



## Grain

“1

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard... 7 For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!”  
Isaiah 5:1 & 7

## Field

“I discovered later, and I'm still discovering right up to this moment, that is it only by living completely in this world that one learns to have faith. One must completely abandon any attempt to make something of oneself, whether it be a saint, or a converted sinner, or a churchman (a so-called priestly type!), a righteous man or an unrighteous one, a sick man or a healthy one. By this-worldliness I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, problems, successes and failures, experiences and perplexities. In so doing we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world — watching with Christ in Gethsemane. That, I think, is faith; that is metanoia<sup>1</sup>; (cf. Jer. 45!).” Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Letter to Eberhard Bethge 7/21/1944

**Submitted by K. Fred Rist, Alma, Wisconsin**

## Thoughts

If you watched certain parts of the Vietnam War series on PBS, you got a glimpse of the onerous decisions those who didn't believe in the war but were drafted into it faced. One interviewed veteran claimed he felt cowardly for going to Vietnam. Another draftee had moved to Canada and said he for a while felt like the coward so many accused him of being; he later gave up his American citizenship, an action he regrets today. Burdens fueled by public policy were heavy for young people. Many family members and friends of all ages divided over their varied responses to the war.

Reverend Dr. Dietrich Bonhoeffer engaged weighty choices. While living in the U.S. he was startled by the racism against black people but had to recognize the degree of discrimination in his own beloved Germany with the rising power of the Nazi regime. In 1930, his friends at Union Seminary asked Bonhoeffer to remain in New York. Mahatma Gandhi invited him to move to India. Bonhoeffer decided to return to Germany and eventually helped form a seminary aligned with scripture, not the church hijacked by the state. He was invited to join a group that planned to assassinate Hitler and wrote the above letter the day after a failed attempt. He was executed not long before the war ended.

Making decisions about how to reflect the kingdom of God in our society takes time and study. Quick fixes or a Gospel of prosperity boasted by televangelists or by political leaders manipulating religion are not part of Isaiah's scenery. None of our successes and failures or spirit-filled and flawed decisions need to tear us from God, but fully interacting with the world and participating in making decisions with discernment matter. In Isaiah, God makes great claims on our actions while offering far-reaching love. Happy Monday!

## Prayer

Highly recommended.

## Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to [cindyc@loppw.org](mailto:cindyc@loppw.org)

Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy