

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Book Study Thread: Bonhoeffer**

**Book Study Thread: Bonhoeffer - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/14 14:57**

Would anyone be interested in participating in an online Book Club thread on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Cost of Discipleship" ?

There are threads which address this issue.

We could read and discuss a chapter a week and align the reading with any intertextually cited scripture. Though he bases his book mostly on Matthew 5.

This would be a dream come true to reread and discuss this book with folks like you.

Pretty please?!?

I don't live in a town with a church that would be game to reading Bonhoeffer or even Spurgeon (the latter I read every night). They read all of the "prosperity gospel" malarkey like "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" by John Maxwell.

Yuck! C'mon, saints! This book is absurd. Yet, I went to a church that did a book club study on this. I joined the book club, got three chapters into the book and was heartbroken.

If only I lived in a town with a church that cares about Discipleship. Yet, the motto of this church was "We Make Disciples". No, you make worldly leaders...big difference.

**Re: Book Study Thread: Bonhoeffer - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/14 15:05**

IssacharSon,

I will do that with you. Let me get a copy of his book. Do you know of one that is available online? If not, I will purchase one. He was a great Christian, I just disagree with him getting involved with a group to assassinate Hitler since Jesus taught non-resistance. But, I am willing to read his justifications about what brought him to this point. It should be very enlightening since we may face worse despots in the future and many may be tempted to do the same thing as Dietrich.

I think it is interesting that one of the worst despots ever were the Caesars and there is no record of the early church conspiring with flesh and blood weapons.

Anyway, I am getting ahead of things and I should wait till we get to that part of the book. I hope the chapters are short if you want to do one per week. :-)

Maybe I will make another category called "Book Club".

Pilgrim

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2012/7/14 15:21**

If its alright I have already been reading this book but I can start over and join in the study with you both?

Look forward to hearing others insights.

God bless  
maryjane

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/14 15:27**

Ok, I am going to get a copy of the book.

Pilgrim

**Re: Bonhoeffer: The marble man?, on: 2012/7/14 16:13**

A martyr yes; executed for his involvement in a plot to assassinate Hitler; but maybe a social martyr?

BEWARE OF THE MARBLE MAN!

" Moreover, Bonhoeffer believed that the true Christian was the confessing believer who totally immersed his life in the secular world, becoming a secular Christian."

"Bonhoeffer plainly rejected such cardinal doctrines as the virgin birth, physical resurrection, and substitutionary atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.

According to Bonhoeffer, it is a "cardinal error" to regard Christianity as a religion of salvation. In an article at the Way of Life web site we have documented Bonhoeffer's heresies from a 1967 edition of his Letters and Papers from Prison. (See the Modernist section of the End Times Apostasy Database ]..(discern the time ).....

And..."Bonhoeffer, like many good theological existentialists, would say that the resurrection of Jesus is not something that literally happened to Jesus, but rather it is something that happens to us, his disciples. "Jesus Christ has been raised in our hearts" and that "resurrection" gives significance to our existence.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, many evangelical Christians fell in love with Bonhoeffer's writings, because they found a deep personal piety contained therein that they found attractive.

They also appreciated his courage and willingness to die for his convictions. But once again, this shows how uncritical evangelicals have become.

While we might find many statements from Bonhoeffer on such subjects as personal piety and personal ethics that we might agree with and even appreciate, those statements come packaged in a theology that should be troubling to those who take the biblical narrative seriously. .

I myself do in fact believe that the proposition "Jesus Christ is risen from the dead" is an ontologically true statement. In fact, if it were not so, I would concur with the apostle Paul that "our faith is futile." What genuine transformative power is that proposition supposed to have if it is not ontologically true?..  
<http://www.sortingbeans.com/bonhoeffer-and-ontology/>  
.....

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a neo-orthodox German theologian, pastor, preacher, radio broadcaster, and prolific writer in the 1930s and early-1940s, during the rise, rule, and downfall of Adolph Hitler.

He was greatly fascinated with neo-orthodox thought, theology, and terminology, and was greatly influenced by the major theologian of neo-orthodoxy, Karl Barth (1886-1968).

Bonhoeffer's writings are credited with helping to father the "Death of God" theology which was popularized by the Anglican Bishop John A.T. Robinson in the decade of the 1960s.

Bonhoeffer was in reality a practical atheist and a religious humanist who denied virtually every cardinal doctrine of the historic Christian faith (Letters and Papers from Prison, ed. Eberhard Bethge, New York: Macmillan Co., 1972, pp. 9-12).

Bonhoeffer readily acknowledged "the debt he owes to liberal theology." Declaring that it was impossible to know the objective truth about Christ's real nature and essence, Bonhoeffer proclaimed that God was dead.

Moreover, Bonhoeffer believed that the true Christian was the confessing believer who totally immersed his life in the secular world, becoming a secular Christian.

Rejecting the objective unalterable moral standards of the Bible, Bonhoeffer proclaimed a situational ethics -- that right and wrong are determined solely by the "loving obligations of the moment"

(Letters and Papers from Prison, ed. Eberhard Bethge, New York: Macmillan Co., 1972, pp. 9-12, 378; Ethics, pp. 38, 186; No Rusty Swords, pp. 44-45).

<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/bonhoeffer/general.htm>

I might investigate Bonhoeffer before investing so much time in him. Yes, I read the COST, many years ago, but became unsettled in his intellectual confusion centered around the simplicity of the Word as being the WORD.

He was a Mass-taking confessional who studied at Catholic monasteries and worshipped there also. He was a champion of Ecumenical-ism also. He possessed the courage to die for his beliefs, but in my view, was never a Christian at all.

#### **Watch what you eat!, on: 2012/7/14 16:36**

Bonhoeffer beliefs and teachings: Documented. Watch what you eat.

He believed that "God is teaching us that we must live as men who can get along very well without Him. The God who is with us is the God who forsakes us."

Bonhoeffer also believed that the concept of God as a "supreme Being, absolute in power and goodness," was a "spurious conception of transcendence," and that "God as a working hypothesis in morals, politics, and science ... should be dropped, or as far as possible eliminated" (Letters and Papers from Prison, S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, pp. 122, 164, 360).

2. He believed that mankind had become of age and no longer needed religion, which was only a deceptive garment of true faith; he suggested the need for a "religionless Christianity." To Bonhoeffer, "the Christian is identified not by his beliefs, but by actions, by his participation in the suffering of God in the life of the world"

(Letters and Papers from Prison, S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, p. 163).

Thus, Bonhoeffer's final writings have given impulse to Marxist theologians sponsoring "liberation theology" and to others wishing to promote a worldly social gospel.

3. He refused to discuss the origin of Christ, His relationship to the Father, His two natures, or even the relationship of the two natures. Bonhoeffer was adamant in his belief that it was impossible to know the objective truth about the real essence of Christ's being-nature (Christ the Center, pp. 30, 88, 100-101).

4. He questioned the Virgin Birth, and in reality denied it (The Cost of Discipleship, p. 215).

5. He denied the deity of Christ; he advocated that "Jesus Christ Today" is not a real person and being, but a "corporate presence" (Testimony to Freedom, pp. 75-76; Christ the Center, p. 58).

6. He denied the sinlessness of Christ's human nature and further questioned the sinlessness of His earthly behavior (Christ the Center, pp. 108-109).

7. He believed that Christ exists in three "revelatory forms" -- as Word, as sacrament, and as church. From asserting that Christ is the church, he followed that all persons in the church are identical with Christ (Christ the Center, p. 58; The Cost of Discipleship, p. 217). This amounts to pantheism!

8. He believed that Christianity is not exclusive, i.e., that Christ is not the only way to God (Testimony to Freedom, pp. 55-56).

9. He was a prominent figure in the early ecumenical movement, as evidenced through his associations with the "World Alliance for International Friendship" (a forerunner of the apostate World Council of Churches), Union Theological Seminary, and Visser 't Hooft (who later became the first General Secretary of the WCC) (Testimony to Freedom, pp. 22, 212, 568).

Bonhoeffer also reached out to Roman Catholics, prefiguring the broader ecumenism that blossomed after Vatican II in

the mid-1960s.

10. He was a practical evolutionist (No Rusty Swords, p. 143), and believed that the book of Genesis was scientifically naive and full of myths (Creation and Fall: A Theological Interpretation of Genesis 1-3).

11. He adhered to neo-orthodox theology and terminology concerning salvation (Testimony to Freedom, p. 130), was a sacramentalist (Life Together, p. 122; The Way to Freedom, pp. 115, 153),

.. believed in regenerational infant baptism (Letters and Papers from Prison, Macmillan, pp. 142-143) as well as adult baptismal regeneration (The Way to Freedom, p. 151), equated church membership with salvation (The Way to Freedom, p. 93), and denied a personal/individualistic salvation (Letters and Papers from Prison, Macmillan, p. 156).

12. He placed little or no value on the Old Testament -- "... the faith of the Old Testament is not a religion of salvation" (Letters and Papers from Prison, S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, p. 112).

13. He denied the verbal-plenary inspiration of Scripture, believing that the Bible was only a "witness" to the Word of God and becomes the Word of God only when it "speaks" to an individual; otherwise, it was simply the word of man/men. (Testimony to Freedom, pp. 9, 104; Sanctorum Communio, p. 161).

To Bonhoeffer, the Bible was meant "to be expounded as a witness, not as a book of wisdom, a teaching book, a book of eternal truth" (No Rusty Swords, p. 118). He also believed in the value of higher criticism/historical criticism, which is a denial of the inerrancy and authenticity of the Bible (Christ the Center, pp. 73-74).

14. He had no faith in the physical resurrection of Christ. Bonhoeffer believed the "historicity" of the Resurrection was in "the realm of ambiguity," and that it was one of the "mythological" elements of Christianity that "must be interpreted in such a way as not to make religion a pre-condition of faith."

He also believed that "Belief in the Resurrection is not the solution of the problem of death," and that such things as miracles and the ascension of Christ were "mythological conceptions" as well (Christ the Center, p. 112; Letters and Papers from Prison, S.C.M. Press edition, Great Britain: Fontana Books, 1953, pp. 93-94, 110).

Dr. G. Archer Weniger declared, "If there is wholesome food in a garbage can, then one can find some good things in Bonhoeffer, but if it be dangerous to expect to find nourishment in a garbage can, then Bonhoeffer must be totally rejected and repudiated as blasphemy. It is worse than garbage."

(<http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/exposes/bonhoeffer/general.htm>) Bonhoeffer.

**Re: Watch what you eat! - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/14 17:11**

BrotherTom,

Watch what you regurgitate.

This would all seem very convincing if one accepts noncontextual criticism of literary work.

Taken all out of context, you are right!

If you've actually read Bonhoeffer's works, not so fast!

I found the sources of many of your citations above and Claim #4 in particular, is also referenced on a Fundamentalist website called "FundamentalBaptist Ministries.com"

And I have my paperback copy of Bonhoeffer's "Cost of Discipleship" open to "page 215" and it says nothing about the virgin birth.

If you have a copy of the book, pls open to page 215 and you will see that it immerses you into Chapter 24 entitled, "The Suffering of the Messengers" whereby, he gives a commentary on Matthew 10: 16-25

Our diverse interpretations of this man's life all the more necessitate a need to study his book.

Why don't you join me in a book study of "The Cost of Discipleship"?

Love-in-Christ,

KP

**Online Book Club: "The Cost of Discipleship" - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/14 17:44**

Wow!

You all are so awesome! The criticism I've read of Bonhoeffer via SI posts has ignited a desire to reread this book.

Thank you BrotherTom and Pilgrim777!

And MaryJane is in for a life changing experience that will not result in enhanced "personal piety" but rather, catapult on e's understanding of Christ's teachings about true, authentic discipleship.

If you notice, MaryJane, Bonhoeffer opens each chapter (except chapter 1) with scripture. He puts Christ words before his own.

This book promotes spiritual maturity. An incidental benefit will be in clarifying and discounting the myriad of myths, surprisingly spread about a Christian and martyr with a controversial life.

Should we give everyone a week to respond to the Online Book Club and acquire the book (link to acquire book below):

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Cost-Discipleship-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer/dp/0684815001>

Should we start on Friday, 07/27/12 prepared to discuss the following?:

READING PASSAGE

- I. Introduction (5 pages)
- II. Chapter One: Costly Grace (pgs. 43 - 56)

DISCUSSION FORMAT

- I. Discuss weekly posts to this thread (15 mins.)
- I. Prepare/Share two (2) points of inquiry for the Club (30 mins.)
- II. Prepare three (3) reflections on passage covered to share with Club (30 mins)

Yeah?

Is every Friday during a certain time convenient for everyone. Wouldn't it be great if we could meet live!?!

If not, what day and time could we meet up here to share the book?

This would be great!

Look forward to hesaring form you.

Love-in-Christ,

KP

**Re: - posted by Trekker, on: 2012/7/14 20:48**

QUOTE: "He was a great Christian, I just disagree with him getting involved with a group to assassinate Hitler,"==PILGRIM777

As it turns out, not really. He was actually a heretic, from what I have read of his writings and theology. And by heretic I mean that his CORE doctrines (on salvation) were a FALSE GOSPEL. My discovery of this made me quite sad, as he was quite heroic. While most other church people in Germany just sat and warmed the pews he was actually trying to do something to stop Hitler, trying to save lives, speaking out, etc. His whole family was heroic. Whether you disagree with what he did, he at least did SOMETHING.

**Re: , on: 2012/7/14 21:05**

Trekker are you saying Bonhoeffer was not a Christian in the New Testament sense if the word? That he was not trusting in Christ for his salvation?

Bearmaster.

**Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/7/14 21:25**

The Cost of Discipleship  
by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)

Note: This book begins with a "Memoir" by Gerhard Leibholz, Bonhoeffer's Christian brother-in-law who was part Jew, therefore condemned to death by Nazi law. Bonhoeffer drove his family to the Swiss border and safety. Since everything that follows comes from Bonhoeffer's book (except for a few words in brackets), we have not used quotation marks. The numbers refer to pages in the 1963 paperback version published by Macmillan. Bonhoeffer dared to criticize the politicized cultural "Christianity" of Hitler's Germany (primarily the unbiblical "religious" Idealism, formalism, and Nazi compromise). He was not, as some have said, a liberal Christian opposing genuine Christianity. Unfortunately, some English-speaking interpreters of his German letters have unjustly distorted his prison-letters and taken certain phrases -- such as "religionless Christianity" -- out of context. To see his genuine love for the whole, unadorned Word of God, please see Life Together by Bonhoeffer. Together with Martin Niemöller and other founders of the Confessing Church, Bonhoeffer actively opposed both Hitler's National Socialism and the Nazi subjugation of churches. Bonhoeffer was first arrested for helping Jews escape to Switzerland. He was executed by hanging at Flossenbürg concentration camp on April 9, 1945 shortly before its liberation. (See Trapped in Hitler's Hell and Day of No Return)

Memoir by Gerhard Leibholz

Bonhoeffer's closest friend and brother-in-law

When war seemed inevitable, Bonhoeffer's friends abroad wanted him to leave Germany to save his life, for he was unalterably opposed to serving in the Army in an aggressive war.... In June 1939, American friends got him out of Germany. But soon he felt that he could not stay there, but that he had to return to his country. When he came to England on his return from the United States, his friends quickly realized that Bonhoeffer's heart belonged to his oppressed and persecuted fellow Christians in Germany and that he would not desert them at a time when they needed him most.

"I shall have no right," Bonhoeffer wrote to Niebuhr before leaving America, "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."... Bonhoeffer never regretted this decision, not even in prison, where he wrote in later years:

"I am sure of God's hand and guidance... You must never doubt that I am thankful and glad to go the way which I am being led. My past life is abundantly full of God's mercy, and, above all sin, stands the forgiving love of the Crucified." Bonhoeffer (together with his sister Christel and her husband, Hans von Dohnanyi) was arrested by the Gestapo in the house of his parents on April 5th, 1943. In prison and concentration camps, Bonhoeffer was greatly inspired by his indomitable courage, his unselfishness and his goodness, all those who came in contact with him. He even inspired his guards with



aspect, some of whom became so much attached to him that they smuggled out of prison his papers and poems written there, and apologized to him for having to lock his door after the round in the courtyard.

His own concern in prison was to get permission to minister to the sick and to his fellow prisoners, and his ability to comfort the anxious and depressed was amazing. We know what Bonhoeffer's word and religious assistance meant to his fellow prisoners, especially during their last hours (even to Molotov's nephew Kokorin, who was imprisoned with Bonhoeffer in Buchenwald and to whom the teaching of Christ was brought home)...

In his hearing before the Gestapo during his imprisonment, defenseless and powerless... only fortified by the word of God in his heart, he stood erect and unbroken before his tormentors. He refused to recant, and defied the Gestapo machine by openly admitting that, as a Christian, he was an implacable enemy of National Socialism and its totalitarian demands toward the citizen—defied it, although he was continually threatened with torture and with the arrest of his parents, his sisters and his fiancée... In 1944, when friends made an attempt to liberate him and to take him to safety abroad, he decided to remain in prison in order not to endanger others.

The last service which Dietrich Bonhoeffer held on the day before his death... 'moved all deeply...' Bonhoeffer, who was never tried, went steadfastly on his last way to be hanged, and died with admirable calmness and dignity.

Both modern liberal theology and secular totalitarianism hold pretty much in common that the message of the Bible has to be adapted more or less, to the requirements of a secular world. No wonder, therefore, that the process of debasing Christianity as by liberal theology led, in the long run, to a complete perversion and falsification of the essence of Christianity by National Socialism.

...the Christian must be prepared, if necessary, to offer his life for this. Thus all kinds of secular totalitarianism which force man to cast aside his religious and moral obligations to God and subordinate the laws of justice and morality to the State are incompatible with his conception of life.

**Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/7/14 21:27**

Grace and Discipleship

Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting today for costly grace. Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjack's wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost! The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it has been paid, everything can be had for nothing....

Cheap grace means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system. It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian 'conception' of God. An intellectual assent to that idea is held to be of itself sufficient to secure remission of sins.... In such a Church the world finds a cheap covering for its sins; no contrition is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin. Cheap grace therefore amounts to a denial of the living Word of God, in fact, a denial of the Incarnation of the Word of God.

Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner. Grace alone does everything they say, and so everything can remain as it was before. 'All for sin could not atone.' Well, then, let the Christian live like the rest of the world, let him model himself on the world's standards in every sphere of life, and not presumptuously aspire to live a different life under grace from his old life under sin....

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.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble, it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "ye were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.

Costly grace is the sanctuary of God; it has to be protected from the world, and not thrown to the dogs. It is therefore the living word, the Word of God, which he speaks as it pleases him. Costly grace confronts us as a gracious call to follow Jesus.

Jesus. It comes as a word of forgiveness to the broken spirit and the contrite heart. Grace is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

On two separate occasions Peter received the call, "Follow me." It was the first and last word Jesus spoke to his disciple (Mark 1.17; John 21.22). A whole life lies between these two calls. The first occasion was by the lake of Gennesareth, when Peter left his nets and his craft and followed Jesus at his word. The second occasion is when the Risen Lord finds him back again at his old trade. Once again it is by the lake of Gennesareth, and once again the call is: "Follow me." Between the two calls lay a whole life of discipleship in the following of Christ. Half-way between them comes Peter's confession, when he acknowledged Jesus as the Christ of God....

This grace was certainly not self-bestowed. It was the grace of Christ himself, now prevailing upon the disciple to leave all and follow him, now working in him that confession which to the world must sound like the ultimate blasphemy, now inviting Peter to the supreme fellowship of martyrdom for the Lord he had denied, and thereby forgiving him all his sins. In the life of Peter grace and discipleship are inseparable. He had received the grace which costs. As Christianity spread, and the Church became more secularized, this realization of the costliness of grace gradually faded. The world was Christianized, and grace became its common property. It was to be had at low cost.

**Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/7/14 21:31**

The Call to Discipleship

"The call goes forth, and is at once followed by the response of obedience. ... It displays not the slightest interest in the psychological reason for a man's religious decisions. And why? For the simple reason that the cause behind the immediate following of call by response is Jesus Christ Himself.

"Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ. It remains an abstract idea, a myth which has a place for the Fatherhood of God, but omits Christ as the living Son. ... There is trust in God, but no following of Christ."

"The disciple places himself at the Master's disposal, but at the same time retains the right to dictate his own terms. But then discipleship is no longer discipleship, but a program of our own to be arranged to suit ourselves..."

Discipleship and the Cross

Jesus Christ must suffer and be rejected. (Mark 8:31-38) This 'must' is inherent in the promise of God—the Scripture must be fulfilled. Here there is a distinction between suffering and rejection. Had He only suffered, Jesus might still have been applauded as the Messiah.

Jesus is a rejected Messiah. His rejection robs the passion of its halo of glory. It must be a passion without honor. Suffering and rejection sum up the whole cross of Jesus. To die on the cross means to die despised and rejected of men. Suffering and rejection are laid upon Jesus as a divine necessity, and every attempt to prevent it is the work of the devil, especially when it comes from his own disciples; for it is in fact an attempt to prevent Christ from being Christ. (Peter in Matthew 16)

That shows how the very notion of a suffering Messiah was scandal to the Church. ... Peter's protest displays his own unwillingness to suffer and that means that Satan has gained entry into the Church, and is trying to tear it away from the cross of its Lord.

Jesus must therefore make it clear beyond all doubt that the "must" of suffering applies to his disciples no less than to himself. ... Discipleship means adherence to the person of Jesus, and therefore submission to the law of Christ which is the law of the cross.

When Jesus begins to unfold this inescapable truth to His disciples, He once more sets them free to choose or reject Him. "If any man would come after me," He says. For it is not a matter of course, not even among the disciples. Nobody can be forced, nobody can even be expected to come. He says rather, "If any man" is prepared to spurn all other offers which come his way in order to follow Him. Once again, everything is left for the individual to decide....

To deny oneself is to be aware only of Christ and no more of self, to see only Him who goes before and no more the road which is too hard for us. ... All that self-denial can say is: "He leads the way, keep close to Him."

"...and take up his cross." ... Only when we have become completely oblivious of self are we ready to bear the cross for His sake. If in the end we know only Him, if we have ceased to notice the pain of our own cross, we are indeed looking only unto Him. If Jesus had not so graciously prepared us for this word, we should have found it unbearable.

To endure the cross is not a tragedy; it is the suffering which is the fruit of an exclusive allegiance to Jesus Christ. When it comes, it is not an accident, but a necessity. ... the suffering which is an essential part of the specifically Christian life.

It is not suffering per se but suffering-and-rejection, and not rejection for any cause of conviction of our own, but rejection



n for the sake of Christ. 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. We have then forgotten that the cross means rejection and shame as well as suffering.

The Psalmist was lamenting that he was despised and rejected of men, and that is an essential quality of the suffering of the cross. But this notion has ceased to be intelligible to a Christianity which can no longer see any difference between an ordinary human life and life committed to Christ. The cross means sharing the suffering of Christ to the last and to the fullest.

Only a man thus totally committed in discipleship can experience the meaning of the cross. The cross is there, right from the beginning, he has only got to pick it up there is no need for him to go out and look for a cross for himself. Every Christian has his own cross waiting for him, a cross destined and appointed by God. Each must endure his allotted share of suffering and rejection.

But each has a different share: some God deems worthy of the highest form of suffering, and given them the grace of martyrdom, while others He does not allow to be tempted above that they are able to bear.

The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ-suffering which every man must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. We surrender ourselves to Christ in union with His death—we give over our lives to death. When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die. Death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at his call. Jesus' summons to the rich young man was calling him to die, because only the man who is dead to his own will can follow Christ. In fact, every command of Jesus is a call to die, with all our affections and lusts. But we do not want to die.

The call to discipleship means both death and life sets the Christian in the middle of the daily arena against sin and the devil. Every day he encounters new temptations, and every day he must suffer anew for Jesus Christ's sake. The wounds and scars he receives in the fray are living tokens of this participation in the cross of his Lord.

But there is another kind of suffering and shame which the Christian is not spared. While only the sufferings of Christ are a means of atonement, yet since he has borne the sins of the whole world, the Christian also has to undergo temptation bear the sins of others; he too must bear their shame and be driven like a scapegoat from the gates of the city. (Heb. 13:12-15) The passion of Christ strengthens him to overcome the sins of others by forgiving them. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal. 6:2)

Suffering then is the badge of true discipleship. The disciple is not above his master. That is why Luther reckoned suffering among the marks of the true Church. If we refuse to take up our cross and submit to suffering and rejection at the hands of men, we forfeit our fellowship with Christ and have ceased to follow Him. But if we lose our lives in His service and carry out cross, we shall find our lives again in the fellowship of the cross with Christ. The opposite of discipleship is to be ashamed of Christ and His cross and all the offense which the cross brings in its train.

Discipleship means allegiance to the suffering Christ. It is a joy and token of His grace. Christ transfigures for His own the hour of their moral agony by granting them the unspeakable assurance of His presence. In the hour of the cruellest torture they bear for His sake, they are made partakers in the perfect joy and bliss of fellowship with Him. To bear the cross proves to be the only way of triumphing over suffering.

Jesus prays to His Father that the cup may pass from Him, and His Father hears His prayer; for the cup of suffering will indeed pass from Him—but only by His drinking it.

God speaking to Luther: "Discipleship is not limited to what you can comprehend—it must transcend all comprehension. Not to know where you are going is the true knowledge. My comprehension transcends yours. Thus Abraham went forth from His father not knowing whither he went. Behold, that is the way of the cross. You cannot find it yourself, so you must let me lead you as though you were a blind man. Wherefore it is not you, no man but I myself, who instruct you by my Word and Spirit in the way you should go. Not the work which you choose, not the suffering you devise, but the road which is clean contrary to all you choose or contrive or desire—that is the road you must take. To that I call you and in that you must be my disciple."

#### The Beatitudes

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Privation is the lot of the disciples in every sphere of their lives. They ... have no security, no possessions to call their own, not even a foot of earth to call their home, no earthly society to claim their absolute allegiance. ... For his sake they have lost all.

The Antichrist also calls the poor blessed, but not for the sake of the cross, which embraces all poverty and transforms it into a source of blessing. He fights the cross with political and sociological ideology. He may call it Christian, but that only makes him a still more dangerous enemy.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” With each beatitude the gulf is widened between the disciples and the people, their call to come forth from the people becomes increasingly manifest.... And so the disciples are strangers in the world, unwelcome guests and disturbers of the peace. No wonder the world rejects them! ... they bear their sorrow in the strength of him who bears them up, who bore the whole suffering of the world upon the cross.... The community of strangers find their comfort in the cross, they are comforted

by being cast upon the place where the Comforter of Israel awaits them. Thus do they find their true home with their crucified Lord, both here and in eternity.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” This community of strangers possesses no inherent right of its own...nor do they claim such right for they are meek, they renounce every right of their own and live for the sake of Jesus Christ. When reproached, they hold their peace; when treated with violence they endure it patiently; when men drive them from their presence, they yield their ground. They will not go to law to defend their rights nor make a scene when they suffer injustice.

Their right is in the will of their Lord—that and no more. They show by every word and gesture that they do not belong to this earth.... But Jesus says: “they shall inherit the earth.”

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” Not only do the followers of Jesus renounce their rights, they renounce their own righteousness, too. They get no praise for their achievements or sacrifices....

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” Who is pure in heart? Only those who have surrendered their hearts completely to Jesus that He may reign in them alone....

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” The followers of Jesus have been called to peace. When he called them they found their peace, for he is their peace.... But nowhere will that peace be more manifest than where they meet the wicked in peace and are ready to suffer at their hands. The peacemakers will carry the cross with their Lord, for it was on the cross that peace was made. Now that they are partners in Christ’s work of reconciliation, they are called the sons of God as he is the Son of God.

“Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” ...The world will be offended at them and so the disciples will be persecuted for righteousness’ sake. Not recognition, but rejection, is the reward they get from the world for their message and works....

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. “For My sake” the disciples are reproached, but because it is for His sake, the reproach falls on Him.

...while Jesus calls them blessed, the world cries: “Away with them, away with them!”

Yes, but whither? To the kingdom of heaven. “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven.” There shall the poor be seen in the halls of joy.... God wipes away the tears from the eyes of those who had mourned upon earth. He feeds the hungry at his Banquet. There stand the scarred bodies of the martyrs, now glorified and clothed in the white robes of eternal righteousness instead of the rags of sin and repentance. The echoes of this joy reach the little flock below as it stands beneath the cross, and they hear Jesus saying: “Blessed are ye!”

The Enemy--the "Extraordinary"

There were those who cursed them for undermining the faith and transgressing the law. There were those who hated them for leaving all they had for Jesus sake.... There were those who persecuted them as prospective dangerous revolutionaries and sought to destroy them. Some of their enemies were numbered among the champions of the popular religion, who resented the exclusive claim of Jesus.

The Hidden Righteousness

The life of discipleship can only be maintained as long as nothing is allowed to come between Christ and ourselves -- neither the law, nor personal piety, nor even the world. The discipline always look only to his master, never to Christ and the law, Christ and religion, Christ and the world. ... Only by following Christ alone can he preserve a single eye. ... Thus the heart of the disciple must be set upon Christ alone.

The Body of Christ

The Son of God becomes man. The Word is made flesh. He who had existed from all eternity in the glory of the Father, he who in the beginning was the agent of creation (which means that the created world can be known only through him and in him), he who was very God (I Cor. 8.6; II Cor 8.9; Phil. 2.6 ff; Eph. 1.4; Col. 1.16; John 1.1 ff; Heb. 1.1 ff) accepts humanity by taking upon himself our human nature, 'sinful flesh' as the Bible calls it, and human form (Rom.8.3; Gal. 4.4; Phil. 2.6 ff).

God takes humanity to himself... in the Body of Jesus. Of his mercy God sends his Son in the flesh, that therein he may bear the whole human race and bring it to himself. The Son of God takes to himself the whole human race bodily, that race which in its hatred of God, and in the pride of its flesh had rejected the incorporeal, invisible Word of God. Now this humanity, in all its weakness, is, by the mercy of God, taken up in the Body of Jesus in true bodily form."

God sends his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8.2 f). God sends his Son—here lies the only remedy. It is not enough to give man a new philosophy or a better religion. A Man comes to men.... The Incarnation, the words and acts of Jesus, his death on the cross, are all indispensable parts of that image.... Here is God made man."

Note: Bonhoeffer was surrounded by lukewarm pastors and cultural "Christians" who supported Hitler. To most people in the established German Lutheran church, security and wealth had become more important than God's precious Word and faithfulness to Him.

In prison, Bonhoeffer was separated from those he who, like him, trusted God. Compromise was not an option, so He put all his trust in God. (Of course, so did Moses, Joseph, David, Paul and many others whose faith deepened when totally separated unto God alone)

These Scriptures remind us of such tests and triumphs:

"...the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one." 1 John 5:19

"If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.... If they persecuted Me they will persecute you... for they do not know the One who sent Me." John 15:19-2

See also Bonhoeffer - Part 1: Nazi Religion versus "Religionless" Faith

God's Word: What the Bible Tells Us About Persecution

"Life Together" by Bonhoeffer

Home | Victory

**Re: , on: 2012/7/14 21:31**

I am totally disgusted by the criticisms of Bonhoeffer here on this thread. By the way, they are complete lies. To say that Bonhoeffer did not believe in God the Father and His eternal Son Jesus and that he did not believe in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is complete lies. This cut and paste hatchet job on Bonhoeffer ( and the cut and paste comes from a hatchet website) is disgusting. I am just sick to my stomach.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/7/14 21:43**

Brethren,

I hope that you will read the 3 posts that I have posted about Bonhoeffer and "the cost of discipleship" and that it will help clarify that this man was a " true disciple of Christ" who truly loved the Lord and His people.

Blessings...from brother rbanks

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2012/7/14 22:28**

Though there was much liberal thinking in German evangelical circles and even if Bonhoeffer wrote some questionable things it must be expected because theologians do try and speculate on some theories of doctrine and investigate things this way.

I and have Bonhoeffer's writings personally very edifying and his life and walk matching his talk.

Personally I see nothing wrong with studying the book "Cost Of Discipleship" We must be open to learn from brothers of many persuasions and take the good we can.

May God prepare us for what is coming. We surely need piety and discipleship as a key focus because of its lack in the last hundred years.

**Re: Book Study Thread: Bonhoeffer - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/7/14 22:55**

I have been thinking about studying Bonhoeffer that past couple of months, I know very little about him, and also would be interested in a book study

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/15 0:32**

Well, I am looking forward to the Cost of Discipleship Book Club study. I'm sure there will be profitable things that come out of the study. Thanks rbanks for your posts. Those were shocking and extreme things that you brought up about him, BrotherTom. I think it surprised everyone. Where could these brothers find such information? The fact that you posted them must mean that you actually believe them, too.

I am not dissuaded in studying the book and even more intent on it. The fact that there is such diametric and polarizing opinions about this brother makes me want to investigate the matter on my own.

Pilgrim

**Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2012/7/15 1:45**

I am glad to see the idea of a book club emerging in Sermon Index. As long as we understand we aren't reading scripture when we read these books, we should do fine.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, through his extensive writings, strikes me as simply a sincere 20th century man with more questions than answers, and as such is someone we can relate to. He was fueled by an empathy for modern man, whom he saw as experiencing an unprecedented sense of lostness, being disconnected from the past and facing an uncertain future. Placing upon himself tremendous intellectual, moral, and social burdens, and at home with academics and laypeople equally, he attempted to defend the relevancy of Christianity for Germany (and the world) during one of the greatest paradigm shifts in European history.

All of his writings, when taken together, leave me with a sense of deep intellectual integrity, but I must confess I ultimately find him hard to pin down on many issues. I think this is why he can be successfully quoted by groups as diverse as Conservative Evangelicals and Radical Marxists. Still, his mind was so keen that he could ask some of the most vitally important questions of his day, and turn a provocative phrase to challenge complacency, and for these reasons I have enjoyed reading him.

Given my own ambivalence towards Bonhoeffer's collected writings, how then do I approach his early book, "The Cost of Discipleship?"

Certainly his later years, during his time in prison, he seemed to press his theology to its most worldly limits in an attempt to stay connected with the sorrowful human condition of the violent 20th century unfolding around him. Many people have zeroed in on this quote...“God is weak and powerless in the world, and that is exactly the way, the only way in which he can be with us and help us. Matthew 8:17 makes it crystal clear that it is not by his omnipotence that Christ helps us, but by his weakness and his suffering...only a suffering God can help.” (Bonhoeffer 1953 p. 164 Letters and Papers from Prison) For myself, this seems like the sincere efforts of a despairing man to explain and even defend God's apparent silence during the dreadfully inhuman events going on all around him. Given the living nightmare he saw himself in, he can be forgiven if his Letters From Prison didn't quite sound like Paul's letters from Prison; "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Having said all of this, I think Dietrich Bonhoeffer is worth studying. Even though I don't agree with many of his conclusions, I respect him as a better man than me...which is very challenging! I am intrigued by his ideas of a religionless Christianity, which has its first stirrings in this book "The Cost of Discipleship." I think "religionless Christianity" is simply akin to Leo Tolstoy's view that Christianity is not a "Mystic Religion but (is) a New Theory of Life." Both men believed that Christianity was terribly misunderstood inside and outside the Church. Both men began with the shocking premise that the Sermon on the Mount is not an impossible ideal, but a new way of life where spirit meets the bone.

So, the key to reading and understanding what Bonhoeffer was getting at in "The Cost of Discipleship" is to take the Sermon on the Mount literally, not mystically or ideally. His unblinking premise that a modern Christian lives a life of inward prayer and outward action without Bourgeoisie religious ceremony is what has inspired both conservatives and liberals alike to claim Bonhoeffer as their own.

For myself, there is one chapter in particular of this book that I am particularly fond of...but I will leave that discussion for when this thread arrives at that point!

Blessings,

MC

**John Brown's body., on: 2012/7/15 7:55**

Below, in a nutshell, is an explanation of DB's theology, and the inspiration that drove his life; He was the modern day original Social Activist; similar to John Brown, the great Abolitionist, who believed the cause of Christ, and the gospel of Christ, was shown in your commitment to active social change; there-by the assassination plot to on Hitler.

He was not martyred for the cause of Christ, as was John Brown. He was executed for attempted murder of a head of state. He was also, like John Brown, vastly influential because of his stand adhering to social activism, even unto death, and murder.

.....  
"Thus, Bonhoeffer's final writings have given impulse to Marxist theologians sponsoring "liberation theology" and to others wishing to promote a worldly social gospel."  
.....

He was similar to the Reverend Wright's "G.D.America!"'s theology; A cause driven life, and as the Roman Catholic sub-doctrine of living a sacrificial life to please God, and the more sacrificial the more pleasing to God.

As I see it, holding the complete body of evidence, it is impossible to believe that he was ever a Christian, as is clearly evidenced by a wide body of his works.

IssacharSon wrote:  
"BrotherTom,  
"Watch what you regurgitate."

"This would all seem very convincing if one accepts noncontextual criticism of literary work."

Taken all out of context, you are right!

If you've actually read Bonhoeffer's works, not so fast!

I found the sources of many of your citations above and Claim #4 in particular, is also referenced on a Fundamentalist website called "FundamentalBaptist Ministries.com"

And I have my paperback copy of Bonhoeffer's "Cost of Discipleship" open to "page 215" and it says nothing about the virgin birth.

If you have a copy of the book, pls open to page 215 and you will see that it immerses you into Chapter 24 entitled, "The Suffering of the Messengers" whereby, he gives a commentary on Matthew 10: 16-25

Our diverse interpretations of this man's life all the more necessitate a need to study his book." IssacharSon

.....  
Fair enough, I.S. I wanted to remind you that the original copy of Bonhoeffer's work has been re-published many, many times, and from German to many languages, including English. You probably have a paperback copy. I did too, and I still remember it; it was emerald green and thick. The format and pages are different to the original hardback copy, and may also have been edited.

Yes, I have read the book, at least much of it, until I got bogged down with the complex theological tripe that began to grieve me.

Also, I referenced a study from at least two websites, that referenced their work explicitly as to Bonhoeffer's own words and writings. Here is another one.

If you want a more detailed and straightforward approach as to his twisted theology, I suggest you read "Letters from Prison"..DB.

<http://herewestand.org/blog/2011/07/02/dietrich-bonhoeffer-on-scripture-and-the-virgin-birth/>

I concede that there may be value considering these views, and as I said, I read him as a younger man. Now, I think I see more clearly what he is. He is a philosophical Ecumenical Liberal Theologian, who denies the Word of God to favor his own thinking as truth; This, in my view, is at the core of what the word heresy actually means; Divider.

Thank You for the offer to participate in the book club forum. I think it a good idea, and for now, I have time. However, I would only be interested in Christian authored books; John Bunyan, Whitfield, Edwards and the like. I do not consider DB to be in this fellowship, there-by I must decline. Thanks though, Tom

**Re: John Brown's body. - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/15 8:49**

Thanks BrotherTom for the added info. I have ordered the book and it said "Unabridged", clearly indicating that there are abridged copies. For now, I am going to read it on my own. I don't think I could commit to the format or time, anyway.

Thanks to all for their comments.

Pilgrim

**Re: , on: 2012/7/15 10:55**

Compton writes.....

"God is weak and powerless in the world, and that is exactly the way, the only way in which he can be with us and help us. Matthew 8:17 makes it crystal clear that it is not by his omnipotence that Christ helps us, but by his weakness and his suffering...only a suffering God can help." (Bonhoeffer 1953 p. 164 Letters and Papers from Prison) For myself, this seems like the sincere efforts of a despairing man to explain and even defend God's apparent silence during the dreadfully inhuman events going on all around him. Given the living nightmare he saw himself in, he can be forgiven if his Letters From Prison didn't quite sound like Paul's letters from Prison; "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Excellent brother. Now this is a contextual comment as opposed to someone who admittedly has never read Bonhoeffer and gets his criticisms and thoughts from "two websites.".....bro Frank

**The book world is now the google world..and Utube..just the facts..., on: 2012/7/15 12:04**

Excellent brother. Now this is a contextual comment as opposed to someone who admittedly has never read Bonhoeffer and gets his criticisms and thoughts from "two websites.".....bro Frank

I assume Appollus you are referring to me. Actually I have read Bonhoeffer, and considered him for many years. Yes, there is a wealth of information today easily accessible in the "Google" world, but this does not make it any more or less valid.

It is odd to me, that rather than respond to the 20 or so documented, verse and chapter references, to his anti-Christian heretical faith, that I posted, you choose to belittle me as pridefully ignorant.

Rather than cynical slander about the depth of my post, why not address the issue I have proved. Was DB a Christian? I say no. Do you believe in his doctrine?

After all the years here, I am surprised that you will not keep your eyes on the issue, and not the man. If you feel led, please address these issues. I respect your opinion, and would like to know your reasoning too, in light of the scriptures; our guide, but not a slanderous put-down.

Or, do you just attack, with contempt, any who would prove your sentiments wrong?



**Re: - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/15 12:29**

rbanks,

Wow! I am going to print off your post (along with BrotherTom's) to use as a helpguide for my rereading of this classic book.

I recommend that anyone participating in the Book Study do the same. Print off a copy of rbanks and BrotherTom's posts (with their permission) and apply the criticism and support to what you read for yourself as we go thru the book. I will definitely be referring to these sources.

Thanks, saints!

I reread the Introduction last night and found that the Intro raises and addresses some of the same criticisms I've read about on these posts.

I will also look at the feature sermon posted by SI on "The Training of the Twelve" to see how this survey compares to the Beatitudes.

I love the post offered by SI in that Bonhoeffer has had a similar impact upon my "intellectual integrity" but more importantly, my spiritual integrity. I read it almost two years ago during a bad storm which left us without electricity for weeks. My life has not been the same since then. Of course, I was reading it under the textual subjugation of God's Word (as always!).

This book inspired and motivated me to live out my Christianity as a disciple of Christ. That is, a follower of Christ. My prime mover must come from Him and His teachings (in both the OT and NT) instead of my own empty strivings and superficial efforts.

My actions have meaning and relevance as a disciple of Christ, they didn't before - even in the midst of worldly success.

And I am more free as His disciple than my own agent of humanism. Life is more adventurous and the sufferings are like mere electrons swirling around a nucleus of utter joy.

The suffering in my life as a disciple has a new energy source rooted in Christ's joy. Hence, no matter how horrid the circumstances, nothing can happen to me without my teacher, Lord, and Savior knowing about it and allowing it (Bonhoeffer said this somewhere in "The Cost of Discipleship" - perhaps Chapter 24 - "The Suffering of the Messengers").

I am interested in seeing how spiritually mature individuals such as yourselves will interpret Christ's call to discipleship in to your everyday lives, challenges, family lives, friendships, studies, prayer life (as though we ever stop), sufferings (as though it ever stops), joys, and all other circumstances Christ immerses you into.

After each chapter, I am going to share what particular aspect of my life changed and in what way. I'd love to know the same from you all.

Love-in-Christ,

KP

**Re: The book world is now the google world..and Utube..just the facts..., on: 2012/7/15 12:41**

BT, yo write.....

"Rather than cynical slander about the depth of my post," brother, your post was cynoical slander. In your post you quoted another website, not Bonhoeffer. Rbanks and Compton quoted Bonhoeffer, you did not, hence the paste and copy charge.

I suppose you know the views of the "websites," you quoted on Tozer and Guyon as well? It is this that I object to, that given your admission that you never finished "The Cost of Discipleship," because you could not understand it, you then make the claim that Bonhoeffer believed God to be dead and that he did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus. Why not, instead of just quoting another website, give us the quotes like Rbanks and Compton did, where you say that Bonhoe

ffer said that God was dead or that Jesus did not bodily arise. Anyone who has actually read Bonhoeffer knows that this is simply not true. I would think that after all these years Tom, that you would have a little more evidence of your own, rather than others' opinions (which they are all entitled to) that Bonhoeffer was an atheist and a heretic, a high charge I am sure you would agree. I think you know that certain websites have agendas and slants, is it remotely possible that the websites that you quote have used certain texts, taken them out of context, and come of with a pre-text to pander to a certain community of people? I think Compton's quote, by giving context, clearly demonstrates that. It was you that made the charge that Bonhoeffer believed that God was dead and did not believe in the resurrection. Banks quotes refute that yet you do not respond to that or give actual quotes to prove your accusations. The ball brother, not the man, is in your court BT.....bro Frank

**We are not divided - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/15 12:56**

BrotherTom,

You have the spirit of a true philosopher and protector of the faith. I respect this immensely.

Your detailed criticism of Bonhoeffer is brilliant, but I have to read his book again. I have a copy of and read "Letters from Prison" and I saw no signs of heresy, but rather a more intense attempt to work out his theology with impending death sentence hanging over his head.

The proof is in the words of the man and his life. Have you read his book of Daily Devotions, "I Want To Spend These Days With You".

I have and he even more clearly enunciates his utter conviction and devotion to a more authentic form of Christianity in relying on God's grace to live out the teachings of Christ. Not in the form of monasticism (though it had its relevancy when Christianity was being smeared into the same canvas as the world) or asceticism, but, as Christ did, denouncing sin, but accepting the sinner. Participating and immersing oneself in the world without the world immersing itself in you. This was why Christ was able to fellowship with and affect publicans and prostitutes without becoming one nor being effected by them.

Discipleship makes me a more passionate and authentic lover of mankind. Bonhoeffer is just a gifted messenger, it's Christ's "message" that I follow, not Bonhoeffer.

It will truly be our loss without your contribution to our Book Club study on Bonhoeffer. (Sigh...).

I am confident that one day, we will be laughing about this in eternity (all three of us, incl. Dietrich, yeah!).

Love-in-Christ,

KP

**Re: We are not divided, on: 2012/7/15 18:23**

Hi guys,

I believe that the charges of heresy, believing God is dead and not believing that Jesus rose again from the dead have been dealt with very well with extensive quotes here on this thread. The one charge that was not refuted was that he was some kind of "John Brown." Let me just say that Bonhoeffer was arrested in April of 1943 for being involved in a conspiracy, yes, but not to kill Hitler (that would have gotten you killed either immediately or some time soon thereafter) The conspiracy he was arrested on was for helping 13 Jews to escape to Switzerland, a place where Bonhoeffer could travel because he "worked" for the "Abwehr." More than a year later, the famous attempt on Hitler's life was attempted, July 1944.

Bonhoeffer knew men that were involved in that wide spanning conspiracy. Yet Bonhoeffer was not killed until just days before the war ended. So the charge that he was a "John Brown," was not and has not every been established and all we have to go on is the words that he wrote in his books. Perhaps some may have specific evidence that Bonhoeffer was a part of this conspiracy and therefore justify calling him a "John Brown?" .....bro Frank

**Noble and exalted commitment, but Christian?, on: 2012/7/15 20:13**

KingJimmy weighs in on the subject almost 7 years ago on just one of the several threads discussed on D.Bonhoeffer here at SI. I thought it very clear, and well done, and answers the idea of "Confessional Christianity", which was important to DB.....

KingJimmy speaks:

To help clarify a bit, from my understanding of it (though rather limited), Neo-Orthodoxy is essentially a two-faced belief system. It has it's academic side, that pretty much accepts liberal convictions concerning textual criticism, history, etc., concerning the Scriptures.

However, it also has it's "confessional" nature to it which pretty much says that it doesn't care too much about the scholarly findings, though accepting of them. The Neo-Orthodoxy say that in spite of what we believe to be true scientifically, historically, and scholarly, we are going to go ahead and confess the confession of the orthodox Christian credo. Essentially to the Neo-Orthodox, it doesn't matter if the claims of the Scriptures are actually objectively true. To them, all that matters is the confession.

So, to the academy they'll concede the findings of scholarship. When playing Church however, they'll essentially sound like the historical Christian faith. Thus, Bonhoeffer is widely read amongst evangelicals, and is quoted approvingly from the likes of Ravenhill, Katz, Christianity Today, etc., who are probably unaware of the underlying foundations and convictions of people like Bonhoeffer or Barth.

Essentially the Neo-Orthodox theologians are knowingly enter into a delusion. They truly believe the reality of the claims of Christianity are mostly false, yet desire to go ahead and believe and confess it's claims anyway. Thus, they can look very conservative and evangelical, and warmly received by many.

And no doubt, some of their insights are outstanding from which we as Christians can glean from. Even though Bonhoeffer is a Neo-Orthodox theologian, who can possibly deny the wonderful insight he offers in books like "Life Together?" This goes for any theologian. Even Ravenhill sometimes quoted from some liberal sources when he believed they were right about some of the things they said."

[https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic\\_id=9118&forum=35&start=20&viewmode=flat&order=1](https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=9118&forum=35&start=20&viewmode=flat&order=1)

"Who stands firm? Only the one for whom the final standard is not his reason, his principles, his conscience, his freedom, his virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all these, when in faith and sole allegiance to God he is called to obedient and responsible action: the responsible person, whose life will be nothing but an answer to God's question and call." Bonhoeffer

In this he reached the epitome of the Noble cause, and in his martyrdom, an almost hero status. To Bonhoeffer living the life of Christ was only authentic in terms of paying the cost in terms of social activism; as was the spirit of John Brown, the great Civil War Activist of the same moral ilk and amazing courage.

The following are excerpts from Called by God, by Raum. There are thousands of references to Bonhoeffer's involvement in the assassination attempt of Hitler, though this was not discovered upon his arrest, for basically helping Jews escape THE HORROR.

"He recognized that his ability to serve the church in the future was already compromised, but that Hitler's assassination was necessary, he did not doubt."

Page 133

"Dietrich, Eberhard, and the Bonhoeffer family waited anxiously for news of the assassination. It was difficult to hide their disappointment on hearing that the plot had failed. More secret meetings and more planning convinced the conspirators to ..."

Page 142

Thanks to coded messages from family both Dietrich and Hans von Dohnanyi knew that another assassination attempt was planned for July 1944. If it succeeded, the charges would be dropped. Hans took extreme measures to delay his trial

...

The Bonhoeffer family prayed that Dietrich and Hans would not be connected to the plot. After all, they had been in prison when the assassination attempt occurred. For a long time, nothing happened to change their situation and the family ...and then, written documents were discovered identifying Bonhoeffer by name, and he was executed in prison.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Called by God By Elizabeth Raum

He believed that to follow Christ for a social cause was the only authentic Christ, and thereby participated not only as a Moses figure for the German Jew, and his band of Confessional young ministers, who were banned in Nazi-ism, but as judgment upon them, and became deeply involved in the underground resistance.

He forsook the safety and comfort of America to return with a more radical zeal, and ultimately was executed for it, when he was exposed in the assassination plot.

He was quite an amazing figure, and I can see how Compton could say, "a better man than I." However, I do not see a Biblical and Spiritual faith that he lived, and as elevated as his exploits exalted his character, I cannot see it as a Christian one. BT

**Re: Noble and exalted commitment, but Christian?, on: 2012/7/15 21:09**

I can only repeat the charges, playing the ball and not the man.

Charge 1. Believed God was dead

Charge 2. Heretic

Charge 3. Did not believe in the resurrection of Jesus

Charge 4. Was arrested on conspiracy to kill Hitler, therefore a type of "John Brown."

All of these charges have been refuted in this thread alone as the extensive quotes testify to the opposite of charges 1-3. Charge 4 is simply false on its face as he was not charged with conspiring to kill Hitler. What he knew or did not know or what if any part he played remains totally in the realm of conjecture. As far as him only believing in the "confession," rather than salvation, this is totally incorrect. I suggest that a mere reading of the first three chapters of "The Cost of Discipleship," will shatter this charge completely. In those first three chapters Bonhoeffer speaks about cheap grace as opposed to costly grace. He said that cheap grace was a mere confession, a mere mental assent to an abstract truth and that none of this was salvation. This is the exact opposite of the charge laid here against him.....bro Frank

**Re: , on: 2012/7/15 21:50**

This is a link from the holocaust museum in DC.

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/bonhoeffer/?content=6>

It gives a complete summary of Bonhoeffer's involvement in the German resistance ( yes there was one) and the latest book, an excellent read, completely agrees with this account. "Bonhoeffer, pastor, martyr prophet, spy" is the name of the book and it goes into great detail as to his involvement in the intelligence and how he worked to help Jewish people escape and Confessing Church pastors avoid military service. It runs about 800 pages but is well worth the read for a complete picture of Bonhoeffer....Frank

If it were ever proven that Bonhoeffer helped in the conspiracy to kill Hitler, I would find myself in disagreement with him on that issue and if he were still alive he would have to rip up his major work, because being involved in the killing of Hitler would be the opposite of what he wrote.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/15 23:00**

Thank you for those resources, Frank.

Pilgrim

**Re: The end justifies the means, in Bonhoeffer's mind., on: 2012/7/16 6:27**

If it were ever proven that Bonhoeffer helped in the conspiracy to kill Hitler, I would find myself in disagreement with him on that issue and if he were still alive he would have to rip up his major work, because being involved in the killing of Hitler would be the opposite of what he wrote.....bro Frank

Operation Valkyrie and the July Plot to Assassinate Hitler  
(July 20, 1944)

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At the end of 1943 the Schutz Staffeinel (SS) and the Gestapo managed to arrest several Germans involved in plotting to overthrow Adolf Hitler. This included Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Klaus Bonhoeffer, Josef Mueller and Hans Dohnanyi. Others under suspicion like Wilhelm Canaris and Hans Oster were dismissed from office in January, 1944.

It is estimated that 4,980 Germans were executed after the July Plot. Hitler decided that the leaders should have a slow death. They were hung with piano wire from meat-hooks. Their executions were filmed and later shown to senior members of both the NSDAP and the armed forces.

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<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/julyplot.html>  
.....

The Nazis implicated thousands of people in the assassination plot, including Bonhoeffer and three members of his immediate family (his brother Klaus and two brothers-in-law). Incriminating documents, hidden by his sister's husband Hans von Dohnanyi, had been found by the Gestapo. Although he did not yet realize the secret papers were in the hands of his enemies, Bonhoeffer was a condemned man.

<http://www.awesomestories.com/religion/bonhoeffer/attempted-assassination-of-hitler>  
.....

As the war continued, and Nazi atrocities worsened, Bonhoeffer joined others to plot against Hitler. But Operation Valkyrie failed to kill the German ruler (on July 20, 1944), and his revenge against those immediately responsible was swift, and fatal. Claus von Stauffenberg, who'd left a briefcase bomb in Hitler's planning room at Wolf's Lair, was executed the day after the bomb exploded.

<http://www.awesomestories.com/flicks/agentof-grace/summary>  
.....

Bonhoeffer: "Who am I".....outlining Valkyrie:

Also:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xITUH2gGMZU>  
.....

Bonhoeffer: Is assassination legal?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xITUH2gGMZU>  
.....

.....ETHICAL ASSASSINATION.....

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the legendary German theologian, was one of the central figures in two separate and complex plots to assassinate Adolf Hitler – Operation 7 and Operation Valkyrie.

This hero paid the ultimate price in fighting against Nazism, fascism and against Hitler's so-called "German Christian, Aryan" movement leading inevitably to his martyrdom at Flossenbürg concentration camp exactly two weeks before it was liberated by the U.S. Army 90th and 97th Infantry Divisions and three weeks before Hitler committed suicide inside his underground secret bunker in Berlin.

After preaching his last sermon, Bonhoeffer was hanged with piano wire and his body unceremoniously burned on April 9, 1945.

In his magnum opus, "Ethics," Bonhoeffer wrote these immortal lines

<http://mobile.wnd.com/2012/04/bonhoeffer-and-truths-gray-area/>

"In a world where success is the measure and justification of all things, the figure of Him who was sentenced and crucified remains a stranger and is at best the object of pity. The world will allow itself to be subdued only by success."

The end is what justifies the means."

!! "It is not ideas or opinions which decide, but deeds."!!

!!!!!! "Success alone justifies wrongs done."!!!!!!

"With a frankness and off-handedness which no other earthly power could permit itself, history appeals in its own cause to the dictum that the end justifies the means."

"The figure of the Crucified invalidates all thought which takes success for its standard!"

<http://mobile.wnd.com/2012/04/bonhoeffer-and-truths-gray-area/>

#### Re: The ethics of murder., on: 2012/7/16 7:31

"If it were ever proven that Bonhoeffer helped in the conspiracy to kill Hitler, I would find myself in disagreement with him on that issue and if he were still alive he would have to rip up his major work, because being involved in the killing of Hitler would be the opposite of what he wrote.....bro Frank

BT writes: "Well Frank, that is exactly what Bonhoeffer did; he ripped up everything he wrote and believed about non-violence pacifism. He knew he was breaking God's law in participating in the plots to assassinate Hitler, but justified it anyway; He was also a former Gandhi disciple, the champion of non-violent, political pacifism.

DB was an ETHICAL Christian, who believed that only in society, the real world is sorrow and sin dealt with, and the true christian is the one who acts; there-by a social activist;

After years spent openly opposing Adolf Hitler and encouraging Germans to turn against his regime, Dietrich Bonhoeffer — a Christian minister, theologian, pacifist and German citizen — made a deliberate turn from civil disobedience to secret participation in a cabal whose aim was to assassinate the Fuhrer.

Bonhoeffer laid aside his Christian pacifism when he woke up to the fact that Hitler was engaging in genocide. This outraged Bonhoeffer, who held the deep religious conviction that the Jews were a people precious to God and deserving of protection, whatever the personal cost.

As a pacifist, Bonhoeffer had quietly refused to join the military. With his new found commitment to Hitler's murder he changed direction and joined the German Abwehr, the wartime intelligence agency headed by Admiral Wilhelm Canaris.

Canaris was secretly opposed to Hitler and was using Abwehr to launch a variety of plots against the Reich, including assassination attempts. Bonhoeffer never participated directly in such plots — they had to be carried out by the military, because officers were the only ones who could get close enough to the Fuhrer to kill him.

Nevertheless, Bonhoeffer aided and encouraged these plots from his post inside the Abwehr. Pretending to be a loyal servant of Hitler's Reich, Bonhoeffer was in fact a double agent working towards Hitler's forcible overthrow.



Bonhoeffer never claimed that God was "on his side" in this effort. On the contrary, he wrote that his decision to work for Hitler's assassination would make him guilty of breaking God's law.

His conviction was that he had to follow the dictates of his conscience, even though he felt certain that he would be judged guilty by God should he cause Hitler's death. His only moral hope, he believed, was that he might find grace to cover his sin through his faith in Christ."

more here:

[http://www.anotherthink.com/contents/politics/abortion/20090602\\_the\\_ethics\\_of\\_murder.html](http://www.anotherthink.com/contents/politics/abortion/20090602_the_ethics_of_murder.html)

To me, I think DB tragic. He was a Dr. of theology at 21, Magna Summa Cum Laud; but never in his life got out of the Jesus in his mind. His ideas and moral choices then became his faith, to his last breath. It appears to me that he was never born again from above, which is the most tragic of all, but believed that his social religious activism, even if they may be sin, were right, for the end in God's eyes, justified the means. This is great deception.

This was the sin of the first king of Israel, Saul...who was fiercely rebuked by Samuel.

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/16 8:23**

And thank you BrotherTom for these resources. Very, very interesting.

I have spoken with many Believers who would take up arms (after all the Constitution and the 2nd Amendment give them the freedom to "bear arms"), to not only defend this nation but also to overthrow a despot. The angry rhetoric is increasing over this current President.

This is not what Matthew 5, 6, Luke 6, is about.

"My Kingdom is not of this world. If it was, then my servants would fight."

BrotherTom, when I read the Cost of Discipleship, I will be keeping in mind that many of these links say that DB turned Matthew 5 into a "social activism" gospel.

Pilgrim

**Re: Book Study Thread: Bonhoeffer - posted by MaryJane, on: 2012/7/16 8:30**

To IssacharSon and pilgrim

I think I am going to withdraw from taking part in this book study not because of what BT shared but because it seems that instead of reading this book to learn and glean what the LORD would have for us, there is every possibility that instead the words of another man who is no longer living will be picked apart to such a degree that all that will come from this is debates and more debates. I don't want to debate, I want to learn what the LORD would have me and walk in that. So respectfully I will read on my own.

I wish you both well in your study though and that you would find the insights and glean the seeds that the LORD would have for you...

God Bless  
maryjane

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 11:54**

Tom posted: "He in effect sacrificed his own moral convictions in the hope of saving Jews from the death camps."

And, if a Jew was reading this - who's "moral convictions" would impress and open their hearts to what a Christian is - the one who's feverishly posting these things or the one this is posted about?

In the absolute horror and madness of those days - can we not forgive this man for being 'tempted beyond his gentle mind'?

He wasn't the one that left the bomb - he's only accused of being with those that wanted Hitler Stopped.

I've read The Cost of Discipleship.

I'd read it again if I still had my copy but I'm still going to enjoy reading this thread when it gets started.

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/16 12:20**

We have to be careful with this type of philosophy, "The End justifies the Means". That kind of thinking is not rooted in Christ.

JiG, I don't think it is an issue of forgiveness. Who are we not to forgive. It may be an issue of "should we imitate him and take his actions as Christian teaching".

Paul said, "Follow me as I follow Christ". So, only as Paul followed Christ, did he want others to imitate or follow his example.

Pilgrim

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 12:28**

Pilgrim, I am "Christian Non-Resistant" and miss our Brother Pastorfrin that gave all of his 'spare' time to posting on that topic while here with us.

This, of Bonhoeffer, is a lesson to us that may face the/antiChrist as he did - that no one is above temptation and must by all means use this as 'a lesson' - that if a man with the heart of Bonhoeffer can be "maddened" enough to side with those that wanted the slaughter to stop by whatever means - then we need to use this example to strengthen our own Resolve, Now - before any such temptation should hit our own shores.

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 13:01**

Really, this is so sad. We have a brother who joins the forum. He comes forth with an excellent idea for a book club. He picks an excellent book. One of the classics of the Christian faith. And the author is trashed before the book is even read.

So Tom since Cost of Discipleship is not to your liking. Why not suggest a book that you like. I think the idea is good. But for sure it will be killed if you turn this thread into a debate thread. The purpose should be to edify. Not tear down.

So Tom what book would you suggest?

Bearmaster.

**I hope I will show myself meek and trusting in that day...but I fear., on: 2012/7/16 13:14**

"This, of Bonhoeffer, is a lesson to us that may face the/an antiChrist as he did - that no one is above temptation and must by all means use this as 'a lesson' - that if a man with the heart of Bonhoeffer can be "maddened" enough to side with those that wanted the slaughter to stop by whatever means - then we need to use this example to strengthen our own Resolve, Now - before any such temptation should hit our own shores." JiG

Thank-you for this admonishment JiG. I struggle with this everyday of my life; whether or not to take up the sword for justice.; This is the issue.

"If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

By doing so, picking up the sword, you lose either way, no matter the outcome. We must trust Jesus, as did all the martyrs.

You cannot overcome temptation by means of your own noble and Ethical devotion. You will always fail, because, the ONLY way we overcome is:

"Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

Salvation, Power to overcome, and God's Kingdom exploits are given one way. The blood, our Testimony by it and through it, and not loving our own way, HOWEVER ETHICAL AND MORAL we may deem it.

As I said earlier, I have failed to see Bonhoeffer's testimony about being saved; being born from above, and cleansed from his sin, nor his daily testimony about these things.

I do not believe he possessed the power to overcome these temptations that came to him, and naturally succumbed to his high and moral convictions, that included that the end, justified the means.

I sincerely hope I am wrong about that, but in light of the mass of written testimony and ideas that he prolifically produced, I think not. To me, DB is a tragic, but noble and well meaning man, who felt he had a mission.

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 13:15**

There are only so many ways to say the DB was not arrested for his involvement in the plot to kill Hitler, he was arrested more than a year before the plot and was alive more than a year after the plot. Those thought to be part of the plot were dealt with very swiftly, many being put up against a wall and killed right away. The fact remains that BD was still alive just days before the war ended and was never seriously considered by the authorities to be involved in this plot, although he knew so many who were.

I guess the charges that were made that he thought God was dead and that he did not believe in the resurrection and that he was a heretic will just be left hanging in the wind. The OP and idea of this thread was excellent, and then it was turned into a tearing down of the man, very sad. Not sure who benefits from that, certainly not the Body.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2012/7/16 13:21**

Come on guys, its not like Bonhoeffer is a Mormon and running for President...

**Natural Ethics and modernistic thoughts lead you to man. Humanism., on: 2012/7/16 13:40**

"There are only so many ways to say the DB was not arrested for his involvement in the plot to kill Hitler, he was arrested more than a year before the plot and was alive more than a year after the plot.

Those thought to be part of the plot were dealt with very swiftly, many being put up against a wall and killed right away. The fact remains that BD was still alive just days before the war ended and was never seriously considered by the authorities to be involved in this plot, although he knew so many who were." Appolus

Frank: Did it ever occur to you that the reason DB, and many others were NOT immediately executed was for means of interrogation? and successful interrogation? All together after that night the investigation turned up 4980 suspects, all executed. Bonhoeffer was interrogated many times before his execution , and it is clear, that many, many of the arrested gave up names, and probably his own family or friends gave him up.

I have clearly stated my views, in light of bundles of writing, that I do not see Salvation, or a testimony as to ever being born again. I hope I am wrong, and I was not there at his death. The thief at the cross made it, didn't he. As far as doctrine goes, it's just off the wall, as noble as it may seem.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/julyplot.html>  
.....

"The Nazis implicated thousands of people in the assassination plot, including Bonhoeffer and three members of his immediate family (his brother Klaus and two brothers-in-law). Incriminating documents, hidden by his sister's husband Hans von Dohnanyi, had been found by the Gestapo. Although he did not yet realize the secret papers were in the hands of his enemies, Bonhoeffer was a condemned man. "

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/religion/bonhoeffer/attempted-assassination-of-hitler>

**Re: Natural Ethics and modernistic thoughts lead you to man. Humanism., on: 2012/7/16 14:04**

What was a noble idea dies a quick death. I was thinking about joining. Now I will seek the peace if the Besr den. I only pray Br. Issachar can still salvage something from this.

Bearmaster standing down.

**Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/7/16 14:54**

Quote:  
-----This, of Bonhoeffer, is a lesson to us that may face the/an antiChrist as he did - that no one is above temptation and must by all means use this as 'a lesson' - that if a man with the heart of Bonhoeffer can be "maddened" enough to side with those that wanted the slaughter to stop by whatever means - then we need to use this example to strengthen our own Resolve, Now - before any such temptation should hit our own shores.  
-----

Exactly, JiG! That is my point. Lessons can be learned from everything, even our beloved heroes. We are, afterall, just mere men.

Pilgrim

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 15:50**

I have no heroes per say, but what I do know is that "talk is cheap" until we see those we love being tortured and put to death and the other innocents as well ... we don't truly know our own hearts at this moment of how we will react if we were witness to such atrocities - but what Pastor Frin taught me personally, that "Anger" of any type is within all of us and anger borders on hatred.

If it should ever be our turn to see such atrocities in front of our faces - will anger and hatred be present if we see 'anger' at one another even on just an internet forum.

No one can 'think rationally' when Angered.

To see prolonged suffering as Bonhoeffer and his contemporaries were exposed to - could shake anyone's 'resolves' - even to sound doctrine --- as Richard Wurmbrand testified to in his writings.

It's easy to sit in an air-conditioned home in completely peaceful surroundings and 'think' of what 'we' would do under these Extremes that both of these men were exposed to for years, nonetheless one day of testing by demonic cruelty.

Some humility at this present moment would be highly recommendable.

**Re: Natural Ethics and modernistic thoughts lead you to man. Humanism., on: 2012/7/16 16:12**

JIG writes.....

"Some humility at this present moment would be highly recommendable" I definitely agree with that sister.

Tom writes..... "I have clearly stated my views, in light of bundles of writing, that I do not see Salvation, or a testimony as to ever being born again. I hope I am wrong, and I was not there at his death. The thief at the cross made it, didn't he. As far as doctrine goes, it's just off the wall, as noble as it may seem."

Well brother, doubling down even after your charges against him were refuted by extensive quotes. Shall we agree to disagree? We have done so before when speaking of Guyon and Tozer?.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2012/7/16 16:23**

The prison doctor at Flossenburg watched Bonhoeffer die and went on to write these words...

“Through the half-open door in one of the huts I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer, before taking off his prison garb, kneeling on the floor praying fervently to his God. I was most deeply moved by the way this loveable man prayed, so devout and so certain that God heard his prayer. At the place of execution, he again said a short prayer and then climbed the steps to the gallows, brave and composed. His death ensued after a few seconds. In the almost fifty years that I worked as a doctor, I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God.”

---

I wonder what would be said about my last moments if I were to die as this man did??

God bless  
mj

**My hopes for a revelatory, blessed book club...., on: 2012/7/16 17:49**

"I think I am going to withdraw from taking part in this book study not because of what BT shared but because it seems that instead of reading this book to learn and glean what the LORD would have for us, there is every possibility that instead the words of another man who is no longer living will be picked apart to such a degree that all that will come from this is debates and more debates.

I don't want to debate, I want to learn what the LORD would have me and walk in that. So respectfully I will read on my own."..MaryJane:

This is not the book club study; it IS the discussion forum, and there will be differences here. This one is rather mild, as I see it, without overt anger, and a degree of respect, and some see it one way, and others another, but to pooh-pooh it as irrelevant, and "picking apart another who is no longer living" is not a wise approach, nor particularly mature.

It is very important, to compare, or "debate", as you say it, the doctrines and teachings of a man to the Bible, and the Spirit of Truth? Wouldn't you agree? There must always be a "proving out" of all things, and there always has in the church. There are heresies out there from famous men you know, that are subtle and dangerous. This is the nature of deception.

"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

This is the at the nature of discussion or debate, and without it, you have immaturity and deception, don't you? This discussion, is that.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

As far as the book club goes, do not allow debate, but keep it focused on the revelatory aspect of passages, and direct it to learning God's heart, and sharing it.

I would keep it closed by the week, by chapter, and only allowing those who read the book with you, who actually owned it off-line. Then, accept new members interested `at the cut-off date, Say Sunday.

Have a limited Rule book, such as no debate, what is God saying, and no negative, critical spirits allowed. I think it is a great idea. What you want could happen, easily, and I hope it does. Have a sign up sheet, and let her rip! The format will take form in time. The forum is not an outlined book club; it is a discussion round table with everyone joining in with different ideas, and the important ones to people do seem to be passionate, but that doesn't make it wrong.

**To Tom :) - posted by MaryJane, on: 2012/7/16 18:49**

by Brothertom on 2012/7/16 11:49:33

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---

Tom you wrote: but to pooh-pooh it as irrelevant, and "picking apart another who is no longer living" is not a wise approach, nor particularly mature.

My response to you: I was not saying your or anyone else opinions are irrelevant or at least it was not my intention to do so. Sometimes in writing on the forum it can be difficult to convey exactly what I am thinking. I do not want to take part in debates. After reading through the different posts here in this thread I did think that the book club might end up being nothing more than debates and while that maybe how you feel led to spend your time (and that is perfectly fine) I do not care to. Sorry if you felt offended it was not my intention that is why I said it was not because of you that I was withdrawing from the book club. Honestly it was because I know myself, I can be immature as you said and I do not want to get caught up in debates that may very well cause me to stumble into sinning against my LORD.

Tom wrote:It is very important, to compare, or "debate", as you say it, the doctrines and teachings of a man to the Bible, and the Spirit of Truth? Wouldn't you agree? There must always be a "proving out" of all things, and there always has in the church. There are heresies out there from famous men you know, that are subtle and dangerous. This is the nature of deception.

---

my reply : Scripture is the final say and all that I read or take in I take to the LORD before I do anything further. I assume others do the same but perhaps they do not. I do not need to debate this topic with anyone, I stated that I have not read the entire book yet and indicated that I would start it over to read with others. My desire in doing so was to read with others who profess a love for CHRIST and what they might be seeing and then pray and seek GOD on what HE would have for me to take away from this man's works and what HE might have me leave behind.

---

Tom wrote: This is the at the nature of discussion or debate, and without it, you have immaturity and deception, don't you? This discussion, is that.

---

My response to you: I was not nor am I interested in debates they more often lead to one person or another attempting to win and argument and I find I learn very little when I involve myself. Pride tends to come in and there is that old self desire to be "right" In reading this book I was not attempting to be "right" or sway another person's point of view. In taking p

art my only desire was to read through this book with others as I said an learn what the LORD might have for me and leave the rest.

I hope the book club goes very well and is what ever Greg and those who take part in it wish it to be. For myself I thought after reading this thread that perhaps I would be better off not putting temptation before me and yes I am immature in many things I am learning.

I hope you have a nice evening Tom.  
God Bless you  
mj

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 19:54**

MJ wrote.....

"The prison doctor at Flossenburg watched Bonhoeffer die and went on to write these wordsÂ...

Â"Through the half-open door in one of the huts I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer, before taking off his prison garb, kneeling on the floor praying fervently to his God. I was most deeply moved by the way this loveable man prayed, so devout and so certain that God heard his prayer. At the place of execution, he again said a short prayer and then climbed the steps to the gallows, brave and composed. His death ensued after a few seconds. In the almost fifty years that I worked as a doctor, I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God.Â"

Yes sister, so many martyrs have this wonderful testimony. If I were facing hanging by piano wire, I am not sure how composed I would be either sister, yet surely the same Spirit that has been in the Martyrs would be in us, dont you think? In the natural so many of us would not be able, but in the Spirit He enables.....bro Frank

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2012/7/16 20:11**

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---

I do believe by HIS strength it is possible yes.

God bless  
mj

**Re: , on: 2012/7/16 20:47**

Martyrs for Christ are trashed here on earth. But they are royally received in heaven. Where Brother Dietrich is now. The opinions of men mean nothing to him. For he is with his Savior.

Bearmaster.

**The noble cause....an enemy of the Cross., on: 2012/7/17 9:01**

"Yes sister, so many martyrs have this wonderful testimony. If I were facing hanging by piano wire, I am not sure how composed I would be either sister, yet surely the same Spirit that has been in the Martyrs would be in us, dont you think? In the natural so many of us would not be able, but in the Spirit He enables".....bro Frank

Does it really matter how a man accepts execution? or whether he is calm or brave, or kneels and prays? Does this give him or her credence with God? Do you have any idea how many Roman Catholic Priests or Nuns have been martyred? or Buddhist Priests and monks in the Communists revolutions in the past 100 years? I do know that many died bravely, and I would bet that most of them kneeled and prayed, and probably sang too.

I think what matters is Who a man or woman lived by, The TRUTH Himself, and the fruit they bore, and what they taught about this truth. Living by noble Ethical convictions, that leads you into Social Activism as a creed is fine, but let us not confuse this kind of life as a Christian one; it is not.

Where is the Testimony of a sinner saved in DB's life? Where is the testimony of being born again by the Holy Spirit? ; and add to this the almost tormented philosophical and intellectual spinning of religious theories....!

We will know them by their fruit. Were there salvations following his life?, as there is in every authentic Apostolic teacher or Pastor? What exactly did he teach? His idea of the cost of discipleship was to immerse himself in the cause, for the good of others, even believing that the end justifies the means. This is deep, perverted deception, even unto justifying murder.

We walk by the Spirit, in the Spirit, and if Jesus is our Lord, we choose Jesus to follow Him. We will reflect this in our spiritual life as defined in the Bible; the fruits of the Spirit; love, peace, longsuffering and patient etc.

We also will be bound to the truth in our confession united with our testimony, and will TEACH this simplicity; that is, if we are truly born again.

When I consider DB, I have not bore witness to this, in his writing, nor in his testimony. I detect a religious spirit, always learning but never coming to the knowledge of the truth. If he was born again, the most important and continuing event in a man's life, he did not speak of it, and it was not paramount in his life, or he would have.

He gave himself over to social activism in the most noble of causes; the liberation of the Jews facing the holocaust. He went so far as to plan help in two plots to assassinate their evil leader; .

This was the cause of his martyrdom, not the cause of Christ. He is a noble figure, with many, many more who gave their lives in WW2 in such a way, for the cause of the Jews....but he is not my hero, nor, do I believe a Christian model, or teacher.

Again, I hope he did find Christ in those days before his execution, and I truly want to meet him in Heaven, if I make it.

**Re: , on: 2012/7/17 10:35**

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/julyplot.html>

"At the end of 1943 the Schutz Staffeinel (SS) and the Gestapo managed to arrest several Germans involved in plotting to OVERTHROW Adolf Hitler."

Emphasis mine.

"Overthrow" is not 'assassinate'.

What I do know is that, many of these 'quotes' are not found in the books that they are said to be found in.

What I do know is - the complexities of Hitler's reign is that it was Funded by international bankers and also certain men in high places in the U.S. and elsewhere.

It was an experiment for what's to come. A proto-type and much was learned by those that did and do want a one world dictator in the future that practices genocide. There's much not being researched here about Hitler and WWII.

AND there is no better way to get rid of a honorable man and Not allow him to become a "hero of the faith type martyr, that influences and strengthens other's resolve to come against genocide in the future" than to lie about him, if even in just the misquoting or twisting of his words.

'We' know that the one world leader that they've had in mind to come, will not be overthrown by anyone other than The K

ing of kings at His Return - but these occultic demon possessed rich men of the earth that are waiting to put him on their throne, don't know that 'we' can't and won't attempt to over-throw their man - the son of perdition.

No man is perfect - most especially in the most trying times in history and at such a young age - killed at 39 yrs old - but checking all the links posted against him and knowing the reasons behind Hitler's rise to power and for WWII - what I see is a very craftily designed plan to come against those that opposed such a demonically inspired government as it was.

“Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.”

“Bless them that persecute you.' If our enemy cannot put up with us any longer and takes to cursing us, our immediate reaction must be to lift up our hands and bless him. Our enemies are the blessed of the Lord. Their curse can do us no harm. May their poverty be enriched with all the riches of God, with the blessing of Him whom they seek to oppose in vain. We are ready to endure their curses so long as they redound to their blessing.”

- The Cost of Discipleship

Page 1 of 3 -

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/29333.Dietrich\\_Bonhoeffer?page=1](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/29333.Dietrich_Bonhoeffer?page=1)

**The Gospel is not what you say, or pray. Consider the Pharisee., on: 2012/7/17 11:32**

"At the end of 1943 the Schutz Staffeinel (SS) and the Gestapo managed to arrest several Germans involved in plotting to OVERTHROW Adolf Hitler."

Emphasis mine.

"Overthrow" is not 'assassinate'. JiG.....

BT; response: Oh, but it is one in the same. Consider Solomon's justice on everyone involved in the conspiracies to de throne him., as being guilty; and in this case, overthrow was murder.

Consider the assassination of President A. Lincoln. John Wilkes Booth pulled the trigger, and was killed by legal police, but everyone he talked to involved, that even knew about it and did not reveal this plot, was executed, 4 men and one woman, who may have only overheard the discussion of the cabal at her hotel.

True, no man is perfect, and sins, as do I. The issue here is not his death caused by his crime, but his life, and the perverted teachings he disguised as the Gospel; IE: Moral Relativism, or Ethical Socialism, versus the Cross, and being born again by the Spirit of God.

The former is deception, and will lead you away from God; it is in this sense, heresy.

But, on a deeper level, what is the issue here?

I SAID:

"We will know them by their fruit. Were there salvations following his life?, as there is in every authentic Apostolic teacher or Pastor? What exactly did he teach?

His idea of the cost of discipleship was to immerse himself in the cause, for the good of others, even believing that the end justifies the means. This is deep, perverted deception, even unto justifying murder."

JiG quoted DB; "Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.”

“Bless them that persecute you.' If our enemy cannot put up with us any longer and takes to cursing us, our immediate reaction must be to lift up our hands and bless him. Our enemies are the blessed of the Lord. Their curse can do us no harm. May their poverty be enriched with all the riches of God, with the blessing of Him whom they seek to oppose in vain. We are ready to endure their curses so long as they redound to their blessing.”

- The Cost of Discipleship .DB

Very moving and spiritual confession, but when confronted with the reality of living it, he endured none of it, and conspired to murder rather than to bless.

He sealed this hypocrisy, sadly, with his own blood.

He began to say unto his disciples first of all, " Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

**Re: The Gospel is not what you say, or pray. Consider the Pharisee., on: 2012/7/17 11:48**

Quote:

-----"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

On 'this', you and we can definitely Count On, Tom.

**Re: The noble cause....an enemy of the Cross., on: 2012/7/17 11:51**

Brother Tom. MJ and I and Bearmaster and in fact almost every other person are having a conversation about a dear brother in Christ. You have made your charges, which were soundly refuted by Rbanks and others and you fell silent after that on the heretic issues and the God is dead statement and the " he did not believe in the resurrection,' statements. We agreed, or so I thought, to disagree. You are entitled to your opinion and you have expressed it. I was expressing my admiration for how this dear saint died, I am not sure why you would choose to interject on this comment between MJ and I and Bearmaster. What purpose does it serve? You have already stated plainly what you believe, most others disagree with you, but perhaps now you are simply flogging a dead horse? There should be a purpose for our comments on the forum.....bro Frank

**Re: Book Club starts 07/27/12 @ 7:15 pm - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/17 15:07**

Jesus-Is-God wrote:

"What I do know is - the complexities of Hitler's reign is that it was Funded by international bankers and also certain men in high places in the U.S. and elsewhere.

It was an experiment for what's to come. A proto-type and much was learned by those that did and do want a one world dictator in the future that practices genocide. There's much not being researched here about Hitler and WWII."

Regarding the "prototype" dictator. Your comment reminded me of my review of I Samuel last Sunday. Saul was the prototype dictator for the Tribes of Israel. Overcome by the "Son of David's" antecedent!

And, the Tribes were (though more explicitly) begging for a dictatorship! Without considering his destructive potential to practice genocide unto suicide by the end of his reign.

Hmph! Even with Hitler, there was nothing new under the sun.

Even if all of the horrible and false criticism this thread has (enthusiastically) researched about DB were true. Which it IS NOT!

I forgive him. I love him. And I look forward to worshipping with him in eternity. As I do all of the saints who care enough to examine the nature and necessity of living out a relationship of discipleship in Christ, Our Lord and Savior. DB's Savior, too! !

Love-in-Christ,

KP

#### **Floggin' a dead horse? Maybe so...., on: 2012/7/17 15:31**

"What purpose does it serve? You have already stated plainly what you believe, most others disagree with you, but perhaps now you are simply flogging a dead horse? There should be a purpose for our comments on the forum".....Frank

Actually, Frank, I simply responded to the direction of the thread, and in my experience, that what a thread actually is. Many as yourself, directly requested my thoughts, by way of challenge. It may be difficult for you to see this, but couldn't your assessment of me, and the above statement, could be directly aimed at yourself also.

Never-the-less, you are right. I've done enough "flogging" here, and I have made my point, which I consider relevant, at least to the cause of what sound doctrine and what true Christian Activism is, and what it is not.

Your assertion that "Most others disagree with me" may not be absolutely true; Though the number of saints who agree with me doesn't matter a whit,\* I have communications with some who support me, and the ideas I expressed, and in my mind proved, against a faith in a Ethics Driven Gospel, Humanism, and Social Activism as the authentic Gospel;

It is not, but deep deception, and for those who may believe it as a path to God, dangerous and filled with mental ambiguity, as ideas and practical ethics become melded into the fires of a soulish righteousness that "The End does justify the means!"

He wrote a number of inspiring books, "The Cost" being most famous, and from time to time lifted up very inspiring maxims about the heart of moral action, and discipleship, but this in itself does not make the man, his deeds do. He became an underground resistance spy and helped the plot to assassinate Hitler, did he not? In his mind, this was serving Christ in testimony. I say not.

This, in the end was DB's testimony, and his martyrdom itself laid down upon this one and same altar, and sadly, apart from the Gospel of Christ.

\* I was thinking of Paul the Apostle's courageous stand against the mighty Peter about the Judaizers, and Peter's elitist, religious Jewishness. He may have been the only Christian in the world who understood and confronted the hypocrisy started here, and can you imagine the impact! If he did not, we could not fellowship a Messianic believer in spirit and truth today!

Paul did so absolutely alone..

Sometimes we must think and act alone.



**Re: Floggin' a dead horse? Maybe so.... - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2012/7/17 15:51**

Edti: After some thoughtful counsel from another sister here I decided to remove my reply. She was right and it was not edifying to the body.

I have not read this book but am going to now.

rdg

**Re: Floggin' a dead horse? Maybe so...., on: 2012/7/17 16:37**

"Sometimes we must think and act alone."

Well brother, on that we can agree :) I definately would agree with that and walking the path can be a narrow lonely experience. All I would say, in conclusion BT, you were never asked your opinion about this man. This thread started off with the purpose of doing a book study. You made a decision to "tear him down," and I am sure you are fully convicted in doing that. But that was not the purpose of this thread, it might even be a hijacking of this thread which is not the purpose of the forum. Perhaps you could have started another thread, in fact you may want to start a thread and give a list of people that you consider to be heretical and in no way Christian. It may be your "Paulean stand," but others will be able to see where you are coming from and who you would consider heretics. I know of two others at least who would be on your list as we have bumped heads on that before :)

My request for you to start such a thread is obviously tongue in cheek. It would probably be more encouraging for you to share writers from the past who you do consider Godly.....bro Frank

**Iron sharpens iron., on: 2012/7/17 18:01**

Frank: Done floggin'. At least you know where I stand. I will continue, as I am allowed, and with respect, to express my views on issues, and ministries, and express my views as in relation to truth and error.

I am not ashamed at all about these views, and I am either wrong, or right, but I would say them again, if I see a deceiver, or error; and let the axe fall where it is, as I also do when I am blessed and ministered to.

I have no desire to offend what-so-ever, and often I post about more edifying topics than the expose'; they will offend those who esteem that minister, I have learned. I hope to live the entirety of the rest of my life bonded to this idea, and hopefully bare fruit out here, in the real world, outside the confines of persona's and ideology.

What people believe as truth is important to me, for it shapes what they believe, and ultimately WHO they believe, which in turn shapes their faith, which will mandate their entire eternity; with Christ Jesus or without Him, forever and forever. True love is wanting a person to be with Christ and His heaven.

I want to give myself to loving the truth, and allowing it to slay me, while forming the Truth in me, a PERSON. I am a miserable failure in this endeavor, yes, and exhibit much more pride and flesh than truth, but I get up again, beg for mercy, and move on.

The often barbs and jabs and cries of "How dare you!"..... serve to keep me more balanced and patient, and clear-minded. This is but a discussion forum after all, and there will be many who disagree.

In the end, I want to preach the gospel to the poor, see men saved in Spirit and Truth, and established in these Kingdom Truths, so that they will be able to grow and endure the great winds of error and deception sweeping down upon us in Tsunami intensity.

<http://brideinthewilderness.blogspot.com/?view=classic>

I have about 35 articles I have posted on my log-site. If you are interested in more of the "positive" stuff, teachings and prophecies and the like, you may check this out.

I am soon to take a sabbatical from this Internet, and all things electronic, and escape somewhere to be broken, and repent of a very hard heart. Then, in September I am headed for a gospel mission into the war torn, jihad infested part of Africa, by the command of the Lord; Eritrea. This is the most sobering mission I have ever considered, and I must go.

Iron sharpens iron, and I appreciate everybody who has put my nose to the whetstone, and I mean that. I am sharper for the experience.

**Re: Book Club starts 07/27/12 @ 7:15 pm, on: 2012/7/17 20:52**

Dear KP, this is your thread and I love your idea of going through this book together.

Could I just beg a question ... Could you start it on another fresh thread, on whatever date you come to?

Thank you Brother!

**Re: - posted by IssacharSon, on: 2012/7/19 18:47**

Definitely!

And, by the way, I am a "sister" in Christ, not a "brother". But that is okay, I wrongly assumed that my gender was irrelevant in a forum such as this. Yet, when attempting to reach out to others, it does become an issue (I guess???).

I plan to reread DB's book as a book...nothing more.

I am confident that I was never, ever deceived by his writings on "discipleship". Everything that I read, see, hear, touch, taste, etc. has to be consistent and in agreement with the Word of God in order for me to even accept it as "reality". DB's book, (which I still plan to study and comment on starting July 27th - in a separate thread) is a beautiful portrayal of Christ's teaching regarding the nature and character of a disciple. It inspired me to align my walk with that of a true follower of Christ - abiding in Christ and His Word abiding in me-at ALL times.

I hope that others will join me for a spirit-motivating examination of the principles of discipleship and see if we can trace any of these characteristics in our own walk.

I consider him to be a faithful brother in Christ.

Love-in-Christ,

KP

**Re: , on: 2012/7/19 20:04**

That's Wonderful to know, Sister! :) Makes it easier for me in certain ways to not feel intimidated to just speak freely. Have truly appreciated you - your zeal, burdens and down-right friendliness & sincere kindness. Have been glad your skin is thick enough to hang around. Atta Girl!

His Love to you as well and All His Best!