

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present,

Lecture 26, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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This is Dr. Roger Green in his church history course, Reformation to the Present. This is session 26 on Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Today's November 22nd, and in 1963 of this day, what happened? Of course, let's see if Grant knows.

Oh, we have some people who saw the light today. We thought you guys left and went home for Thanksgiving break. Okay, we're just asking a question before we actually start.

Today's November 22nd, and in 1963, 50 years ago; what happened on this day 50 years ago? It has been in all the papers. JFK, absolutely JFK. Now, here's what people don't realize.

Something happened in church history on this day, November 22nd, 1963, the same day as the assassination of JFK. C.S. Lewis died on that day, and he didn't get any press because all the world's attention was focused on the assassination of JFK. So, C.S. Lewis died, and nobody paid attention to that, really.

I think some of the Christian magazines did. So, we lost C.S. Lewis on this day 50 years ago, too. So, that was a big loss.

Well, just for a quick devotional today, and in that we're talking about Dietrich Bonhoeffer, I just want to read from Cost of Discipleship, and if you haven't read the book, you'll want to read the book. It's really, it's a powerful book. It's really based on the Sermon on the Mount, and he begins the book by talking about something we mentioned in class the other day: costly grace.

Cheap grace is a deadly enemy of our church. We're fighting today for costly grace. Cheap grace means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system.

It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth. The love of God is taught as the Christian, quote, conception, unquote, of God. An intellectual assent to that idea is held to be sufficient to secure the remission of sins.

The church which holds the correct doctrine of grace has, it is supposed, ipso facto, a part in that grace. In such a church, the world finds a cheap covering for its sins. No contrition is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin.

Cheap grace, therefore, amounts to a denial of the living word of God. In fact, a denial of the incarnation of the word of God. Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner.

Costly grace, on the other hand, is the gospel that must be sought again and again, the gift that must be asked for, and the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man his only true life.

It is costly because it condemns sin and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it costs God the life of his son. You were brought at a price, and what has cost God a lot cannot be cheap for us.

Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his son too dear a price to pay for our life but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the incarnation of God—Cost of Discipleship.

So, if you folks haven't read the Cost of Discipleship, you will want to add it to your reading list. Let me ask my two friends who just came in, what happened 50 years ago to this day? Yeah, on November 22nd, 1963. It's been in all the papers.

Was it? Thank you for that. It was the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Now, what happened in church history? I wonder who knows.

What happened in church history 50 years ago? It's C.S. Lewis who died on that day 50 years ago on the same day as JFK. We mentioned in class that nobody paid attention to that because all the attention was given to JFK. So, well, we've got, now we've got, we've got first true believers, and now we've had four people to see the light, and we have only one apostate.

So, now we can just journey on, and I hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving. We won't be together again until a week from Monday, and on that Wednesday is when you want to give me four questions because next week, from Monday and Wednesday, we see a video on Dietrich Bonhoeffer called Memories and Perspectives. On Friday, we will have a review session.

On the Monday, we finish our lectures. The next Wednesday, we will do our second review session. So, we have five class days left when we come back.

So, it goes pretty fast. So, where should we be? We're in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one background, two theology and I just wanted to mention some aspects of his theology. The first one that I mentioned was ecclesiology and the church as a community.

So, that is pretty important for Dietrich Bonhoeffer. And then the second one we didn't get to, I don't think, Christology. Did we get to his Christology? No.

We didn't get to his Christology. So, the doctrine of Christ, again, is very important. You saw that in what we were reading about the Cost of Discipleship.

What is the gospel? What is costly grace? Costly grace is the incarnation of God. So, costly grace is God coming in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. So, that's costly grace.

So, Jesus Christ is the center of his theology, the focus of his theology. Everything revolves around that and the incarnation. He actually wrote a book.

One of his books was entitled Christ the Center. So, that gives you an idea of how critical this was for him. So, now, he's the center of what? He is the center of all reality.

Christ is the center of all reality. Christ is the center of everything that exists. And therefore, Christ is the unifying factor of the world for Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Now, the world may not know that, but theologically, Bonhoeffer believed that Christ is the center of reality, including the reality of the world. Now, that leads me to say that sometimes I hear Gordon's students say, now, I know none of you will ever say this again after this class. Sometimes I hear Gordon students say, when I get out into the real world, now, probably none of you have ever said that, but when I get out into the real world, I've got news for you.

This is the real world. Any community that takes this message seriously, that Christ is the center of community life, which we take pretty seriously at Gordon, means that this is the real world. This is reality, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer pictures it.

When you get out of Gordon College, you're not entering into the real world. In a sense, you're entering into the unreal world because you're entering into a world that does not recognize Christ as the center of reality. So, I know that none of you would ever, from now on, ever in your life say, when I get into the real world, you're in the real world. Welcome to the real world in Gordon College.

So, this is it, and you're going to be going out into a very unreal world, as far as Bonhoeffer is concerned, anyway. So, he is the center. Now, a couple of things about Christ as the center of all of this reality.

Three kinds of images, in a way. One image is that Christ who came and is the center of reality is a suffering Christ. God is a suffering God.

So, God realizes and understands the suffering of humanity. So, when we suffer, God suffers because he's a suffering God. That's one image, in a sense.

The second image is Christ as the mediator. Christ is the mediator between you and me. Christ is a mediator between us and the world.

Christ is the mediator between us and God. God bless you. So, the mediatorial function of Christ is very important for Bonhoeffer.

He talks a lot about Christ as a mediator. And then the third image is that kind of an image of question. The third image is a question: who is Christ for us today? That's the question always at the uppermost of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's thinking.

Who is Christ for us today? What does Christ mean for us as a community today? What does Christ mean for the world today? So, there are these three kind of images of Bonhoeffer when he deals with his Christology. So, number one is ecclesiology. Actually, we've got number two, theology, under Bonhoeffer, and then we've mentioned some things.

So, number one is ecclesiology. Number two is Christology. Number three is religion, quote-unquote, and what he called religion-less Christianity.

Religion and religion-less Christianity. Now, this takes some explanation, and Bonhoeffer can be misunderstood here very, very easily. What he means by religion is all of our attempts to find God, to know God, to learn about God that's religion.

And he doesn't like religion, doesn't like the word religion, doesn't like the concept of religion. Because religion gives people the impression that it's up to us to find God, that it's up to us to know God, and so forth. So, we go through all of these kind of religious tasks to try to find God.

No, that's not the way forward for Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The way forward is what he called a religion-less Christianity, and a religion-less Christianity means God finds us in Christ. And when God finds us in Christ, it's as a result of that, finding us by his grace in Christ, that we want to live the kind of lives that are pleasing to him, and we want to believe the kind of doctrines that explain the Bible, and so forth.

But for him, religion is bad news because it's all of us trying to find God in some way, and that's bad news. The story of the Bible is not about us finding God. The story of the Bible is about God finding us in Christ.

So, religion and religion-less Christianity. Okay, the fourth thing is the world. What did Bonhoeffer say about the world? Well, he says a lot about the world, but the first thing he says about the world is that the world was created by God.

God created the world. Therefore, it is inherently good. So, Bonhoeffer will not, you know, Bonhoeffer does not like people who say, get me out of this world as fast as I can, you know, because this world is not my home.

I'm just passing through. Well, you get the idea that if this world isn't your home, you're just passing through the fact that the world is not very good. You know, the world is really kind of evil, and so forth.

Bonhoeffer will have none of that. This world was created by God, and it's up to us to make the world the kind of world that God intended it to be. So, inherently, we are living in an inherently good world here, and he has placed us in this world for a purpose, no doubt about that.

Now, to show how good the world is, God himself came in the flesh, in the incarnation. That shows how much God was concerned for his creation, that he would come in the flesh himself. So, the incarnation, for Dietrich Bonhoeffer, is an affirmation of the world.

So, it's very, very important for him. So, okay. Now, Bonhoeffer then says, in terms of the world, Bonhoeffer says, we should encounter the world.

We Christians should encounter the world. We should be out in the world. We should not be living in monasteries, but we should be out in the world, encountering the world.

How do we do it? We do it through the church. We do it through the body of Christ, through the community. So, the church community, the body of Christ, encounters the world, and it encounters the world in three very distinct ways.

So, there are three ways in which we live in the world: we encounter the world, and we participate in the world. Okay. Way number one is by prayer.

Now, you would think, right away, you would say, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, what are you talking about? Prayer is a very private thing. It's a thing within the church and so forth. No, because we pray for the world.

When we, in prayer, have the world in mind, we have the world in mind, both as God's creation and as the world in mind that needs redemption. So, prayer is the first way in which we encounter the world. Number two, we sometimes encounter the world in suffering.

In suffering. If the gospel is being correctly proclaimed, there are going to be consequences for proclaiming that gospel, and the church is a suffering church. But the suffering of the church represents that it's doing its job in encountering the world.

If the church just kind of looks like the world, then it's not doing its job. It's not being the church that God calls it to be. Okay.

And the third way, and you're not going to be surprised by this because he's a good Lutheran, remember. So, the third way is through your vocation, through your calling. That's how you encounter the world, through your vocation.

We've already said, when we talked about this earlier, all vocations are equally worthy. That's the good Lutheran doctrine. Remember what Bonhoeffer's going to pick up on that.

All vocations are equally worthy. There's not a better vocation and a worse vocation. All vocations are on the same level.

So, through our vocations, we encounter the world. No doubt about that. So, that's really, really important.

Okay. Now, in terms of the relationship with the world, here's where he gets into the discussion of who we should care for in the world and what our relationship in the world should be with the government. So, first of all, who should we care for in the world as the church, as the body of Christ? What's our responsibility to care for the people of the world? Well, we are to care, especially for the outcasts of the world, the homeless, the helpless, and the marginalized.

Those are the people that we should be reaching out to all the time. Okay. And what did this mean for Bonhoeffer? This meant standing with the Jews because who was being marginalized? Who was being slaughtered? Who was being put into ghettos? Who was being taken to concentration camps? It was the Jews.

So, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, lessons he learned from New York and the black community, takes that back to Germany with him, and he said the place where the church must stand is with the Jews. And so, he stood with the Jews. And he even worked on their behalf to assassinate Hitler, no doubt about that.

Okay. So, there's one: who should we care for in the world? As we look at the world, who should be the people to whom we minister? Number two, now, what should the relationship be with the government? Okay. Well, remember, he's a good Lutheran.

So, remember, he's going to believe that the church is divinely ordained and the government is divinely ordained. So, he's going to have this kind of understanding of church and state. The question is, what do you do when the state overreaches its power? What do you do when there is no longer a state that, obviously, no longer a state that God has ordained? What do you do when a state is vicious like the Nazis? What do you do? Well, Bonhoeffer said, we'll also see this in the film. Bonhoeffer said, you must do three things.

When the state, and again, the video will show this, but when the state acts as a non-state, when the government acts as an un-government and, obviously, is stepping over the boundaries of its power, here are the three things that you do. Number one, you have to remind the state of the limits of its power. The church has to have the courage to speak to the state, to speak to the leaders of the state, and to remind the state that its powers are limited by God.

If you're overstepping those powers, God is going to judge you for that. That takes a little bit of courage when you're living under Hitler to remind that regime that it has overstepped the limits of its power. But that's the first thing you do.

The second thing you do is bind up the wounds of the victims. That has a little bit to do with what we said previously, but you bind up the wounds of the victims. Where there are victims of abuse of power, you must stand with them and care for them.

You bind up the wounds of the victims, in this case, the Jews, for Bonhoeffer, of course. Then, the third one, the imagery, is a little bit strange. But if necessary, if necessary, Bonhoeffer said, you put a spoke in the wheel.

Now, the imagery is of a car driving down the road. You see this car driving down the road. You've got to go and take a big stick, and you've got to jam the wheel of the car so the car won't function anymore.

If necessary, you put a spoke in the wheel. If necessary, you stop that car from driving anymore. If necessary.

Well, he thought it was necessary to get involved in a plot to kill Hitler, so he did put a spoke in the wheel. He tried to put a spoke in the wheel. The other imagery he uses for that, Bonhoeffer asked, said if you saw a car driving down the road and there's a big crowd of people on the road and a car's driving down the road and a madman was behind the wheel and swerving all over the place and it was obvious that he was going to run down all those people, what would you try to do? You try to get into the car and take the wheel away from the madman, take control of the car away from the madman.

Well, that's easy to understand what Bonhoeffer's talking about because the Nazi government was like a car out of control, slaughtering people. It's time now to jump in that car, grab the wheel, and control the car ourselves. So those are the three kind of, in terms of relating to the state, those are the three things that you do.

So that was important for Bonhoeffer. Okay, so that's Dietrich Bonhoeffer, first background to theology, just those theological points, ecclesiology, Christology, religion, and the world. So we're going to move on from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and I know we're going to see a lot in memories and perspectives for two days, Monday and Wednesday, and I have a little sheet for you so you can jot down some notes.

But are there any questions before we see the video on Monday? Any questions about Bonhoeffer? A pretty remarkable person. If you're going to read one thing, this should be *At the Cost of Discipleship*. If you're going to read the second book by Bonhoeffer, it should be called *Life Together*.

But are there any questions about Dietrich Bonhoeffer at all? One of Ted and I will be going down to the Society of Biblical Literature and American Academy of Religion meetings, and one of the societies I belong to is the International Bonhoeffer Society. So there are three meetings of the International Bonhoeffer Society in Baltimore, so we'll hear papers read about Bonhoeffer and talk about recent books about Bonhoeffer and that, so it's very interesting. All right, let's go to D, the Second Vatican Council, because the Second Vatican Council was an important part of this kind of theological development from Dietrich Bonhoeffer to the present.

Okay, and we're just going to mention Pope John XXIII here. Let's see if I put his date. No, I didn't.

I don't think I put his... Just let me see here. Oops, sorry. You know how I am with this, so you'll understand.

Okay, we're coming down to... Oh, there he is. Okay, bless his heart. All right, so we want to mention, and it's on your list here, Pope John XXIII, 1881 to 1963.

Okay, all right, Pope John XXIII. Now, here are just a couple of words about him as pope: he became pope in 1958, so in terms of his papacy, he was 58 to 63. Now, very, very interesting with the election of Pope John XXIII.

It seems as though, anyway, that the Roman Catholic Church couldn't kind of come to an agreement with... About who the pope should be. So they elected this fellow, Pope John... He took the name Pope John XXIII, and he was called the caretaker pope. He was going to take care kind of of the Roman Catholic Church until he died, and then we'll put a real pope in there, in a sense, someone who can really lead us into the future.

So, Pope John XXIII, the caretaker pope, and surprise, surprise, he wasn't a caretaker pope at all. And one of the... I think I have this, but let me just see if I do. Yeah, if I don't, no.

Okay, caretaker pope. I thought I put this in the PowerPoint, but I didn't, so bless my heart on that. Okay.

Surprise, surprise, he pretty immediately wrote... Or not immediately, but during his papacy, he wrote an encyclical that was a powerful encyclical, and it was called... And I didn't put it down, so I'll spell it for you. It was called Pacem, P-A-C-E-M, P-A-C-E-M, Pacem. And then the word in, and then the word terris, T-E-R-R-I-S, Pacem in terris.

And so Pacem in terris, which means what? You can almost tell by looking at it. It means what? Peace on earth, peace in the world, peace on earth. And what he does as the pope is he gets involved in the whole business of trying to bring about shalom to this world.

And what he says is that the only time we're going to get shalom, peace on earth, is when there is cooperation among all nations. Nations have got to put aside their claim to power, and they've got to recognize all nations as equally worthy of being at the table and talking about peace. But Pacem in terris, peace on earth, a major document in the middle of the 20th century.

Now, you would have had to live at that time to realize how important Pacem in Terris was because we were at the brink of... At one point, we were at the brink of nuclear war. And there again, this was another world from your world, I realize that, but you cannot imagine what it was like when the Russians put missiles in Cuba. And the Russians put missiles in Cuba, 90 miles away from the land of the United States, nuclear-powered missiles in Cuba.

You can't imagine what it was like. We were holding our breath because President Kennedy, now on the 22nd of November, was talking about his assassination, but President Kennedy was going to come on television and make a national speech on television. Now, those were the old days, so we're talking black and white.

We're talking about how you actually had to walk up to the television to turn it on. You actually had to get out of your seat to turn the television on. Can you imagine that? I mean, this is unimaginable.

And it's also black and white. There's no colored television, so it's black and white. I know, I myself, when I knew he was making that speech, I ran home and sat on the couch with my parents just, and we were, you could almost, you almost held your breath because what he said on television, what JFK said on television was he was

telling Mr. Khrushchev, get those missiles out of Cuba or else, and the or else would have been a nuclear war.

So, and none of us would have been alive to talk about it now, I tell you. So, it was, it was, was so close, in a sense, to nuclear warfare, and we were just, you know, wondering what the future was going to be. Now, in the midst of that, that world, of the world of the 50s, early 60s, John Paul XXIII comes along as a man of peace and talks to the world leaders and to his Catholic church about Padua Minteros, peace on earth.

Now, that would have been enough, in a sense, but the other thing he did, this is the caretaker pope now, the other thing he did was he called another church council, a worldwide church council, and it was called the Second Vatican Council, and number two, right there under, under, you've got it in your outline there, the accomplishments of the Second Vatican Council. The Second Vatican Council was convened in October of 1962, a worldwide council, and let me tell you this: he changed the Roman Catholic Church by this Second Vatican Council. The Roman Catholic Church is a different church after the Second Vatican Council than it was before the Second Vatican Council.

So, what they thought was going to be the caretaker pope exploded the Roman Catholic Church, and he's not the caretaker pope; he just was. It was amazing what he did. So, what we're going to do now is just mention a few of the accomplishments of Vatican II, so this is D2 under your outline if you're following the outline, some accomplishments of the Second Vatican Council. The whole Catholic Church has changed as a result of that.

Okay, and just list them, but I'm not listing them in the necessary order of importance. However, one first important thing about the Second Vatican Council was mass in the vernacular. When you go to mass, you're going to hear it in English, or Spanish, or German, no more in Latin. Now, I used to go to mass before Vatican II, I used to go to mass occasionally with my friends, and the whole thing was in Latin, so I, I had no one, I had no idea what was going on, and basically, to be honest, neither did they, because it's all in Latin.

Now, it's all going to be in the vernacular, you know, so this is a pretty amazing step, you know, and so forth, so. Okay, a second, what should we say, a second accomplishment, in a sense, of Vatican II is ecumenical dialogue between Roman Catholics and other Christians, kind of an opening up of dialogue between Roman Catholics and other Christians, and for, after Vatican II, an opening up of dialogue even with non-Christian religions, so a kind of a moving out from the Roman Catholic enclave to, to encounter non-Christian religions, even. So, this was a pretty remarkable thing, and you, again, you'd have to kind of live back in the 60s to get a sense of how remarkable that was, no doubt about that, so, but moving out

Christians and non-Christians, Christians, a moving out in an ecumenical way to other Christians, but then even broadening that to moving out and speaking with non-Christians, with Jews, with Muslims, with others, and so forth.

There's a sense in which I am a product of that. The reason I'm a product of that is that I got my PhD from Boston College, and the program that I entered was a program of Boston College, a Roman Catholic school, and Andover Newton, a Protestant school, and the program was a joint PhD program. Now, Boston College grants the degree, but the program was a program of Protestants and Catholics together with a PhD program, so it was very interesting.

So, in a sense, I benefited from that kind of ecumenism that he started. Okay, another thing that Vatican II accomplished was a kind of dissemination of the study of the Bible. We want our people, our good Catholics; we want our people to study the Bible, and we want them to be reading the Bible.

I think you can honestly say there had been, and the Bible had been inaccessible, unavailable really to Roman Catholic lay people up until Vatican II. Now, he's encouraging, after Vatican II, the study of the scriptures, and what happens is that a lot of Roman Catholic scholars get involved in the translation, translations, and commentaries of the Bible. So, a lot of Roman Catholic scholars get into this world, and a lot of Roman Catholic lay people start having Bible studies because they want to learn from the Bible.

That's all because of Vatican II. That's all because of John XXIII, no doubt about that, so. Then the final thing that it did, and obviously, we're just giving some kind of highlights here just to give you a sense of where the Roman Catholic Church went, but a final thing that it did is it opened up discussion on some very sensitive issues in the Roman Catholic Church.

Let me take Hope's question first, and then we'll, yeah, Hope. The Latin Vulgate was the official translation, or the, yeah, the official translation, but after Vatican II, they allowed for other translations, commentaries, and kind of an opening up. So, when the biblical record is being read, it's being read, or when the biblical text is being read, it's being read in your language.

And then some pretty, did any of you have the Steve Hunt? You're taking it now. Bless your heart. Oh, you wanted to take it.

You're taking it now. And does he mention Raymond Brown in the course? He mentions him a lot because certainly there's no doubt that one of the great scholars, I've heard him lecture three or four times. One of the great scholars in the Gospel of John is Raymond Brown, and the two-volume commentary in the Anchor Bible series

by Raymond Brown is a really classic text. Well, that's, see, that all comes as a result of Vatican II, so we can thank Vatican II for that.

Now, lots of issues are being opened up. Let me just mention some that have opened up in dialogue since. Now, I don't think Vatican II could have envisioned all of this, but they opened up dialogue within the Roman Catholic Church.

But, for example, women priests. Are we going to have women priests in the Roman Catholic Church? Now, Catholics are talking about this in a way that they could never have talked about before Vatican II. There's no doubt about that.

Now, the Roman Catholic Church is a long way from having women priests, but it is being discussed. That's an example. Birth control.

Birth control is again being discussed. Catholics wouldn't discuss this before Vatican II. They'd discuss that.

Now, the marriage of priests. In a previous lecture, we've already mentioned how Anglican priests came into the Roman Catholic Church. Now, the Roman Catholic Church is talking about Roman Catholic priests being married.

You would never have had that before Vatican II. Another one that I remember, only because, you know, there again this was my time, and that is the charismatic movement. Then I think I probably told the story of, if I told the story, but when I went to Barrington College in 1970, does this story sound familiar to anybody? And my officemate, when I walked into my office on the first day, did anybody resonate? Okay.

I walked into my office on the very first day at Barrington College, and they said, well, your office is such and such a place. So, I got the key, walked in, and opened the door to the office. Pretty big office, but it was just filled, filled, filled with books, file cabinets, and everything.

So, I knew. Then, there was one little desk over in the corner, empty, so I knew that was mine. So, I deduced that.

So, I walked in, and then after I was in the office for about 15 minutes, came and filled the door because he was a tall, sturdy fellow, was an Anglican priest, collar, cross, and everything, Terry Fulham, who is a graduate of Gordon College, and he was my office mate. So, I got to meet my office mate. I had never met an Anglican priest before, so this was new to me.

But we weren't, I weren't together very long before I found out he was a charismatic Anglican priest, and that made it even more interesting. And then in the first few

weeks, he said, now, I need to kind of educate you. He said, you need to realize that in the state of Rhode Island, which is, by the way, the strongest concentration per capita of Roman Catholics in the country, per capita, now it's a small state, so the strongest concentration per capita of Roman Catholics, in the state of Rhode Island, that was the birthplace of the charismatic renewal movement for the Roman Catholic Church.

So, he said, we're going to educate you. So, he started taking me to Roman Catholic charismatic meetings, which were very interesting in churches packed with charismatic Roman Catholics. And then at the end, there would be a mass, so.

But the Roman Catholic Church, that's one of the things they were able to discuss after Vatican II. What's the charismatic movement, and should the Roman Catholic Church participate in it? So, Vatican II, needless to say, the church is different because of Vatican II and because of John XXIII. It's never been the same since. There's no question about that. Okay, let's go to E, theological movements confronting modernism in the postmodern world.

We're going to start with some definitions, and I know you've had these probably in other courses, so I'm going to define these pretty, pretty quickly here. And you've got them, you've got them listed here, modernity, enlightenment, modernism, postmodernism, so. Okay, all right.

First of all, modernity. Let's just give a definition of modernity. Modernity began in the 18th century.

It was kind of attributed, in a sense, to the 18th century because there was a kind of confidence that developed in the 18th century in the Western world that humanity could think for itself. So, it was kind of, in a sense, a reliance on the intellectual capabilities of humanity. And so, it got this kind of definition, it got this kind of talking about modernity in that way.

We are able to think for ourselves. We are able to reason for ourselves and reason out, you know, so. That's one.

The second is enlightenment. Again, you've heard these definitions before. But enlightenment, in a sense, takes place at about the same time.

But there was really, which is an emphasis upon reason to make sense of the world. So, enlightenment is an emphasis upon the fact that we're able, by our reason, to make sense of the world, to make philosophical sense, to make scientific sense of the world, and to make cultural sense of the world. For unaided reasons, we are able to do that.

And that kind of ushers in this kind of period, which became known as the period of the enlightenment. So, in a sense, it took away from the mysteries of the world. However, and we've already mentioned this before when we talked about Immanuel Kant.

However, there were people during the Enlightenment, fortunately, who said remember that there are limitations to rationalism. Rationalism is the hallmark of the Enlightenment, but remember that there are limitations to rationalism. There are some things that we cannot know by reason alone.

And for Immanuel Kant, that meant God, for example. It certainly meant the afterlife, for example. It certainly meant that, by reason alone, we can't come to an understanding of ethics, morals, and so forth.

So, there are limitations there. Number three is modernism. What would we say modernism is? Modernism is an application of the 19th century to what we learned in the 18th century.

So, modernism is taking what we learned from the Enlightenment and applying it to the 19th century. Okay. Now, that had three results.

So, modernism, taking the Enlightenment seriously, applying it to the 19th century, there are three results. And I only mentioned them quickly because we've mentioned them before in the course. Three results are number one, certainly a critical attitude toward doctrine, even a skeptical attitude toward doctrine, and toward the doctrines of the church, the doctrines that the church was promulgated in the 19th century, and especially doctrines that had to do with Christology, especially doctrines that had to do with the nature of Christ and salvation, soteriology.

So, that really was part of what we call modernism in the 19th century, this very skeptical, critical attitude about Christian doctrines. Number two is something we've already mentioned enough times in the course; we're tired of it now, but number two is a positive attitude toward biblical criticism, taking biblical criticism really seriously, and even radical biblical criticism, taking that pretty seriously. So, a positive attitude toward biblical criticism, kind of a welcoming of biblical criticism without realizing its limitations, kind of drinking it in totally.

So, that's number two. And number three, you're not going to be surprised by this, but number three would be defining the Christian faith by ethics rather than doctrines. So, the Christian faith is defined by the ethical life and the moral life rather than the theological dimensions of the faith.

So, as we mentioned a hundred times in the course, Jesus becomes a good man. He becomes a good moral example to us. We want to follow that moral example.

So, that is modernism. That's what we have in the 19th century. Now we're also going to talk about postmodernism and just mention postmodernism.

I like what one person said about postmodernism. It's a vague and ill-defined notion for sure. So, postmodernism, how many times you talk about postmodernism in your courses at Gordon College? A lot.

So, it's a vague and ill-defined notion. I think that's right. I'm not sure exactly what it is, but I guess I know it when I see it.

So, we are living, I guess we're living in a postmodern world. So, what I do want to do is mention four kind of what I feel are characteristics of postmodernism. Now, think of these characteristics more.

Don't think of them in terms of all the other courses. Think of them more in terms of doctrine. Think of them more in terms of theology.

So, that's what we're interested in. So, okay. All right.

Now, number one, of course, in postmodernism is not having confidence the way the Enlightenment had confidence in the ability of reason, in the ability of rationality to provide the foundations for our life. So, the confidence that the Enlightenment had to use unaided reason to kind of build a foundation for life, that's out in postmodernism. Postmodernism does not see that as true anymore.

So, that's one characteristic. Okay. Second characteristic.

And the second characteristic is the reason is not able to provide a moral groundwork for the life in which we're living now. So, you can't use reason to provide, to deliver a kind of morality. So, that's number two.

Okay. Number three is rebellion. A rebellion against what? A rebellion against, well, two things.

Number one, there's a rebellion against authority, whether it's the authority of the church, the authority of a book like the Bible, or the authority of leaders in the church. But it's certainly a rebellion against authority, no doubt about that. And it is a rebellion against tradition.

Rebellion against tradition. Don't tell me about the church for 2,000 years, the tradition of the church, the traditional teachings of the church, and so forth. We don't care to know those things.

So, that's okay. And then, finally, number four would be a kind of relativism. Relativism kind of flourishes in a postmodern world because everybody does his own thing, and everybody thinks his own thoughts, and so forth.

There is no authority beyond your own kind of thinking, your own thoughts, and so forth. So, I think that's where kind of postmodernism has led us. Then that leads us to number two, and then number three, naturally, the nature of Christian theology today.

But number two is Enlightenment's critique of Christian theology. So, okay. Enlightenment's critique of Christian theology, and then where do we go from there? I'm going to give you a five-second break, though, because we've been writing a lot here.

Bless your hearts. You're ready for this Thanksgiving break. I'm just looking down at you.

You're ready for this. You need this. You're desperate for this.

So, can any of you leave campus today? Or do you have classes on Monday? You have classes on Monday. Classes on Tuesday? Classes on Tuesday. Okay.

So, some of you may be leaving campus today. Okay. Two more seconds for your break.

Doing okay? You're hanging in there? Okay. Enlightenment's critique of Christian theology. I don't really need to go over this because Enlightenment's critique of Christian theology is a critique of basic Christian doctrine, and you would know what those doctrines are.

Doctrine of Trinity, Doctrine of Christology, Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Doctrine of the Christian Life. I mean, you could name them for me. So, I don't need to go over Enlightenment's critique of Christian theology, the kind of things we've been talking about, or some specific issues.

Now, that leads us, however, to the question of number three, the nature of Christian theology today. What about Christian theology today? What are we going to do with that? So, okay. Well, now we will get this at the conferences we'll be going to this week.

We'll be hearing people take all kinds of positions on the nature of Christian doctrine. What place does it have today? So, okay. Well, basically, if you went to the lectures and went to the papers being read about all of this, you would hear three positions being offered, and they are, in a sense, they're in opposition to each other.

Okay? Position number one would definitely be to throw out Christian doctrine. Get rid of it. And the reason you need to get rid of it is because Christian doctrine represents the mega story.

Christian doctrine represents the big story of God and creation and the fall and salvation by grace and so forth. So, we can't have a big story in a postmodern world. What's important in a postmodern world is my story and your story, but we can't have a mega story.

So, there would be lots of papers being delivered that virtually say that. Throw out Christian doctrine. Throw out Christian theology because they represent the mega story, and we're done with the mega story.

We don't want it anymore. We don't need it anymore. It's just the individual story that counts.

So, you would hear a lot of that. Now, if we believed that, then we wouldn't have had this course. We would have stopped on day one and said, have a good semester because if you're going to throw it out, throw it out and don't study it.

So, okay? So, number two is Christian doctrine, Christian theology. Number two is, a second kind of paper you would kind of hear is, you've got to retain doctrine. You've got to retain theology.

And the reason you have to is because it's the most appropriate way to affirm the biblical story. The biblical story, the Bible gives us the story. What Christian theology and Christian doctrine do is explain the story and the Bible.

It also not only explains the Bible, of course but explains the traditions of the church. And I mean church with a capital C, not your denomination or my denomination, but the body of Christ. You would hear a lot of papers.

That's kind of the opposite of what we said at the beginning. Okay. And then the third thing that we said, it might fit, it would fit in the second, but it wouldn't fit in the first because the first says throw it all out, nothing to it.

But it would fit in the second, but there would be an argument about how it would fit in the second. The third kind of paper you would hear is, constantly test the validity of doctrine and theology. That is, doctrine and theology is fine, but you've got to really test it.

You've got to see the validity of it. And where do you see how it's valid? You see how it's valid in the broader culture, in the broader world in which you live. Is there a

validity to the doctrine and theology that you're espousing? Is it valid in the broader culture? And is it valid in the life of the individual believer? Does it have a validity there? The word I have is, is there a cohesion to doctrine and theology that really helps to explain, helps to kind of make sense of our lives and the world in which we live? That kind of belief can be connected to number two.

It can be taught, and papers can be read by people who believe it is the way to affirm the Bible. But it also can be taught by people who kind of are disconnected from number two, from the Bible and the traditions of the church, because doctrine is always a new thing in every generation. So you've got to kind of be careful about number three here.

Depends on who the people are who are espousing it. It depends on how seriously they take the Bible and the traditions of the church. But those would be three opinions about what you do with Christian doctrine and how you should approach Christian doctrine and Christian theology today.

No doubt about that. So okay, now that brings us to number F; Christianity looks at itself and other religions. So, we'll talk first about the dialogue with Roman Catholics.

And I don't, you know, some of you were at the paper that was presented on the ecumenism and the dialogue of Protestants with Roman Catholics. But the dialogue between Protestants and Roman Catholics, historical attitudes, historical changes, the nature of the dialogues, and continued agreements and disagreements. So, okay, first of all, there are historic attitudes that Protestants have toward Roman Catholics and Catholics toward Protestants.

Now, some of you have heard Mark Knoll, right? Didn't some of you go to the Mark Knoll lecture? I think some did. Yeah. Well, he, it was a great lecture, by the way.

I mean, I hope you enjoyed his paper thoroughly and just were immersed in it and so forth. But he wrote a book called *Is the Reformation Over?* And in the book, *Is the Reformation Over?* He gets to this issue of the dialogue between Catholics and Protestants. It's a great book.

You should put it on your summer reading list. You should, so we've given you what we gave you today. *Casa Discipleship*, *Life Together*, *Is the Reformation Over?* So, we've given you some good books for your summer reading list. Okay.

In the book, he talks about problems that Protestants have with Roman Catholics and then some problems that Roman Catholics have with Protestants. So those are historic attitudes. So, let's just mention a couple of problems that Protestants have with Roman Catholics.

One problem they have is they think all Roman Catholics teach us salvation by works. So, Protestants really think that salvation by doing good deeds is the Catholic way. So they're kind of critical of Catholics for this, no doubt about that.

They also feel that Roman Catholics are prevented from reading the Bible. They feel that's a historic attitude of Protestants toward Roman Catholics. They're prevented from reading and studying the Bible, and the church won't let them read and study the Bible.

They can't have access to the Bible. So that's an attitude that they have. So, okay.

They also feel that Mary has been too exalted in the Roman Catholic church. You've made Mary a co-redemptor with Christ. You've exalted Mary.

The Roman Catholics have exalted Mary too much. So, all right. They also feel that the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church, the way the Roman Catholic church is kind of established with the Pope on down, has kind of stripped the people of the priesthood of all believers, has kind of taken away from Roman Catholics the fact that they can be priests one to another.

Maybe not in preaching the sermon or giving the sacrament, but that they can be priests one to another in praying for each other, counseling each other, and everything. But Protestants think that Roman Catholics can't be priests to each other, that they're stripped of that because of this strict hierarchy under which they're governed. So there are that kind of attitude.

Now, Roman Catholics have trouble with Protestants, on the other hand. In terms of historical attitudes, Roman Catholics feel that Protestants have problems. Okay.

Let me mention, I've got about two minutes, so let me just mention one thing. Roman Catholics feel that Protestants have a problem with interpreting the Bible. Because the Bible is not interpreted by the church, that means that every Tom, Dick, and Mary, every Tom, Dick, and Mary, everybody has their own interpretation of the Bible.

And where is that going to lead? This is how Catholics think about Protestants. Where is that going to lead? That's going to lead to chaos. So that's bad news as far as they're concerned.

Secondly, Catholics feel that Protestants don't understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the church. Because the Holy Spirit works in the church, in the body of Christ, especially through the teaching offices of the church, to give the people what they need to know in terms of their own salvation. Roman Catholics feel we are much

more community-oriented in the body of Christ and the Holy Spirit working through us than Protestants are.

Because Protestants are too kind and individualized, of course, Roman Catholics feel that Protestants have neglected Mary. Now, we've already talked about that when we talked about Mary.

But I do feel that Roman Catholics have made too much of Mary, and Protestants have made too little of Mary. But there's no doubt they feel that Protestants have rejected Mary and not made enough about Mary. They do believe that Protestants have forsaken the seven sacraments, that most Protestants have forsaken what Roman Catholics believe to be the seven sacraments of the church.

And we've already talked about and mentioned those seven sacraments. And they feel that Protestants haven't done a good job there. And then finally, they do believe Roman Catholics do believe that Protestants don't understand apostolic succession and apostolic authority.

It's because of the apostolic authority of the bishops and so forth, bishops, councils, and popes. It's because Protestants haven't maintained that apostolic authority of the teaching offices of the church that they've opened the door to everybody's opinion, to secularization, and so forth. So, there are these kinds of historical attitudes.

And what we'll do the next time we lecture, which won't be for another week, a week and a half, but what we'll do is just finish this up in terms of Christology, Christianity looking itself in other religions. Then, I will make a few remarks about the conclusion of the course. Okay.

I hope you have a great Thanksgiving week. Whenever that begins, it may be beginning right this minute when you walk out the door for some of you. Bless your hearts. I don't know when it's going to begin but have a great Thanksgiving.

When we come back, we're going to see the video on Monday and Wednesday. On Wednesday, you're giving me four questions from the texts on Wednesday for the following Friday and the following Wednesday. We're all clear about that.

We're all set about that. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving. See you.

This is Dr. Roger Green in his church history course, Reformation to the Present. This is session 26 on Dietrich Bonhoeffer.