

To Tell the Truth, Collyer Gives Sermons in Verse

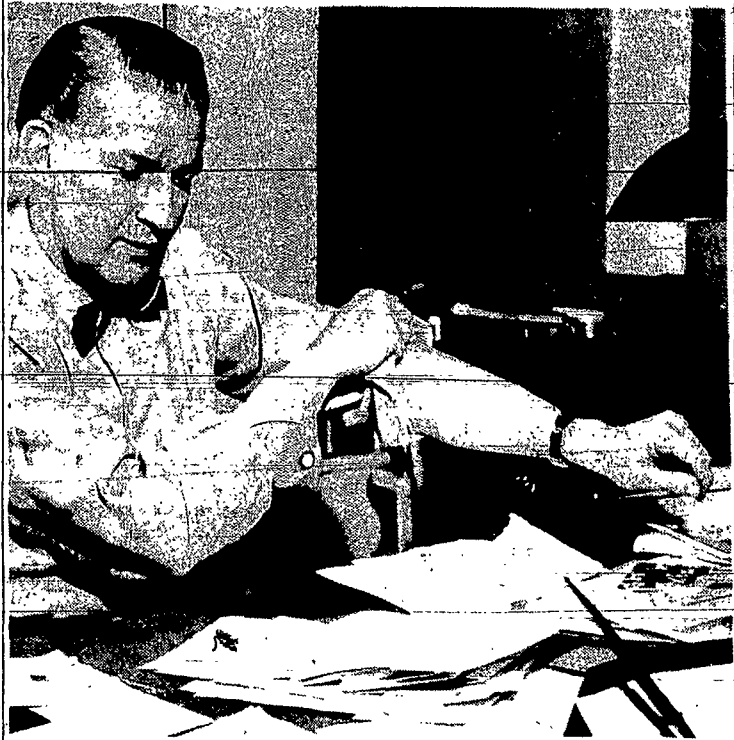
New York—Bud Collyer, the popular moderator of television's "To Tell the Truth," probably would not draw many "correct" votes if he were to go on the show and tell the panel and TV audience what he reads. For, his affidavit would read:

"I, Bud Collyer, am a lay preacher in the First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich, Connecticut. What's more, I give my sermons in verse."

Collyer, who is also superintendent of his church's Sunday School, has been giving the sermons-in-verse for more than four years and many of them have been published in two books, "Thou Shalt Not Fear" and "With the Whole Heart." In addition, he was invited to demonstrate his unusual preaching method before the Second International Bible Communication Congress, which was held in Washington last Fall and attended by Catholic, Protestant and Jewish clergymen.

"I think the congregation is apt to pay closer attention when you're speaking to them in verse," Collyer explained, shortly after taping another of his "To Tell the Truth" programs, which are seen on CBS-TV on weekday afternoons and on Monday evenings. "It's always easier, too, for the congregation to remember a quote from poetry."

"I preach every three months or so," he added, "and I can tell you: the people do listen."



BUD COLLYER

Collyer's sermons do not consist of brief religious poems but are of a long, "epic" nature, which range from a verse presentation of a Biblical story and its modern application.

"(All of them must be scattered, so that each lived in a different place, a different land.

They'd have no knowledge of each other's speech, And, even though they tried to understand,

They'd be confused. And so man lost the way For prompt communication with his brother.

And ever since that time, try as they may,

Men never fully understood each other.")

to an exhortation to give more attention to the things of the spirit, as in this passage:

"If isometric exercises aid you

To find a simple way to instant health,

While working nine to five has amply paid you

To find a quicker way to instant wealth,

Remember that your spirit may be starving —

There's nothing isometric for your soul.

So talk a lot with God, and you'll be carving

A brand new road, with Jesus as its goal."

Immediately after the interview, Collyer was off to record a series of one-minute radio commercials on behalf of the American Bible Society, in which he gave brief anecdotes from Scripture and suggested how they might be relevant today. He has also recorded the entire New Testament for distribution to the blind.

"I've always been keenly interested in religion; I've been teaching Sunday school since I was 18," said Collyer, who is married and the father of three grown children.

Born Clifton Collyer, he set out to follow his father's career as a lawyer, and got his law degree from the Jesuit-operated

Fordham Law School in 1930. ("My father had told me that when you're looking for law schools, look for the ones that have the greatest cross-section of creeds on the faculty, and that's what Fordham had in fact, 50 percent of the students were Jewish and only 20 per cent were Catholic.")

What began as merely a way to work his way through Fordham — a job as a singer on CBS radio — developed quickly into a full-time career in show business.

Although few people now associate his voice with the character, Collyer played Superman all of the years it was on radio, and since September, he has been providing the voice for the Superman cartoons on CBS-TV.

What Collyer has been associated with — ever since he became one of TV's first regular performers in 1950 — is his "God bless you," which he invariably adds to "Goodbye."

"Out of every thousand letters we get, someone will write and say, 'Who do you think you are — a priest or something?' but that's usually all the com-

plaint we get," Collyer said. "I use that form of farewell because that's what I was taught to do from childhood."

"Our mother never said 'good-bye' to us, but 'God bless you,' she'd tell us that nobody really knows what 'goodbye' means, that it's short for 'God be with you,' so she'd tell us: make it clear — what we meant." (Catholic Press Features)

COURIER-JOURNAL
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God not Dead for Bonhoeffer

St. Paul — (RNS) — Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the martyred German theologian, was a revolutionary Protestant thinker but he was not responsible for the "death of God" theology sometimes attributed to him, his biographer said here.

Dr. Eberhard Bethge said most of the "death of God" theologians realize they are not heirs of Bonhoeffer, although some admit they make "creative misuse" of his theology.

The biographer, here for a series of lectures, is currently teaching at Chicago Theological Seminary and during the coming term will be Posidick visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York.

It was to Dr. Bethge that Dr. Bonhoeffer wrote from prison the famed letters which continue to influence Protestant theology more than 20 years after he was executed in 1945 by the Nazis for his part in the plot on Hitler.

The Bonhoeffer letters were "hidden" in Dr. Bethge's desk and unknown to the world until he edited them and they were published in the early 1950s.

Since then, there has been "wide after wave" of interest in Bonhoeffer's writings, fed in part by other books, such as "Honest to God" by Bishop James Robinson of England.

Dr. Bethge, who married a niece of Dr. Bonhoeffer, has completed a biography of Bonhoeffer which will be published early in 1967 in Germany and later in England and the United States.

Don Bonhoeffer knew about the conspiracy against Hitler that began in 1938 but did not actively join the movement until a year later, shortly after making a brief visit to the United States, Dr. Bethge said.

It was a difficult step for a Lutheran to take since he is taught to obey those in authority, Dr. Bethge observed.

Dr. Bonhoeffer was imprisoned in April, 1943, and died on April 9, 1945, at the age of 39 in a prison at Flossenbürg, in North Bavaria, a few days before American troops arrived there.

What has made Dr. Bonhoeffer so famous, Dr. Bethge said, was his rare combination of being a martyr, a great theologian with a great vision, and a precise writer.

He is popular today both in this country and in Communist-controlled countries because he gives people "a kind of courage to try anew when present structures are breaking down," Dr. Bethge explained.

One sentence in his writings, "Before God, we have to live today without God," has been "distorted" by some theologians to say, "We have to live today

without God," his biographer said.

One of Dr. Bonhoeffer's contributions, Dr. Bethge, said was to "show us how far and how much Christians should identify themselves with the world."

Dr. Bethge said he is sometimes asked why he gives all his energy "to a man who has never matured," referring to the fact that Dr. Bonhoeffer died at such a young age.

He said his biography will be titled: "Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Theologian, Christian, Contemporary"

Dr. Bethge was himself arrested by the Nazis in 1943 and was the only one of five imprisoned members of his family to escape execution. He is now director of the Pastor's Institute of the Church of the Rhineland in Westphalia, Germany.

John A. McCarthy Jr., 32 Red Bud Rd. and a senior at Aquinas Institute was runner-up.

Miss Owens will now compete in a district contest to be held at Bishop Kearney High School on Feb. 25.

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home the point that is the task of today's youth to bring people back to the spirit of the early Church.

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45TH BRANCH of Seton Workers of St. Mary's Hospital will meet Feb. 20 in the home of Mrs. Peter De Vincellis, 860 Wegman Rd.

18TH BRANCH to be entertained by Mrs. J. Nelson Cooke of Alamo Drive, Saturday, Feb. 18 at 1 p.m.

50TH BRANCH will hear Father Michael Conboy at its meeting, Thursday, Feb. 23, at the home of Mrs. Thomas Foley, 218 Curcice Park, Webster at 8:30 p.m.

7TH BRANCH to be entertained by Mrs. Rudolf C. Siebert at her home on Sarradringham Road, Sunday, Feb. 19. A white elephant sale will be held.

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