

Preface by REINHOLD NIEBUHR



The Cost of Discipleship

by DIETRICH

BONHOEFFER

The Cost of Discipleship

"Dietrich Bonhoeffer," writes Reinhold Niebuhr in his preface, "was one of the truly creative spirits of the Church." In Nazi Germany he carried his Christian loyalty to the actual point of taking up his cross and going to his own Golgotha. The memoir of his life which introduces the book is a record of spiritual devotion so supreme that one who reads it cannot help feeling that his own soul stands before it to be judged, chastened—and it may be lifted to better consecration.

What Bonhoeffer himself has written is in tune with what has been written about him. He sets forth what the doctrine of the grace of Christ really means, in distinction from the formalisms of thought which have often obscured its searching truth; he treats at length the Sermon on the Mount; and he concludes with a rapt and semi-mystical interpretation of "The Church of Jesus Christ and the Life of Discipleship." Here are convictions wrought in the fires of magnificent self-sacrifice and a courage which went all the way to a martyr's death.

LOUIS

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

TRANSLATED BY R. H. FULLER

FOREWORD

BY THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER

AND MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR

BY G. LEIBHOLZ

*With a Preface
by Reinhold Niebuhr*

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

NEW YORK • 1958

'Nachfolge' first published in Munich 1937
This (abridged) translation first published October 1948

COPYRIGHT, 1948 BY
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

All rights reserved—no part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages in connection with a review written for inclusion in magazine or newspaper.

NINTH PRINTING, 1958

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The poems "Who am I?" on p. 15 and "New Year 1945" on p. 16 are quoted by kind permission of "Time and Tide" and "The New English Review."

CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| PREFACE by Reinhold Niebuhr | 7 |
| FOREWORD by the Bishop of Chichester | 8 |
| MEMOIR by Dr. Leibholz | 9 |
| INTRODUCTION | 29 |

I. Grace and Discipleship

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Costly Grace | 37 |
| 2. The Call to Discipleship | 50 |
| 3. Discipleship and the Cross | 70 |
| 4. Discipleship and the Individual | 78 |

II. The Sermon on the Mount

St. Matthew v: Of the "Extraordinariness" of the Christian Life

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 5. The Beatitudes | 89 |
| 6. The Visible Community | 99 |
| 7. The Righteousness of Christ | 104 |
| 8. The Brother | 110 |
| 9. Woman | 114 |
| 10. Truthfulness | 117 |
| 11. Revenge | 121 |
| 12. The Enemy - the "Extraordinary" | 126 |

St. Matthew vi: Of the Hidden Character of the Christian Life

| | |
|---|-----|
| 13. The Hidden Righteousness | 134 |
| 14. The Hiddenness of Prayer | 140 |
| 15. The Hiddenness of the Devout Life | 146 |
| 16. The Simplicity of the Carefree Life | 149 |

*St. Matthew vii: The Separation of the
Disciple Community*

| | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| 17. | The Disciple and Unbelievers | 157 |
| 18. | The Great Divide | 162 |
| 19. | The Conclusion | 168 |

III. The Church of Jesus Christ and the
Life of Discipleship

| | | |
|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 20. | Baptism | 173 |
| 21. | The Body of Christ | 180 |
| 22. | The Image of Christ | 192 |
| | INDEX | 199 |

DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born in Breslau, February 4, 1906, the son of a university professor. He went to Tübingen University and to Berlin University where he studied under Harnack. At twenty-four he became a lecturer at Berlin University. But before actually starting on his career he went to Union Theological Seminary in New York for a time.

When Hitler came to power in 1933 Bonhoeffer abandoned his academic career which seemed to him to have lost its proper meaning. He left Germany for a time but he soon returned and on April 5, 1943, was arrested by the Gestapo and thrown into prison. On April 9, 1945, he was executed at Flossenbürg just a few days before this concentration camp was liberated by the Allies.