

14 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² “Speak to the children of Israel, that they turn and camp before Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, opposite Baal Zephon; you shall camp before it by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They *are* bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.’ ⁴ Then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD.” And they did so.

⁵ Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had fled, and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people; and they said, “Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?” ⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his people with him. ⁷ Also, he took six hundred choice chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt with captains over every one of them. ⁸ And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. ⁹ So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea beside Pi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon.

¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, “Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt? ¹² *Is* this not the word that we told you in Egypt, saying, ‘Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians’? For *it would have been* better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness.”

¹³ And Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.”

¹⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ But lift up your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry *ground* through the midst of the sea. ¹⁷ And I indeed will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So, I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gained honor for Myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.”

¹⁹ And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud went from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. Thus, it was a cloud and darkness *to the one*, and it gave light by night *to the other*, so that the one did not come near the other all that night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. ²² So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

²⁴ Now it came to pass, in the morning watch, that the LORD looked down upon the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and He troubled the army of the Egyptians. ²⁵ And He took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them with difficulty; and the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians.”

²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the waters may come back upon the Egyptians, on their chariots, and on their horsemen.” ²⁷ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and when the morning appeared, the sea returned to its full depth, while the Egyptians were fleeing into it. So, the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ Then the waters returned and covered the chariots, the horsemen, *and* all the army of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them. Not so much as one of them remained. ²⁹ But the children of Israel had walked on dry *land* in the midst of the sea, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so, the people feared the LORD and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.

Jesus feeds five thousand (Matthew 14: 13-21)

The Big Question: What is the New Testament?

¹³ When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

¹⁵ As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food."

¹⁶ Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

¹⁷ "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

¹⁸ "Bring them here to me," he said. ¹⁹ And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. ²⁰ They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. ²¹ The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Matthew 14: 13-21



1: Who was Lazarus?

2: What type of life did Lazarus have?

3: What happened to Lazarus when he died?

4: What happened to the rich man when he died and why?

5: What did the rich man ask of Abraham?

6: What was Abraham's reply?

“There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

“The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’

“But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; do they not listen to them?’

“‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Luke 16:19-31

1: Who do the sheep represent?

2: What sorts of things do the 'sheep' do?

3: Who do the 'goats' represent?

4: What sort of things do the 'goats' do?

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you invited me in; I needed clothes and you clothed me; I was sick, and you looked after me; I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and you gave me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me nothing to drink; I was a stranger and you did not invite me in; I needed clothes and you did not clothe me; I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

“They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or needing clothes, or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

“He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

“Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” **Matthew 25:31-36**



1: Pre-reading: what do you already know about the term 'prodigal son'?

2: Retrieval: What is the reaction of the father and the older son when the younger one returns?

3: Reflect; What is the meaning of this parable?

¹¹ Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

²⁸ "The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

³¹ "'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"



The Parable of the Good Samaritan

1: Pre-reading: what do you already know about the term 'Good Samaritan'?

2: Retrieval: What did the Samaritan do that others did not?

3: Reflect; What is the meaning of this parable?

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”



1: Pre-reading: what do you already know about Jesus as a healer?

2: Retrieval: write a brief summary of the story.

3: Reflect; What is the meaning of this parable?

²⁴ So Jesus went with him.

A large crowd followed and pressed around him. ²⁵ And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. ²⁶ She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. ²⁷ When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, ²⁸ because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." ²⁹ Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

³⁰ At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

³¹ "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?' "

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. ³⁴ He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."



David and Bathsheba

The Big Question: How are Christian moral principles formed?

1: Pre-reading: what do you think Christians would describe as immoral acts?

2: Retrieval: write a brief summary of the story.

3: Reflect: What is the meaning of this story?

11 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem.

2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, **3** and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." **4** Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (Now she was purifying herself from her monthly uncleanness.) Then she went back home. **5** The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, "I am pregnant."

6 So David sent this word to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent him to David. **7** When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. **8**

14 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. **15** In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so he will be struck down and die."

16 So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. **17** When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David's army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.

18 Joab sent David a full account of the battle. **19** He instructed the messenger: "When you have finished giving the king this account of the battle, **20** the king's anger may flare up, and he may ask you, 'Why did you get so close to the city to fight? Didn't you know they would shoot arrows from the wall? **21** Who killed Abimelek son of Jerub-Besheth? Didn't a woman drop an upper millstone on him from the wall, so that he died in Thebez? Why did you get so close to the wall?' If he asks you this, then say to him, 'Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.'"

22 The messenger set out, and when he arrived he told David everything Joab had sent him to say. **23** The messenger said to David, "The men overpowered us and came out against us in the open, but we drove them back to the entrance of the city gate. **24** Then the archers shot arrows at your servants from the wall, and some of the king's men died. Moreover, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead."

25 David told the messenger, "Say this to Joab: 'Don't let this upset you; the sword devours one as well as another. Press the attack against the city and destroy it.' Say this to encourage Joab."

26 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. **27** After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.

1: Pre-reading: what does Christian ethics say about a pregnant teenager considering an abortion?

2: Retrieval: write a brief summary of the proposed Christian response from Hauerwas and Willimon.

3: Reflect: What are your thoughts on this response?

Scenario – a pregnant teenager is considering an abortion.

So our response to an issue like abortion is something communal, social, and political, but utterly ecclesial – something like a baptism. Whenever a person is baptized, be that person a child or an adult, the church adopts that person. The new Christian is engrafted into a family. Therefore, we cannot say to the pregnant fifteen-year-old, ‘Abortion is a sin. It is your problem.’ Rather, it is **our** problem. We ask ourselves what sort of Church we would need to enable an ordinary person like her to be the sort of disciple Jesus calls her to be. More important, her presence in our community offers the church the wonderful opportunity to be the church, honestly to examine our own convictions and see whether or not we are living true to those convictions. She is seen by us not as some pressing social problem to be solved in such a way as to relieve our own responsibility for her and the necessity of our sacrificing on her behalf (for our story teaches us to seek such responsibility and sacrifice, not to avoid it through governmental aid). Rather, we are graciously given the eyes to see her as a gift of God sent to help ordinary people like us to discover the Church as the body of Christ.

Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon: *Resident Aliens* (2014).

1: Pre-reading: what do you know about Fletcher's situation ethics?

2: Retrieval: write a brief summary of situation ethics.

3: Reflect: How useful are situation ethics to Christians?

Situation ethics was most famously championed by **Joseph Fletcher** (1905-1991).

He believed that we should follow the rules until we need to break them for reasons of love.

It is based on **agape** love (Christian unconditional love), and says that we should always do the most loving thing in any situation.

Fletcher rejected following rules regardless (**legalism**) and also the idea that we should not have any rules (**antinomianism**) and said that we need to find a balance between the two.

Four working principles

When establishing his version of Situation Ethics, Fletcher used four key principles which he aimed to fulfil in writing his theory:

1. Pragmatism (it has to work in daily life - it must be practical)
2. Relativism (there should be no fixed rules)
3. Positivism (it must put faith before reasoning – "I am a Christian, so what should I do?")
4. Personalism (people should be at the centre of the theory)

Six Fundamental Principles

There are six fundamental things that underlie Fletcher's Situation Ethics:

1. Love is the only absolute (it is intrinsically good)
2. Christian decision making is based on love
3. Justice is love distributed
4. Love wants the good for anyone, whoever they are
5. Only the end justifies the means
6. Love is acted out situationally not prescriptively

Advantages of Situation Ethics

The key advantage is that it uses rules to provide a framework but allows people to break rules to reflect life's complexities.

Disadvantages of Situation Ethics

It does not provide a clear definition of what love actually is.

Some might say it is too subjective – because decisions have to be made from within the situation. Humans do not have a bird's eye view on a situation so have difficulty in seeing what the consequences will be.

Agape love is too much to aspire to and may be polluted by a selfish human tendency.

It is human nature to love family more than strangers.

We do not know whose rules to follow.



Paul Schneider: The Pastor who stood up to the Nazis

From the beginning Pastor Schneider preached the evils of Nazism and was warned to stop. Pastor Schneider knew that the state could not legally separate a pastor from his parish; he would inevitably be acquitted by a judge. But the Gestapo operated its own law. Persuaded by a friend whom he trusted, he quickly moved to Baden-Baden (outside the Rhineland). He realised that, almost inevitably, the concentration camp would be his lot. The temptation must have been strong to abandon his stand (had he not done enough?) and live a quiet life thereafter. Turning his back on temptation, he wrote in late September to Hitler, setting out his complaints and calling on the head of state to authorise justice. He then travelled to Dickenschied and preached there the following Sunday. That afternoon, on the way to Womrath, he was arrested. After two months in detention, the decision was taken on 27 November 1937 to send him to Buchenwald concentration camp. He passed through the gates marked with the words: "To each his due deserts."

Paul's first five months at Buchenwald, in spite of continuous toil in the quarry and the machinations of the SS, passed without serious problems. On Hitler's birthday, 20 April 1938, however, the order was given that all prisoners should greet the swastika flag by taking off their caps.

"Paul, don't do anything stupid," whispered a Christian fellow-prisoner.

Pastor Schneider alone refused, received 50 lashes, and was dragged, covered in blood, to the detention cells. Here the noted sadist Martin Sommer was in charge.

Nevertheless, sometimes Pastor Schneider climbed to the small cell window and preached sermons to the assembled prisoners. "Come to me," he called one day, "all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." At these times he would be thrown to the ground and beaten into unconsciousness.

In the summer of 1939, Sommer strung up Pastor Schneider in his cell for several days, as if crucified. At that time, a fellow-prisoner, observing him, thought of the prophet Isaiah:

*He was despised and rejected of men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted
with grief.*

The end came on 18 July 1939, when Pastor Schneider was murdered by an overdose of a heart stimulant. His grave in Dickenschied was a place of pilgrimage for many, during and after the war. Gretel survived for another 64 years, tirelessly building upon Paul's witness.

BIG Question: What was Bonhoeffer's Christian and moral teaching?

6: How did Paul Schneider continue to protest even from his detention cell?

7: When and how was Paul Schneider murdered?

8: What was the name of his wife?

9: What did his wife do after his death?

10: What significance did Paul Schneider's grave have?

1: What was Paul Schneider's job title?

2: Why did he get into trouble with the Nazis?

3: After his arrest, what concentration camp was he taken to?

4: What act of defiance did he do on Hitler's birthday?

5: How was he punished?

1: Pre-reading: what do you already know about the Confessing Church in Germany?

2: Predict: what do you think the Barmen Declaration stated?

3. Retrieval: write a brief summary of the Barmen Declaration.

The Barmen Declaration or the Theological Declaration of Barmen 1934 (German: *Die Barmer Theologische Erklärung*) was a document adopted by Christians in Nazi Germany who opposed the German Christian movement. In the view of the delegates to the Synod that met in the city of Wuppertal-Barmen in May 1934, the German Christians had corrupted church government by making it subservient to the state and had introduced Nazi ideology into the German Protestant churches that contradicted the Christian gospel.

The Barmen Declaration includes six theses:

1. The source of revelation is only the Word of God — Jesus Christ. Any other possible sources (earthly powers, for example) will not be accepted.
2. Jesus Christ is the only Lord of all aspects of personal life. There should be no other authority.
3. The message and order of the church should not be influenced by the current political convictions.
4. The church should not be ruled by a leader ("Führer"). There is no hierarchy in the church (Mt 20, 25f).
5. The state should not fulfill the task of the church and vice versa. State and church are both limited to their own business.
6. Therefore, the Barmen Declaration rejects (i) the subordination of the Church to the state (8.22–3) and (ii) the subordination of the Word and Spirit to the Church.

"8.27 We reject the false doctrine, as though the Church in human arrogance could place the Word and work of the Lord in the service of any arbitrarily chosen desires, purposes, and plans."

On the contrary, the Declaration proclaims that the Church "is solely Christ's property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance." (8.17) Rejecting domestication of the Word in the Church, the Declaration points to the inalienable Lordship of Jesus Christ by the Spirit and to the external character of church unity which "can come only from the Word of God in faith through the Holy Spirit. Thus alone is the Church renewed" (8.01).