

Dietrich Bonhoeffer
The Cost of Discipleship

He had just been delivered to Flossenberg Concentration Camp on the Sunday after Easter. His fellow prisoners asked Dietrich to lead them in a church service. He chose two Scripture passages for that service were The Old Testament passage was Isaiah 53:5. *But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.* His New Testament passage was 1 Peter 1:3. *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.* It is no wonder that Bonhoeffer was thinking about the saving stripes of Jesus Christ and his hope in the resurrection. It was the day before his execution, April 8, 1945. As if perfectly orchestrated, as soon as the impromptu service was over, two prison guards arrived at his cell to escort him to the mock trial and the hangman's noose.

Long before Hitler rose to power, Bonhoeffer preached these words. "Why are we so afraid when we think of death? ...death is grace, the greatest gift of grace that God gives to people who believe in him. Death is mild, death is sweet and gentle, it beckons to us with heavenly power, if only we realize that it is the gateway to our homeland, the tabernacle of joy, the everlasting kingdom of peace."¹

His execution came exactly two weeks before the Allies marched in and liberated Germany from Nazi tyranny. He had been imprisoned for two years and he missed rescue by two short weeks. There is much we can learn from his thirty-nine year sojourn on this earth, but first, let me remind you why we are looking at the like of Dietrich Bonhoeffer this morning.



Once a year on or near Reformation Sunday I present a biography of a Christian who has had a great impact with their lives. I choose Reformation Sunday, which is today, because it marks the anniversary when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. This date marks the start of the reformation and in their own way, each of these people that I have covered have contributed to the reformation of the

church and proclamation of the gospel of Christ. Previous biographies have covered the lives of Ulrich Zwingli, William Tyndale, David Brainerd, George Whitefield and Amy Carmichael. I also do these annual biographies to encourage you to do your own reading. This book on Bonhoeffer took me forever to read but most biographies are much shorter. All of these people are part of the “great cloud of witnesses” that is recorded in Hebrews 11 but has not stopped there.

The title, *The Cost of Discipleship*, is taken from Bonhoeffer’s most famous book. This quote gives you a flavor of its content and purpose.

Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of the church. We are fighting today for costly grace. Bonhoeffer goes on to say, “Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. Costly grace 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.



Dietrich and Sabine

Dietrich was born in 1906 a full ten minutes before his twin sister, Sabine. The Bonhoeffer family was a well known and well-connected throughout Germany. I would not label them as aristocrats but perhaps a second tier aristocrat. They employed five full-time servants in their home and had a large country home that they would visit in the summers. Dietrich’s father became the most famous psychiatrist in all Germany in his day. He was more of a brain chemist, what we today call neurochemistry, than a typical psychiatrist. He rejected the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.²

Dietrich’s father was not a Christian but his mother was, however, they almost never attended regular church services as a family. I wasn’t entirely clear why they did not attend church. As we will see, the church was a state run Lutheran Church that was nearly devoid of any true faith and spiritual life. It’s important to know that for many decades prior to this, Germany had been the center of theological liberalism. The discipline of higher criticism was created by theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher in the early 1800’s. Basically everything we know about modern theological liberalism can be traced to Schleiermacher who essentially taught that the Bible is not historically reliable and therefore is not to be used as a foundation for faith and life, as we do in our evangelical churches. The Bible is nothing more than man’s attempt to record their religious beliefs and stories. The Bible is a collection of myths and should only be studied with scholarly indifference. When you add this view of Scripture with



L-R Sabine, Dietrich, Christine, Ursula, Klaus, Walter and Karl-Friedrich

a government run church it's no wonder that the Bonhoeffers did not attend. Dietrich's mother did make sure that every child received their instruction in the Christian faith as they had daily Bible instruction and hymn singing in their home.

It was undoubtedly through the influence of his mother that Dietrich decided at age thirteen to become a theologian. How many thirteen year olds would choose such a path for their life? Like the rest of his family, Dietrich was a brilliant man. He earned his doctorate in theology at the age of twenty-one. During these years, Germany was suffering from massive hyperinflation brought on by the restrictions imposed upon them from World War I. "By November 1923, a dollar was worth about four billion German marks."³ While he was away studying, Dietrich included this in a letter to his family. "I don't have much money in hand. I had to spend 6 billion for bread."⁴ Bonhoeffer's reputation for theological brilliance made him into a minor celebrity. All of the best theologians and universities were recruiting him to be part of their school. As college football



Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-R0211-316
Foto: o. Ang. | 1932, Frühling

coaches recruit the best high school athletes, Bonhoeffer was wooed to join the faculties of these historic schools. Dietrich was torn between the academic world and the life of a pastor. In addition to being brilliant, Dietrich was also a master teacher, especially of children. He taught confirmation classes and eventually led a small seminary and all of his students respected him and loved him because they knew they were loved in return. "He often said that if one couldn't communicate the most profound ideas about God and the Bible to children something was amiss."⁵ Here is the difference between Bonhoeffer and much of the curriculum sold to churches today. Instead of taking profound ideas and simplifying them so children can understand, they dumb down the ideas themselves and spoon feed them to the kids. For example, more often than not, Sunday School curriculum becomes an exercise in teaching good morals on the order of Veggie Tales.

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Instead of joining a faculty at one of these schools, Bonhoeffer accepted an invitation to teach for one year at Union Seminary in New York City. As it is today, Union Seminary was as liberal as they come. Because of Bonhoeffer's reputation, they "tolerated" his conservative views. Less than two months after Bonhoeffer arrived at Union, Harry Emerson Fosdick, the leading liberal preacher of his day, was installed at Riverside Church just a few blocks from Union. For this, he made the cover of TIME magazine. In our only visit to New York, Karen and I stayed at Union Seminary and visited this same church, which happened to be celebrating their annual Gay Pride Sunday on the morning of our visit.



As he had been in Germany, Bonhoeffer longed for more out of the churches. In one letter home he wrote, “In New York they preach about virtually everything, only one thing is not addressed, or is addressed so rarely that I have as yet been unable to hear it, namely, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the cross, sin and forgiveness, life and death.”⁶ He was disgusted by this liberalism so he found a church more to his liking, Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem. Their pastor was the son of slaves and was born three weeks after General Robert E. Lee surrendered in

Appomattox, Virginia. Abyssinian had over ten thousand members and was probably the largest church in the U.S. He bought records of gospel music which remained his prize possessions all of his life. He loved this church because it was gospel centered and possessed real spiritual life.

The core of theological liberalism, which Bonhoeffer responded to and would fight against for the rest of his life, is a low view of Scripture. We can understand his reaction to this liberalism by his following statement.

If it is I who determine where God is to be found, then I shall always find a God who corresponds to me in some way, who is obliging, who is connected with my own nature. But if God determines where he is to be found, then it will be in a place which is not immediately pleasing to my nature and which is not at all congenial to me. This place is the cross of Christ. And whoever would find him must go to the foot of the cross, as the Sermon on the Mount commands. This not according to our nature at all, it is entirely contrary to it. But this is the message of the Bible, not only in the New but also in the Old Testament.⁷

When Dietrich witnessed the widespread racism in America, his brother, who had been in the U.S. the year prior wrote, “our Jewish question is a joke by comparison, there won’t be many people who claim they are oppressed here.”⁸ Tell me—were Jews oppressed in Germany? At this time in history, oppression of black in the US was far worse than that of Jews in Germany, but that was about to change. Shortly after arriving in New York, huge changes were happening back in Germany. Unlike our two party system, Germany had multiple political parties. One of the lesser known parties, the National Socialist German Worker’s Party only held 12 of the 600 seats in the government, an insignificant number. Have you heard of this political party? Many of you have as it is better known as the Nazi party. A few weeks after Dietrich arrived in the US, the Nazi party rose from the ninth largest to the second largest party.

Three years later and less than one month after being appointed as Chancellor of Germany, Hitler enacted the Reichstag Fire Edict, which among other things stated:

Restrictions on personal liberty, on the right of free expression of opinion, including freedom of the press, on the rights of assembly and association, and violations of the privacy of postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications; and warrants for house searches, orders for confiscations as well as restrictions on property, are also permissible beyond the legal limits otherwise prescribed.⁹

Basically, they took the constitution of the German government and put it through a paper shredder. Though they did their best to woo the church and hide their agenda, the true goals of the Nazis were as follows.

13. The National Church demands immediate cessation of the publishing and dissemination of the Bible in Germany.

14. The National Church declares that the Fuhrer's *Mein Kampf* is the greatest of all documents

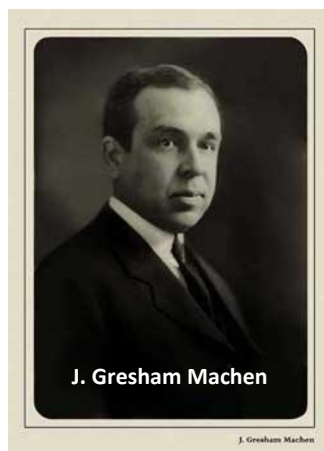
19. On the alters there must be nothing but *Mein Kampf*

30. The Christian cross must be removed from all churches, cathedrals and chapels...and it must be superseded by the only unconquerable symbol, the swastikas.¹⁰

Taking on the mantle of a prophet, a few days after Hitler took office, Bonhoeffer gave a speech on the radio called *The Church and the Jewish Question* detailing three main points.

1. Help the state in its job to keep law and order.
2. "Aid the victims of state action... even if they do not belong to the Christian community" (i.e. the Jews).
3. Work against the State and stop it from perpetrating evil.

Bonhoeffer's response to rising Nazi power was different than most every other church in Germany. Most bought into the Nazi propaganda hook, line and sinker. Since the swallowed the Nazi party line and since the churches were already liberal and spiritually dead, Bonhoeffer started a new movement of churches known as the Confessing Church. In a way, they took a similar stance to what Martin Luther did in 1517. Luther never planned to leave the Catholic Church he just wanted massive reforms. Similarly, the Confessing Church did not want to become its own branch but saw itself as the true German Lutheran Church. All of the others were social clubs disguised as churches. This new movement would need to train pastors for these confessing churches so in 1935 at age 29, Dietrich started the first seminary for the new Confessing Church.



What Bonhoeffer did was a radical and severe break with liberalism that has been the mark of all great reforms throughout history. For example, Princeton University was started as a training school for pastors and had presidents such as Jonathan Edwards, but it didn't take long for them to slide into liberalism. In 1929, J. Gresham Machen was a professor at Princeton Seminary until the rampant liberalism was too great for him. He could no longer purify the institution from the inside out and was forced to leave. He started Westminster Seminary near Philadelphia. He also started the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Both of these institutions remain solidly evangelical to this day.

What Bonhoeffer did is the same thing that Chinese believers have done who are part of the underground or house church movement in China and refuse to be part of the State/communist run church. This is the same thing that the Confessing Lutherans have done, who last year broke from the ELCA due to their ordination of practicing homosexuals. There are actually many branches of the confessing Lutheran church. Furthermore, our own church traces its roots back to a similar reform movement. The history of the EFCA goes back to



when conservatives broke away from the State church in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The State dictated what to believe and how to worship. We are the Evangelical Free Church of America and originally, the “free” part of our name meant that we were free from state control.¹¹ If our denomination ever began to slide down the slippery slope of liberalism, we would all be forced to do one of two things—reform it from the inside out, as the confessing Methodists are successfully doing in their denomination, or else break free and start a new movement.¹²

This was clearly the right decision for Bonhoeffer. By 1938, one year before the start of World War II, the head of the State Church declared that “anyone who is called to a spiritual office is to affirm his loyal duty with the following oath” I swear that I will obedient and faithful to Adolf Hitler, the Fuhrer of the German Reich...¹³

Bonhoeffer knew that war was coming and as a way to save him, he was offered a teaching position back at Union Seminary in New York. He could have stayed there for many years and avoided persecution and the horrors of war. But instead, almost as soon as his boat landed in the harbor, he wrote, “I have come to the conclusion that I have made a mistake in coming to America. I must live through this difficult period of our national history with the Christian people of Germany. I shall have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials of this time with my people.”¹⁴

He knew he could not stand by and watch Hitler destroy his country and its people. This began the most difficult—as well as the most controversial part of his life. Bonhoeffer joined a resistance movement whose goal was to assassinate Hitler and restore the government to rightful hands. In doing so, he was recruited as an operative for the German intelligence agency called Abwehr. The Abwehr was a counter intelligence organization similar to the Gestapo but much less brutal. Oskar Schindler, from the movie *Schindler’s List*, was also an Abwehr agent. In essence, Bonhoeffer became a spy. Abwehr officially operated as part of the Third Reich, however “many of the Abwehr's operatives — including the head of the agency — were in fact anti-Nazi and were involved in many assassination attempts against Hitler, including the one that nearly did kill Hitler in 1944.”¹⁵ Serving with Abwehr allowed him to stay out of the front lines as a soldier as well as continue some of his writings and travel.

Bonhoeffer was in a very difficult and lonely position. Because he worked for Abwehr, he did not have to serve in active duty. This was confusing to members of his confessing church who did not know he was an agent of Abwehr. Why were so many of them called up to duty while he was living a normal life? For those who *did* know he was party of Abwehr, they had assumed that he had capitulated and was now pro-Hitler. Had anyone learned that he was part of a plot to assassinate Hitler, many would have hated him for this decision.

Just so it is clear, Bonhoeffer was not exactly a trained sniper or explosives expert. He was not intending on pulling the trigger as it were, but he was involved in gathering incriminating information against Hitler which could prove his massive guilt. We all know of the atrocities that he committed, but especially in the early years of the war, these details were not available. They

kept a growing file on him and the Nazis and it when this file was eventually discovered it was proved disastrous for Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer's brother Klaus was the chief lawyer for the German airline, Lufthansa and was also part of the Nazi resistance and was executed two weeks after Dietrich.¹⁶

Interestingly, during these years of Nazi resistance is when he worked on his longest book called *Ethics*. And this raises the question—what would we have done if we had been in his place? Would we have allowed ourselves to be drafted into the German killing machine? There was no such thing as conscientious objectors. You could not resist the Nazis. Would you have stayed in the U.S. where you would have been safe from harm? Or would you have followed in his actual steps and become a Nazi resister? Is one decision more ethically sound from a Biblical viewpoint? It is easy to criticize his decision but like so much of history, we can't really know what we would have done. For many of us, this may not be a mere hypothetical question. For many of us it will not be a question of what *would* you do but rather what *will* you do? As good Christians, we believe wholeheartedly in the teaching of Romans 13, that every governing authority has been established by God and we must submit to it. But the Bible is also very clear that there are times when we must practice civil disobedience, where obedience to the government would be in direct contradiction to obedience to Christ. What will you do? We need to be prepared for this decision now, not when it finally comes our way.

But we must know that his decisions were not based on any kind of self-preservation but rather was based on his general view of suffering, which he practiced throughout his life.

If we want to be Christians, we must have some share in Christ's large-heartedness by acting with responsibility and in freedom when the hour of danger comes, and by showing a real sympathy that springs, not from fear, but from the liberating and redeeming love of Christ for all who suffer. More waiting and looking on is not Christian behavior. The Christian is called to sympathy and action, not in the first place by his own sufferings, but by the sufferings of his brethren, for whose sake Christ suffered.¹⁷

We see more of his Biblical ethics in this statement that is used by dozens of pro-life ministries around the world.

Destruction of the embryo in the mother's womb is a violation of the right to live which God has bestowed upon this nascent life. To raise the question whether we are here concerned already with a human being or not is merely to confuse the issue. The simple fact is that God certainly intended to create a human being and that this nascent human being has been deliberately deprived of his life. And that is nothing but murder.¹⁸



Maria von Wedemeyer

Bonhoeffer was a self-declared bachelor his whole life and never anticipated getting married, until he ran into a young eighteen year old woman named Maria von Wedemeyer. He was acquainted with her family and had known her since she was a little girl but now she was all grown up and he almost fell instantly in love. In a strange twist of fate, one day in 1942, they had lunch together in a small restaurant which was owned by Hitler's brother.¹⁹ After receiving approval from Maria's family, they were engaged on Jan. 17, 1943.

There were other remarkable circumstances. Two months later, Dohnanyi, Bonhoeffer's good friend and fellow conspirator, was driven in a car owned by Bonhoeffer's father carrying the bomb meant to kill Hitler during a plane trip.²⁰

On the day of Bonhoeffer's father's birthday and the last day the whole family would ever be gathered together, a member of the Third Reich appeared at their house and awarded the elder Bonhoeffer with the Goethe medal for art and science. The medal was complete with a note signed by none other than Hitler. There were two Nazi conspirators in the house that day. This was the very day of the second bombing attempt on Hitler, which also failed.²¹



Another irony was the work of Dietrich's older brother. In 1938, Dietrich's brother, Karl-Friedrich, was working at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute and was part of the team of researchers that first split the atom. In years prior, Karl had worked alongside Albert Einstein. This work was being done in order to develop an atomic bomb and rule the world. Therefore, Dietrich's brother was working for the Nazi's to create an atomic bomb so that Nazi Germany could rule the world and Dietrich was risking his life to stop German domination.²² Albert Einstein urged President Roosevelt to start their own atomic research so that the Allies could develop the atomic bomb before the Germans could do so.



Bonhoeffer in Tegel Prison

Ten weeks after his engagement to Maria (April 5, 1943), Bonhoeffer was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Tegel Prison. The Gestapo was completely unaware that he was involved in the assassination plots. He was actually arrested for a much lesser crime. Even in prison, Bonhoeffer's family connections helped him. His uncle was commandant of Berlin and was over the warden of Tegel Prison. This "celebrity status" combined with his deep kindness toward everyone allowed him much more freedoms than he otherwise would have had. He served as a pastor to inmates and guards alike. He also continued to write his book, *Ethics*. During these years in prison, he always practiced a habit of daily Bible reading and prayer using the Bible that belonged to his brother Walter who was killed in the first World War.

His fiancé Maria continued to be faithful to him during these years in prison. They exchanged letters as often as it was allowable and she was able to visit Dietrich multiple times. Despite his dangerous ties with the Nazi resistance, both believed that Dietrich would be released, especially as the Allies began to turn the tide on the German war machine. As an unmarried pastor, Bonhoeffer preached at many wedding services, including the wedding of his best friend who married his niece. From a brief quote, we learn a lot about his understanding of Christian marriage. "It is not your love that sustains the marriage, but from now on, the marriage that

sustains your love.”²³ This is profound wisdom with strikes a dagger in the heart of mindless romanticism. Bonhoeffer clearly saw marriage is a lifelong, covenant relationship



Colonel von Stauffenberg

Though Bonhoeffer was not directly involved, his friends at Abwehr were instrumental in the most successful attempt on Hitler’s life in July of 1944 in what was called Operation Valkyrie.²⁴ Colonel von Stauffenberg planted the bomb at Hitler’s feet and on the way to his mission, he said, “I have searched my conscience, before God and before myself. This man is evil incarnate.”²⁵

The briefcase bomb was moved slightly and landed behind the heavy support section of the conference table. This was the reason that only three people were killed and Hitler was not one of them. Hitler’s secretary described her boss following the blast. “The Fuhrer looked very strange His hair was standing on end, like quills on a hedgehog, and his clothes were in tatters. Bit in spite of all that he was ecstatic—after all, hadn’t he survived?”²⁶



Conference room after the Valkyrie blast



Hermann Goring,

commander in chief of the German Air Force, said the following in a radio address after the failed assassination. “The Fuhrer was saved by a miracle... Long live our Fuhrer, who Almighty God so visibly blessed on this day.”²⁷

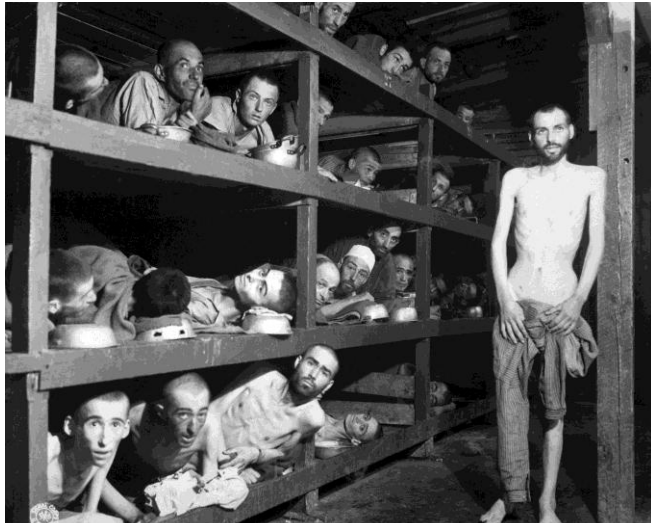
A “church” newspaper also sang the praises of the madman. “The Fuhrer was saved and thus unspeakable disaster averted from our people. For this we give thanks to God with all our hearts and pray, with all our church congregations, for God’s assistance and help in the grace tasks that the Fuhrer has to perform in the most difficult times.”²⁸ This quote demonstrates how the established church had become Nazi supporters and why Bonhoeffer started the Confessing Church.

Many of his friends tried to lay out a detailed plan to assist Bonhoeffer to escape from Tegel Prison but in the end, he decided against it as he thought it would cause too much trouble for many people. After 18 months at Tegel, Bonhoeffer was secretly transferred to a Gestapo prison, then to Buchenwald and finally to Flossenbergl Concentration Camp. Unfortunately, even though he was arrested for a different reason, the Gestapo finally implicated



Hitler's shredded pants after blast

him in the assassination attempts.



Buchenwald Concentration Camp

Buchenwald was a far worse place than Tegel Prison. Despite the suffering he experienced there, a fellow inmate described Bonhoeffer this way: He had “all humility and sweetness, he always seemed to diffuse an atmosphere of happiness, of joy in every smallest event in life, and of deep gratitude for the mere fact that he was alive...he was one of the very few men that I had ever met to whom his God was real and ever close to him.”²⁹

The camp doctor at Flossenberg described his last few minutes of his life: “Through the

half open door in one room 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 lovable 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 almost fifty years that I have worked as a doctor, I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God.”

half open door in one room of the huts I saw



Flossenberg Concentration Camp



Crematorium at Flossenberg

Remember I said at the start that his fellow prisoners asked Dietrich to lead them in a church service. Just after he finished the service, two guards arrived at the door to the cell and led him away. The other prisoners said goodbye and his final words to them were: “This is the end. For me the beginning of life.”³⁰ Watch [Brief video](#) of execution scene.

When he wrote one of his last letters to his fiancé, Maria, just before Christmas of 1944, he must have known what awaited him.

Should it be ours to drain the cup of grieving
Even to the dregs of pain, at thy command,
We will not falter, thankfully receiving
All that is given by the loving hand.³¹

Bonhoeffer's life displayed the cost of discipleship—the cost of following Jesus Christ despite the consequences. His life demonstrated what continual reformation of the church must look like, a life of gospel proclamation and defense of the reliability of Scripture and extreme faithfulness to the Word of God. No other Christian stood so boldly against the massive atrocities of Hitler. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is indeed a part of the “great cloud of witnesses” of which we should be familiar and seek to follow.³²

Rich Maurer
October 31, 2010

Dietrich was not the only one to give his life for the resistance movement. His brother Klaus and his brother-in-law Hans von Dohnanyi were also executed by the Nazis.



“X” indicates executed person. Back left—Dohnanyi Back right—Klaus and Dietrich Front right—Rüdiger Schleicher

¹ Metaxas, Eric, *Bonhoeffer—Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, ©2010, p. 531.

² Also, his father was the lead psychologist to examine Marinus van der Lubbe, a Dutchman accused of starting a fire in the German Parliament building. The Nazis plotted the fire and accused the Communists of starting the fire. This quickly led to giving Hitler the absolute control of a dictator. (Metaxas, p. 146)

³ Metaxas, p. 44.

⁴ Metaxas, p. 44

⁵ Metaxas, p. 64.

⁶ Bonhoeffer in New York, Metaxas, p. 99.

⁷ Bonhoeffer in a 1936 letter to his brother-in-law, Rudiger Schleicher, Metaxas, p. 137. He also wrote: “Do not try to make the Bible relevant. It’s relevance is axiomatic...Do not defend God’s word, but testify to it...Trust to the Word. It is a ship loaded to the very limits of its capacity.”

⁸ Metaxas, p. 110.

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reichstag_Fire_Decree

¹⁰ Metaxas p. 171. Hitler also said, “It’s been our misfortune to have the wrong religion. Why didn’t we have the religion of the Japanese, who regard sacrifice for the Fatherland as the highest good? The Mohammedan religion too would have been much more compatible to us than Christianity. Why did it have to be Christianity with its meekness and flabbiness?” (Albert Speer. 1971. *Inside the Third Reich* Translated by Richard Winston, Clara Winston, Eugene Davidson. New York: Macmillan. p 143; Reprinted in 1997. *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*. New York: Simon and Schuster. p. 96.)

¹¹ Now the “Free” part of our name has come to mean that each congregation is autonomous and “free” to govern its own affairs, provided it abides by the EFCA Statement of Faith and Distinctives.

¹² Of course a third option would be to leave and join another conservative movement.

¹³ Metaxas, p. 308.

¹⁴ Metaxas, p. 321.

¹⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abwehr>

¹⁶ His brother Walter was killed in World War I.

¹⁷ Metaxas, p. 447.

¹⁸ Metaxas, p. 472.

¹⁹ Metaxas, p. 411.

²⁰ Metaxas, p. 427. The assassination plan was called Operation Flash.

²¹ Metaxas, p. 341.

²² I really do not know if Karl-Friedrich was pro-Nazi or just got caught up in the heady and cutting edge field of physics and went along with the research being conducted by the Germans.

²³ Metaxas, p. 458.

²⁴ One of the assassins recalled a lunch with Hitler. “To see Hitler eat was a most disgusting sight. His left hand he placed upon his thigh, while with his right hand he stifled his food...into his mouth. As he did so, he did not lift his hand to his mouth, but kept his right arm flat on the table and brought his mouth down to his food.” (Metaxas, p. 471.)

²⁵ Metaxas, p. 479.

²⁶ Metaxas, p. 481.

²⁷ Metaxas, p. 482.

²⁸ Metaxas, p. 483.

²⁹ Metaxas, p. 514.

³⁰ Metaxas, p. 528.

³¹ Bonhoeffer, in a letter to his fiancé, Maria von Wedenmeyer, dated December 19, 1944.

³² Like all men and women throughout history, including those recorded in Scripture, Bonhoeffer was a sinful man with holes in his theology and practice. We should be discerning about what we follow but these failings should not cause us to reject his life and influence.