

For All Eternity:

The Gift That

Keeps on Giving



Dietrich Bonhoeffer

**February 4,
1906 –
April 9, 1945**

**He was
hanged on 9
April 1945
during the
collapse of
the Nazi
regime.**



The Tie That Binds

“We have one another only through Christ, but through Christ we do have one another, wholly, and for all eternity.”

Life Together



**ARISTIDES
OF ATHENS
B? – D 134
AD**

**AUTHOR OF
APOLOGY,
WHICH HE
PRESENTED
TO
EMPEROR
HADRIAN**



Which Says in Part:

**they love one another,
.....And if there is among
them any that is poor and
needy, and if they have no
spare food, they fast two or
three days in order to supply
to the needy their lack of
food.**



**TERTULLIAN
AD 160-225**

**BISHOP OF
NORTH
AFRICA**

**WROTE HIS
OWN
APOLOGY IN
AD 197**



From the Mouths of Pagans

But it is **mainly the deeds of a love** so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us **“Behold, (they say,) how they love one another,”** for they themselves are animated by mutual hatred. **“Behold, (they say about us,) how they are ready even to die for one another,”** for they themselves would sooner kill.



To Be Very Clear

- This doesn't say, "behold how they love one another, every Sunday morning from 10:30 AM to noon."
- This kind of community impact and widespread notoriety could only happen as they shared life together at a deeply committed level **every day, day after day. But Why?**
- **Because they Loved that much!!**



Francis Chan Letters to the Church

As elders we came to the painful conclusion that when unbelievers came to our services, they weren't observing anything **supernatural** about the way we loved one another.



Original Church Brand Acts 2

- **42** They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and [[ao](#)]to prayer.
- **43** [[ap](#)]Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and [[aq](#)]signs were taking place through the apostles. **44** And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; **45** and they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.



Life Together

- **46 Day by day** continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from **house to house, they were taking their [at]meals together with gladness and [au]sincerity of heart,** ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding [av]to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- Behold, how they LOVE one another!!



Let Me Remind You...

- So, when you “get saved,” you **don’t** become a saved **but still individual** free moral agent, **still independent** but now better equipped to live your life with more blessings throughout eternity

- NO, no, no, no ... when we are born again and the Holy Spirit takes residence within us, it is for the **express purpose of becoming a part of HIS BODY**, filled with **His life** and gifted with supernatural abilities **from Him** so **He can LOVE the world through us**



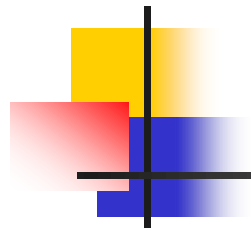
The JESUS Mandate

- **John 12:** ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ He who loves his [h]life loses it, and he who hates his [i]life in this world will keep it to life eternal. ²⁶ If anyone [j]serves Me, he **must follow Me**; and **where I am**, there My servant will be also;
- Where was He going at that moment?
- To the Cross!! My will DIES – His Life Rules
- But there is MORE!!!

His Ultimate Goal - WOW

~~John 17: 22~~ The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, **that they may be one, just as We are one;** ²³ **I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may [h]know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.**

²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, **be with Me where I am,** so that **they may see My glory** which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.



OK, So Where Is He?

“The Church is not a religious community of worshippers *of* Christ, but *is Christ himself* who has taken form among men.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer,

Ethics (ed. Simon and Schuster, 2012) -

ISBN: 9781451688504



In the Body = Being In Him

- Ephesians 4:15 but [i]speaking the truth in love, [i]**we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, even Christ,** ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together [k]by what every joint supplies, according to the [i]proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the **building up of itself in love.**
- **We are called to be where HE IS, and He is the Head of His Body, HIS CHURCH**



Read It And Weep

“We have one another only through Christ, but through Christ we do have one another, wholly, and for all eternity.”

Life Together



Suddenly So Clear

We fully experience the presence and power of Jesus Christ **only** as we become fully engaged in and sharing life together as a community of believers, **HIS BODY, the CHURCH**



The Master's Plan

- 25 “O righteous Father, [i]although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; 26 and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, **so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.**”
- **God has already laid the only foundation of our fellowship, because God has bound us together in one body with other Christians in Jesus Christ, (Life Together – D.B.)**



Good News!, YOU Are

- deeply loved by God,
- fully accepted by God,
- completely and permanently forgiven by God,
- lavishly blessed by God,
- and eternally, perfectly embraced by God as his child; a child who brings Him unspeakable JOY