and death of Jesus.

II. The Martyr's Struggle - *II Timothy 4:6-18*

A. Only By Faith - *vv.6-8*

1. We are saved by faith and we depart in faith - Paul declares he has kept the faith
2. We have a reward for the life we have lived - a crown of righteousness

B. Only By Hope - *vv.9-16*

1. Some will walk with us in the footsteps of Jesus Christ - they give us hope and a blessing
 - a. Luke stays with Paul in Rome
 - b. Mark and Tychicus are helpful to Paul's mission
 - c. Timothy is following in the ministry of Paul
2. Some will oppose our work, our words and our way of life-they will choose the way of the world
 - a. Demas deserts Paul because he loved the world
 - b. Cresens and Titus leave for other places
 - c. Alexander opposes Paul and the gospel of Jesus Christ

C. Only By Grace - *vv.17-18*

1. God will never leave us or forsake us - His grace will lead us home
2. God will use our lives to bring glory to His Name - we witness His grace