

# ASBURY at the MOVIES

## SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 3 July 20, 2025

“Bonhoeffer: Pastor. Spy. Assassin.”



### OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the life and witness of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. We are grateful for his courage in the face of evil, his profound theological insights, and his example of costly discipleship. We pray for the strength to follow his example, to stand against injustice, and to live lives that are pleasing to you. We remember his suffering and pray for those who are persecuted for their faith today. May his legacy inspire us to live with courage, faith, and hope. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

#### 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

#### Proverbs 31:8-9 (NIV)

*<sup>8</sup>Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. <sup>9</sup>Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.*

#### Isaiah 1:17 (NIV)

*Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.*

#### Micah 6:8 (NIV)

*He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

#### John 15:13 (NIV)

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Lutheran pastor and theologian during the rise of Nazi Germany. He was a key founding member of the Confessing Church, which spoke out against the Nazi regime. His writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential. Bonhoeffer was imprisoned for 1 ½ years for his involvement in a plot to kill Hitler and he was eventually hung on April 9, 1945. What lessons can we learn from his life?

Today, Bonhoeffer is still remembered because he displayed moral courage in the face of overwhelming evil. He spoke up when others remained silent. He changed hearts when others were indifferent. He defended the innocent when others looked away. He was even willing to die when others chose self-preservation.

## QUESTIONS

1. Did you see the movie *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Assassin*? What are your thoughts on the movie?
2. Bonhoeffer's theology was impacted by his time spent with the Abyssinian church in Harlem. It was here that he encountered a faith expression rooted in social justice and lived experience. The Church puts flesh on Jesus and is called to do what he did in his earthly ministry. What does it mean for you to be a member of the Body of Christ?
3. Bonhoeffer risked everything when he spoke out in a sermon against the Nazi leaders and their policies. Bonhoeffer spoke up when many remained silent. A recurring theme in the Bible is that we are called to speak out against injustice. Where do you see injustice in your community? What are you doing to close the justice gap in this area?
4. Bonhoeffer was an avowed pacifist. So participating in the plot to kill Hitler was a major ethical dilemma for him. How can you justify being part of a plot to kill Hitler? Would you have become part of this plot as well if given the chance?
5. In Bonhoeffer's book "The Cost of Discipleship," he says "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die... 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." What does it mean to you to "take up the cross and follow Jesus?"

## FINAL APPLICATION

How are you living your life like Bonhoeffer?