



Respectful Resistance

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Big Idea: Daniel models a pattern for thriving in opposition through the practice of respectful resistance.

Key Text: Daniel 1-5; 11:32

Resource: Michael. P. DeJonge. (2018). *Bonhoeffer on Resistance: The Word Against the Wheel*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

Like any theological perspective, Bonhoeffer has his critics. Some say that he provides insufficient ethical guidelines and is vague on what is our responsibility and what is God's. His foundation is Nazi Germany and that isn't applicable to most contexts. Others say that he doesn't provide a comprehensive framework for how to practically engage in resistance or address larger political and social issues. While these criticisms (and more) highlight limitations in Bonhoeffer's theology of resistance, DeJonge's book highlights six aspects of Bonhoeffer's theology of resistance, many of which are overlooked but helpful in clarifying different roles in resistance. It's the confusion of roles that makes resistance

1. What makes respectfully engaging with those who oppose you harder for you to do?
2. Which of the following examples of inflexibility is the biggest issue for you?
 - a. Inattentive: Don't give time to hear what matters to others.
 - b. Unyielding: Expect others to make the adjustments.
 - c. Disconnected: Communicate in a manner that pushes people away.
 - d. Impulsive: Too rash with others, including authority figures.
 - e. Self-Focused: Value personal authenticity over the mission's integrity.

What can you do to develop in your identified area? Who is a good role model of what adaptability in that area would look like? What do they do well?

3. Resistance requires us to know our values and roles and dare to live them out. What do you value that you struggle to live out? What are the principal causes of that struggle?

4. Bonhoeffer claimed that the church must focus on the Word of God (the Gospel). For him, resistance is word driven. That does not mean we do nothing because God's Word is an action word. God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. How does the church best present God's word as an action word, as something that takes on flesh that impacts lives?

5. Connecting with people requires empathy, wisdom, humility, communication, and compassion. Which of these five traits is your strongest and which is your weakest? How have you successfully developed a character defect? What lessons can you share with others about your experience?

6. Connecting with people requires many things. Among them are building relationships (Daniel 1,2), supporting our peers (Daniel 2,3), modeling wisdom (Daniel 2, 4), and serving others, (Daniel 2, 4, 5). Which of these four do you excel at? Why do you think this is? Which of these is a growth area for you?