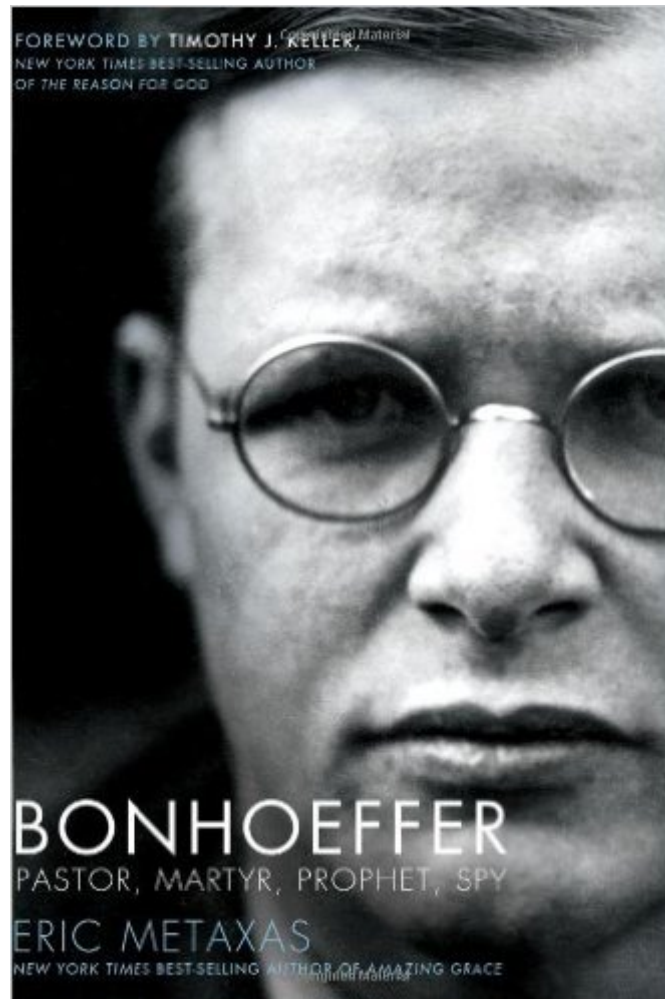


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Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy



Synopsis

WHO BETTER TO FACE THE GREATEST EVIL OF THE 20TH CENTURY THAN A HUMBLE MAN OF FAITH? As Adolf Hitler and the Nazis seduced a nation, bullied a continent, and attempted to exterminate the Jews of Europe, a small number of dissidents and saboteurs worked to dismantle the Third Reich from the inside. One of these was Dietrich Bonhoeffer—a pastor and author. In this New York Times best-selling biography, Eric Metaxas takes both strands of Bonhoeffer's life—the theologian and the spy—and draws them together to tell a searing story of incredible moral courage in the face of monstrous evil. Metaxas presents the fullest accounting of Bonhoeffer's heart-wrenching decision to leave the safe haven of America to return to Hitler's Germany, and sheds new light on Bonhoeffer's involvement in the famous Valkyrie plot and in "Operation 7," the effort to smuggle Jews into neutral Switzerland. In a deeply moving narrative, Metaxas uses previously unavailable documents—including personal letters, detailed journal entries, and firsthand personal accounts—to reveal dimensions of Bonhoeffer's life and theology never before seen. "Bonhoeffer is the story of a life framed by a passion for truth and a commitment to justice on behalf of those who face implacable evil." Includes Readers' Guide

• [A] beautifully constructed biography. • "Alan Wolfe, The New Republic" • "Metaxas tells Bonhoeffer's story with passion and theological sophistication. . . ." • "Wall Street Journal" • [A] weighty, riveting analysis of the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. . . . • "Publishers Weekly" • "Metaxas presents Bonhoeffer as a clear-headed, deeply convicted Christian who submitted to no one and nothing except God and his Word." • "Christianity Today" • "Metaxas has written a book that adds a new dimension to World War II, a new understanding of how evil can seize the soul of a nation and a man of faith can confront it. . . ." • "Thomas Fleming, author, The New Dealers' War" • "Metaxas has created a biography of uncommon power—intelligent, moving, well researched, vividly written, and rich in implication for our own lives. Or to put it another way: Buy this book. Read it. Then buy another copy and give it to a person you love. It's that good." • "Archbishop Charles Chaput, First Things" • "A definitive Bonhoeffer biography for the 21st century." • "Kirkus Reviews" • 2011 ECPA Book of the Year • 2011 Canterbury Medal by the Becket Fund recognizing courage in the defense of religious liberty • 2011 Christopher Award winner highlighting the power of faith, courage, and action • "A definitive Bonhoeffer biography for the 21st century." • Kirkus Reviews

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Customer Reviews

On the morning of April 9, 1945, German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer was executed at Flossenburg concentration camp. The camp doctor, H. Fischer-Hullstrung, later remembered:[Just before the execution] "I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer kneeling on the floor, praying fervently to God...so certain that God heard his prayer...I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God."Others testified that, up to his last day, the 39 year old Bonhoeffer remained cheerful. He knew what he had to do, was reconciled to God's will, and was able to climb the steps to the gallows "brave and composed."Who was this man who died so bravely--who Hitler himself, from his bunker beneath Berlin just three weeks before his suicide, ordered to be "destroyed?" He's the subject of best-selling author Eric Metaxas's new biography, "Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy."Shortly after his conversion in 1988, Metaxas read Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* and learned the story of the young man who, "because of his Christian faith stood up to the Nazis and ultimately gave his life." From then on, he was determined to tell the story to others. And tell it he has. Metaxas takes readers, in 592 pages, through Bonhoeffer's entire life, from his parent's courtship to his memorial service. No corner of the subject's life is left unexplored. Through the author's use of Bonhoeffer's personal letters to family and friends, earlier biographies, interviews with those who knew Bonhoeffer, and other thorough research, readers get a comprehensive and balanced look into one of recent history's greatest theologians. Appropriately, Metaxas emphasizes Bonhoeffer's theology and how it played out in his life.

"When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote those words in *The*

Cost of Discipleship, which was first published in 1937. Eight years later, on April 9, 1945, he answered Christ's bidding and was executed by the Nazis at the Flossenburg concentration camp for conspiring to assassinate Adolf Hitler the previous year. Bonhoeffer's last words, appropriate to a Christian facing death, were hopeful. "This is the end...For me the beginning of life." In Bonhoeffer, Eric Metaxas sets out to narrate Bonhoeffer's life for a new generation of Christians, who are unacquainted with the 1967 biography written by Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's closest friend. Metaxas is the author of *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery* (2007), which was subsequently turned into a movie. His biography of Bonhoeffer is well written, well paced, and very insightful, especially regarding the theological, spiritual, and ethical evolution Bonhoeffer experienced in his conflict with the Nazis, which consumed the latter third of his short life. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one of eight children born to Karl and Paula Bonhoeffer, and the youngest of five boys. He was the scion of illustrious families on both his paternal and maternal sides. His father Karl's ancestors included prominent politicians and scientists. Karl himself was chair of the department of psychology at the University of Berlin--in effect, the leading psychologist of Germany. His mother Paula's family included military leaders and theologians, including her grandfather, the prominent liberal church historian Karl August von Hase, and her father Karl Alfred, the erstwhile chaplain to Kaiser Wilhelm II.

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