

"I feel sorry for those who are afflicted by these dreadful, blighting, semi-infidel, materialistic notions, that leave God, Christ, the Holy Spirit and the angels wholly out of the Christian's life--for those who think all these spiritual beings left us when the Bible was finished, and who think that we now have to fight the battle alone. Some of these people pray, but what they pray for is more than I can tell, unless it is for the 'reflex influence': and when they are praying for that they are praying to themselves, not to God."

"No man is competent to direct his own steps, to express his own thoughts, to do the simplest duties, to pray the shortest prayer, without divine help. I am glad in believing that in each child of God the Divine Helper dwells."

"God will hold everything against us we do that is wrong, whether it be in ignorance, weakness or willfulness, if we are not in Christ. If we are in Christ and abide in him, he holds nothing against us. All who live and die in Christ will be saved . . . So the matter of being delivered from our sins, great and small, depends on our being in Christ . . . [If one listens to the apostles' teaching, shares with the poor, attends to the table of the Lord, and continues in prayer] as he ought . . . he will surely abide in Christ. These four are God means of grace to transform a poor, frail, sinful human being into the likeness of Christ . . . He who faithfully uses these means unto the end of life cannot be lost; he who neglects any of them endangers his soul's salvation."

"The most important thing in the world is daily, diligent, prayerful study of the divine word."

"We should pray to God to give us whatever is best for us, wealth or poverty, honor or humiliation, health or sickness, life or death; being sure that whatever he gives to his dutiful child will be a blessing; resting in the faith that for all that we sacrifice or suffer for him we may expect a hundredfold reward, even in this present time."

"Indeed, all prayer is based upon the idea that God takes cognizance of us and in some way above our comprehension works in our affairs. We pray for food, for strength, for guidance, for deliverance from temptation, for the extension of Christ's kingdom, for the welfare of our families, and so on; now if these prayers avail at all, in any way, in securing for us food, strength, guidance, and deliverance from temptation....it is because in answer to them there is put forth, in some way, a power incomprehensible to mortals."

"And it may be, my brother, if you and I have had a hard time now and again in our money matters, it is because we have not given to the poor in the systematic, liberal way in which we should have done. Have you ever made it a rule to give a fourth of your income regularly to the Lord? or two tenths? or even one tenth? . . . So if we want money in abundance to supply our families with what they need, and fill up our own wants, while we are preaching, let us see to it that we give a very liberal per cent of our income to the poor."

If Christians are wise, they will be diligent in business; and then, when they have money, they will use it with a free hand in ministering to widows and orphans, in caring for the poor, in having the gospel preached, or to sum it all up, in lending it to the Lord. . . Lend your money to the Lord, and it is safe; you will be sure to get it when you need it . . . The meanest sin among the professed followers of the Lord is covetousness; and no doubt it is damning more of them, by many thousands than any other crime."

14. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

Born in Prussia, was a German pastor, theologian, and anti-Nazi dissident as well as a founding leader of the German Confessing Church. He became student of theology with a doctorate in theology from the University of Berlin in 1927. Too young for ordination, he went to the United States to study at Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1930. He often attended the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, and he became acquainted with the reality of segregation and discrimination in the United States.

In 1931, he returned to the University of Berlin as a lecturer in theology, was ordained at the age of 25, and became active in the ecumenical movement. He opposed Nazism from the beginning and led in the establishment of the Confessing Church that opposed the Nazi regime (1/3 of German Christians became part of it). In 1933, he accepted a pastorate in London where he served for two years. In 1935, he returned to Germany to lead an underground seminary to train pastors for the Confessing Church (it was closed in 1940 by the Gestapo). In 1938, the Gestapo banned Bonhoeffer from Berlin, and by 1940 he was forbidden to speak in public. Two of his most famous books were written during this time: *Cost of Discipleship* and *Life Together*.

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die. . . One act of obedience is worth a hundred sermons.

If our Christianity has ceased to be serious about discipleship, if we have watered down the gospel into emotional uplift which makes no costly demands and which fails to distinguish between natural and Christian existence, then we cannot help regarding the cross as an ordinary everyday calamity, as one of the trials and tribulations of life. We have then forgotten that the cross means rejection and shame as well as suffering.

Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession.... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

In June 1939, he was invited to join the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He accepted, but once he arrived, he immediately returned to Germany.

I have come to the conclusion that I made a mistake in coming to America. I must live through this difficult period in our national history with the people of Germany. I will have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials of this time with my people . . . Christians in Germany will have to face the terrible alternative of either willing the defeat of their nation in order that Christian civilization may survive or willing the victory of their nation and thereby destroying civilization. I know which of these alternatives I must choose but I cannot make that choice from security.

Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

The Church is the Church only when it exists for others . . . not dominating, but helping and serving. It must tell men of every calling what it means to live for Christ, to exist for others.