

## SESSION 3 (MN SJR, 2/2007, jpc)

### 2:30 Holy Spirit (Radical Freedom)

**Greeting:** (Galatians 5:13) L: It is to freedom R: You have been called. L: Amen. R: Amen

**Song:** 1) “Free To Decide” (round); 2) “Morning of Freedom”

#### **Context:**

- **Last night, What? (Between the Arrows, TWLI – activity of Mysterious Power “G-O-D)**
- **This morning, What? (The Christ Event that gives us a new relationship to **life BTArrows)****
- **This afternoon, What? (Holy Spirit – radical new life style coming out of this Word/Event)**
- **Tonight: reflection on life “at the movies”**
- **Tomorrow morning: corporate lifestyle of Those Who Care who operate out of the “trinity” above.**

**Poetry:** DHL, about English males, “**How Bestly the Bourgeois Is**” (p. 102)

On a different note, a bourgeois German boy who got turned around by the Word – Spin on Bonhoeffer’s life/his Ethics. His decisions: **military service (no); to leave Germany (yes, later return); attempted assassination of Hitler (yes); Xn minister use violence (yes)** (*Courage to Lead*, p. 175).

**R.A.M:** Spirit is always already present./ Freedom is always already present./ Decision is always imminent./ Not to decide is to let someone else make my decision for me/ and thereby deny my freedom.

2:45 Bonhoeffer Paper (written in prison and smuggled out on scraps of paper)

#### **Para 3: 1-6 (Read and comment)**

<sup>1</sup>*Responsible men and women act in the freedom of their own selves, without the support of others, of circumstances, or of principles, but with a due consideration for the given human and general conditions and for the relevant questions of principle.* <sup>2</sup>**The proof of their freedom is the fact that nothing can answer for them, nothing can exonerate them, except their own deeds and their own selves.** <sup>3</sup>**It is they themselves who must observe, judge, weigh up, decide and act.** <sup>4</sup>*It is they themselves who must examine the motives, the prospects, the value and the purpose of their actions.* <sup>5</sup>*But neither the purity of the motivation, nor the opportune circumstances, nor the value, nor the significant purpose of an intended undertaking can become the governing law of those actions, a law to which they can withdraw, to which they can appeal as an authority, and by which they can be exculpated and acquitted.* <sup>6</sup>*For in that case they would no longer be truly free.*

- Someone **summarize** what Bonhoeffer is saying here about **freedom**.

- Some body read **para 2**: *Responsibility and freedom are corresponding concepts. Factually, though not chronologically, responsibility presupposes freedom and freedom can consist only in responsibility. Responsibility is the freedom which is given only in the obligation to God and to our neighbor.*
- So **responsibility** and **freedom** are very **close by definition**, but Bonhoeffer wants to make a **difference** . . .

### **Jump to Para 9:**

[I read] *In responsibility both obedience and freedom are realized. Responsibility implies **tension** between obedience and freedom. There would be **no more responsibility** if either were made independent of the other [no tension]. Responsible action is subject to obligation, and yet it is creative [summary?]. To make obedience independent of freedom leads only to the Kantian ethic of **duty** [name classic persons of duty in history], and to make freedom independent of obedience leads only to the ethic of **irresponsible genius** [name some classic irresponsible geniuses in history]. [How person of duty and irresponsible genius the same?] Both the dutiful person and the genius carry their justification within themselves [What do they say? Told/ought. Feel good.]. **Responsible people stand [where?] in the tension** between obligation and freedom; they must **dare to act** under obligation and in freedom; yet they **find their justification [where?]** neither in their obligation nor in their freedom **but solely in the One who has put them in this (humanly impossible) [why does he use this phrase?] situation and who requires this deed of them.** Responsible people deliver up themselves and their deeds to God [say another way, without using the word “God”].*

1. Let’s see if we can illustrate this (**responsibility “triangle,”** reviewing the sentence)
2. **How many** of you are more **persons of duty**? How many are more **irresponsible geniuses**?
3. When was a time that you were a **responsible person**? (They give **several examples**.)

#### **4. Battery of Questions:**

- So what were you obligated to?
- What was your free decision?
- What was the struggle?
- How did you feel in the midst of all that?
- How did you know you were doing the right thing at the time?
- What were the consequences?
- Did you do the right thing?

### **Para 8:**

(**Second sentence: let’s** read about the **paragon** of one standing in the tension of **obligation/freedom**, therefore **the responsible human**) *Jesus stands before God as the*

one who is both obedient and free. As the **obedient one** he does God's will in blind compliance with the law which is commanded him, and as the **free one** he acquiesces in God's will out of his own most personal knowledge, **with open eyes and a joyous heart**; he recreates this will, as it were, out of himself.

1. Did **Jesus want to go to Jerusalem** that Psalm Sunday? How do we know he **struggled with that decision** (Gethsemane). What went on there?
2. Did **Jesus want to go to the cross**? What do you think? **How do** we know he **was a free person**? (What did he **tell Pilate** when he said, "Don't you know I have the power of your life and death in my hands?") (How do we **know he struggled at the crucifixion**? What was his cry from the Cross ("**Let this cup pass**")? What was his ultimate **cry of freedom & obedience**? ("Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.")
3. Was Jesus a **responsible person**? Was he an **obligated man**? a **free man**?
4. **[I read]** **[Second time a group litany: this side is Obedience; this side is Freedom]** *Obedience without freedom is slavery; freedom without obedience is arbitrary self-will. Obedience restrains freedom; and freedom ennobles obedience. Obedience binds the creature to the Creator, and freedom enables the creature to stand before the Creator as one who is made in the Creator's image. Obedience shows men and women that they must allow themselves to be told what is good and what God requires of them (Micah 6:8); and liberty enables them to do good themselves. Obedience knows what is good and does it, and freedom dares to act, and abandons to God the judgment of good and evil. Obedience follows blindly and freedom has open eyes. Obedience acts without questioning and freedom asks what is the purpose. Obedience has its hands tied and freedom is creative. In obedience men and women adhere to the decalogue and in freedom they create new decalogues (Luther).*

### 3:30 Questions:

1. What does the **tension between obligation and freedom** get you? Does it give happiness?
2. [Point to **Responsible One** on triangle again.] Who are **examples of the Responsible Ones** besides Jesus? Get out **at least five: Gandhi/ Mandela** (both men of color) **Lech Walensa** (all foreigners) **MLK** (all men) **Erin Brockovich** – other women?
3. **How obligated?** 50%? **How free?** 50%?
4. **How do you know if you are 100% free** -- which is just free?
  - **Example:** Capt. Medina. **Lt. Calley**. My Lai (1968); head-on fire on village of women and children. Famous court marshal trial at Ft. Benning, GA. "**I was just following orders, sir.**" (Nuremberg Trial, same: "I was just following orders, sir.")

- Let's get the feeling of this: You are a Jew in a Nazi concentration camp. They have singled you out to shoot your fellow Jews -- or be shot. **Who are you obligated to? How free are you in that situation?**
- Hold GUN to head. "Are you going to shoot them or not?" (hold to head of several)
- **How many choices** do you have in **that situation? How free? What % free?** So, any time you have **at least two choices, what? (Always have at least two – Yes or No – therefore always 100% free.)**
- **What difference make knowing that?** (Can you can ever blame someone else for what you did and remain free? Can you ever get by with "I did what I was told?")
- **Freedom is scary.** Yet it is the **hallmark of a full human being.** (We all think we'd rather have freedom than not.) **Scary when we know the consequences.** Look at **Socrates. Jesus. Gandhi. MLK.**
- **On to Para 3: Freedom is the style of those guided by the Holy Spirit.**

### Para 3, begin s. 7 . . .

*<sup>7</sup>The action of the responsible person is performed in the obligation which alone gives freedom and which gives entire freedom, the obligation to God and to our neighbor as they confront us in Jesus Christ. [what this mean?] <sup>8</sup>At the same time it [what?] is performed wholly within the domain of relativity, wholly in the twilight which the historical situation spreads over good and evil; it [what?] is performed in the midst of the innumerable perspectives in which every given phenomenon appears. <sup>9</sup>It [what?] has not to decide simply between right and wrong and between good and evil, but between right and right and between wrong and wrong. <sup>10</sup>As Aeschylus said, "right strives with right." <sup>11</sup>Precisely in this respect responsible action is a free venture; it is **not justified by any law (or order)**; it is performed **without any claim to a valid self-justification, and therefore also without any claim to an ultimate valid knowledge of good and evil. [to want to valid k. of good before I act – where that line come from?]** <sup>12</sup>Good, as what is responsible, is **performed in ignorance of good and in the surrender to God of the deed** which has become necessary and which is nevertheless, or for that very reason, free; for it is God who sees the heart, who weighs up the deed, and who directs the course of history [and we'll die not knowing for sure if anything we ever do is good].*

- **Necessary deed, free deed, and Jesus deed** used interchangeably by Bonhoeffer.

**Para 4:** *With this there is disclosed to us a deep secret of history in general. Those who act in the freedom of their own most personal responsibility are precisely the ones who see their action finally committed to the guidance of God. The free deed knows itself in the end as the deed of God; the decision knows itself as guidance [by the Holy Spirit?]; the free venture knows itself as divine necessity. It is in the free abandonment of knowledge of their own good that they perform the good of God.*

- **People, you are free.** Question always is, "**What are we going to do with our freedom?**"

- How do we **know we are free**? Because our **“leader” has shown that all are 100 % free. Two things Jesus was first in** for his brothers and sisters:
  1. **faith in God**
  2. **free responsibility for God’s creation** (And that’s the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment or freedom: commanded and free to love God and neighbor).
- **How does all this make you feel?**
- **Why is it such “good news”? What a tradition we are part of!**

**Song: “Responsibility,”** to one of the Beattle’s greatest hits.

**4:10 Freedom Meditation: “Gracious Freedom”** (15 minutes) (Pass out)

**RAM:** “We surrender our free deed to God;/ for it is God who sees the heart,/ who weighs up the deed,/and who directs the course of history.” Amen./Amen.

**4:25**

**We’ll be seeing a feature film tonight and then having a conversation together,** so you have an **hour break** before dinner. (May want to dream a little.) Let’s get going at **6:00 sharp**.

**Meal Thanks**

**As we eat dinner:** Let us be **reminded** that our food is a gift from the earth and nourishes us to care for the total earth community. **Amen.** (Amen.)

**5:30 Dinner**