

Uprising Today: Session 6
**“The Cost of Our Concerns and Expectations:
A Documentary Film On An Uprising”**
Sunday, August 1st, 2004 | 3-5pm | IDF

Notes

Attendance: Jim (of course!), Jen, Ben, Anat, Sally, Durl, Jan, Martin, Laurel, Mike, Jane, Robert, Claire

Background on the Documentary *Bonhoeffer*

- Written and directed by Martin Doblmeier
- It was submitted to the 2003 Sundance Film Festival but it was rejected for being too controversial, so local churches organized a showing at the theatre in town
- Journey Films (www.journeyfilms.com) decided to try to release it into theatres
- No theatres picked it up, so it began to be released to Churches for showing and can be bought online
- It's about Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the young German theologian who offered one of the first clear voices of resistance to Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer openly challenged his church to stand with the Jews in their time of need, and eventually joined his family in the plots to kill Hitler.
- For more info, go to www.bonhoeffer.com

Notes from watching *Bonhoeffer*

Carl Barth, a German theologian, made observations about how countries reclaimed God for themselves after World War I. His theories about this had an influence on Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

He lost his older brother in World War I, which had a large effect on him and his view of war. The Churches in Germany also suffered heavily after this (which affects their participation in the Third Reich—they want to get power back and see supporting Hitler as the way).

Bonhoeffer decided to go to seminary. At the age of 21, he graduated. His thesis outlined his idea of what the church should be, which he saw as the physical manifestation of Christ.

In September of 1930, he went to New York City as a Teaching Fellow at Union Theological Seminary. He got exposed to the African American Episcopalian Style of church services and communities. He was taken with the very emotional gospels and brought back recordings with him to Germany.

On January 30, 1933, Hitler (National Socialist Workers Party) becomes the Chancellor of Germany

They discussed of the difference of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. Anti-Judaism at the time was more a conflict of different faiths and their beliefs. Anti-Semitism is where it becomes racist, like in the Third Reich.

Hitler and the Roman Catholic Church in Germany reached a Konkordant that gives the Roman Catholic Church autonomy as long as they do not go against Hitler's regime.

Protestants in Germany began to protest Hitler and the Pastor Emergency League is formed.

Bonhoeffer refused to lead the funeral for his brother-in-law's father due to their Jewish heritage. Later he regretted this and wrote a letter to his sister.

Bonhoeffer got frustrated with the situation in Germany and went to London to work on the World Ecumenical Movement. He had planned to go to India as part of this movement to study with Gandhi but it fell through.

As the Aryan Paragraph was adopted in Germany, Bonhoeffer and others formed the Confessing Church to oppose the involvement and interference of the Nazis in the German churches.

"What are we waiting for? The time is late."
--Bonhoeffer

Cheap grace vs. costly grace

Bonhoeffer ran an illegal seminary (it was illegal because it allowed non-Aryans to enroll) at Finkenwalde. It was closed in 1937 by the Gestapo.

The Confessing Church started to fall apart. Many of those involved refused to openly oppose Hitler's policy and criticized those who did. When Kristallnacht happened, the Confessing Church was silent.

He went back to New York City, but quickly realized he needed to be in Germany.

In September of 1939, Germany invaded Poland and World War II began.

Bonhoeffer, along with many members of his family, began to plot to assassinate Hitler. They saw this as the only way to end Hitler's reign.

In May of 1940, France surrendered.

The conspirators helped several Jews escape Germany. However Bonhoeffer was later criticized for not getting more Jewish people out of Germany. He was caught for conspiring against Hitler was imprisoned after the conspirators failed in several attempts to kill Hitler. Although the war was lost, he was sentenced to death.

He got moved to one of the concentration camps and on April 9, 1945, he was hanged.