

THEOLOGY READING GROUP

11 February 2025

CONCEPTS

Primary goal is to read a substantial work of theology and to create an inclusive learning environment where readers of different levels of theological knowledge can interact in a mutually enriching way.

Session will toggle between sustained reading, brief responses, and more general sharing.

When we come to the first “share” period of the session, each person will be given 2-3 minutes to respond, react, or comment on how the reading speaks (or does not speak) to them (you’re encouraged to use first person singular, “I think” or “this makes me wonder . . .”).

CONCEPTS

As we share, feel free to name how you hear God/Spirit speaking: “What I hear God/Spirit saying to me . . .”

It is helpful to everyone if you do share but it is not required. “Just listening” is an acceptable status within the group.

Participants are asked to not “argue” or “critique” other reactions to the work we read together. Argument can be good, but it is not for this forum.

You may find that someone in the group speaks in a way that clarifies or sparks something in you – that’s okay to share, so long as it is something that comes from you and not “against” or as a critique of someone else’s reaction to the reading.

Nuts and Bolts

- It would be helpful to have someone serve as a timekeeper for the sharing portions of the session.
- We will read the main text only; not the footnotes. Occasionally, the text serves up either Latin or German, sometimes in brackets, e.g., [Gesinnung]. Please do not feel obligated to read these aloud unless you have a facility with the language.
- During the reading portion: Please use the following edition of Bonhoeffer's Ethics (available instantly by Kindle or, by post, as a paperback):
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Ethics-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer-Works/dp/0800683269/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?encoding=UTF8&dib_tag=se&dib=eyJ2IjojMSJ9.et8adBd7azFhnQYgv4pGu6tXo0oxkyzuNhZWN2_8-yFnZDkOb9TJBitbuqAJXa_gAcw-c8tsOH7WnGZQkT6_AOsis7GAbJ1j78a-bD4b2tHbLI3MICuHg7Izjy-sD-BzzgINxswT-VYkG3AZGGFB45Csl32LNehZDX5ujo8OojY5syY-xWKCbvut_AvvBcukBO05SptqFOvv_dOYWelHP_9_KMXcL9WMthYbV_OkKq4.HCYoZwPksiY0BawhEv34fwdWnfa-OH90GG8hSZfHKzg&qid=1728381871&sr=8-15

NUTS AND BOLTS

- If you would like to read after someone has said “pass” simply begin reading.
- During the share portion of the meeting, participation is through ‘the raised hand’ icon on Zoom. Host will call on you.
- Sessions will not be recorded but some materials shared during our meetings can be so long as you’re happy to share your email address for that purpose.
- I can be reached at either learningmentor@nwsynod.org.uk or robhoch@utusheffield.org.uk.



BONHOEFFER: THREE PERIODS

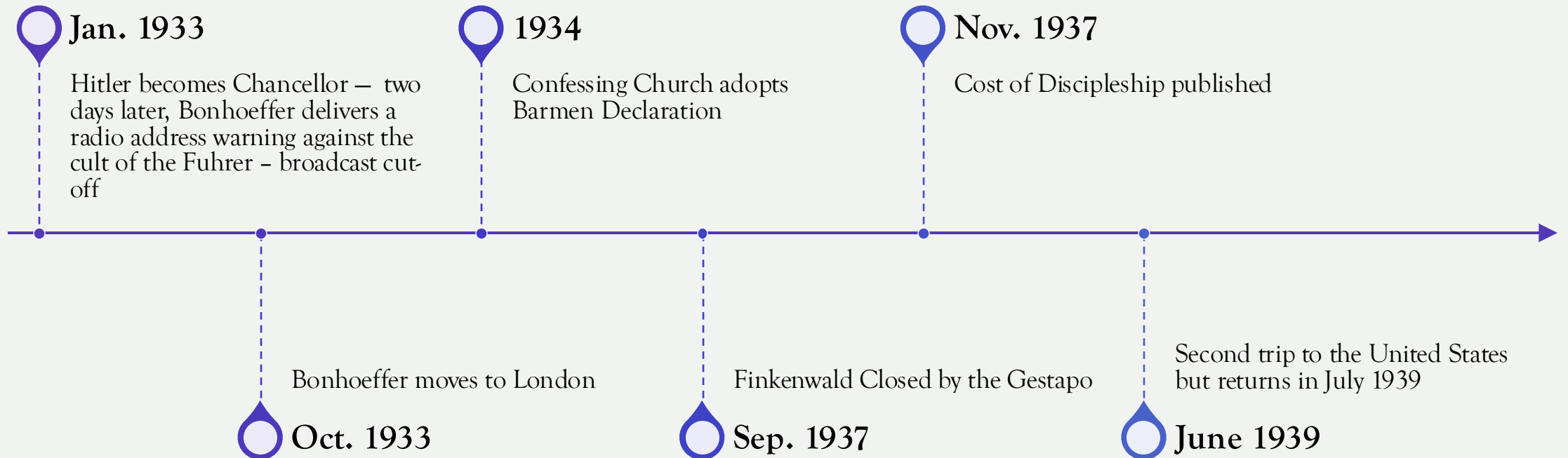
Discovery, Pastoral, and
Conspiracy



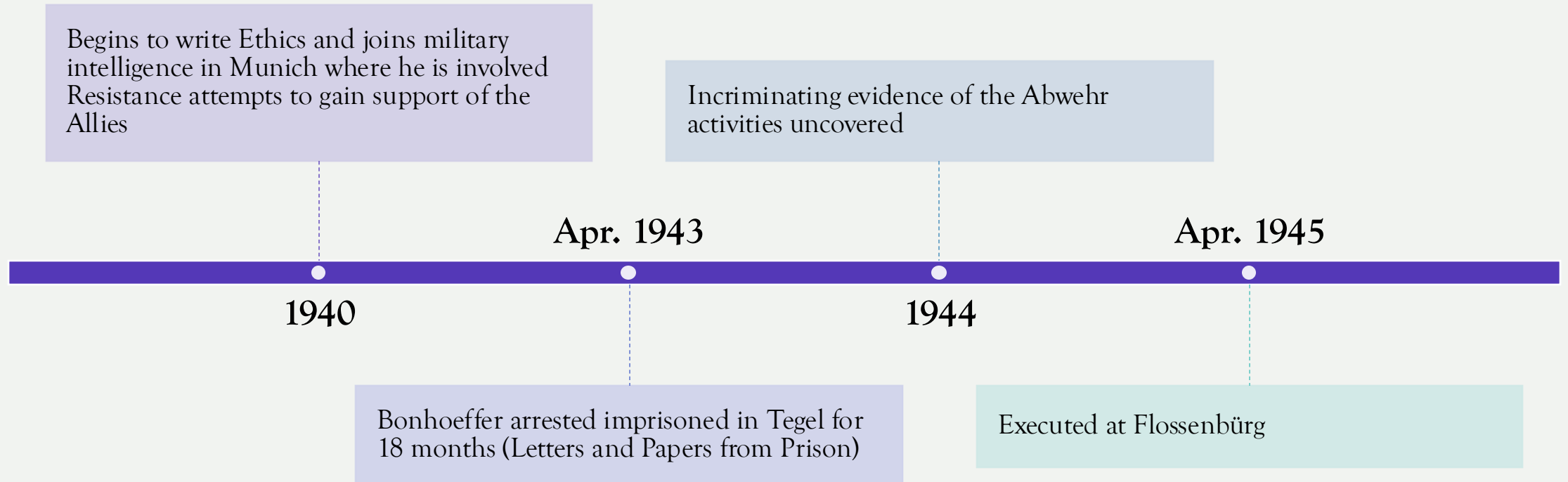
EARLY THEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY (1923-1931)

- 1927 Completes first dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio*
- 1930 Completes second dissertation, *Act and Being*
- 1930-31 First Trip to the USA: NY as a lecturer at Union Theological Seminary

PASTORAL PERIOD (1932-1939)



CONSPIRATOR (1940-1945)



Anticipating our reading today
starting with first whole paragraph of p. 82 to approximately p. 95

Ecce homo (Latin): Ecce homo are the Latin words used by Pontius Pilate in the Vulgate translation of the Gospel of John, when he presents a scourged Jesus, bound and crowned with thorns, to a hostile crowd shortly before his crucifixion.

The chapter title is, Ethics as Formation

Bonhoeffer uses 'Ecce Homo' as a heading to stress Jesus as the Real Human Being and to attack 'tyrannical despisers of humanity' and 'dismantle' narratives of 'success' or even 'failure' as something that can cope with the world.

Behold

Behold the Real Human Being through whom the world is reconciled

Behold

Behold the God become human through whom the mystery of the love of God is seen

Behold

Behold the One whom God has judged

Behold

Behold the human being accepted, judged, and awakened by God to a new life.

One takes from life what it offers, not all or nothing, but good things and bad, important things and unimportant, joy and pain. One doesn't cling anxiously to life, but neither does one throw it lightly away. One is content with measured time and does not attribute eternity to earthly things. One leaves death the limited right that it still has. But one expects the new human being and the new world only from beyond death, from the power that has conquered death.

p. 92

11 Feb 2025 begin reading at top of p. 82 with

“This may sound very theoretical, and so it is as long as we are not clear about where this stance is grounded. . .”

From where we finished on 11 Feb

Begin reading on second whole paragraph of p. 92, “Within the risen Christ the new humanity is borne, the final sovereign Yes of God to the new human being . . .”

Finished on p. 102. Begin next time with chapter, “Heritage and Decay”