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The Key to the Bible: Bonhoeffer's Approach to the Psalms as Theological Interpretation

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Abstract: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's approach to the Book of Psalms as the hermeneutical key to all of the Bible can help to combine historical and theological readings of the Bible. This article highlights four aspects of Bonhoeffer's approach: (1) by reading the Psalms prayerfully and receptively, persons are drawn into the realm of God's revelation; (2) Christ comes to the reader of the Psalms as the one who is already present, and the reader partakes of Christ's righteousness; (3) because the Psalms are read in new contexts, Christ reshapes these contexts: life becomes open for God; (4) by definition, the Psalms are read in the community of the synagogue and the Church, since no single person has experienced all that the Psalms express. These four aspects together render reading the Psalms, and the Bible as a whole, a theological enterprise, in a hermeneutical situation defined by the living Christ. The situation of interpretation is reversed by a change of subject: God is the one reading, the interpreter is the one being interpreted.

Keywords: Bonhoeffer, exegesis, theological interpretation, Psalms, prayer

Introduction: Historical and Theological Readings

Combining historical and theological readings of Scripture is no easy task. Against the dominance of historical-critical methods, a diverse movement has emerged and developed over the past decades, broadly identified as "theological interpretation of Scripture."¹ With different emphases, this movement shares the following characteristics: (1) a dissatisfaction with historical-critical methods, because disengaged, atomizing readings would do not fit the Bible's intended readership; (2) a conviction that the Bible is a theological book, and its claims concerning God must be taken seriously;² (3) an emphasis on the Church as the community that receives and reads the Bible;³ (4) attention to the spiritual practice of reading the Bible;⁴ (5) a positive view of pre-modern interpretations of the Bible. Although these are often conceived as naïve, uninformed, and ahistorical, they do provide wisdom.⁵

Three recent examples may suffice to illustrate the richness and creativity "theological interpretation of Scripture" has to offer, and its limitations. First, Matthew W. Bates has retrieved "prosopological exegesis" from the early church, which means that the pre-existent Christ speaks in and through Old Testament voices.⁶ While typological readings find shadowlike prefigurations of Christ, prosopological interpretation reckons with Christ actually being present in the Psalms. Second, Hans Boersma has recently advocated sacramental readings of Scripture, following the Church Fathers, based on a Platonic understanding of reality.⁷ All of reality, but particularly Scripture, reflects the reality of God and thus has a sacramental quality. Third, Darren Sarisky uses Augustine's hermeneutic of the sign (*signum*) and the thing signified (*res*) to renew theological readings against various forms of naturalism.⁸

While the approaches mentioned have the advantage of continuity with the early church, they also share disadvantages in exegetical and theological respects. The problem with respect to exegesis is obvious: by focusing on retrieval of precritical exegesis rather than exegesis itself, a distance is created from the actual biblical text on one hand, and the history of interpretation on the other. The biblical text itself may disappear behind the horizon of the history of interpretation, however rich that may be. The fact that forms of “theological interpretation of Scripture” can dispense with exegetical methods is an obvious disadvantage. Besides, from a theological point of view, “theological interpretation of Scripture” is in danger of merely reproducing doctrines already supported. The question is whether theological interpretations that lean heavily on precritical approaches to Scripture have a self-critical potential.

A second theological disadvantage concerns the nature of interpretation. If the Bible is a theological book that makes claims about God, a consistently theological approach would begin with revelation, the fact that God speaks his own word. In other words, theological interpretation of Scripture is not a matter of human techniques for reading the Bible, but a matter of God’s revelation to communicate with creatures.

The present article presents the hermeneutical approach to the Psalms of the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945) against the background of the ongoing debate concerning theological interpretation of Scripture. Bonhoeffer shares the intention of proponents of “theological interpretation of Scripture” to read the biblical texts in ecclesial and liturgical contexts, as a spiritual practice. Still, unlike proponents of “theological interpretation of Scripture,” Bonhoeffer values historical-critical methods and uses these. Bonhoeffer’s approach can help to bridge the gaps between exegesis and theology, between critical and spiritual readings, and between academic methodology and ecclesial practice. Not only “theological interpretation of Scripture” can benefit from these insights, but Church and theology at large.

Four aspects of Bonhoeffer’s approach are highlighted in the present article: (1) the emphasis on prayer as receptivity to God’s Word; (2) the presence of Christ in the Psalms and in the spiritual realm in which the reader finds herself; (3) the contemporization of the Psalm and the present as divine, rather than human, activity; (4) the Church as the resonance box of the Psalm. The primary focus of this article is Bonhoeffer’s brief introduction to the Psalms from 1940, *The Prayerbook of the Bible*, but various other sources are used to contextualize Bonhoeffer’s directions.⁹

Prayer and Receptivity

For Bonhoeffer, the Psalms are the entryway and a hermeneutical key to all of the Bible. The Psalms are not merely a biblical book, but a spiritual realm where God and humans meet and where a path of life opens itself.¹⁰ One enters this realm by reading the Psalms, or rather by praying them, because the Psalms are meant to be prayed, and the book of Psalms is the “Prayerbook of the Bible.” Bonhoeffer criticizes the main Protestant traditions, including his own Lutheran tradition, because they have abolished the practice of praying the Psalms on a daily basis.

Bonhoeffer’s emphasis on prayer has a biographical background. In a letter to Elisabeth Zinn, a former classmate, Bonhoeffer wrote on 27 January 1936 about a fundamental change in his life that had taken place in 1931.¹¹ He confesses that before that date, he did not pray or read the Bible seriously. After 1931, particularly the Psalms became important for his spirituality. This culminated in the publication of

The Prayerbook of the Bible in 1940, shortly before an order was issued that prohibited Bonhoeffer from speaking in public or publishing.

Entering the spiritual realm of the Psalms is not a matter of human technique, nor is it dependent on the high quality of the spirituality in the one praying the Psalms. Rather, the Psalms are part of God's revelation: God approaches the reader through the Psalms. Although these Psalms are completely human as poetry and as prayers directed to God, they actually come from God to humans. So a dynamic movement takes place: God not only speaks to his people, but also speaks through their answers to Him. The one who prays the Psalms is taken up in this dynamic movement of the Word. "The words that come from God become the steps by which we find God."¹² God's Word seeks a home in the heart of the one who prays.¹³

Bonhoeffer's meditation on Psalm 119 sheds further light on what the spiritual realm of the Psalms entails. Bonhoeffer started this meditation in the year 1939 and 1940, around the time his *Prayerbook of the Bible* was published. He had planned to meditate on the entire Psalm, but he could not finish. In this meditation, Bonhoeffer notes that the spiritual realm of the Psalms has not only a spatial, but also a temporal or rather eschatological, aspect. "You don't stand still with God, but you walk a path."¹⁴ This temporal aspect is in fact eschatological, because time itself is not neutral, not a mere *chronos*, but a *kairos*. In a lecture on "Contemporizing" (*Vergegenwärtigung*), Bonhoeffer notes that the Holy Spirit is the subject of the present time (*Gegenwart*), and therefore of contemporizing (*Vergegenwärtigung*).¹⁵ Time is full of the operations of the Holy Spirit. Obviously, Bonhoeffer denies a merely secular understanding of time to favour a thoroughly theological and eschatological view of time.

For Bonhoeffer, as for Luther, prayer and meditation cannot be separated.¹⁶ Without prayer, meditation has no soul, and without meditation, prayer has no fuel. "Meditation means taking God's word prayerfully to heart."¹⁷ For Bonhoeffer, this meditation leads to joy, or at least it should. In Psalm 119, the Psalmist rejoices in God's statutes, and he will not forget them. Bonhoeffer observes that forgetting God's Word happens often because one does not rejoice enough in it. What you rejoice in, you do not forget.¹⁸ Since people do forget God's word, it is necessary that they pray the Psalms and let God's Spirit work in them.

So when believers start praying the Psalms, they are drawn into the realm of God's revelation. The movements in this dynamic differ from a general understanding of interpretation, in which the one who interprets is the subject of interpretation. Rather, God's subjectivity is primary. "We have to deny our pious 'I', so that God can act on us."¹⁹ God's subjectivity does not erase but rather creates human subjectivity. The act of reading the Psalms becomes God's act, so the reader is in fact "being read," being interpreted by God. An encounter takes place. The nature of that encounter leads to the second aspect of Bonhoeffer's hermeneutic of the Psalms.

Christ and Justification

Christ's presence is a cornerstone of Bonhoeffer's reading of the Psalms. The Messiah that is promised in the Psalms already speaks in and through them. Bonhoeffer writes, "The one who prays the Psalms remains himself, but in him and with him it is Christ who prays."²⁰ This is both a matter of participation of David in Christ, and of identification of Christ and David. Christ does not replace David, but David remains himself. Still, identification is more than mere reinterpretation of the "historical" David in the

light of Christ. David genuinely participates in Christ, and vice versa. Christ identifies himself with David and David with himself by participating in David's words and life. David's life becomes the life of Christ. This is the mystery of Incarnation. Bonhoeffer's approach seems similar to the prosopological exegesis of the early church, uncovered by Matthew Bates, but the fundamental difference is that it is the incarnate Christ, not the pre-existent Logos, who speaks through David.

Rather than a book, the Psalms are a sphere, with dimensions of time and space, in which the one reading the Psalms finds herself. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, who operates within the spiritual realm of the Psalms. The objective of the Spirit's operations, as always, is to make room for Christ. Christ comes to the reader of the Psalms. This reader does not need to meticulously seek Christ in the Psalms, or draw out christological implications from the Psalms. Bonhoeffer is a theological realist. The Psalms do not present a promised, but yet absent, Christ, or an idea of Christ, or building blocks for the later messiah. In the Psalms, there is the *Christus praesens*, the present Christ—which is the only Christ.

Christ's presence in the Psalms is a *praying* presence. As human, Christ has incorporated all human suffering and pain, more than any other human being could have. Because it is the incarnate Christ rather than the pre-existent Logos who prays, he speaks from his experience of suffering. Meanwhile, the prayer is also truly the prayer of the believer, since Christ's words are more fitting than our own words can be to describe our situation. The participation works both ways: the incarnate Christ participates in the human condition, and the believer who prays the Psalms participates in Christ's words and life.²¹

Bonhoeffer's lectures on Christology from 1933 shed light on his reading of the Psalms. Bonhoeffer describes a reversal through the encounter with Christ. First, Bonhoeffer notes that we should not ask *what* Christ is, which would be a way to make Christ fit into our predetermined categories, but we should ask *who* he is.²² The answer that Jesus Christ is the Word of God, the Logos, is unacceptable for the human mind (Logos): it would imply that the human must die in his capacity as ruler of his world, as the sinner he is. To maintain his position, the human Logos wants to kill Christ, and does so. But when the human Logos crucifies him, Christ returns and presents himself as the one who has conquered death, the risen one. Now everything has changed: the human, sinful authority that killed Christ is powerless against the risen one. This shift from cross to Resurrection implies the reversal of the who-question. Christ is now the one who asks: "who are you to ask these questions?"²³ This is the moment when humans can no longer avoid the existential question, the question of transcendence, which is the actual christological question. The answer can only lie in Christ himself: "I am a sinner as shown in the Crucifixion, but I receive a new life through Christ's resurrection." The encounter with Jesus Christ is the encounter with the crucified and risen one, the one who is not defined by us, but who defines our existence.²⁴

This christological aspect helps us to interpret what Bonhoeffer writes in his *Prayerbook*: "The true man Jesus Christ prays in this Psalm and takes us up in his prayer."²⁵ Christ makes us participate because of his identification with us. This takes the form of an encounter in which humans are being judged and justified. In other words: the act of interpretation of the Psalms is an act of justification. The picture of a subject (the exegete) who deals with an object (a Psalm) is replaced by God as subject who through his Spirit draws human subjects into a spiritual realm and journey, in

which all interpretive questions either are false, or are returned to the human person in a new way by Jesus Christ.

The emphasis on justification does not imply that all Psalms are forced into a mould, by which their characteristics would be eliminated. On the contrary, in Christ, the varied nature of the Psalms makes sense. The congregation prays Psalms of penitence because all human beings are sinners and Christ prays these Psalms with the congregation. Although he is blameless, he has taken the sin of the world on himself. On the other hand, the congregation can sing Psalms of innocence only in Christ, because of his righteousness, which becomes ours through justification. Bonhoeffer's approach transcends a simple dichotomy of law and gospel. Rather, it concurs with his reading of the Sermon on the Mount in *Discipleship (Nachfolge)*, which is stamped by the present, living Christ. His call to follow him cannot be reduced to either law or gospel, nor can the gospel take away the claim of the law.²⁶ The present Christ is both law and gospel in person.

Participation does not imply that no distinction remains between Christ and the believer. No believer can pray the Psalms in the exact same way as Christ, as Bonhoeffer demonstrated in his sermon on Psalm 58, preached in Finkenwalde.²⁷ He notes that his hearers and himself cannot pray this Psalm, which calls for God's violent revenge against the Psalmist's enemies. The reason Bonhoeffer's hearers cannot pray this Psalm is not because they would be morally superior in comparison to the barbaric times of the Old Testament. Rather, they are too sinful to do so. The fact that they believe in Christ does not automatically imply that they are on the right side of every matter. Rather, praying this Psalm teaches the congregation who the enemy actually is, and to pray that God will destroy this enemy. Thus, praying the Psalms, even the violent ones, sheds light on the present situation.

Life and Temptation

Bonhoeffer preached his sermon on Psalm 58 amidst growing aggression by the Nazi regime. The identification of this regime with the enemy of Psalm 58 is obvious. According to Bonhoeffer, the *Bekennende Kirche* is persecuted by this enemy and rightly prays that God will punish the enemy. But the situation is more complicated. Bonhoeffer draws a distinction between objective innocence and personal innocence. In his *Prayerbook*, Bonhoeffer notes, "The fact that we are persecuted for the sake of God's cause really places us in the right over against the enemy of God. Alongside objective innocence, which can of course never be really objective because the fact of the grace of God likewise always meets us personally, there can stand in such a Psalm the personal confession of guilt."²⁸

It is worth noting that both objective and personal innocence are dependent on the context of the believers who pray the Psalms. The Bible, and the Psalms in particular, does not disclose truths of a general nature. "It is not a book *containing* eternal truths, teaching, norms, or myths, but the sole *witness* of the God-human Jesus Christ."²⁹ Because the living Christ is present, the Psalms resound in ever new contexts, which are recreated because the Psalms are prayed. Thus, the Psalms are prayed right in the middle of the concrete life of the congregation, in the personal life, and in society. All of these contexts are transformed when the Psalms are being recited. This does not happen automatically, *ex opere operato*, but through Christ. The Psalms as a spiritual realm do not remain separated from daily life, but praying the Psalms

in the presence of Christ spills over into reality, with recreative force. In his class on homiletics (1935/1936), Bonhoeffer had noted that “the hearer should participate in the inner movement of the text.”³⁰ This is exactly what happens when one prays the Psalter. The inner movement of the text has heuristic force in the present of the believer: she discovers both subjectively and objectively what guilt and innocence are. The confession of guilt lays the guilt bare, and the statement of innocence reveals what true innocence is.

For Bonhoeffer, it is neither the believer’s nor the theologian’s task to “contemporize” text and reality, to make the text relevant for the present time.³¹ Since the Holy Spirit is the subject of the present time, he makes text and reality contemporary. Once again, Bonhoeffer’s dependence on Luther’s association of prayer and meditation is relevant. The standard order of the medieval monastic approach to Scripture was *oratio, meditatio, contemplatio*: prayer, meditation, and contemplation. Luther modifies this order decisively: after prayer and meditation, he replaces contemplation with *tentatio*, temptation or *Anfechtung*.³² This temptation is not primarily the inclination to sin, but the clash between the reality of the Word of God and the reality of the senses.³³ Since God’s promise and the present world are at odds, the question is what is true. In temptation, the believer clings to the Word, since God is more to be trusted than our own eyes. Instead of the inward way of contemplation, Luther places Scripture in the everyday world, claiming that Scripture reveals what actual reality is. For Luther, as for Bonhoeffer, the Psalter is among the most important books of the entire Bible. In his preface to the edition of the Psalter, Luther calls it the “little Bible, in which every aspect of the entire Bible is found at its briefest and most beautiful.”³⁴ So the Psalter reveals not only Christ, but also daily reality. For Bonhoeffer as for Luther, nothing is as real as Christ.

The light shed by Psalms on lived experience can be illustrated from the only date reference in Bonhoeffer’s personal Bible. He underlined many verses in his Bible, but only in the margin of Psalm 74:8 did he note a date. The verse reads, “They burned every place where God was worshipped in the land.” Bonhoeffer underlined this verse on 9 November 1938, when violence against the Jews erupted in Germany, and many synagogues were burnt in the so-called *Kristallnacht* or “Night of Broken Glass.” Clearly, Bonhoeffer interpreted the reality of Psalm 74 as his reality, and the reality of the German people.

To impact the daily life of the believer, the Bible must be meditated upon. The Psalms are particularly apt for this meditation. As Bonhoeffer notes in his meditation on Psalm 119, the Psalmist prays that God open his eyes that he may see the wonders of God’s law. “Only a blind person cries out for open eyes.”³⁵ When one’s eyes are opened, one sees a wondrous world. What appeared to be dead before is in fact life. By implication, when God’s Word enters into one’s life, one becomes a stranger on earth.³⁶ The mismatch between God’s commandments and the present world remains unresolved, although this should not lead to contempt for the world. The guest obeys the rules of the inn.³⁷

Church and Community

In his doctoral dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio*, Bonhoeffer had already insisted that the Church is never without Christ because Christ is never without his Church. The Church is “Christ existing as congregation.”³⁸ The Psalms are no exception to the

rule. In *Prayerbook*, Bonhoeffer observes that no single person can pray all Psalms of complaint based on his own experience of suffering. These Psalms express the need of the entire church in all ages. Only Jesus Christ has experienced this need in its totality.³⁹ Whoever prays the Psalms does so in community with the entire church. Bonhoeffer states that David prays the Psalm, Christ prays the Psalm, and “we” pray the Psalm. “We: that is that entire congregation, in which alone the entire richness of the psalter can be prayed, but it is also every individual, insofar as he participates in Christ and his congregation, and in their prayer.”⁴⁰

Bonhoeffer emphasizes the importance of praying the Psalms together, and daily. The repetition in Hebrew poetry invites joint Psalmody, as was the custom of the early church and of Luther.⁴¹ Bonhoeffer expects to see more blessings than ever expected in the congregation when the psalter is regained. In *Life Together* he divides the Christian life into private life and community life. In both, praying the Psalms is vital.⁴² In Finkenwalde, it was customary that the Psalms were read aloud, with readers taking turns.⁴³

For the spiritual renewal Bonhoeffer envisions as taking place, Scripture needs to be read against the grain of one’s own preferences. Luther famously wrote that wherever the Word of God comes, it meets you as adversary.⁴⁴ This opens up avenues of unheard-of creativity and renewal.

Conclusion

Bonhoeffer’s approach to the Psalms is thoroughly theological, while he maintains historical-critical methods. Four aspects can enrich present-day theological readings of Scripture.

First, Bonhoeffer’s reading of the Psalms is thoroughly theological, in the sense that the text of the Psalms is part of the dynamic interplay between God and humans in God’s revelation. This is not, in the strict sense, a matter of theological *interpretation*, since the reader is as much interpreted as he is interpreting. Theological interpretation is not primarily an act of retrieval, but an act of prayer. This is, of course, a general observation on the nature of theology as such: it takes place in the concrete encounter between God and human. Prayer exemplifies what theology is.

Second, Bonhoeffer’s emphasis on the present Christ defines the hermeneutical situation. Unlike the patristic view of the pre-existent Christ behind the Old Testament, Bonhoeffer focuses on the incarnate Christ, on the crucified and risen one as the one who prays the Psalms. Christ’s prayer defines the character of the Psalms and defines the situation of the congregation. Reading the Psalms, praying the Psalms, takes place within the domain where Christ’s presence is at work. This is a more nuanced answer to classical historical-critical detached exegesis than the path of patristic retrieval. Whereas Matthew Bates, for instance, rejects all historical-critical (and perhaps, all historical-grammatical) approaches to maintain his patristic retrieval, Bonhoeffer can unproblematically accept historical criticism, because it does not affect Christ’s presence in the psalter. For this presence is not a matter of text, but of Christ as person. Bonhoeffer’s approach to the Psalms helps to define *theological* interpretation as *christological* interpretation.

Third, because the direction of interpretation has flipped, not starting with the human interpreter, but with God, who employs human voices, Bonhoeffer’s hermeneutic is stamped by receptivity. The Psalms are to be prayed, because prayer is the

only way to receive what otherwise remains hidden. Prayer is acknowledgement of one's blindness, which is far better than the illusion of sight.

Fourth, biblical texts do not need to be *made* relevant by theological interpreters. Because Christ is present and the Holy Spirit is the subject of the present time, praying the psalter is relevant in and of itself: it reveals what is relevant and puts aside what seemed relevant before. This is the truly creative force of biblical interpretation.

In sum, interpretation is a matter of being interpreted receptively, in prayer, by the living Christ. Praying the Psalms is a theological act par excellence.

Notes

1. For an overview, see Mark Alan Bowald, "The Character of Theological Interpretation of Scripture," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12 (2010): 162–183; Daniel J. Treier, "What Is Theological Interpretation? An Ecclesiological Reduction," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 12 (2010): 144–161; Neil B. MacDonald, "Theological Interpretation, the Historical Formation of Scripture, and God's Action in Time," in *The Bible as Christian Scripture: The Work of Brevard S. Childs*, ed. Christopher R. Seitz and Ken Harold Richards (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 85–101.
2. John Webster, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 6.
3. E.g., J. Todd Billings, *The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway to the Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010).
4. Bowald, "The Character of Theological Interpretation of Scripture," 183: "The reading of the Bible begins less as an act of isolated and desperate textual archaeologists but more as one spiritually hungry and thirsty creatures who are confronted with the abundant and bountiful gospel in the living speech of the very embodiment of life and truth himself."
5. Billings, *The Word of God for the People of God*, 151–155.
6. Matthew W. Bates, *The Birth of the Trinity: Jesus, God, and Spirit in New Testament and Early Christian Interpretations of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
7. Hans Boersma, *Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2017).
8. Darren Sarisky, *Reading the Bible Theologically* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
9. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," in *Gemeinsames Leben, Das Gebetbuch der Bibel*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke 5, ed. Gerhard Ludwig Müller and Albrecht Schönherr (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1987), 105–132. The present article cites the German edition of Bonhoeffer's works, abbreviated as "DBW."
10. See Brad Pribbenow, *Prayerbook of Christ: Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Christological Interpretation of the Psalms* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018); Gerard Den Hertog, "Christus in de Psalmen: Bonhoeffer's omgang met 'het gebedenboek van de Bijbel,'" in *Weergaloze kennis: Fs. Barend Kamphuis*, ed. Ad de Bruijne (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2015), 156–165; Arnold Huijgen, "Bonhoeffer en de Bijbel: Enkele waardevolle aspecten van Bonhoeffer's bijbelgebruik voor gereformeerde theologie vandaag," in De Bruijne, *Weergaloze kennis*, 166–175.
11. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "An Elisabeth Zinn," in *Illegale Theologenausbildung: Finkenwalde 1935–1937*, ed. Otto Dudzus and Jürgen Henkys (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1996), DBW 14:113.
12. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:108.
13. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119. 1939/40," in *Illegale Theologenausbildung: Sammelvikariate 1937–1940*, ed. Dirk Schulz (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1998), DBW 15:520.
14. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:508.

15. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Vortrag über Vergegenwärtigung neutestamentlicher Texte. Hauteroda, 23. 8. 1935," DBW 14:404.
16. Martin Luther, "Vorrede zum 1. Bande der Wittenberger Ausgabe der deutschen Schriften 1539," in *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–2009), 50:659.
17. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:524.
18. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:525.
19. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:515.
20. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:111.
21. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:111–12.
22. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Vorlesung: 'Christologie' (Nachschrift)," in *Berlin 1932–1933*, ed. Carsten Nicolaisen and Ernst-Albert Scharffenorth (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1997) DBW 12:283. Cf. Hans-Jürgen Abromeit, *Das Geheimnis Christi: Dietrich Bonhoeffers erfahrungsbezogene Christologie* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), 235–241.
23. Bonhoeffer, "Vorlesung: Christologie," DBW 12:286.
24. Bonhoeffer, "Vorlesung: Christologie," DBW 12:286.
25. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:121.
26. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Nachfolge*, 2nd ed., ed. Martin Kuske and Ilse Tödt (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1994), DBW 4:45–67.
27. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Predigt zu Psalm 58 (11. 7. 1937)," DBW 14:980–988.
28. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:128. This translation is from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works 5, ed. Geoffrey B. Kelly, trans. Daniel W. Bloesch and James H. Burtneis (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1996), 173.
29. DBW 14:412. This translation is from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Theological Education at Finkenwalde: 1935–1937*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke 14, ed. H. Gaylon Barker and Mark S. Bocker, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2013), 424, quoted by Michael Mawson, "Scripture," in *The Oxford Handbook of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, ed. Michael Mawson and Philip G. Ziegler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 133.
30. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Vorlesung über Homiletik," DBW 14:494.
31. Bonhoeffer, "Vortrag über Vergegenwärtigung," DBW 14:409–10.
32. Luther, "Vorrede," WA 50:659.
33. Cf. Oswald Bayer, *Theologie*, Handbuch Systematischer Theologie 1 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlag, 1994), 42–49, 99.
34. Martin Luther, "Vorrede auf den Psalter (1528), WA DB 10/1:99.
35. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DWB 15:528.
36. Ps. 119:19; Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:529.
37. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:530.
38. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio: Eine dogmatische Untersuchung zur Soziologie der Kirche*, ed. Joachim von Soosten (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1986), DBW 1:87.
39. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:124.
40. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:112.
41. Bonhoeffer, "Das Gebetbuch der Bibel," DBW 5:115.
42. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Gemeinsames Leben," DBW 5:38–41, 65.
43. Bonhoeffer, "Meditation über Psalm 119," DBW 15:511.
44. Martin Luther, "Dictata super Psalterium 1513–1516," WA 3:574.