

Who Am I?
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*Am I really what others say about me?
Or am I only what I know of myself?
Restless, yearning and sick, like a bird in its cage,
struggling for the breath of life,
as though someone were choking my throat;
hungering for colors, for flowers, for the songs of birds,
thirsting for kind words and human closeness,
shaking with anger at capricious tyranny and the pettiest slurs,
bedeviled by anxiety, awaiting great events that might never occur,
fearfully powerless and worried for friends far away,
weary and empty in prayer, in thinking, in doing,
weak, and ready to take leave of it all.*

*Who am I? This man or that other?
Am I then this man today and tomorrow another?
Am I both all at once? An imposter to others,
but to me little more than a whining, despicable weakling?
Does what is in me compare to a vanquished army,
that flees in disorder before a battle already won?
Who am I? They mock me these lonely questions of mine.
Whoever I am, you know me, O God. You know I am yours.*

from: [A Testament to Freedom](#) 514