

# Bonner Querschnitte

## Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

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## BQ 719 – No. 15/2022

### “A Remarkable Man and an Unmatched Legacy”

#### Festschrift Honors Dr. Manfred W. Kohl on Occasion of 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday

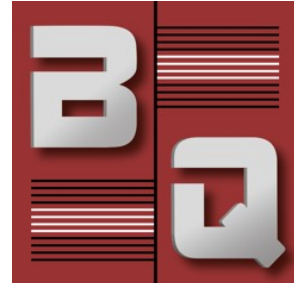
(Bonn, 01.04.2022) On the occasion of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, leaders of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) presented Dr. Manfred W. Kohl with a festschrift honoring his life and legacy as a visionary Christian leader who left his mark on many Christian ministries, churches and leaders on all continents. At the celebration in Dorfwiel, Germany, co-editors WEA Secretary General Bishop Dr. Thomas Schirmmacher and Dr. Reuben van Rensburg handed Kohl a copy of the Festschrift on behalf of the more than 30 contributors and their co-editor Dr. Zoltan Erdey.

“There are many things that you could say about Manfred. Together with his wife Barbara, he built up World Vision Germany. He helped to establish the structure of the World Evangelical Alliance that it has today. But he always wanted to keep things simple. The Festschrift is called “be focused... use common sense... overcome excuses and stupidity...”. 37 contributors have shown what Manfred has taught all of his life: The simplicity of the bible and common sense don't exclude each other. He dedicated his life to bring the gospel to as many people as possible,” van Rensburg commented.

Schirmmacher noted Kohl's gift of mentoring and focusing on practical solutions, noting that “he educated leaders and helped them realize their dreams within global Christianity. Particularly in the area of theological education, Manfred left a huge legacy

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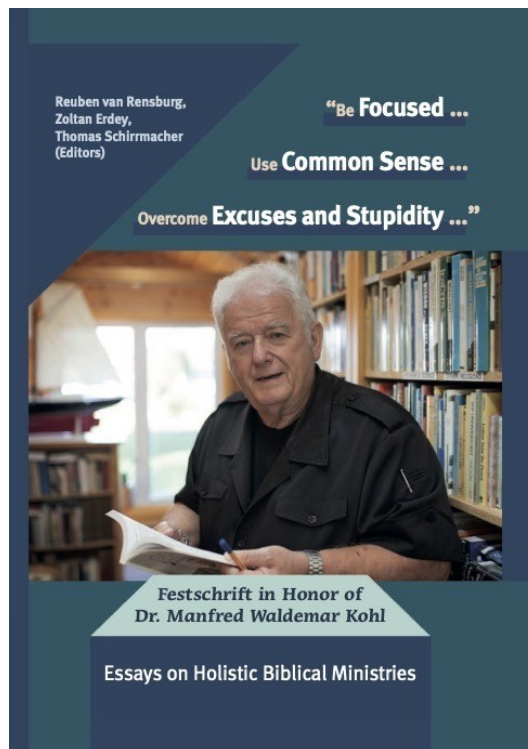
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around the world. This is what inspired the last sentence in my preface to the book: Manfred Kohl has left an indelible mark on global Christianity, fusing biblical insights together with practical models for today.”

Kohl has served in many senior roles in theological education and holds the distinction of having personally visited more theological institutions than anyone else in history (495). He has published over 120 books and articles and has received numerous awards and honorary doctorate degrees. He founded World Vision, the well-known Christian Humanitarian Organization, in several European Countries; Re-Forma, which has set a global standard for non-formal theological education; the Galilean Movement, calling for annually an additional one million women and men for biblical ministry and co-chairs the Integrity Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance and the Lausanne Movement.

In the preface to the Festschrift, Schirmmacher further noted, “Manfred lived in and learned from multiple cultures, including Germany, the USA, Africa and Canada. He absorbed the best of each of them into his leadership. He lectured in many countries and trained many leaders around the globe, most often on a one-to-one basis. But his was never just a private counseling enterprise. He was always guiding leaders to focus on how to evaluate and restructure their organizations to ensure sustainability and the fulfillment of long-term strategies.”

Regarding Kohl’s role in the Integrity Network of WEA & Lausanne, Schirmmacher observed that “Manfred is passionate about integrity because for him, corruption



Dr. Manfred Kohl during his speech © BQ/Martin Warnecke



Bishop Dr. Thomas Schirmmacher during his speech © BQ/Martin Warnecke

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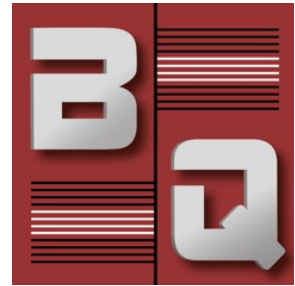
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Participants of the celebration © BQ/Martin Warnecke

is an utter evil and the opposite of everything he teaches churches and institutions about stewardship, responsibility and accountability.”

And in summary, Schirmacher commented, “Manfred has been known as a scholar, mentor, advisor and friend who never minced words. He is known to rely on the simple but essential phrases “Be focused” and “Use common sense” when dealing with colleagues on every level. Many times, he has told his listeners, “Stop being a Dummkopf” or “Overcome excuses and stupidity.” He is known for speaking candidly and not “through the flowers,” as he calls it. However, as numerous colleagues have testified, Manfred has always displayed a deep love and concern for each individual or Christian ministry with whom he interacts. In his unique way, he has made many, many friends.”

Upon receiving the Festschrift, Kohl expressed his gratitude saying, “I am overwhelmed with thanksgiving and joy that so many world-renowned scholars have written for this Festschrift. Many, many greetings from all around the world have reached me. I hope that this Festschrift will be used in all the trainings programs for ministry. It is an excellent collection of important material.”

The birthday celebration was attended by many evangelical leaders and personal friends, with well-known Christian singer Siegfried Fietz as special guest.

### Downloads and Links:

- **Photo 1:** Dr. Manfred Kohl during his speech © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 2 and photo 3:** Bishop Dr. Thomas Schirmacher during his speech © BQ/Martin Warnecke

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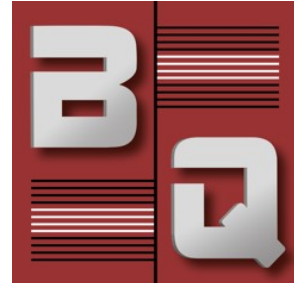
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- **Photo 4:** Bishop Dr. Thomas Schirmmacher congratulates Dr. Manfred Kohl © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Photo 5 and photo 6:** Participants of the celebration © BQ/Martin Warnecke
- **Download of the Festschrift:** [https://www.bucer.de/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/Buecher/978-3-86269-236-1\\_Festschrift\\_Manfred\\_Kohl.pdf](https://www.bucer.de/fileadmin/dateien/Dokumente/Buecher/978-3-86269-236-1_Festschrift_Manfred_Kohl.pdf)

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