

Chapter 6

Is there really no universal moral truth? *The Courage to Care*

The Nazi Crimes – On the basis of a theory of race in which there exist a hierarchy between “types of humans”

- systematic massacre of jewish people, gypsies, and homosexuals,
- sterilization of disabled people (mental and / or physical),
- “mediterranean” and ”slavic” types put into slavery
- political opponents (communists and socialists) in concentration camps

For the first time in history: “crime against humanity”

What responsibility in a Nazi regime – roughly three options for people under the German regime or German occupation:

1. Collaborate – i.e. help the Gestapo (Nazi police)
2. Bystanders – don’t ask, don’t tell, survive
3. Resist – there were roughly two different forms of resistance:
 - 3.a. commit to the organized resistance – and commit what were called “terrorism acts” (bomb on German trains etc., assassination of German officers etc.)
 - 3.b. isolated acts : save a few jewish people

The people in the movie belong to category 3.b.

Questions – about the movie:

1. “There was no decision to make”. Many of the people in the movie tell that they did not “think” about what to do, but knew what they *had to do*. How do they know what is right to do if not in considering the pros and cons, and making a rational decision? Do you have any experience of such a strong sense of duty?
2. One of the woman killed a policeman to save the jewish family she was keeping hidden in her home. Do you think it was right to kill in these circumstances? Why?
3. Who is responsible for the Nazi crimes? Only the nazis or all the bystanders?

4. One could say: "Members of the resistance put other people's lives in danger without the consentment of these people, which is wrong." What do you think?
5. Why do you think these people did what they did? In order to feel good about themselves? In order to get something out of it? For what other reasons?