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Karl Barth and Evangelism

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KARL BARTH AND EVANGELICALISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

All beginnings are hard. Often a beginning is difficult because not enough people perceive its desirability or need. Starting is hard when all things appear new, for the way ahead is unseen. Usually, a vision is necessary. Generally, the foundation of the past is essential. But faith is the *sine qua non* for an evangelical beginning.

Today, evangelicalism needs renewal and reformation if it is to accomplish its work as the Church of Christ. It needs the vigor of a new beginning. The dimensions of this beginning can be as little or as great as the evangelical community permits. The opportunity is here, the time is now, and a beginning toward change must arise if the evangelical witness is to prove faithful to the task of presenting the Gospel.

It must be faith in the living God, and faith alone, that determines the parameters of change. Certainly, an evangelical beginning does not mean a new origin. That possibility is excluded. Rather, the evangelical community must make a fresh start in meeting some old needs. As a point of departure, evangelicals must affirm a vision of constructive,

dynamic, and dogmatic theology. In doing so, the foundations laid in the apostolic age and repaired by the Reformers will once more become evident. Finally, by faith the evangelical community must venture to begin to change.

Faith is a positive venture. Its very nature should indicate the direction change must take. Faith is constructive; it builds. Faith is dynamic; it comes afresh each time it comes. Faith is even dogmatic; it conforms to its own logic with a divine consistency. Can any problem be insuperable?

THE JUSTIFICATION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Any problem, any genuine need, is its own justification for study. The problems within evangelicalism today point to the necessity of developing a positive theology. Therefore, a program that begins with the recognition of this need also begins with the possibility of meeting it. In the final analysis, this simply means beginning with a vision and translating it into victory. Of course, some process must arise. The program must be outlined and the requirements specified. But the justification for dreaming and acting is the existence of the problem.

If a positive evangelical theology is to emerge in the days ahead several changes must first occur. Prior to all else, is the recognition of need. A prerequisite to action, then, is demonstrating the need and desirability of reform and renewal in evangelical theology today. Those who

recognize the desirability of movement in these directions are agents of change. While initial stimulus to the task of developing a better theology almost certainly comes from those change agents at the top of the ecclesiastical structures, there has to be strong, broad support within the community. For this to take place, two important facts must be communicated. First, change agents must indicate how reform and renewal can take place, and why it should. They must demonstrate how the inspiration and direction of theologians can be utilized in this task. Thus, second, they must often establish that theologians need neither be feared nor ignored, no matter what the theologies involved. Naturally, there are parameters already inherent in evangelicalism to exclude all non-Christian religions. But the parameters must be wide enough to include all theologies within the Church, even those that are not evangelical. The key is establishing a redemptive framework.

This study is a tentative attempt at demonstrating one model for use in the development of a positive theology. A redemptive framework showcasing one concrete example might indicate how to communicate the facts outlined above. Accordingly, the purpose of this study is specifically to indicate how the person and work of Karl Barth can provide inspiration and direction for the healthy renewing and reforming of evangelical theology today. As this purpose is realized, the broader implications related to the above discussion emerge.

With the introduction of Karl Barth as a figure central to this study several preliminary comments must be made. First, Barth was a theologian. In fact, he was the most acclaimed theologian of this century. Yet, in America, Barth was slow to gain a hearing and was never as well-received or understood as he was elsewhere. Second, Barth has either been feared or ignored by vast numbers of evangelicals. This is especially unfortunate in view of the tremendous potential available in Barth for recovery and utilization in the development of a positive evangelical theology. Even evangelical theologians who should know better have too often failed to appropriate any good from Barth by dismissing him with a label and a critique. Finally, both the person and work of Barth can reveal strengths at the very points where evangelicals and their theology are weakest.

In this regard, four arenas help define why Barth in particular is valuable. First, his place historically and theologically is one of great relevance to evangelicals. Barth claimed to stand squarely in the middle of the Reformation tradition. His echoing of vital ideas and themes from the Bible drove men back to the Scriptures. Second, Barth's method was biblical and dogmatic. His exegesis stimulated a major movement in biblical theology. His understanding and use of dogmatics was among the most creative, and comprehensive, of any theologian since Aquinas. Third, Barth's work was constructive and kerygmatic. He utilized the best thoughts of Church history to communicate the Gospel

message. Fourth, Barth's challenge to others was always both Christo-centric and relevant. He saw himself as a witness to only one Lord, Jesus Christ. This witness he always sought to communicate by word and deed in a manner relevant to the situation at hand. These facts justify the place of Barth in this study.

THE LIMITATIONS AND SOURCES FOR STUDY

Unavoidably, limitations must be established. Both the development of a positive evangelical theology and a mastery of Barth as a step in contributing to that development are awesome tasks. Neither considered alone can be done full justice in a limited study. However, a limited study is profitable as the beginning of a major contribution. The immensity of a task cannot excuse its neglect. No matter how great the task some beginning, however small or incomplete, can profit the total work.

Accordingly, this study represents tentative steps, intended as indicative of the kind of work needed on both this scale and a greater one for the reform and renewal of evangelical theology. The study is not definitive. It is a study to inform and assist change agents. As a model it is concrete in form, but ready to be expanded, adapted, and completed where and when the need emerges.

With these considerations in mind, certain limitations have been imposed. The study is suggestive, not analytical, when concerned with the renewing and reforming of

evangelical theology. But the study is more analytical when examining evangelical theology and its needs. Analysis is also utilized for the examination of Barth's life and work. Throughout, the intent is to report first, then suggest ideas based logically on the findings. The direction of the study is from the concrete to the possible, from the past to the future, from the "what is" to the "what if?"

This study is limited to material available in English. More synthetic than exhaustive, it presupposes a greater breadth of information than depth. In other words, much more could be said. Again, this is a beginning.

The sources for study encompass literature from the modern period only. Particularly, literature on the evangelical situation dates from the period immediately after World War II to the present, with some exceptions. The material concerning Barth centers mainly on the period of the writing of his Church Dogmatics. All German titles have been given in their English translation except where the work has remained untranslated from the original.

THE METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The study unfolds in three parts. The first of these presents a historical survey of modern evangelicalism. Particular attention is given to its development out from the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy. Focus is placed on the current situation in regard to evangelicalism's place and role. This, of course, entails an examination of the opportunity confronting evangelicals, the resources of

evangelical theology, and the needs that must be satisfied. The section ends by positing the thesis.

The second part supports the thesis along two lines. The first presents Karl Barth as an individual who, by virtue of his life, can serve as an inspiration for positive evangelical work. Barth's own affirmation of evangelical theology is examined in the light of his life as well as by the conclusions of his mature thought. Close attention is paid to his confession of faith and the obedience corresponding to it as worked out in the searchlight of history. Together with this thrust, the second line of support is a survey with a short exposition of Barth's theology as reflected in the Church Dogmatics. Preceding the survey, the development of Barth's thought is sketched as background.

The third part moves from an understanding of Barth to attempts at the utilization of the best in Barth for the work of building a positive theology. In this section a few ideas are projected along the lines of Barth as an inspiration and as a guide. The discussion here is to suggest a portrait of Barth built upon some concrete thoughts. From this portrait emerge constructive resources for today's evangelical. The conclusion is a review that looks to the work ahead.

THE DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

As a necessary prologue to the main substance of the study certain key terms must be defined. The first of these is "theology." By this term many things might be implied.

revelatory events."[4] Theologians are more than, "persons who ask the question of our ultimate concern."[5]

What is needed is a definition richer in concepts. The one best suited to this study, and the definition adopted herein as the content and context for theology is from Barth: "we shall have to understand by theologia ektypos mediate revelationis hominum viatorum post lapsum on the one hand Church dogma, and on the other hand . . . the scientific work of dogmatics."[6]

Even with this definition some things are left unsaid. But this formula is of theology, "in its completion as the Church's concrete work of thought completed in time and always completed at a particular time, the work of the Church and in the Church, the inquiry after the relation laid upon us for the sake of Church proclamation."[7] In this relation, dogma is to be understood in the sense of a behest, or a decree. The movement is from God to man. But it really is movement, there is nothing static about theology. It is the purpose of dogmatics to conduct a continual review of theology in light of this movement.

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[4]Rem B. Edwards, Reason and Religion (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1972), p. 4.

[5]Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 119.

[6]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, I/1, trans. G. T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936), p. 309. Note the illuminating discussion preceding. Church Dogmatics hereafter referred to by CD, with appropriate volume and part-volume number.

[7]Ibid.

In a very broad sense, "theology is the literature in which the faith of Christians finds intellectual expression."[1] But this is an inadequate definition for it is too sociological and phenomenological in orientation. Somewhat better is this:

> By theology we mean the rich diversity of analytic and synthetic undertakings by which Word of God and world of men are understood and brought into confluence. . . . In this sense, everyone who speaks a word of witness is a theologian. . . . But Christian theology . . . testifies that one strand of history is particularly meaningful.[2]

This definition commends itself in several ways but fails to capture the divine element. "Theology cannot fail to talk of God, for the very word 'theology' means 'God talk'."[3] Here is a right beginning! From this point several false starts can be avoided. Definitions that are preoccupied by the faith response only give half of the picture. Theology is an operation of grace and proceeds from God to the more or less accurate and trustworthy perceptions of man. Accordingly, theology is not simply, "the systematic conceptual elaboration of the faith response to revelation or

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[1]William Nicholls, Systematic and Philosophical Theology, ed. R. P. C. Hanson, The Pelican Guide to Modern Theology, Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Penguin Books Inc., 1969), p. 17.

[2]Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (eds.), New Theology No. 1 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 11.

[3]John Macquarrie, God and Secularity, ed. William Hordern, New Directions in Theology Today, Vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 13. It must be noted immediately that when Macquarrie makes reference to "God talk" he means something vastly different from the evangelical theologian. Macquarrie admits to some difficulty in saying just how "God" should be talked about (or with).

The goal of theology in this relation is proclamation. Here the understanding of theology is profoundly missiological. The movement from God to man is motivated by divine mission. Theology inquires after, "that attitude towards the Bible as the Word of God which is essential to Church preaching."[8] There is no presumption that Church proclamation is identical with the content and meaning of Scripture. Indeed, history has all too often demonstrated how far apart the two may become. Rather, within theology is an inner necessity for correspondence between its understanding at any given time and its communication to the contemporary listeners. The crucial part in this correspondence process is played by dogmatics.

The usual understanding of this term seems to focus on dogmatics "as the organized and systematic presentation of the dogmas of the Christian Church."[9] While there is much merit in this, it lacks the vitality that theology, as defined above, so obviously needs. Again, Barth is useful:

> Dogmatics is the science in which the Church, in accordance with the state of its knowledge at different times, takes account of the content of its proclamation critically, that is, by the standard of Holy Scripture and under the guidance of its confessions.[10]

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[8]Ibid., p. 308.

[9]Jaroslav Pelikan, "Dogmatics," Handbook of Christian Theology, ed. A. A. Cohen and M. Halverson (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 82. Note Pelikan's observation that Barth, "has written an explicitly ecclesiastical dogmatics, ecclesiastical both in its source and in its object" (p. 85).

[10]Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, trans. G. T. Thomson (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 9.

Reduced to even simpler terms, "dogmatics is the scientific test to which the Christian Church puts herself regarding the language about God which is peculiar to her."[11] These two statements are adopted as this study's understanding of dogmatics. Together they comprise the idea of a vital function necessary to theology. Moreover, this idea avoids any false separation of theology and Church. "Dogmatics is a theological discipline. But theology is a function of the Church."[12] Thus, there are two spheres that constitute the proper context for theology: the Christian Canon and the Church.

However, there are many theologies that boldly claim to operate within the contexts proper for Christian theology. It is not the purpose here to dispute claims. Instead, as an exercise in positive theology, this study is concerned with evangelical theology. Inasmuch as the development and status of modern evangelicalism is the subject material of the first part of this study only some very general remarks are appropriate here.

Evangelical theology is to be understood, "as the science and doctrine of the commerce and communion between God and man, informed by the gospel of Jesus Christ as heard in Holy Scripture."[13] An evangelical is, "one who is devoted

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[11]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 1. [12]Ibid.

[13]Karl Barth, The Humanity of God, trans. J. N. Thomas and T. Wieser (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1974), p. 11. The first essay, "Evangelical Theology in the 19th Century," (11-33), is well worth reading in this regard.

to the Good News--or 'Evangel'--of God's redemptive grace in Jesus Christ."[14] In this regard, " 'Evangelical' means informed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, as heard afresh in the 16th-century Reformation by direct return to Holy Scripture."[15]

However, the term evangelical has also come to represent an even more restricted and particular perspective. Today the term in the United States signifies a distinct group with clear doctrinal characteristics:

> Evangelical Christians are thus marked by their devotion to the sure Word of the Bible; they are committed to the inspired Scriptures as the divine rule of faith and practice. They affirm the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, including the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ, His sinless life, substitutionary atonement, and bodily resurrection as the ground of God's forgiveness of sinners, justification by faith alone, and the spiritual regeneration of all who trust in the redemptive work of Christ.[16]

In this study, reference to evangelical theology must be understood in the context of the doctrinally conservative group described above. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the development of a positive theology by this group. A positive theology is one shaped by constructive action, not reaction. It is dynamic in that it is aggressive in its proclamation of the Good News, it confronts the world

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[14] J. D. Douglas (ed.), The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974). The contributor of the article, "Evangelical," (358-9), is C. F. H. Henry.

[15] Barth, The Humanity of God, p. 11.

[16] Douglas, loc. cit.

rather than waiting to be confronted by the world. A positive theology is evangelical and dogmatic. That evangelical theology is inherently positive is quite evident already. The fundamental doctrines are indeed Good News. But although the center is pure, it is clouded over by uncertainty, division, and negativeness. Thus, the need for reform and renewal must be met if the whole of evangelical theology is to be positive. First, however, it is imperative to review the history of modern evangelicalism.

Chapter 2

THE EVANGELICAL NEED

HISTORICAL SURVEY

" 'Evangelicalism' is a battle-torn flag that has waved over many different Protestant encampments ever since the Reformation, sometimes over more than one at the same time."[1] Yet today the term has come to be most closely identified with one religious group. Today evangelicalism usually refers to Americans of a doctrinally conservative position and "born again"[2] confession. As a distinctly American phenomenon evangelicalism belongs not only to the Christian West,[3] but particularly to the United States. While its roots are solidly entrenched in many of the fundamental doctrines of Church orthodoxy, evangelicalism has acquired its uniqueness from another source. The Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy of the early decades of this century gave birth to the modern conservative movements collected under the single designation, "evangelical."

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[1]Sydney E. Ahlstrom, "From Puritanism to Evangelicalism," The Evangelicals, ed. David F. Wells and J. D. Woodbridge (New York:Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 269.

[2]A term describing a turning point of commitment to Christ by an individual. The expression is found in John 3:3.

[3]See, Bernard Ramm, The Evangelical Heritage (Waco: Word Books, 1973), pp. 11-21.

However, evangelicalism in America is much older than a few decades. The term, "does in fact refer to a fairly unified tradition."[4] Of course, while time has effected considerable changes evangelicalism has maintained its identity in the United States as a movement that originated, "in that revolution in Christendom which the English Puritan movement intended to accomplish."[5] With the migration of the Puritans to the shores of the New World American evangelicalism began.

The Puritans were part of the Protestant Reformation. Thoroughly committed to a recovery of biblical Christianity through the theology of Calvin and Bullinger, the Puritans came to the new land with hopes of instituting a revived New Testament Church.

> Puritan churches gained their most fundamental character from their confident belief that they were in covenant with the Lord God of Israel who had called them out of the world as an "elect nation" and laid upon them the burden of establishing in these latter days a true church of visible saints and a civil order that would exemplify its ethical implications.[6]

With great vigor and stubborn faith the Puritans established their colonies and way of life. From the Pilgrims' arrival in Cape Cod Bay in November 1620, the Puritans led the flow of explorers and settlers into America. The New England colonies in particular became strongholds for the Puritans. But other people settled in the new land also. Puritan theology and lifestyle was challenged. The

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[4]Ahlstrom, op. cit., p. 271. [5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

Puritans themselves changed. In due time, the Puritans ceased to exist as a strong, distinct body. Yet, "in its protest against worldliness, its evangelistic concern, its inward piety, its Scriptural doctrines, its strictness of discipline, the Puritan way of life prepared for the coming of the Wesleys, Whitefield, and all of their train."[7]

The Great Awakening from 1740 to 1742 exemplified the direction colonial evangelicalism began to take. Sparked by the preaching of Jonathan Edwards, a New England Puritan, the flames of revival were spread throughout the colonies by Edwards' friend George Whitefield, the famous England Methodist. The Methodists shared much in common with the Puritans in their distinctive emphases. But Methodist theology had a strongly Arminian flavor. While Arminian doctrine never supplanted the Puritans' Calvinism, Arminian tendencies within the framework of Reformation theology began to become characteristic of American evangelicalism.

Characteristic also was revivalism. "In the nineteenth century, revivalism was not a type of Christianity in America; it was Christianity in America."[8] As the frontiers of the new nation expanded the efforts of evangelists from every denomination became more pronounced. The revivalist was God's man of the hour.

Behind the tents and tree stumps of the revivalist, however, an important though subtle shift in sermons was

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[7]Bruce Shelley, Evangelicalism in America (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Co., 1967), p. 30.

[8]Ibid., p. 46.

> underway. Formerly the Puritans had emphasized God's covenant--what He had done. This was found in Scripture and in doctrine, and a correct understanding of both was essential. This was taught and made real in the church. But revivalism tended to stress, not so much what God had done, but how man responded.[9]

The shift was accentuated by Charles Finney who looked upon revival as dependent upon the right use of right means, and not upon miracle. This attitude met with sharp alarm and dispute by many religious leaders. But Finney served as an influential revisionist of the Reformed tradition and highlighted the changes in American evangelicalism.

These changes are characterized by energetic action. The theological reflection of Puritan theology increasingly gave way to greater and greater focus on inward spiritual experience and its outward manifestations. The inward life of the evangelical was characterized by an experience of conversion. Rather than simply learning and affirming the correctness of various doctrines, believers were called upon to commit themselves to God. The revivals emphasized the urgency of a clear-cut decision between being "born again" or going to hell.

Along with this stress on inward experience was the need to demonstrate it. Here the Methodist doctrine of holiness was a ready answer. This post-conversion experience was variously explained. Whether regarded as a crisis experience or a process, the essence of holiness doctrine was

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[9]Ibid., p. 47.

the attainment to a life of moral perfection. Under the banner of holiness the Methodists assumed a major and vital role in American Christianity. "No group prospered more in the West or seemed more providentially designed to capitalize on the conditions of the advancing American frontier than the Methodists."[10] Nor was their success limited to the frontier. In the post-bellum South the Methodist church experienced a series of revivals and became the dominant church of the region.

Not all evangelicals, however, were of Wesley-Arminian persuasion. The Puritan heritage still burned brightly in institutions like Princeton and denominations like the Presbyterians. These Christians stressed other kinds of visible testimony to inward experience. Education, always a strong part of Reformed tradition, was one such outlet. From 1812-1836 the seminaries of Princeton (1812), Auburn (1818), Union in Virginia (1824), Western (1827), Columbia (1828), Lane (1829), McCormick (1830), and Union in New York (1836) were founded.

The energies of evangelicals, Reformed and Wesley-Arminian alike, found outlets in the great voluntary societies of the period prior to the Civil War. These societies existed for the evangelization of the nation, the remaking of society, and the expression of Christian

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[10]Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 436.

benevolence through a multitude of good causes.[11]

> Once adopted in America, these societies permitted a quick response to crying needs and mobility in marshalling support. Various denominational groups could share in the efforts without raising the troublesome questions surrounding the nature and mission of the church.[12]

The Civil War ended the day of these societies. With the coming of war open conflict and division also arose within the denominations. After the war, evangelicals embarked on a course of new revivals to reestablish themselves. But America had changed and the new society was open to new ideas.

> American evangelical Protestantism was extraordinarily well adapted to the popular ideals and patterns of American life. Patriotism, manifest destiny, Anglo-Saxon self-confidence, the common man's social and economic aspirations, peaceful community life, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution all were accommodated and supported in its capacious system of beliefs.[13]

When these ideals were challenged and the established patterns of living disrupted, evangelicals found themselves faced with unexpected problems. Many of the new problems seemed to center in what was being hailed as the inevitable progress of science and education. Darwin's Origin of Species appeared in 1859 and introduced the theory of evolution. It was soon to enter, and remain, in the mainstream of American thought. In 1878, Julius Wellhausen's History of Israel appeared and soon became prominent in the teaching

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[11]Cf. Shelley, op. cit., p. 51f. [12]Ibid., p. 50.

[13]Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People, p. 805. Hereafter cited as RHAP.

and debate of the biblical critics. Wellhausen, a German theologian, was but one more scholar in a long line of critics who challenged the conservative understanding of the Bible. The Continent had been brewing a new theological flavor in the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and this theology flowered into a new conception of the Christian faith. The proponents of the new "Higher Criticism"[14] brought this theology to an already troubled America.

> A strange formlessness marks the half-century which follows the Civil War. . . . One explanation . . . is that evangelicalism was no longer calling the tune--or more accurately, that fewer people were heeding the call.[15]

Both of these aspects contain some measure of the truth. For certain, great evangelists like Dwight L. Moody still proclaimed the Gospel with large numbers of people responding. Other revivalists also enjoyed varying degrees of success. Only Billy Sunday, though, came close to Moody's wide-spread appeal and popular reception. Instead, a different mood seemed to pervade the land.

Complicating the Reconstruction process after the Civil War was the increased flow of immigrants from Europe into the United States. The Catholic Church was also experiencing growth, as well as certain main-line Protestant

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[14]"Higher criticism," or literary and historical analysis, must be carefully distinguished from "lower criticism," or textual analysis. The latter concerns itself with comparing ancient manuscripts to ascertain which is probably closer to the original, but non-extant text.

[15]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 733.

denominations and various disturbing sects like the Church of Latter-Day Saints, or Mormons as they were more popularly known. With more and more people, urban areas grew and incipient problems changed into important concerns. In the midst of all this the evangelicals still represented a potentially powerful religious and social force.

> The situation in the United States developed along lines substantially different from that of Europe. For here, although widespread movements of departure had been in process long before 1890, the evangelical faith nonetheless still counted great numbers of adherents among the lay people, in the clergy, and in the theological seminaries. Not infrequently whole denominations could be listed among its stanch supporters. Many who wanted to escape the inroads of modernism and biblical criticism in Europe came to the United States as a haven of refuge.[16]

But evanglicalism in America was under attack. The new biblical criticism was also finding a home in the United States. In the 1890s a series of sensational heresy trials brought to the fore the conflict between conservatives and liberals, or modernists, as the proponents of the new theology were sometimes called. Henry P. Smith of Lane Seminary, A. C. McGiffert of Union Seminary (New York), and C. A. Briggs, also of Union, were the controversial figures at the center of these trials. The latter was most bold and vigorous in his defense and the case gained much publicity for Briggs, Union, and higher criticism.

Charles Augustus Briggs was an Old Testament scholar who before his appointment at Union in 1874 had studied in

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[16]Roger Nichole, "Theology," Contemporary Evangelical Thought, ed. C. F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968), p. 85.

Germany. There he had been converted to the new theology and trained in its methodology. After his return to the United States, Briggs began to cautiously present the higher criticism in his teaching and writing. In 1889 he published a book entitled Whither? A Theological Question for the Times. This volume made clear just how much at odds was Briggs with evangelicalism. In it he attacked the work of evangelical revivalist D. L. Moody and set himself in conscious opposition against the doctrine of Scripture inerrancy. With the arguments of the higher criticism in hand, Briggs challenged openly the position of conservative scholars like B. B. Warfield of Princeton.

With the creation of the Department of Biblical Theology at Union, and Briggs' appointment as its chairman, the stage was set for open battle. In his inaugural address, January 20, 1891, Briggs openly challenged the evangelical understanding of the Bible and extolled the higher criticism. The evangelicals responded. W. G. T. Shedd, Professor of Systematic Theology at Union, led the opposition to Briggs. When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, which by earlier agreement with Union had the authority to cancel faculty appointments, refused to support Briggs' new appointment, the Seminary took its own action. The board of directors voted to defy the Assembly's ruling.

The battle, however, was far from finished. In April, 1891, only a few months following Briggs' celebrated address, the New York Presbytery commissioned a committee to consider the theological content of his remarks. The

inaugural address was found doctrinally unsound at several points. In November of the same year Briggs was tried for heresy. By a ninety-four to thirty-nine majority Briggs was exonerated.

The case was appealed to the General Assembly in 1892. This body sent it back to the New York Presbytery for retrial and Briggs was once more acquitted. Again the decision was appealed. Finally, in 1893, the General Assembly excommunicated Briggs from the Presbyterian Church. But the damage had been done. Union had separated from the Presbyterians in 1892, retaining Briggs on its faculty. Briggs later was ordained a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church and he remained at Union until his death in 1913.[17]

By the turn of the century the new thought forms from Europe had solidly entrenched themselves in the United States. More and more intellectual centers were, like Union, embracing higher criticism. Particularly in the East liberalism was flexing its theological muscle. Great change had come to America.

> Now, broadly speaking, the transition was from a later form of Calvinism to German idealistic philosophy. As in the closing decades of the seventeenth century when new streams of thought . . . overwhelmed the earlier British Christian tradition, so in the closing decades of the nineteenth century a flood of ideas that had gathered strength and prestige throughout several generations swept from Germany to inundate the convictions of many American theologians. . . . By 1900 the transition had been virtually completed and the "liberal"

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[17]See, Harold Lindsell, The Battle for the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), pp. 185-199. For an even more complete treatment, see Carl E. Hatch, The Charles A. Briggs Heresy Trial (New York: Exposition Press, 1969).

era in American theology had arrived.[18]

Liberalism, or modernism,[19] posed a serious challenge to the long established American evangelicalism. The liberals presented themselves as the bearers of progress for Christian theology. Conservatives decried them as the embodiment of that greatest barrier to genuine Christianity, unbelief. Liberals promised the liberation of theology from the chains of creedal orthodoxy. Evangelicals responded by linking liberalism with the great heresies of the past.

In this latter respect the evangelicals were essentially correct. "In the language of historical theology, liberals were Arminian or Pelagian."[20] Beginning with a strongly optimistic view of man, the Liberals rewrote theology. They were unified by a common method and attitude that produced a fairly definite content of doctrine.[21]

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[18]M. Eugene Osterhaven, "American Theology in the Twentieth Century," Christian Faith and Modern Theology, ed. C. F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964), p. 48.

[19]These two terms are used interchangeably in this study although they have often been carefully distinguished from each other; e. g., "the distinction between 'modernism' and 'liberalism' depends on whether a system of thought or an attitude of open-mindedness and tolerance is foremost" Shelley, Evangelicalism in America, p. 60. Yet the fact remains that historically the two were so closely identified as to constitute a homogeneous body in opposition to evangelicalism.

[20]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 779.

[21]Ramm follows K. Cauthen in finding, "the essence of American liberalism in three concepts: continuity, autonomy, and dynamism. Each of these concepts represents a contradiction to Christianity as understood in the traditions of Protestant orthodoxy and evangelicalism. Religious liberalism came into existence as a strategy to preserve Christianity after the devestating attacks against Protestant

The methodological distinctives of liberalism provided much material for discussion. Here was a method for theology designed to incorporate modern man's sophisticated understanding. Born as a result of the surging scientific spirit of investigation with its rigorous inductive approach, higher criticism sought to come to the Bible with an attitude of honesty and an assortment of linguistic and historical tools. Concerned with questions of authorship, date of composition, literary style, and historical setting, the higher critic subjected the biblical text to examination by every known tool of examination.

In the spirit of an ever increasingly popular trust in science, the liberals eschewed the approach of traditional Christianity to the Bible.

> The older theological method was largely dogmatic and deductive, drawing its conclusions from a given revelation. The new method, on the other hand, extolled inductive investigation as harmonious with science and as the only sure basis for an enlightened faith.[22]

Whereas orthodoxy valued the historic creeds and catechisms like Nicaea, Chalcedon, Augsburg, and Westminster as reliable expositions in systematic form of the content of Scripture, liberalism did not wish to move deductively from the text to a body of doctrine but inductively from the data at hand back to the historical situation that stood <u>behind</u>

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orthodoxy in the Enlightenment. These three concepts are then to be seen as products of the Enlightenment" (Ramm, <u>The Evangelical Heritage</u>, p. 80). Ramm's summary of Cauthen (pp. 80-85) expands these ideas.

[22]Osterhaven, loc. cit.

the text.

Liberalism presupposed the superiority of the inductive method over the deductive logic of orthodoxy. Accordingly, it was interested in data that was empirically verifiable. This meant confinement within the bounds of human experience, natural reason, and the structure of the physical world. That this also meant denying or reinterpreting many of the claims of Scripture and evangelicalism was simply the inevitable cost of the pursuit of truth.

The liberal methodology was in harmony with the basic attitude shared by modern men prior to World War I. The confidence in science was rooted in an even deeper assurance that autonomous reason could eventually discern truth and provide solutions to any human problem. The modernists brought a humanistic optimism to all their endeavors. They were committed to freeing the Christian from superstition and ignorance. "Liberal theologians also wished to 'liberate' religion from obscurantism and creedal bondage so as to give man's moral and rational powers larger scope."[23]

Armed with confidence and a scientific methodology the liberals soon produced a modern understanding of the Christian faith. But the body of doctrine representing their conclusions was a far cry from the old evangelicalism.

> The most characteristic theme of liberal theology, one which has been asserted throughout Christian history in various forms, is the emphasis on the freedom of man, his capability of responding to God and shaping his life in accordance with the divine will. Christian liberals

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[23]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 779.

> share with their classic forerunner Pelagius the insistence that even in his freedom man cannot be saved without the grace of God; but with Pelagius against St. Augustine, and against the later views of Calvin, liberals have rejected the doctrine of the total depravity of man, and have condemned theories of predestination as destroying man's freedom.[24]

But this theme rested on a presupposition introduced by Schleiermacher in his presentation of the Christian faith. "Schleiermacher was a romantic, and he believed that there was a unity and a communion among God, man, and nature."[25] With this fundamental outlook Schleiermacher developed his doctrine of God. Its structure presented itself in three building-blocks:

> (1) The testimony to the being of God lies in man himself.
> (2) God is present for men in an awareness of the underlying unity of all individual experiences.
> (3) God is present for men in the awareness of having been placed here, here and now, in all our relationships, without our having willed it.[26]

Thus, experience is the key. It is the ground of the communion that exists among God, man, and nature. This unity is mediated by a feeling of absolute dependence upon God. Faith is, essentially, equal to feeling, but feeling in this philosophical concept as absolute dependence upon God. In other words, faith is God-consciousness. Sin, therefore, is the lack of this God-consciousness. Christ

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[24]Daniel D. Williams, "Liberalism," Handbook of Christian Theology, ed. A. A. Cohen and M. Halverson (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 208.

[25]Ramm, op. cit., p. 76.

[26]Stephen Sykes, Friedrich Schleiermacher (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1971), pp. 24-30.

redeems man by the power of his consciousness of God. The Church, by proclaiming Christ, calls men to turn to God-consciousness.

Of course, not everyone who began with Schleiermacher was willing to end with him. But those who adopted his starting point and regarded Christianity in terms of religious experience also followed him in blurring the distinction between the natural and the supernatural. Characteristic of the liberal attitude in this regard was Schleiermacher's understanding of miracles. "Miracle is simply the religious name for event. Every event, even the most natural and usual, becomes a miracle, as soon as the religious view of it can be the dominant. To me all is miracle."[27]

With God and man enjoying the common ground of experience it was no surprise that Schleiermacher was rejected by orthodox Christians for his excessive immanentism. Some charged him with pantheism.[28] This much is clear, the natural and supernatural realms were brought together, subjected to an extensive reexamination, and emerged reinterpreted for Christian theology.

Because of theology's locus in experience man received a new and exalted position. But this was not all. Liberalism followed the course it had set for itself by

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[27]Friedrich Schleiermacher, On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers, trans. John Oman (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 88.

[28]See, Sykes, op. cit., pp. 18-20. Here, in a brief but illuminating discussion of this matter Sykes lets Schleiermacher speak for himself.

affirming several crucial ideas. In addition to reformulating the doctrine of man, the liberals forwarded a relativistic view of truth and an evolutionary concept of history. Moreover, for every idea affirmed by the liberals there was a corresponding denial of some orthodox doctrine. Thus, they denied the deity of Jesus, transcendence of God, depravity of man, inerrancy of Scripture, the basis of salvation in the redeeming work of Christ, and the Church as something ultimately distinct from the brotherhood of man.

In a very real sense, liberal theology was so tied to a positive world outlook that only a positive world situation could give it the support it needed. Prior to World War I, the doctrine of modernism appeared to many as very good news indeed. The impact on the American scene was predictable. Although the fundamentalists resisted the day belonged to liberalism.

> So strong was the influence of the modernists that few defenses remained for the fundamentalist. As early as 1910 most of the denominational theological seminaries had been captured by the modernists. As a consequence, new seminaries were formed by the Bible literalists, but the development of these new institutions was to take time before their influence could be felt. In many instances the attack against the old faith was so powerful that whatever strongholds were left to the literalists became hideaways from the enemy rather than bases from which to launch a counter blow. For the greater part the modernists were able to ride roughshod over the prostrate bodies of their helpless 'brethren.'[29]

Early conservative reaction to the liberal movement consisted mainly in strongly worded confessions and, when

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[29]Harold Lindsell, An Evangelical Theology of Missions (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), p. 22.

necessary, heresy trials like that of Briggs. The Presbyterians, from the first a focal point for viewing the conflict, on several occasions affirmed the orthodox formulations of Scripture and Westminster. The General Assembly, in 1892, adopted the Hodge-Warfield doctrine of a Bible inerrant in its original autographs. This position was reaffirmed in 1893, 1894, 1899, and 1910. The General Assembly's action in 1910 was decisive and far-reaching. The doctrine of an inerrant Scripture was placed alongside the doctrines of the Virgin Birth, Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement, Bodily Resurrection, and miracles of Jesus as essential, and therefore necessary, doctrines of the church.[30]

"The desire to arrest the drift from old moorings led to one other major event in the history of pre-World War Fundamentalism--an event, some would say, that gave the movement its name."[31] This event was the product of the intervention of two evangelical laymen into the struggle. Lyman and Milton Stewart created a $250,000 fund to provide for evangelical leaders a series of booklets by conservative scholars on the issues of the debate. The Fundamentals, as the booklets were entitled, began appearing in 1910 and three million copies had been distributed by the time the twelfth, and final, volume appeared some three years later.

With Amzi C. Dixon, Louis Meyer, and Reuben A. Torrey serving as editors, The Fundamentals were composed of articles

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[30]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 814.

[31]Ibid., p. 815.

on a wide variety of subjects. Of the ninety articles, four were specifically concerned with the inspiration of the Bible, one with the Virgin Birth, one with the resurrection of Jesus, one with the deity of Christ, one with the atonement, and none with the Second Coming.[32] The distinguished scholars who contributed included James Orr, B. B. Warfield, H. C. G. Moule, A. T. Pierson, and G. Campbell Morgan.

The importance of The Fundamentals can hardly be overestimated. They appeared at a moment when the evangelical position desperately needed an organized and coherent exposition of orthodox scholarship. The attitude reflected by the authors was far from panic-stricken. In fact, "the spirit of the work was typical of the spirit of early fundamentalism--calm, determined, intending merely the reaffirmation of fundamental truths."[33]

The books had at least two important effects. First, they promoted a great interdenominational witness by conservatives. This witness rested squarely on strong convictions that were expressed firmly and honorably. For the time, at least, a remarkable unity was formed to support an agreed-upon position. Second, this unity encompassed, "two fairly

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[32]This is all the more interesting in light of the common tendency to confuse The Fundamentals with the five points of the Niagara Bible Conference of 1895. Moreover, while twenty-nine articles speak in some respect to the issue of the Bible's authority they do so in a multi-faceted manner that assumes inerrancy without being dependent upon it.

[33]Harvie M. Conn, Contemporary World Theology (Nutley: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1976), p. 115.

incompatible conservative elements" a denominational, seminary-oriented group, and a Bible institute group with strong premillenial and dispensational interests."[34]

United by a common cause and in a common confession, the evangelicals were able to present a fairly unified case for their faith. Yet the old differences tended to persist. The evangelical theology that was being brought to bear against modernism was rich in diversity. "Doctrinally, a great many elements were part of this early fundamentalism. The sweep of its campaign brought together Calvinists and Arminians, Baptists and Presbyterians. Dispensationalists were also strong leaders in the program."[35]

From the very beginning this divergency in doctrine showed itself to be an obstacle. The united front presented in the conflict was never far removed from profound and crucial differences. Thus, the success of The Fundamentals in bringing about an unprecedented union of differing theologies into one evangelical theology actually served a negative function as well. The call to unity, "despite clashing interpretations of countless scriptural passages,"[36] effectively masked a very real disunity of doctrine. In later years renewed calls to Christian union in the conservative cause would continue to denigrate attempts within evangelicalism for interdenominational respect and understanding.

But, The Fundamentals, despite the doctrinal diversity

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[34]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 816. [35]Conn, loc. cit.

[36]Ahlstrom, loc. cit.

represented, were instrumental in defining the points of conflict between orthodoxy and modernism. The authors reflected a common concern to affirm essential Christian doctrine while also denying the cardinal ideas of liberalism. Evangelicals refused to permit science to assume an authority greater than Scripture. They rejected the validity of evolution as the modernists understood it. Finally, they repudiated the notion that truth is relative.

When the evangelicals denied science a place of supremacy they did not completely forsake it. Rather, science as a separate discipline was both accepted and utilized. On the other hand, it was noted that, "it is perhaps more in its general outlook on the world . . . that science is alleged to be in conflict with the Bible and Christianity."[37] Here the point of conflict quickly centered on the question of miracles. The scientific outlook employed by liberalism left no room for any divine intervention that would create a deviation in the ordinary course of the natural order. By adopting such a position the modernists asserted supremacy of the natural order. The orthodox side was quick to point out that, "it is obvious . . . the question at issue in miracle is not natural law, but Theism."[38] Accordingly, the conflict was not between science and the Bible, but between the orthodox and liberal conceptions

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[37]James Orr, "Science and Christian Faith," The Fundamentals, ed. A. C. Dixon, L. Meyer, and R. A. Torrey (Chicago: Testimony Publishing Co., 1910-14), IV, 93.

[38]Ibid., p. 96.

of God.

In a similar fashion, the higher criticism was not decried as demonic by evangelicals but the use of it by the liberals was viewed as the source of trouble. Evangelicals observed how, "the men who have given name and force to the whole movement, have been men who have based their theories largely upon their own subjective conclusions."[39] Again the strong anti-supernatural bias of the modernists was cited as distorting the original noble purpose of higher criticism. The liberals, it was charged, used the higher criticism with the aim of proving their own theories. They came to the Scriptures, "to discredit, . . . to discover discrepancies, and throw doubt upon their authority."[40] The genuine conflict, then, between orthodoxy and modernism was centered in the question of authority. The issue was whether the Bible would retain the authority vested in it by virtue of its inspired nature or whether the subjective decisions of the liberals would usurp that authority.

Again, in the spectre of evolution, the same basic issues revealed themselves. Evangelicals did not deny the validity of the concept as such. But it seemed to them that the concept, and even the very word, "has come into much deserved disrepute by the injection into it of erroneous and

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[39]Dyson Hague, "The History of the Higher Criticism," The Fundamentals, I, 89.

[40]Ibid., p. 92

harmful theological and philosophical implications."[41] The problem was not evolution, but theism. With the supremacy of the natural order, God was excised. The matter was well summarized by the comment, "The worst foes of Christianity are not physicists but metaphysicians."[42]

Finally, the absoluteness of truth was upheld by evangelicals. For them, authority and veracity were inextricably bound together. This meant that in a very real sense every area of conflict between orthodoxy and liberalism could be broken down to the issue of biblical inerrancy. It was for this reason that the doctrine became the focus of the battle.

> The determinative feature of the view of Scripture conveyed in this tradition is found in a seldom articulated "suppressed premise" grounded not so much in exegesis as in the rationalist and scholastic tendencies of post-Reformation orthodoxy. The syllogism goes something like this: God is perfect; the Bible is the Word of God; therefore the Bible is perfect (inerrant). The "suppressed premise" here is actually the focusing of a whole metaphysic emphasizing the "perfection" and "immutability" of God and a highly deterministic view of God's working in the world more obviously at home in the "high Calvinism" of the old Princeton theology.[43]

Yet it was not just the Presbyterians who were committed to inerrancy. Nor was inerrancy unique to Reformed theology. The doctrine was the one great unifying agent for evangelicalism. When a conservative scholar wrote on

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[41] G. F. Wright, "The Passing of Evolution," The Fundamentals, VII, 5. See also, IV, 102-104.

[42] Ibid., p. 20.

[43] Donald W. Dayton, " 'The Battle for the Bible': Renewing the Inerrancy Debate," The Christian Century, XCIII (10 November, 1976), p. 977.

inspiration he was discussing inerrancy.[44] By it he meant a Bible wholly free from error in its original form. As an absolutely true document the Bible was the authority by which all things were judged.

Although The Fundamentals focused the scholastic powers of the evangelicals it took a greater power to deliver the blow that would eventually fell liberalism. In 1914 the Great War in Europe introduced those elements of human existence so deadly to the kind of optimism upheld by modernists. While American liberals to some extent escaped the consequences of the war, on the Continent the themes of liberalism were put to their severest test. The universal Fatherhood of God and the world-wide brotherhood of man were mocked by the cruel division and atrocities of war. Both sides in the conflict claimed they were in a holy war, but what war could be holy? The attitudes of the German liberals, in particular, posed a serious incongruity that forced many liberals outside Germany to an investigation of their faith. When these German intellectuals openly supported the Kaiser it was a triumph of nationalistic fervor over Christian faith. Young liberals like Karl Barth refused to support the ethics of such a decision and were spurred on in their search for a better theology.

The effects of the war on Americans was mitigated by

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[44]See, James M. Gray. "The Inspiration of the Bible --Definition, Extent and Proof," The Fundamentals, III, 7-41. This article is a clear exposition of the subject that faces the problems squarely and provides an able rationale for the inerrancy position.

the lack of direct involvement in the full horror of war. The battlefields were in Europe. For quite some time the war was only known through the news media. When the United States, late in the war, did join the Allies and supply battle troops, many young liberals saw firsthand the inadequacy of their belief. One young liberal Christian wrote in his diary:

> I have seen over here the collapse of my humanistic religion. It cannot stand up against the tides of human pressure. A man must have some standing-ground in the Eternal amid the shifting sands of a semi-pagan world. . . . Above all modern civilization stands the type of life revealed in the New Testament, rebuking the world and offering the only power that can save it. The divine Christ is the only power that will enable men to realize the human Christ.[45]

However, when the war ended the death of liberalism was not nearly as evident in America as it was in Europe. Over on the Continent a new theology was raising its head and offering hope for a disenchanted people. But in America the liberals continued to parade their theology. Of course, modernists were a little less exuberant, more restrained in their optimism, but still confident of an eventual historical vindication of their doctrines.

The Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy was renewed in intensity. The World Christian Fundamentals Association was formed in 1919. In 1920, evangelical delegates to the Northern Baptist Convention vowed, "to re-state, re-affirm and re-emphasize the fundamentals of our New Testament

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[45] J. W. Nixon, "Liberal Religion After Two Wars," The Christian Century, LXI (9 February, 1944), 171.

faith."[46] Following this, an editorial in the Baptist Watchman-Examiner wrote about "Fundamentalists" who were prepared to fight for the "fundamentals" of Christian orthodoxy. The designation was quickly adopted by members of evangelicalism and also by modernists who often used it in a pejorative manner as they debated.

The struggle was broadened somewhat in 1923 with the formation of the Baptist Bible Union. This group directed itself to combating the teaching of evolution as well as aiding other fundamentalists in the defense of orthodoxy. While evolution, as understood by the modernists, had been an issue for some time, the 1920s marked a special interest in keeping evolution out of public schools and universities. The existence of new organizations like the Baptist Bible Union showed the growing concern of many conservatives to protect the younger generation from a speculative theory deemed inconsistent with Scripture.

In this regard, the conflict reached its climax in 1925 with the infamous "Scopes trial." John T. Scopes, a young Tennessee high school science teacher was charged with violating the recently enacted Butler Act. This law, initiated by George Washington Butler of the state legislature, prohibited the teaching of the evolution theory in all public schools. When the trial began in July it was given national publicity. The presence of William Jennings Bryan and Clarence Darrow transformed the case into a sensational

[46] J. I. Packer, "Fundamentalism" and the Word of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1958), p. 29

contest. Bryan was the champion of fundamentalism while Darrow represented Scopes and modern scepticism. "The trial itself bore more resemblance to a camp meeting (or a prize fight) than to a legal process."[47] In the end, Scopes was found guilty and assessed a fine. Later, however, the State Supreme Court dismissed the case on legal grounds. But the trial turned the evangelical cause into a travesty. Although a few local cases were decided in favor of the fundamentalists the Scopes trial resulted in the discrediting of the whole movement in the minds of many people.

Meanwhile, the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy was keen on other fronts. Especially within certain denominations the struggle for ecclesiastical control was fierce. A few groups, like the Lutherans and many southern churches, were relatively peaceful. In the Southern Baptist Convention liberals constituted no threat at all. But the Northern Presbyterian bodies and those of the Northern Baptists were in the middle of the conflict. To a lesser extent so were the Disciples of Christ. In the cases of Congregationalism and Northern Methodism the liberals were in strong control.[48]

One particularly significant struggle was centered at Princeton. This institution had long been the bastion of orthodox Reformed theology. In the nineteenth century Charles Hodge, perhaps the greatest American theologian of that period, taught at Princeton. His position of influence

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[47]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 909. [48]Ibid., p. 910f.

was inherited by his son, A. A. Hodge, and B. B. Warfield. These men represented the strongest expression of the doctrine of inerrancy. Warfield had engaged C. A. Briggs in the landmark debate of the 1890s. When Warfield died in 1921, John Gresham Machen became the leader of Princeton orthodoxy.

Machen was faced with a situation that was difficult at best. During the years from 1921 to 1929 Princeton was experiencing pressures that would, in 1929, lead to a realignment within the school in pronounced favor of the liberals. But Machen was an able leader for the evangelicals.

As a scholar Machen was among the greatest of his day. His work, The Origin of Paul's Religion was, "one of the best summaries of Pauline studies of that period."[49] The Virgin Birth of Christ was prepared with meticulous precision that eventuated in a careful historical and exegetical treatment of the biblical material. New Testament Greek for Beginners became the primary grammar book for American divinity students. Therefore, it was not unexpected that when Machen turned his attention to modernism a significant study would emerge.

Christianity and Liberalism appeared in 1923. Machen's purpose was, "merely to present the issue as sharply and clearly as possible,"[50] so that each man might be aided

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[49]Ramm, The Evangelical Heritage, p. 99.

[50]J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1923), p. 1.

in making the decision for or against orthodoxy. From the opening pages Machen was uncompromising and crystal clear. Early on he declared:

> In the sphere of religion . . . the present time is a time of conflict; the great redemptive religion which has always been known as Christianity is battling against a totally diverse type of religious belief, which is only the more destructive of the Christian faith because it makes use of traditional Christian terminology. This modern non-redemptive religion is called "modernism" or "liberalism." Both names are unsatisfactory; the latter, in particular, is question-begging. The movement designated as "liberalism" is regarded as "liberal" only by its friends; to its opponents it seems to involve a narrow ignoring of many relevant facts. And indeed the movement is so various in its manifestations that one may almost despair of finding any common name which will apply to all its forms. But manifold as are the forms in which the movement appears, the root of the movement is one; the many varieties of modern liberal religion are rooted in naturalism--that is, in the denial of any entrance of the creative power of God . . . in connection with the origin of Christianity.[51]

Machen proceeded to identify two lines of possible criticism. The first, to which he gave primary concern, was that liberalism is un-Christian. The second line of criticism was that it is unscientific.[52] By making the former approach dominant Machen hoped to keep the focus where it most belonged--in the realm of belief. Machen was motivated by the desire that, "by showing what Christianity is not we hope to be able to show what Christianity is. . . ."[53]

As the argument was developed in Christianity and Liberalism Machen moved through a discussion of six specific subject areas. He examined doctrine in its general sense and then considered the particular doctrinal areas of God

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[51]Ibid., p. 2. [52]Ibid., p. 7. [53]Ibid., p. 16.

and man, the Bible, Christ, salvation, and the Church. To Machen it was clear that in order to reveal fully how Christianity and modernism opposed one another it was first necessary to compare their teachings.

In considering the matter of God and man, Machen discussed the radical differences between modernism and orthodoxy. First, the modernists resisted the necessity of having a conception of God; "theology, or the knowledge of God, it is said, is the death of religion; we should not seek to know God, but should merely feel His presence."[54] Yet, if there is any knowledge of God, it comes, according to the liberals, through Jesus. Machen quickly rebuffed this, noting, "that assertion has an appearance of loyalty to our Lord, but in reality it is highly derogatory to Him."[55] The liberals, Machen contended, neglected the fact that Jesus plainly recognized the knowledge of God through nature, moral law, and Scripture.

Instead of these the liberals asserted that Jesus' knowledge of God was of a practical form. Subjectively Jesus "knew" God as his father and the Father of all men. But this idea, Machen argued, is absolutely foreign to the teaching of the New Testament. God is the Father, but only of those who have entered into the household of faith. The modernist proclamation of God as Father of all men, "really belongs at best only to that vague natural religion. . . ."[56]

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[54]Ibid., p. 54. [55]Ibid., p. 55. [56]Ibid., p. 62.

The failure of the liberals to develop a Christian knowledge of God was because they had lost sight of the one attribute of God that renders sense out of all the rest. In failing to recognize God's awful transcendence the liberals had eliminated the gulf between God and man. God is also truly immanent, but only because he is first transcendent.

> In modern liberalism, on the other hand, this sharp distinction between God and the world is broken down, and the name "God" is applied to the mighty world process itself. . . . To this world-process, of which we ourselves form a part, we apply the dread name of "God." God, therefore, . . . is not a person distinct from ourselves. . . . Thus the Gospel story of the Incarnation . . . is sometimes thought of as a symbol of the general truth that man at best is one with God.[57]

Naturally, then, the liberal doctrine of man would also suffer from its unbiblical character. Machen observed the manner in which their doctrine of man flowed naturally from their deficient doctrine of God. With the gulf between God and man eliminated two points of denial became necessary. First, the liberals had to deny the creaturely limitations of man. Thus, second, there really could be no such thing as sin. "At the very root of the modern liberal movement is the loss of the consciousness of sin."[58]

In his next chapter and the ones following Machen traced how, as modernism built its house, it could only do so at the expense of leaving the firm foundation of orthodoxy. By rejecting both the authority of Scripture and the Lordship of Christ, liberalism became, "founded upon the shifting emotions of sinful men."[59] The Christ of the New

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[57]Ibid., p. 63. [58]Ibid., p. 64. [59]Ibid., p. 79.

Testament is reduced by liberalism from the object of faith to an example of faith. According to the liberals, Jesus was the founder of Christianity only in that he was the first and best Christian. Such stories as the Virgin Birth and miracles of Jesus defy the natural order and are therefore only symbolic. The atonement is a subtle theory that tends to mask the essential truth of Jesus' death as an example of supreme love. The Christian religion is not one of salvation but right living; religion is, "a mere function of the community or of the state."[60] Thus, the Church is the symbol of the greater reality, the brotherhood of man.[61]

Against each point forwarded by liberalism Machen moved to the Bible as the source document of Christianity to demonstrate the unChristian nature of modernism. But despite the skill of his writing and force of his arguments Machen was confronted by a deteriorating situation at Princeton. When the liberal realignment happened in 1929 Machen resigned. With several other evangelical members of Princeton's faculty Machen founded Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia in 1929. He served as its president and as a professor of New Testament until his death in 1937.

Machen was also instrumental in establishing an independent foreign missions board. In 1935, Machen was tried and found guilty by a presbytery convened at Trenton, New Jersey, on charges brought by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Accused for his activities with the

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[60]Ibid., p. 149. [61]Ibid., pp. 80-180.

mission board, Machen was forbidden to defend himself and was suspended from the ministry. In 1936, Machen and one hundred ministers banded together to form the Presbyterian Church in America. Two years later this new denomination was faced with division.[62]

Shortly after this denomination was created it was renamed the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Within the new church an intense debate arose over certain points of doctrine. A faction led by Carl McIntire opposed a move by Machen's colleagues at Westminster that dispensationalism be avoided. McIntire perceived this as, ultimately, an attack on premillenialism. When no agreement could be reached to end the debate McIntire led the defection to yet another new denomination, the Bible Presbyterian Church.

The division exemplified a growing split within fundamentalism itself. On the one hand were those like Machen who had never felt comfortable with the term "fundamentalist" and who believed that the extremes represented by groups like the dispensationalists should be avoided. On the other hand were the strongly premillenial, dispensational evangelicals who had formulated a distinctive framework built around a unique hermeneutic. More and more frequently the fundamentalists found themselves faced by difficulties from within as well as without. As the period between the two World Wars grew to a close an uneasy peace prevailed in

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[62]Frank S. Mead, Handbook of Denominations in the United States (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 227.

evangelicalism.

The fundamentalists were not alone in their problems. For the modernists the times were growing increasingly uncertain also. The main liberal figure during this period was Harry Emerson Fosdick. From 1918 until 1925 Fosdick served as guest minister at First Presbyterian Church in New York. His 1922 sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" brought about the forcing of his resignation in 1925. This led him to the Park Avenue Baptist Church. In 1931, Fosdick was installed in the new interdenominational Riverside Church where he remained until his retirement in 1946. From this position Fosdick served for fifteen years as liberalism's most influential and popular spokesman.[63]

In 1935, Fosdick reviewed liberalism in the significant article "Beyond Modernism." This sermon began by applauding modernism and ended by calling for a liberalism beyond the modernism of the past generation. Modernism, he said, "came as a desperately needed way of thinking."[64] That its particular emphases are no longer needed cannot, contended Fosdick, diminish the glory it once had and possessed rightly. Modernism said what the Church in its time needed to hear.

> The church thus had to go as far as modernism but now the church must go beyond it. For even this brief rehearsal of its history reveals modernism's essential nature; it is primarily an adaptation, an adjustment,

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[63]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 911.

[64]Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Beyond Modernism," The Christian Century, LII (4 December, 1935), 1549.

> an accomodation of Christian faith to contemporary scientific thinking. It started by taking the intellectual culture of a particular period as its criterion and then adjusted Christian teaching to that standard. Herein lies modernism's shallowness and transiency: it arose out of a temporary intellectual crisis; it took a special type of scientific thinking as standard; it became an adaptation to, a harmonization with, the intellectual culture of, a particular generation.[65]

The failure of modernism was only a relative failure. It failed only in the sense that it was not the final, permanent answer. Fosdick outlined four weaknesses in modernism that, coupled with its transient nature, rendered modernism unsuitable for the present situation. First, modernism had been excessively preoccupied with intellectualism. Second, it had been dangerously sentimental. Third, modernism had even watered down the central message and distinctive truth of the reality of God. Finally, modernism had too often lost its ethic and power of moral attack.[66]

Coming from such an eminent spokesman as Fosdick the indictment of modernism was startling and vaguely disturbing to nearly everyone. A new theological wind seemed to be blowing into America from the Continent. But few were fully ready to assess this new theology. The first publication of Karl Barth's work in the English language did not occur until 1928. Instead, American theologians were struggling to cope with the collapse of the economy, a depression lifestyle, and a growing uneasiness with old answers. The churches were again mostly conservative but many wondered if the cause was more the liberal uncertainty than the

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[65]Ibid., p. 1549f. [66]Ibid., pp. 1550-52.

evangelical message. The progressive, liberal periodical, The Christian Century noted in early 1937 the entrance of the United States into a creative period of Christian thought. An editorial observed that, "the roots of contemporary thinking were nourished in the soils of both liberalism and orthodoxy, but the flower that is appearing, or destined to appear, can only be described as a new growth, unlike either of the systems from which it springs."[67]

The year before, in 1936, Adolf Hitler had been installed as the leader of Germany. By 1939, his Third Reich had initiated the Second World War. Although the United States maintained its neutrality they supplied arms to the Allies and waited. During this period a new theological alternative presented itself to America.

One of the harbingers of the newest theology was a strange Dane of the previous century, Soren Kierkegaard. His ideas, developed in the twentieth century and called existentialism, were introduced to Americans chiefly through the labors of David L. Swenson of the University of Minnesota, and Walter Lowrie, rector of Saint Paul's American Church in Rome from 1907 to 1930. Kierkegaard wrote from a Lutheran Christian frame of reference. His philosophy was a response to the conditions of his age. Three, especially, were fundamental: (1) the situation in philosophy following Kant and Hegel and the advance of the sciences; (2) the

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[67]"The Anti-Liberal Animus," The Christian Century, LIV (23 June, 1937), 798.

situation of Christianity after the Enlightenment; and, (3) the situation of the person lost in the masses of a progressive society, one among many, isolated and controlled.[68] Kierkegaard's answer involved the development of a dialectical method in marked contrast with that employed by Hegel. For Kierkegaard, knowledge was not an evolutionary product but arose from a moment of enlightenment through an encounter by faith with God. It was the individual, and the individual before and with and confronted by God who interested Kierkegaard.[69]

The concerns of Kierkegaard, and his solution, were looked upon with a sudden relevance by a few men in Europe in the aftermath of World War I. Among these men was Karl Barth. His early work was introduced to America in 1928 by Douglas Horton. In 1931, Wilhelm Pauck published a careful and enthusiastic study of Barth that received a wide reading. Then, in 1934, Paul Tillich began a new career at Union Theological Seminary in New York after leaving Germany. But, despite all the varied contributions that helped constitute the new theology, the fact remains that the lives and works of Reinhold Niebuhr and his brother H. Richard Niebuhr were the best revelation of the dynamics, nature, and purposes of the thought that would provide an

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[68] H. J. Blackham, Essential Works of Existentialism (New York: Bantam Books, 1965), pp. 2-3.

[69] See, John A Gates, The Life and Thought of Kierkegaard for Everyman (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960) for a good introduction to Kierkegaard. For an introduction to the primary sources, see, Robert Bretall (ed.), A Kierkegaard Anthology (New York: Random House, 1946).

an answer of faith for many Americans.[70]

"Neo-orthodoxy" was the term coined to represent these thinkers. Though vastly different from one another in interest, ideas, and conclusions, they were united by their dissatisfaction with both liberalism and the older orthodoxy. By 1940, The Christian Century could announce the arrival of the new thought and declare:

> Today, . . . the man who wants to be classified as a modernist is rather a strange anachronism when the last word in modernism is a gas-mask, air bombardments of women and children and existence in dugouts.
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> . . . . . .
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> When we examine the orthodoxy of the New Testament, the true source of all our faith, our preconceived views are sometimes shattered.[71]

After posing the question about what were the absolute essentials of Christianity, the answer was returned in the form of five fundamental assertions. First, this modern orthodoxy demanded an absolute belief in a real God. Second, the "supreme contribution" by Karl Barth of the call for faith in a genuine revelation was deemed essential. Modern man must recognize the Word of God for the world of men. Third, "in the new orthodoxy there can continue to be varieties of views about the Bible but . . . there must be utter loyalty to the Bible. . . ."[72] Fourth, modern orthodoxy means belief in the deity of Jesus and the affirmation of

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[70]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 939f.

[71]Hillyer H. Straton, "Orthodoxy--A New Phase," The Christian Century, LVII (17 April, 1940), 509-510.

[72]Ibid., p. 511.

Jesus as the second person in the Trinity. Fifth, and finally, assurance of the living Lord was called absolutely necessary. Both the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus were essential. These fundamentals all must be complemented by followers who exhibit Christlike lives.[73]

But fond hopes of the Kingdom of God on earth had to be set aside during the war years. America was drawn into the conflict in December, 1941, and once more the battlefields were given a new immediacy. As in the First World War, young men were confronted with ultimate questions. A young chaplain with the Pacific fleet represented the feelings of many when he wrote home, "Out here I've seen and felt within myself how inadequate is purely human ability to meet the problems we are forced to meet."[74]

When the war finally ended, the Atomic Age was a reality and the forces of communism had created what came to be known as the "Cold War." In America neo-orthodoxy was firmly entrenched, liberalism, for the moment, was laid low, and evangelicalism was in grave danger. The diversified elements in fundamentalism had been controlled by union against a common foe. With the fall of modernism, the evangelicals came face-to-face with their internal problems.

Perhaps the most pronounced change was the growing identification with dispensationalism. Reformed evangelicals

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[73]Ibid., pp. 510, 511.

[74]Nixon, "Liberal Religion After Two Wars," p. 171.

with their Calvinistic heritage were understandably reluctant to associate themselves with this shift. Many evangelicals withdrew from the movement. Some were attracted to neo-orthodoxy. Others were left waiting for a new development to bring evangelicals together.

The reason for fundamentalism's existence as it had appeared in the preceding decades had passed. Fundamentalism had possessed a unity forged in a common cause. For a long time that alone was sufficient.

> But in due time fundamentalism made one capital mistake. This is why it converted from a religious movement to a religious mentality. Unlike the Continental Reformers and the English dissenters, the fundamentalists failed to develop an affirmative world view. They made no effort to connect their convictions with the wider problems of general culture. They remained content with the single virtue of negating modernism. When modernism decayed, therefore, fundamentalism lost its status. Neo-orthodoxy proved too complex for it to assess. It became an army without a cause. It had no unifying principle.[75]

Fundamentalism after World War II could be defined from a number of directions. First, fundamentalism represented an attitude that led many to define the fundamentalist as, "a person with orthodox convictions who defends them with an anti-intellectual, anti-scholarly, anti-cultural belligerency."[76] Second, fundamentalism was essentially a separatist position. In taking a strong stand against liberal or neo-orthodox leadership in the traditional

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[75]Edward John Carnell, "Fundamentalism," Handbook of Christian Theology, p. 142.

[76]Bernard Ramm, A Handbook of Contemporary Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 53.

denominations the fundamentalists withdrew to form separate denominations or independent congregations. Third, fundamentalism repudiated higher criticism and "with obscurantism" held to the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible. Finally, fundamentalism was generally identified with the Scofield Reference Bible, dispensationalism, and premillennialism.[77]

> Fundamentalism is a lonely position. It has cut itself off from the general stream of culture, philosophy, and ecclesiastical tradition. This accounts, in part, for its robust pride. Since it is no longer in union with the wisdom of the ages, it has no standard by which to judge its own religious pretence. It dismisses non-fundamentalistic efforts as empty, futile, or apostate. . . . Status by negation must be maintained or the raison d'être of fundamentalism is lost.[78]

This judgment, harsh though it may sound, became a motivating factor for many evangelicals to create some form of instrument to indicate evangelical unity and to serve that unity in action. During the latter part of the 1930s it became apparent to many that simply remaining in a fundamentalist union could not solve the problems of doctrinal difference. Therefore, in 1941, evangelical leaders called together by Ralph T. Davis and J. Edwin Wright, met at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. After some discussion they agreed to meet again the following year to pursue a course of action that might provide a positive balance to evangelicalism. Many conservatives were dissatisfied with the newly formed American Council of Churches, a politically oriented, exclusivist organization founded under Carl

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[77]Ibid., p. 53f. [78]Carnell, op. cit., p. 143.

McIntire. However, most evangelicals were in sympathy with McIntire's desire to find some corporate expression by which to counter the Federal Council of Churches, an organization with decidedly liberal convictions.

In 1942, a group numbering nearly 150 met at St. Louis and founded the National Association of Evangelicals. That same year they agreed upon a strongly evangelical creedal statement and began enlisting support. In 1943, they held their first convention. With an increasingly diversified program they attracted a growing number of churches. By 1956, the Association claimed over a million and a half members.

Other expressions of this new evangelical awareness began to take place. Fuller Theological Seminary was founded in 1947. Charles E. Fuller, an evangelist, and Harold John Ockenga, then pastor of the Park Street Church in Boston, felt a need for a quality graduate institution with a strong evangelical commitment. The school opened with four faculty members: Everett F. Harrison, Carl F. H. Henry, Harold Lindsell, and Wilbur Moorehead Smith. Within a few years enrollment stood at three hundred, the faculty was expanded, and the institution was secure.[79]

In 1948, during the opening exercises for Fuller, its first president, Dr. Harold Ockenga introduced a new word to the theological world: "neo-evangelicalism." This term was quickly adopted by some to express their ties to

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[79]Lindsell, Battle for the Bible, p. 106.

the past while, at the same time, making clear their separate identity from fundamentalism or, as some preferred, "neo-fundamentalism." Men like Carl Henry, Gordon H. Clark, Bernard Ramm, Harold Lindsell, and Edward J. Carnell became prominent and influential spokesmen for the new movement.

The man perhaps most responsible for presenting the new evangelical outlook to wide groups of people was William Franklin Graham. A Los Angeles tent-meeting revival in 1949 thrust him into national prominence and the name Billy Graham became synonymous with "evangelical" for many Americans and people around the world. By 1956 the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association had an annual budget of two million dollars and was utilizing many forms of mass media presentation to forward the evangelical response to the Great Commission.

In 1951, the National Association of Evangelicals, closely identified with the new evangelicalism, helped organize the World Evangelical Fellowship. Then, in 1956, the periodical Christianity Today afforded added cohesiveness to the movement. The fortnightly magazine, first edited by C. F. H. Henry, offered news and opinion from the evangelical community.

The new evangelicals sought diligently to avoid the pitfalls that fundamentalism had stumbled into. Rather than separating themselves from the non-evangelical theological world, they welcomed open and honest dialogue. Social concerns were given new attention. The relation of science to the Bible was explored with increasing interest. The new

evangelicals were active in bringing their message to the world by every means and in every area open to them.

> Still another aspect of this "new evangelicalism" which gained public notice during the fifties was its effort to overcome the powerful anti-intellectual and antiscientific spirit that had discredited the older Fundamentalism. This did not involve much (if any) modification of the movement's commitment to scriptural infallibility or its emphasis on the conversion experience. Nor, for the most part, did it involve an effort to transcend the many serious doctrinal issues that divided the "third force." But it did result in a considerable body of critical and apologetic literature attacking modernism, exposing Neo-orthodoxy as but another form of modernism, and defending conservative theology as a rational option for modern man.[80]

As the 1950s drew to a close, conservative Christianity was a vital force in the religious life of America. Still composed of a vastly diversified constituency, various organizations like the National Association of Evangelicals and American Council of Churches represented a large number who chose to call themselves evangelical Christians. As the nation prepared to move into the 1960s few could have guessed the turbulance that would mark a new day for America and American church life.

EVANGELICALISM'S CURRENT SITUATION

"The decade of the sixties seems in many ways to have marked a new stage in the long development of American religious history."[81] The terms "post-Puritan" and "post-Protestant" came into popular usage after the election of

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[80]Ahlstrom, RHAP, p. 958f. [81]Ibid., p. 1079.

the first Roman Catholic to the presidency, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, in 1960. It was the decade of Kennedy's "New Frontier" and Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society." It was also the decade of the Viet Nam war, moral revolution in American society, and political assassination. "The decade of the sixties was a time, in short, when the old foundations . . . were awash."[82]

Moral ambiquity and theological uncertainty were the characteristics of the new age. With a spirit of startling frankness, the news media and popular press devoted much time to a "new morality." In so doing they often exploited a new permissiveness. Fewer and fewer issues were considered illegitimate to discuss. Ethical thinkers, inspired by existential models for human relationships, tended toward less legalistic and more situational modes of guiding morality.[83]

In theology a suddenly baffling uncertainty ocurred as religious leaders tried to assess the current situation and adjust to it. Once more the old answers were found wanting by large numbers of people. Once more the theologians began producing new thoughts to meet the needs of the religiously empty. As early as 1962, more than one theologian could write:

Part of the reason that Christians are having trouble

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[82]Ibid., p. 1080.

[83]Ibid., p. 1084. In this regard, the works of Sartre, Camus, Buber, and Fletcher are noteworthy. Beginning from the noble "I-Thou" relationships of Buber morality in practice often deteriorated to "I-It" debauchery.

> in understanding and handling the new theologies is that the theologies, like society, appear to have outrun history. It seems that theology has made a leap into an unknown country, that it has cut itself loose from what went before and is here before us as something entirely new and unprecedented.[84]

Evangelicalism, still divided by sharp exchanges between its fundamentalist and neo-evangelical wings, seemed as baffled as everyone else at the turns in American society. While the 1960s marked continued growth for evangelicals it was the time of the silent majority. For the most part, conservatives were on the defensive as representatives of the old status quo. The publicity was primarily reserved for the more radical voices in society and theology.

The one rather remarkable exception to this was the sudden explosion known as the Charismatic Renewal. Pentecostalism had blossomed in the United States since the revival at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles in 1906. But with its inevitable growth into an institution in American religion it had appeared that the charismatic impulse was finally, and properly, channelled. Then, on Passion Sunday in April, 1960, an Episcopalian minister named Dennis J. Bennett set aside his preaching schedule for the day and spent the three morning services sharing his experience of what he called the "baptism in the Holy Spirit." At the end of the second service one of his assistants had left the church.

> That "blew the lid off!" After the service concluded . . . those who had set themselves to get rid of the movement of the Holy Spirit began to harangue the arriving

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[84] William C. Fletcher, The Moderns (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), p. 15f.

and departing parishioners. One man stood on a chair shouting:

"Throw out the damn tongue-speakers!"[85]

This explosion at St. Mark's Episcopal church in Van Nuys, California, was far reaching. The bishop of Los Angeles issued a notice banning all speaking in tongues under church auspices. In June the story hit the headlines and was given national coverage. "What happened that Sunday morning . . . brought into the open a movement which had been gathering momentum . . . for at least four years."[86] Suddenly more within the non-Pentecostal churches began to openly confess experiences similar to that voiced by Bennett. A movement of major proportions developed.[87]

However, despite their strict adherence to fundamental doctrine, the charismatics were looked upon by other evangelicals with suspicion, concern, and occasionally even hate. Evangelicalism was on the defense. Anything new, anything different was suspect. As one observer noted, "Many Christians still hold to the faith of our fathers. . . . Not having shifted theologically, these people are still adrift because they have been unable to make the change which

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[85]Dennis J. Bennett, Nine O'Clock in the Morning (Plainfield: Logos International, 1970), p. 61.

[86]Michael Harper, As At the Beginning (Plainfield: Logos International, 1971), p. 56.

[87]The Charismatic Renewal reached into every major Protestant denomination and the Catholic Church as well. By early 1971 conservative estimates indicated over 10,000 Catholic charismatics alone.

changing times require."[88]

On the other hand, the theologians who were gaining great publicity were those who celebrated the changes in society. Relevancy was the key word to these theologies and irrelevancy was the worst crime with which to charge a theologian. One noted theologian commented that, "Behind all of the latest trends in theology there lies a deep concern to come to grips with the realities of our age."[89]

The new theological expressions focused on metaphysical, epistemological, personal, corporate, and moral relevance. So-called "secular theology" caught the imagination of the public. "With startling rapidity secular became a good word and theologians began to boast, 'I am more secular than thou.' "[90] In a world-come-of-age the new word was "God is dead."

The new metaphysic was simply the revival of the old liberal conception of immanence. It was revived because, as one theologian said, "If the reality of God is still to be affirmed, this must now be done in a situation in which, on an unprecedented scale, that reality is expressly denied."[91] In an age of atheism, the only relevant theism must be a this-worldly theism. To affirm the reality of God was

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[88]Lindsell, An Evangelical Theology of Missions, p.16.

[89]William E. Hordern, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 231.

[90]Ibid., p. 234f.

[91]Schubert Ogden, The Reality of God (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 13.

irrelevant apart from the concepts of a secular society.

While there was much disagreement on exactly what the terms "secular," "secularity," and "secularism" meant, it was generally agreed that the outlook of the age was one that must in some way be called by such a name. It was also agreed upon by these theologians that the Church should come to grips with this fact. The faith, practice and proclamation of the Church were called to some form of accounting in regard to secularity.[92]

Paul van Buren's The Secular Meaning of the Gospel and Harvey Cox's The Secular City were clear calls for affirming an immanent God active in history. If this stress was at the cost of an irrelevant doctrine of divine transcendence it was not a price too high to pay. Like the earlier liberalism, the secular theologians wanted to construct a thought system not only consistent with science but, if possible, bound to acceptable forms of empirical observation. The implications of this were quickly developed.

As early as 1961, William Hamilton's The New Essence of Christianity indicated an extreme wing of secular theology. But it was in 1966 that four significant publications heralded the arrival of the most radical school of the 1960s. Thomas J. Altizer's The Gospel of Christian Atheism, Kenneth Hamilton's God Is Dead: The Anatomy of a Slogan, Thomas

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[92]John Macquarrie, God and Secularity, ed. William Hordern, New Directions in Theology Today, vol. 3 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), pp. 18-20.

Ogletree's The Death of God Controversy, and a work jointly authored by Altizer and William Hamilton entitled, Radical Theology and the Death of God, all celebrated the theme that God-is-dead. Paradoxical in terminology, the ideas expressed suffered from vagueness and an inherent extremism. God, "died as God in Jesus Christ in order to embody Himself redemptively in the world."[93]

While the Death-of-God theology itself quickly died it served notice to the theological world the full extent of change effected in a theology totally dedicated to "relevance." The more moderate secular theologians were also captivated by the importance of language but avoided the complete capitulation to a language positivism that had led the radical theologians to an atheistic metaphysic. Although language had always been central to theology there was a marked importance attached to it from Schleiermacher onward.

The traditional nominalism of Christian orthodoxy was subjected to intense examination by first linquists and philosophers and then theologians. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Rudolf Carnap, A. J. Ayer, and Martin Heidegger made important and influential contributions to language studies. The manner in which new language considerations influenced the theological thought of the 1960s is evident in the following argument:

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[93]S. Paul Schilling, God in an Age of Atheism (New York: Abingdon Press, 1969), p. 106.

> It is useless to talk of God as the wholly other . . . the importance of the intention behind this assertion is clear, it is the attempt to give God his glory, to preserve his otherness, to indicate his absolute otherness from his creation. But it is meaningless, because any assertion about the wholly other by its own definition excludes any relation or knowledge about what is wholly other.[94]

Ayer's positivism, the more moderate language analysis school, and various truth-testing modes were all resources for carving out the theology of relevancy. But the secular theologians were not alone in utilizing these tools. The thought of Rudolph Bultmann, and especially his program of demythologization, was made popular in America by theologians like John Macquarrie who embraced an existential posture to the world but were unwilling to get caught up in secular theology. Bultmann himself was heavily indebted to Heidegger's existential philosophy and language theory.

But the supreme contribution of Heidegger and Bultmann to the theological world of the 1960s was an existential sense of personal relevance. Heidegger had been strongly influenced by Ranier Maria Rilke, the German poet, and Soren Kierkegaard. His existentialism centered in a phenomenological analysis of the Dasein, the human "being in the world" characterized as a field of relations. Rather than knowing truth, man dwells in it.[95] Bultmann transferred these ideas to his study of the New Testament. There he discerned how

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[94]David Cairns, God Up There? (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 85.

[95]Milton D. Hunnex, Philosophies and Philosophers (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1971), p. 42.

it was composed of two elements, myth and kerygma. The myth was the literary structure that through contemporary, (i. e., contemporary to the first century), language reflected reality. This reality, independent of historical reporting, was the kerygma, the message of men who had encountered personal meaning in the framework of human existence. To demythologize, then, was to recover this meaning apart from its mythological structure. Bultmann contended that this process did not simply dispense with myth but recognized it for what it was. Demythologization was necessary to free the meaning from and within the text in order to express it in personally relevant terms to twentieth century man.

In a more popular vein, Albert Camus expressed existentially humanistic themes in his powerful novels, essays, and epic work, The Rebel. In America Camus had an important impact on leading individuals like Robert F. Kennedy. Kennedy discovered Camus at the age of thirty-eight, in the months of solitude and grief after his brother's death. By the time of his presidential campaign in 1968 he had read, and read, all of Camus' essays, dramas, and novels. Kennedy seemed particularly impressed by Resistance, Rebellion, and Death. His references to Camus in speeches, highlighted by quotes of Camus in televised debate with Eugene McCarthy, led to some of his supporters constructing signs proclaiming "Kennedy and Camus in '68."[96] American political liberals

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[96]Jack Newfield, Robert Kennedy: A Memoir (New

of the middle and late sicties regarded Camus as a hero of the New Left.

Personal relevancy, however, was balanced by appeals to corporate relevancy. In the theological community there was a call away from the local church ideal to more relevant forms of collective Christian action. Colin Williams criticized the notion of churches based on areas of residence. In his Where in the World?, published by the National Council of Churches in 1963, Williams contended the local church was inadequate to meet the needs of the greater society in which it existed. Somehow, new structures must be erected.[97]

In all these activities a sense of moral relevancy was essential. Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics became a popular book addressing itself to the question of how a Christian ethic could also be a relevant ethic. In a day when morality was ambiguous at best, Fletcher's agape standard was reduced by many from a situation ethic to an excuse for doing what seemed right "at the moment." More sophisticated and sensitive books like Martin Buber's I and Thou, first published in the 1930s, received greater attention. But although many ideas were offered, no uniform ethic emerged.

As the decade drew to its close, two divergent

York: E. P. Dutton, 1969), p. 58f. Special mention of this is made because of the "prophet" image Camus' life and work engendered. Camus was a religious phenomenon.

[97]See, Hordern, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology, pp. 237-238.

impulses seemed to reach their climax. On the one hand, non-conservative theology was characterized by an impulse to seek a lost age. All the old answers of liberalism and the pre-World War I humanism were once again examined. On the other hand, the impulse to be relevant was dominant. Yet, curiously enough, in a world-come-of-age the new theology fell apart.

The turbulence of the 1960s gave way to the disillusionment of the 1970s. Disillusioned by disorder, many Americans began looking for a transcendent reality to make sense out of things. Strangely enough, though the western world of the 1960s was one of great "this-worldly" concerns, it was those currents in Christianity emphasizing the transcendence of reality that experienced the most growth as the churches entered the 1970s. In an article early in 1973, Time magazine quoted California's Episcopal Bishop C. Kilmer Myers as saying, "Hunger for the mysterious is widespread in all people. We cannot be human unless we have the experience of transcendence."[98]

The evangelical churches benefited from this hunger. The Charismatic Renewal, in particular, continued to grow. But, as Time reported, "The most impressive example of growth is the Soughern Baptist Convention, which has maintained a staunchly biblical faith."[99] In contrast to the increases

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[98]"Searching Again for the Sacred," Time, 9 April, 1973, p. 90.

[99]Ibid.

in doctrinally conservative Christianity was the slump within liberal churches. "Together with liberal forms of Catholicism and Judaism, the progressive Protestant denominations are hoist with their own petard. Their very creedal flexibility precludes the certitude that attracts converts."[100]

By the 1976, evangelicalism was once more prominent--and dominant. But the strength of evangelicalism was no longer quiet. As Newsweek observed, "With the strength of growing numbers, evangelicals are also discovering what they can do for themselves."[101] Upon finding themselves under the sudden scrutiny of the mass media evangelicals reflected on the situation and commented:

> Evangelical recovery has taken fifty years. During the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, biblical orthodoxy retreated to the cultural periphery. But it has again come to the center as theological alternatives have fallen on very hard times.[102]

The sudden publicity for evangelicalism was the result of the nation's search for a President. Both candidates claimed a "born again" experience. Gerald Ford, the incumbent, was an Episcopalian. His challenger, democrat Jimmy Carter, was a devout Southern Baptist. It was Carter's testimony to his faith that had first occasioned new interest by the news media in evangelicalism. George Gallup, the renowned pollster, accordingly conducted a national

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[100] Ibid.

[101] "Born Again!" Newsweek, 25 October, 1976, p. 69.

[102] David Kucharsky, "The Year of the Evangelical," Christianity Today, XXI (22 October, 1976), 81.

survey to uncover some of the facts and statistical dimensions of evangelical Christianity in America. Among Gallup's findings were these:

> A far higher proportion of persons of the evangelical group of churches than among the nonevangelical or mainline denominations have had a "born again" experience, hold a literal interpretation of the Bible, and witness to their faith.
>
> The greater missionary zeal of the evangelical group of churches may be an important reason why these churches are experiencing a spectacular growth in membership while certain mainline churches are experiencing serious membership losses.[103]

The election of Jimmy Carter signalled the emergence of the evangelical community into the mainstream of the American consciousness. Signs of political muscle-flexing by evangelicals became evident. At least thirty candidates for Congress included in their platform the testimony that they could be trusted to bring morality to public office because of their evangelical commitment. At the same time, a nation-wide revival called "Here's Life, America" brought many people to a direct and personal encounter with the evangelical community. In politics, sports, and elsewhere evangelicals suddenly stood up and were recognized. Newsweek commented,

> For the first time in this century, large numbers of evangelicals are stepping out of cultural isolation and assuming the burdens of political responsibility once exercised largely by mainline Protestants in consort with Jewish and Catholic leaders.
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> . . . . . .
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> With typical evangelical fervor, groups of "New Evangelicals" are asserting alternate forms of leadership.

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[103] The Sunday Oregonian [Portland], 26 December, 1976, p. A19.

> Beginning in 1973 with its historic "Chicago Declaration," an ecumenical group of scholars and activists called "Evangelicals for Social Action" has functioned as a goad to repentance, reform and radical social witness within the wider evangelical community.[104]

The traditional strengths of evangelicalism stood the new publicity as well as ever. Fidelity to an authoritative Bible, fervor for evangelism, and orthodox doctrine were all submitted again and again to investigation by those outside evangelical circles. But all these matters were also being reconsidered within evangelicalism. Of course, this to some extent had been happening for many years but suddenly, in the flash of unexpected attention, these things were brought out into the open. Newsweek noted:

> Despite the evangelicals' newfound strength, a number of serious divisions have opened up within their ranks. Evangelicals are sharply divided over fundamental religious issues such as the infallibility of Scripture and what they think the Gospel requires of them as born-again Christians. Searching for more authentic Christian life-styles, younger evangelicals are rejecting the salvation-brings-success ethos of establishment evangelicals. And in their hour of political ascendancy, the evangelicals are exhibiting new and often sharply divergent views on how the church should relate to public affairs.[105]

The issue of Scriptural inerrancy, in particular, was a point of disagreement where it had once been the single most unifying factor for evangelicals. Harold Lindsell's The Battle for the Bible raised a storm of controversy. Some, like Billy Graham and Francis Schaeffer voiced their strong support of Lindsell's position upholding inerrancy.

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[104] "Born Again!" Newsweek, pp. 70, 78.

[105] Ibid., p. 70.

Others, like David Hubbard, president of Fuller Seminary, and Carl Henry, former editor of Christianity Today, wondered at the value of Lindsell's book in light of evangelicalism's current situation. The polemical nature of Lindsell's book brought praise and criticism but, above all, it brought attention.

Nor was the attention all good. With the furor over the doctrine of inerrancy there were those who wondered it there was much more to evangelicalism than a fight over non-existent autographs, a "born again" experience, and Jimmy Carter. Some complained that with the preoccupation with personal salvation and biblical literalism, other vital ministries were neglected. They found a correspondence between, on the one hand, the flourishing of fundamentalism, Luthern Church-Missouri Synod controversy, Charismatic Renewal, and attacks on the National and World Council of Churches, and, on the other, the growing neglect of social issues such as racial justice, world peace, and the abolition of hunger and malnutrition.[106]

The "Here's Life, America" campaign also received some heavy criticism. The revival was condemned by some on one or more of at least seven points. First, it was accused of a faulty understanding of the gospel and of the meaning of salvation. Second, it was criticized for a faulty understanding of witness. Third, it was charged with depending

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[106]Kenneth Wray Conners, "Legalism or Logos?" The Christian Century, XCII (17 December, 1975), 1153.

upon gimmicks for results. Fourth, it was said to have a rigid attitude toward both the ends and means of evangelism. Fifth, it was indicted for depending upon the emotional exploitation of persons technologically sophisticated but theologically naive. Sixth, it was reproved for its latent political significance. Finally, seventh, it was denounced as using the gospel as the means to an end.[107]

Of course, such criticisms were entirely over-looked or dismissed by most evangelicals. But the fact remains that as the evangelical community moved into a period of potential leadership in the religious life of America not all was well. Sensitive voices were crying out for reform. Some, like Carl Henry, offered suggestive guidelines for evangelical advance.[108] More and more evangelicals were seeing the sensibility of reform. Everyone could see the benefit of renewal. But change came hard. Not all could agree on what was beneficial. Those evangelicals who moved away from a rigid view of inerrancy experienced the harsh criticisms of those who disagreed with them.

Still, as the decade of the 1970s moves to its inevitable end, evangelicals are confronted with the responsibility of both preserving a soundness of doctrine and presenting a soundness of life. This study is one response to

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[107] J. Randolph Taylor, "Here's Bright, America!" The Christian Century, XCIII (24 November, 1976), 1030-1032.

[108] See, Carl F. H. Henry, "Agenda for Evangelical Advance," Christianity Today, XXI (5 November, 1976), 164.

the burden laid upon evangelicalism to set its house in order, purifying the whole, and standing blameless before God and man. History has shown the need of change and the strengths and weaknesses of evangelical Christianity. The thesis that the person and work of Karl Barth can provide inspiration and direction for the healthy renewing and reforming of evangelical theology today, is not arbitrary. Rather, it is but one small beginning to bring the benefits of one man's service to the service of a community; both serve the Lord, and He insures the victory. Yet, as the work is begun the final warning of the world still stands unanswered:

> Evangelical Christianity has been growing quietly for ten years--often at the expense of played-out mainline churches. During that period, evangelicals have zealously sought out the young, offering the certainties of a fired-up faith as an alternative to secular disillusion. But as it happens, just as the nation is at last taking notice of their strength, evangelicals find their house divided. The Presidential election has only exacerbated latent differences in doctrine and social attitudes. As a result, 1976 may yet turn out to be the year that the evangelicals won the White House but lost cohesiveness as a distinct force in American religion and culture.[109]

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[109] "Born Again!" Newsweek, p. 78.

Chapter 3

BARTH THE EVANGELICAL

BARTH'S CONFESSION OF FAITH

Preliminary Remarks

Christian faith means believers in action. It makes little sense to discuss Calvinism without some reference to John Calvin. Theology cannot be viewed in the void; theologies need theologians. Of course, this is obvious. It is so obvious hardly anyone lingers over it. This study lingers right here.

"Being" and "acting" are all too often divorced from one another. Christian biographies are created to inspire others to action. Christian theologies entice students to reflection. But human beings are both act and essence, and it is humanity that constitutes both the resource and audience for the proclamation of God's Gospel.

Accordingly, in studying Karl Barth both his person and his theological work are understood as valuable sources for the continuing task of constructing a positive evangelicalism. In other words, Barth lived and worked like any man, but also as a Christian. Moreover, Barth was celebrated within his own lifetime as the greatest theologian of his time and one of the greatest of all time. Of course,

while these claims can, and have been disputed, the fact remains that Barth's contribution to modern theological understanding was considerable.

However, in light of the concern for evangelical theology, the question might still be raised, why Barth? The only answer that can justify his place in this study is that positive theology is redemptive theologizing. What this means, is taking the best from Barth and leaving the rest. Whether or not all evangelicals agree that Barth was an evangelical is, in this sense, incidental.

At the same time, if Barth was an evangelical, then his value as a resource for evangelicalism is even greater. This is so because then Barth can easily, and profitably, be appealed to as an example and inspiration. Of course, Socrates is an inspiration too. But an evangelical inspiration is the man who, like the Apostle Paul, looked not to himself but to God. This God-directed appeal by word and deed is what contributes to theology, and when that appeal is through Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of man, that appeal is truly evangelical.

Thus, this chapter argues for what it, to some degree, presupposes. Karl Barth, the man acting in history, was an evangelical Christian. To be sure, Barth was hardly an American evangelical! Then, too, his fondness for the term fundamentalist was of about the same degree as that voiced by J. Gresham Machen. But the evidence of history reveals a man who was an evangelical. It is that evidence

this chapter examines.

At this point, a remark about labels is in order. Barth has often been called "neo-orthodox." Now, in itself, this term carries no pejorative connotations. It simply means "new orthodox." Historically the term describes those theologians who, after World War I, turned away from liberalism and back toward orthodoxy. But, their orthodoxy was called "new" because it was not identical to the older orthodoxy. Rather, it represented an extension of orthodox thought. While clinging to many orthodox affirmations it also refused to release some liberal ideas.

Historically, Barth was recognized as one of the founders of neo-orthodoxy. However, in the course of historical development two important things took place. First, Barth himself moved further and further toward the traditional orthodoxy and further away from all liberal forms of theology. However, the neo-orthodox movement lapsed back toward liberalism. It became a corrected liberalism.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that even from his beginning as a "neo-orthodox" theologian, Barth, and those with him, started with a clearly evangelical vision:

> The fear that a Christianity dominated by the thought-forms of a disintegrating culture could not survive, and, even more, that a "culture religion" could have no message of hope to a society that despaired of its powers, was the driving force in this creative effort to reestablish Christian faith on the foundations of God's revelation in scripture rather than on the foundations of Western scientific, political

or social thought.[1]

Of course, there are those who persist in regarding Barth as neo-orthodox. Within certain given contexts of consideration this is not objectionable. But those who persist in using the term as a means to dismiss Barth with little further attention succeed only in perpetuating their own ignorance and that of those who follow them. This is especially true in light of the more responsible evaluations offered by evangelical scholars like F. F. Bruce and E. J. Carnell. A printed dialogue with Bruce speaks clearly to this issue:

> Q. I am considerably perplexed by the variety of opinions I hear expressed about the orthodoxy of Karl Barth. According to some evangelical leaders, he was the pioneer in a return to truly biblical theology; according to others, he was a dangerous neo-modernist, all the more dangerous because of his use of orthodox terminology. Where does the truth lie?
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> A. It lies much more with the former representation than with the latter. Barth stood squarely within the Reformation tradition. . . . There is no point in continuing to criticize him on the basis of writings which he later considered himself to have outgrown as belonging to his "egg-shell" stage.[2]

The latter part of Bruce's comment is as important as that which precedes it. Each and every time Barth is criticized solely on the basis of his earlier writings the critic reveals his irresponsible approach to historical data. In this regard, it is very important to linger yet awhile

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[1]Langdon B. Gilkey, "Neo-orthodoxy," Handbook of Christian Theology, ed. A. A. Cohen and M. Halverson (New York: World Publishing Co., 1958), p. 256.

[2]F. F. Bruce, Answers to Questions (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), p. 155f.

longer on this subject and justify a bit more completely the judgment that Barth was an evangelical. Not only this, but it is also important to briefly review the most important instance of irresponsible judgment, correct it, and offer some reasons for why evangelicals so often misunderstand Barth.

E. J. Carnell is one in essential agreement with Bruce concerning Barth. In 1962, Carnell was present at the University of Chicago as a panel member questioning Barth. Finding the occasion an unforgetable experience, Carnell later summed up his impressions for the Christian Century in an article titled , "Barth as Inconsistent Evangelical." While not finding that his dialogue with Barth, "left nothing wanting," Carnell concluded, "I am convinced that Barth is an inconsistent evangelical rather than an inconsistent liberal."[3]

The inconsistency, in Carnell's opinion, was a lack by Barth of doctrinal consistency. Carnell questioned Barth's hermeneutic and wondered if his theology was really as safe from the threat of subjectivity as it might be. But what impressed Carnell, even more than the greatness and weakness of various doctrines, was the person of Barth himself. Carnell commented, "There was nothing affected about him; it seemed obvious that he lives by the grace that he

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[3]E. J. Carnell, "Barth as Inconsistent Evangelical," The Christian Century, XXIII (6 June, 1962), 714.

preaches."[4] Finally, Carnell confessed:

> I am utterly ashamed of the manner in which extreme fundamentalists in America continue to attack Barth. I felt actual physical pain when I read in Time magazine that Cornelius Van Til, one of my former professors, had said that Barthianism is more hostile to the Reformers than is Roman Catholicism. I propose that Van Til ask God to forgive him for such an irresponsible judgment.[5]

Carnell was not alone in feeling so strongly about Van Til's analysis and judgment of Barth. The works of Van Til on Barth constitute the most serious example of irresponsibility in study and report. This is not to say that Van Til's books reflect the worst understanding of Barth.[6] But Van Til's irresponsibility constitutes a serious problem because Van Til has such a wide and sysmpathetic hearing. Since this is an allegation of some importance to this study several further remarks are in order.

First, it must be recognized that Van Til, a colleague of J. G. Machen at first Princeton and later Westminster, is a theologian of high standing in the Reformed tradition. If his work at one point is defective that by no means necessitates a dismissal of his considerable contribution to theology. Nor must it be allowed that there is no value whatsoever in Van Til's study of Barth. Yet, while acknowledging the time and effort spent by Van Til in producing Christianity and Barthianism, The Defense of the

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[4]Ibid. [5]Ibid.

[6]That dubious honor has several candidates. In evangelical circles the worst understanding may be that presented by C. C. Ryrie, Neo-orthodoxy: an Evangelical Evaluation of Barthianism (Chicago: Moody Press, 1956).

Faith, and The New Modernism: An Appraisal of the Theology of Barth and Brunner, as well as various articles on the subject, it must also be acknowledged that he missed the mark.

Colin Brown, Bernard Ramm, T. L. Haitjema, M. P. Van Dijk, Hans Urs von Balthasar, G. C. Berkouwer, and Barth himself are included among those who have cried out in protest against Van Til. It is significant that many of those who have protested belong to the same Reformed understanding upheld by Van Til. One of them, Berkouwer, devoted a lengthy appendix in his classic work on Barth to a discussion of Van Til's interpretation. Berkouwer noted:

> My main objection to Van Til's interpretation is not that he criticizes Barth. I criticize Barth also, and in this very book, but Van Til's analysis does not correspond to the deepest intents of Barth's theology. Hence it does not surprise me that Barth says in amazement that he cannot recognize himself at all in The New Modernism.[7]

Colin Brown observed that Van Til's critique, "often appears to take much for granted, not least what Barth actually says and also the biblical exegesis which Van Til claims to underlie his own thought."[8] Now, it must again be emphasized that both Brown and Berkouwer are evangelicals. The work by Berkouwer is generally regarded as one of the best and most important books on Barth. In fact, Barth

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[7]G. C. Berkouwer, The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, trans. Harry R. Boer (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 388.

[8]Colin Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967), p. 155f.

referred to it as, "the great book on myself . . . written with such care and goodwill. . . ."[9] The judgments of Brown and Berkouwer of Van Til are responsible judgments.

A major contributing factor of Van Til's failure to correctly evaluate Barth rests in a faulty historical perspective. The caution enjoined by F. F. Bruce, a sound canon for right interpretation, was violated by Van Til. Hans Urs von Balthasar found it ridiculuous that in the late 1930s so many insisted on interpreting Barth's later thought by his earlier work. But he went on to remark:

> The situation is even more ridiculous ten years later (1947), when Cornelius van Til (The New Modernism) tries to explain the whole theology of Barth and Brunner on the basis of their earlier positions and in terms of the philosophical principles that are supposedly at the root of their system.[10]

The obvious corrective is a renewed struggle for the correct historical perspective. Conclusions about Barth based on his Epistle to the Romans, published in 1922, violated sound principles of scholarship. The greatly unfortunate instance of this in Van Til's work too easily promotes the same error by lesser minds.

However, this mistake is but one factor in why Barth has been misunderstood by so many American evangelicals. There are several other important reasons. But before list-

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[9]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, IV/2, trans. G. W. Bromiley, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), p. xii.

[10]Hans Urs von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, trans. John Drury (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 45. Note that this work is also regarded as one of the best written about Barth.

ing these it is important to recognize at least four reasons why American conservatives believed they discerned in Barth a modernist in disguise. They felt Barth had cut himself loose from religious experience, natural theology, philosophic rationalism, and the evangelical view of biblical revelation in propositional statements.[11]

It seems possible, though, that these reasons are of lesser importance than other, usually unrecognized factors. This is not to say that American evangelicals have been wholly incorrect in their assessment of Barth. But other, largely unseen reasons exist that have produced some misunderstanding of Barth. First, as noted above, there has been an insistence on speaking of the Barth of crisis theology. With this has been a corresponding ignorance of Barth's Church Dogmatics. As one American theologian put it, "Just a few were willing to consider the possibility that Barth's theology might have undergone some change. . . ."[12] Second, there is the geographical barrier. Barth lived and worked on the Continent. He was a Swiss trained in German theology. Failure to consider the cultural differences, seen in approaching Barth as if he was an American writing directly to the American Church, obviously results in misunderstanding.

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[11]Sydney E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 944.

[12]Robert T. Osborn, "Positivism and Promise in the Theology of Karl Barth," Interpretation, XXV (July, 1971), 284.

Of course, recognition of this problem cannot in itself be enough. Indeed, "some charitably concluded that Barth was simply too European for the American mind."[13] Third, Barth was a Reformed theologian. To American evangelicals out of touch with this tradition the result was misunderstanding, or, in some instances, disagreement simply because Barth followed Calvin and not Wesley. Fourth, Barth spoke in a context of ecumenics and not denominationalism. The sectarianism so a part of the life of Americans was not perceived by Barth as at all desirable. Accordingly, those American conservatives who tried to understand Barth without first setting aside their ecclesiastical provincialism were liable to misjudgments and false pronouncements. Fifth, caricatures by Barth of "fundamentalists," and by Americans of "Barthianism," have not contributed greatly to understanding by either side. Sixth, a fundamental structural difference exists that has led to problems in interpretation. Barth was creative. He dialogued with tradition. But, when evangelicals have not completely forsaken tradition, they have often been content to merely recite it. Therefore, they cannot truly understand or appreciate Barth's role in the advancement of the tradition. A prominent evangelical theologian posed the problem this way:

> Barth deliberately seeks a new language in which to state the Gospel and to fashion its proclamation in the modern age. This may be sound in principle, but it raises its own problems. The language is often difficult.

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[13] Ibid.

> It makes old truths sound strange. Does it also make them different?[14]

Finally, failure to understand the historical background to Barth and his role in history has resulted in false judgments. Only ignorance can explain calling Barth a liberal. While this factor and the others listed may or may not fully explain American misconceptions of Barth it remains true that, "in any case he was not well understood and he could complain, with considerable justification, that in most American interpretations of his theology he 'could hardly recognize in them anything else than my own ghost!' "[15]

With these considerations in view, an examination of Barth's life can correct some misunderstandings and promote the contention that Barth was an evangelical. While a man may convincingly hide heresy in the garb or orthodoxy, he must still live his life in the searchlight of history. Even here, of course, mere morality may not mean godliness. Yet, the close correspondence between confessing Christian faith and living the Christian ethic certainly, at the very least, indicates a genuine Christianity. When the confession and ethic is evangelical, what is the logical conclusion?

Barth's Confession

When Karl Barth enters the heavenly gate he first

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[14] G. W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth," Creative Minds in Creative Theology, ed. P. E. Hughes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 51.

[15] Osborn, loc. cit.

> expects to inquire after Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and then perhaps after Augustine and Thomas, Luther and Calvin, and Schleiermacher. The scope of interest evident in this personal confession hints at the difficulty of finding a place for Karl Barth in the theological filing system. Many have tried to place him and have respectively called him a Neo-Supernaturalist, Neo-Marcionite, Neo-Modernist, Christomonist, and even Christomaniac. In a more general, and less pungent, but perhaps more pertinent way, his theology has become known as dialectical, kerygmatic, or simply as theology of the Word of God. These labels, however, frequently tell more about their authors than about Barth. At times he expressed chagrin that many concerned themselves more with Barth than with the object for which he sought to win attention. They seemed to forget that all flesh is grass, even Barth's theology. Only the Word of God shall stand forever. All Barth ever wanted to say is just that.[16]

This testimonial to Barth is very much in harmony with Barth's own testimony. Eberhard Busch, Barth's assistant during the last years of his life, has provided an illuminating glimpse into Barth's thought during that period. Busch's Letzte Zeugnisse provides some of the last published thoughts of Barth. Herbert Hartwell's article, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," is a careful digest of Letzte Zeugnisse and other last writings of Barth. In his article, Hartwell observes Barth's continued activities during his retirement, "in the service of the cause to which he had devoted his life, that is, his witness to Jesus Christ and to all that is implied in that name."[17] Hartwell's brief review of the five articles included in Letzte Zeugnisse

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[16]Frederick L. Herzog, "Theologian of the Word of God," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 315.

[17]Herbert Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," Scottish Journal of Theology, XXVI (May, 1973), 184.

provides a good introduction to what he terms "Barth's last testimonies."[18]

Hartwell notes, "It is indeed no accident that the first of these last testimonies is a witness to Jesus Christ."[19] This testimony is indeed just that--a testimony. Written as a personal witness to Jesus Christ, the language is devotional rather than theological. In fact, the testimony was formulated in response, "to a Parisian paper's request in November 1968 for a testimony to who and what Jesus Christ is for Barth. . . ."[20] Rather than claiming a special mystical relationship with Christ the testimony is, "of what Jesus Christ means, or at least could mean, in our own life. . . ."[21]

Barth referred to six aspects of the life and work of Christ. First, Jesus Christ is the motive and foundation of the covenant between God and man. Second, Christ is the free gift offered to all men. He is the content and fulfillment of God's covenant with man. Third, Jesus is the One in whom God has reconciled the world to himself. Fourth, Christ has done his work in life and death for the sake of the world and the Church. Fifth, Jesus is the One who has risen from the dead and who will finally reveal to all the world the victory accomplished by his life and death. Finally, sixth, Jesus Christ is the Word of God spoken to

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[18]Ibid., pp. 182-203. [19]Ibid., p. 192.

[20]Ibid. [21]Ibid.

every human being.[22]

This last point, in particular, recalls the historic confession uttered in the Barmen Declaration of 1934. There Barth wrote, "Jesus Christ, as he is testified to us in the Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God, whom we are to hear, whom we are to trust and obey in life and in death."[23] These words voice no idle, speculative theology. They constitute a personal confession within a community confession, delivered at a time and in a place that demanded great courage and the utmost sincerity. These words reflect an evangelical commitment by a minister and his church. Taken together with the words of Barth's Church Dogmatics and other mature writings there seems to be little if any reason to suspect that Barth's confession was not essentially evangelical.

OBEDIENCE IN THE SEARCHLIGHT OF HISTORY

Background

Karl Barth's life covered eight decades of European history. He was born half a century after the deaths of Hegel and Schleiermacher. But only some three decades separated Barth from the lifetimes of Kierkegaard and F. C. Baur. When Barth was born, theological liberalism was

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[22]Ibid., pp. 192-194.

[23]John H. Leith, ed., Creeds of the Churches (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1973), p. 520.

enjoying great popularity on the Continent. The great scholars Adolf Harnack, Hermann Gunkel, and Adolf Jülicher were in the process of beginning long, distinguished careers.

An impressive line of liberal dogmatic theologians could be traced from Schleiermacher through Albrecht Ritschl to Wilhelm Herrmann. As the generation that included Barth, Brunner (b. 1889), Bultmann (b. 1884), and Tillich (b. 1886) grew up, the theological faculties were dominated by liberals. Church historians like Harnack and Ernst Troeltsch were inculcating new students with their interpretations of Church dogma and history. It was a time of optimism and supreme confidence in science and reason.

German idealism was firmly entrenched in the thought of the late nineteenth century into which Barth was born. Hans Urs von Balthasar has identified this factor as crucial to properly understanding Barth. He writes, "We gain further insight if we look for the roots of Barth's thought in German Idealism, which found its first transcendental form with Kant and its definitive form from Protestant theology with Schleiermacher."[24] It was all the more amazing then that, "the content of Barth's thought is directly opposed to that of German idealism."[25]

These factors and others in the background to Barth's life point to the truly remarkable character of his evangelical theology. His was a life and work forged in a cultural

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[24]Von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, p. 170.

[25]Ibid., p. 174.

context greatly influenced by German idealism, theological liberalism, and a nationalism fortified by the concepts of a culture Christianity. Yet from this Barth emerged as a man converted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Not only was Barth changed, but he initiated changes that would alter the lives of many others.

The Years of Youth (1886-1915)

Karl Barth was born 10 May, 1886 in Basel, Switzerland. His grandfather and father were both Reformed ministers. However, his father, Fritz Barth, was also a professor of theology and a specialist in the New Testament. His book Einleitung in das Neue Testament, published in 1908, remained for many years a very useful introductory text. Fritz Barth was not a liberal and Karl was raised, "where his faith was nourished in positive evangelical theology. . . ."[26]

In 1889, Fritz Barth was appointed Professor in New Testament and Early Church History at the University of Bern. Here Karl, his other brother Heinrich, and his younger brothers all grew up and received their early academic training. But in 1902, when Karl was sixteen, his first interest in systematic theology was kindled by his course of instruction for Confirmation. "On the evening of his

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[26]Thomas F. Torrance, Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910-1931 (London, SCM Press, 1962), p. 15. Hereafter cited by KBET.

Confirmation day he boldly resolved to become a theologian. . . ."[27]

So, at the age of eighteen, in 1904, Karl entered the University of Bern where he studied under his father and the liberal dogmatician Herman Lüdemann. While at Bern, he became particularly interested in the philosophy of Kant and the theology of Schleiermacher. But after two years at Bern, Barth wished to go to Marburg to study under the famed neo-Kantian Wilhelm Herrmann. However, Barth's father opposed this. The elder Barth, "wanted him to be exposed to a more conservative influence."[28] Accordingly, Karl entered study at the University of Berlin during the Fall semester of 1906.

At Berlin, Barth heard lectures by Adolf Harnack, Karl Hall, Hermann Gunkel, and Julius Kaftan. At this time he was more attracted to Harnack than the others although he still desired to study under Herrmann. When he had finished reading Herrmann's Ethik, he again desired to move his studies to Marburg. But instead, in deference to his father, he returned to Bern for the summer term. Following his father's desires he enrolled at the University of Tübingen in the fall of 1907.[29]

Two important events ocurred while he was there.

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[27]Ibid.

[28]Karl Barth, How I Changed My Mind, intro. and epilogue, John Godsey (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 18. Hereafter cited by HCM.

[29]Ibid., p. 78f.

First, Barth was not at all attracted to his father's choice, Adolf Schlatter. "Barth did not find Schlatter very appealing, . . . and wrote letters of complaint to his father, saying: 'I told you so!' "[30] Nevertheless, the move to Tübingen still proved to be significant. After hearing Theodor Häring lecture on systematic theology, Barth again became quite interested in the subject.

Finally, in 1908, Barth was able to go to Marburg. There he spent three semesters under Johannes Weiss, Adolf Jülicher, and, most importantly, Herrmann. Of the latter man, Barth was later to say, "Hermann was the theological teacher of my student years."[31] While at Marburg, Barth was also further influenced by the neo-Kantian philosophy represented by Hermann Cohen and Paul Natorp.

After completing his studies at Marburg, Barth again returned to Bern where he passed his theological examinations and, at age twenty-three, was ordained a minister in the Swiss Reformed Church. Rather than taking a ministerial post, though, Barth went back to Marburg where he became an editorial assistant on the staff of Christliche Welt, edited by Martin Rade. Then, in late 1909, he returned to Switzerland.

During 1910, Barth served as the assistant pastor in

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[30]Ibid., p. 19.

[31]Karl Barth, Theology and Church: Shorter Writings, 1920-1928, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith, intro. T. F. Torrance (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 238.

a Swiss Reformed church at Geneva. But in 1911, he moved to a pastorate at Safenwill, a village in Aargau, north-central Switzerland. A year later, his father died at Bern. In these days Barth was being confronted by all the concerns that face a pastor in any small town. He was aided in 1913 by two important persons. On 26 March, 1913, Barth married Nelly Hoffmann. Also in that year his friend Eduard Thurneysen took a pastorate in the neighboring village of Leutwil.

From Thurneysen came the needed counterpoint in dialogue that was so necessary to the development of each. Thurneysen introduced Barth to the works of Johann Blumhardt, and his son Christoph. The Blumhardts' theology found a ready audience in the two young pastors. Barth and Thurneysen shared in the development of one another in many ways. Torrance writes:

> Although they could not meet as often as they wished, they corresponded regularly with one another and thought out together their ministerial and theological problems; together they often journeyed to Bad Boll in Württemburg in their attraction to the preaching of Christoph Blumhardt and their desire to learn from his passionate concern to bring the message of the Kingdom and compassion of God to bear upon the daily life of man in all its redeeming power; and together they faced the fierce critical and indeed atheistic questions of modern man and sought for their answers in the Word of God.[32]

Among Barth's other acquaintances in these early years were Emil Brunner, also a young Swiss pastor, and Rudolph Bultmann, whom Barth had come to know while still a

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[32]Torrance, KBET, p. 17.

student at Marburg in 1908. But it was Thurneysen who became and remained Barth's closest friend. In their involvement with the people of their communities the two had become religious socialists. Yet the religious liberalism they both had pledged allegiance to did not supply them with the answers needed for the questions of their ministries. They began looking elsewhere.

In 1914, a momentous event took place. In early August, ninety-three German intellectuals, including many of Barth's former instructors, proclaimed their support of the war policy of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II. Later, Barth recalled:

> In despair over what this indicated about the signs of the time I suddenly realized that I could not any longer follow either their ethics and dogmatics or their understanding of the Bible and of history. For me at least, 19th-century theology no longer held any future.[33]

Crisis in the Heart (1916-1930)

Although Barth became an official member of the Social Democratic Party in 1915, he was already moving further and further away from the ideas undergirding socialism. A series of addresses later collected and printed under the title, Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie (1924), were delivered by Barth in 1916. These messages were indicative of Barth's changing thought as he moved away from liberalism.[34]

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[33]Karl Barth, The Humanity of God, trans. J. N. Thomas and T. Wieser (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 14.

[34]Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie (München, 1924) has been translated into English by Douglas Horton as The

Barth was discovering, as he expressed it, that, "within the Bible there is a strange, new world, the world of God."[35]

In 1917, Barth and Thurneysen published a volume of their sermons entitled Suchet Gott, so werdet ihr leben!, a work again expressing an exciting new relationship with the Bible.[36] But a far greater work was being prepared. Throughout the long days of 1918, Barth labored over some notes he was keeping as he studied the Apostle Paul's letter to the Church at Rome. At last he gathered them together. In 1919, these notes were published as a commentary entitled, The Epistle to the Romans.[37] In the first printing only 1,000 copies were ventured. In Switzerland, the response was slow and unenthusiastic. But some 700 copies were sold in Germany, "where the book found a much more open and ready response among those whose lives had been shattered by the experiences of war and defeat."[38]

The impact created by the book startled Barth. Later

Word of God and the Word of Man (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928).

[35]Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man, p. 33.

[36]Suchet Gott, so werdet ihr leben! (Bern, 1917), had remained, as of 1960, untranslated. The title is translated as, "Seek God and you shall live." If the work has been translated into English, it is unknown to the author at the time of this writing.

[37]From this point on, German titles will be put forward in the text only when the work has remained untranslated into English. All titles given in the text are those of the standard English translations.

[38]Barth, HCM, p. 24.

he reflected:

> As I look back upon my course, I seem to myself as one who, ascending the dark staircase of a church tower and trying to steady himself, reached for the bannister, but got hold of the bell rope instead. To his horror, he had then to listen to what the great bell had sounded over him and not over him alone.[39]

The reactions were rarely equivocal. Those who responded were either keenly distressed or greatly enthusiastic. Among the many who responded negatively were some of Barth's former professors like Jülicher and Harnack. On the other hand, Brunner, Friedrich Gogarten and Georg Merz, three young theologians, were all very impressed. Merz, in particular, was instrumental in getting Barth to bring out an edition in Germany.

Barth agreed to a new edition on the condition he be allowed to rewrite the book. This task he worked on throughout 1920. In that year, Barth was involved in a personal confrontation with his former teacher, Adolf Harnack. In April, the two were both present at the Aargau Student Conference where Barth had been invited as a lecturer. This meeting left the liberal historian more certain than ever that Barth had forsaken his earlier training.

In 1921, after thorough rewriting, the second edition of The Epistle to the Romans was published. Barth's

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[39]Karl Barth, Die Lehre Vom Worte Gottes: Prolegomena zur christlichen Dogmatik (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1927), p. ix. Translated by Paul Lehman, "The Changing Course of a Corrective Theology," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 334. Also quoted in HCM, p. 25.

sensitivity to his critics and his own continued growth combined to produce, "a new edition in which the original has been so completely rewritten that it may be claimed that no stone remains in its old place."[40] This edition also received a stirring response. As a result of his commentary Barth was thrust upon a new career.

During the months of September and October, 1921, Barth settled into his new position at the University of Göttingen as Honorary Professor of Reformed Theology. The days of his pastorate in Safewil had acquainted him with pastoral problems but now he was faced with lecturing on Reformed theology. The difficulty this imposed on Barth was revealed in his correspondence with Thurneysen and in various comments he made during this time. Even in July of 1922, when he was invited to explain his theology to a meeting of ministers, Barth felt compelled to say, "With theology proper I have hardly made a start. Whether I shall ever get on with it or whether I shall even wish to get on with it, I do not know."[41]

But, the way ahead beckoned, and Barth responded. In 1922, together with Thurneysen and Friedrich Gogarten, the journal Zwischen den Zeiten was founded. The title, "Between the Times," was an appropriate one for the theology

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[40]Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans (2nd edition), trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 2.

[41]Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man, p. 98.

it represented. A so-called "school" of young theologians had gathered around Barth. Variously called "dialectical," or "crisis" theology, the new thought looked to Barth for its leadership. In 1923, with Georg Merz as editor, the journal published its first issue. Not surprisingly, the first article was one by Barth entitled, "The Need and Promise of Christian Preaching."

Although Barth had not earned a doctorate during his student days, he was given an honorary doctor of theology degree from the University of Münster in 1922. However, Barth's expertise in theology was continually deepening. In 1924, at the age of thirty-eight, Barth delivered his first lectures in dogmatics entitled, "Instruction in the Christian Religion." But Barth was uncomfortable at Göttingen, a school oriented strongly to Lutheranism.

Therefore, when an invitation was made to him to come to the University of Münster as Professor of Dogmatics and New Testament Exegesis, Barth quickly accepted. The move was accomplished and Barth began lecturing at Münster in the fall of 1925. During this time Barth also maintained the steady course of writing and publishing that he had begun back before the war years. A second volume of sermons with Thurneysen as co-author had been published in 1924 under the title Come, Holy Spirit! A commentary on the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, entitled The Resurrection of the Dead, appeared in 1924. Another commentary, The Epistle to the Philippians, was published in 1927.

Before the commentary on Philippians was published, Barth had already begun work on his first major attempt at writing a systematic theology. "Die Christliche Dogmatik was published deliberately as an Entwurf, that is, as a project or first sketch."[42] Released in 1927, this volume represented a dogmatic theology grounded in revelation. In this regard, "the new dogmatics was admittedly a complete break with what had preceded it, e.g., the Dogmatik of Barth's own teacher, Herrmann."[43]

Then, in 1930, Barth again moved, this time to a post at the University of Bonn. The newly appointed Professor of Systematic Theology was joined by an assistant, Charlotte von Kirschbaum, who was received into the Barth household and who remained with the family for over thirty years as Barth's secretary. It was at Bonn that Barth made the discovery that would liberate his theological work.

Crisis in the World (1931-1960)

In 1931, Barth's Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum was published. Few at the time, or afterwards, recognized its great importance for Barth. In his Preface, Barth wrote:

> It did seem appropriate that at some time, both for my own sake and for others, I ought to make a definite statement of some of the reasons why I find more of

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[42]Torrance, KBET, p. 107. The title is translated as "Christian Dogmatics."

[43]Ibid.

> value and significance in this theologian than in others. I hope I may be successful in making both sides give careful attention to him, for so far they have failed to do so.[44]

Barth's careful, exegetical analysis of Anselm's Proslogion led him to an interpretation directly at odds with certain other scholars. But what Barth discovered in Anselm was of decisive importance for him. Thus, it was with remorse that Barth found that this, his favorite book, was virtually ignored. Many years later, in the Preface to the second edition, issued in 1958, he remarked:

> Only a comparatively few commentators, for example Hans Urs von Balthasar, have realized that my interest in Anselm was never a side-issue for me or--assuming I am more or less correct in my historical interpretation of St. Anselm--realized how much it has influenced me or been absorbed into my own line of thinking. Most of them have completely failed to see that in this book on Anselm I am working with a vital key, if not the key, to an understanding of that whole process of thought that has impressed me more and more in my Church Dogmatics as the only one proper to theology.[45]

Renewed by his discoveries from Anselm, Barth once again began the task of constructing a systematic theology. From his earlier, aborted attempt, he retained revelation as the correct ground of theology. But, when his new work's first part appeared in 1932, several important changes were evident. Now titled Church Dogmatics, the new volume displayed Barth's rigorous effort to excise all the trappings of an existential philosophy.

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[44]Karl Barth, Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum, trans. Ian W. Robertson (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 7.

[45]Ibid., p. 11.

Yet, just as Barth was entering the work with which he would be primarily concerned for most of the rest of his life, storm clouds were gathering once more over Europe. In Germany, the swastika of Adolph Hitler's Nazi party was becoming an increasingly common sight. On 25 April, 1933, the "Evangelical Church of the German Nation" was created as the official state church, and the "German Christian" movement, an affirmation of Nazism, gained strength daily. The newly organized "church" immediately issued an enthusiastic declaration:

> A mighty National Movement has captured and exalted our German Nation. An all-embracing reorganization of the State is taking place within the awakened German people. We give our hearty assent to this turning-point of history. God has given us this: to Him be the glory.[46]

In mid-May, Barth was called to Berlin on the grounds of his alleged social democratic leanings. But since leaving Switzerland, Barth had not been actively engaged in politics. However, by the first week of July the situation was such that Barth confided to a visitor that at any moment he might be relieved of his post. The next day he was again called to Berlin.[47] Barth's visitor noted:

> At least we have in Barth a man who knows his position and his power, and one who is willing to become a

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[46]Karl Barth, Theological Existence To-day! A Plea for Theological Freedom, trans. R. Birch Hoyle (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1933), p. 23, cited by Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, trans. and intro. Robert McAfee Brown (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1964), p. 23.

[47]E. G. Homrighausen, "Barth Resists Hitler," The Christian Century, L (26 July, 1933), 954.

> martyr for the cause of the gospel. Those who have been critical of him now know that the man is genuine. His is the one voice now that dares to speak against the tremendous tide of national feeling, even now when everyone else has lost his head. There is no better time to stand by Barth personally than now, for any appeal to Hitler, any other protest, will avail nothing. . . . Barth will not consent to a political rulership of the church; he will have it ruled only by the living word of God.[48]

Upon Barth's return from Berlin, he joined with Thurneysen in the creation of a new journal, Theologische Existenz heute. The title, "Theological Existence Today," reflected the conditions in Germany. For them, theological existence became a matter of day by day concern. At the same time, the summer issue of Zwischen den Zeiten was the last for that journal. Barth and Thurneysen had grown further apart from Brunner, Bultmann, Gogarten, Merz, and the others who had contributed to the journal and once associated themselves with the dialectical theology.

Throughout the long summer Barth firmly resisted the Nazi church movement. In America and elsewhere watchful observers, impressed at the solitary splendor of this theologian, wrote tributes to Barth. One editorial commented:

> Barth will not bow the knee unto Baal, and his knees are nowhere more stiff than when he declares against an Aryan church and asserts that "if the German Evangelical church excludes Jewish Christians, or treats them as inferior, it is no longer a Christian church."[49]

During this time of trial many looked to Barth for direction. Among them was a rather remarkable young man,

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[48] Ibid., p. 955.

[49] "A Bold Retreat from Current Problems," The Christian Century, L (30 August, 1933), 1075.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The two had first met in Bonn in the summer of 1931. In the years that followed they maintained a lively correspondence. In 1933, faced with the decision whether to go to London to pastor a German church or remain in Germany, Bonhoeffer sought Barth's advice. The reply from Barth very much impressed Bonhoeffer but, with the support of his family, Dietrich resolved to make the move anyway. "Barth was very annoyed with him for going to London, and impressed upon him very deeply that he must return home to Germany again in order to support the Confessing Church."[50]

However, many left Germany for a variety of reasons. This forced those who remained behind to assume an even more active role of leadership. Together with the German pastor Martin Niemöller, Barth maintained an active support of the newly formed Confessing Church. Niemöller's presence as the political and oratorical leader of this group enabled Barth to devote his considerable energies to formulating the theological posture that the young church would adopt. Therefore, when the formally organized German Confessional Church issued its declaration at Barmen, in Wuppertal, Germany on 31 May, 1934, Barth was its chief architect. The Barmen Confession set itself in unyielding opposition to the false doctrines engendered by Nazism.

Immediately, new difficulties beset Barth and his

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[50]Sabine Leibholz-Bonhoeffer, The Bonhoeffers: Portrait of a Family (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971), p. 48.

colleagues. By the spring of the following year the Nazis were at last successful in forcing Barth out of the country. On 25 June, 1935, Barth left Germany to return to the city of his birth. At Basel, he was quickly installed as an instructor in the university. Despite his new professorship Barth did not cease to work in every way possible to help the Confessing Church. As the situation in Germany deteriorated, Barth's Credo appeared. It was dedicated to Niemöller, Hans Asmussen, Hermann Hesse, Karl Immer, Heinrich Vogel, and all the others engaged in the intensifying German church struggle.

After reestablishing himself in Basel, Barth visited Italy and Hungary in 1936/37. Despite a full lecturing schedule, and the responsibilities of his family, Barth still found time to work on his Church Dogmatics. The concluding part of the first volume appeared in 1938. During this time, Barth was also honored by an invitation to deliver the 1937/38 Gifford Lectures at Aberdeen, Scotland. This he did, addressing himself to the teaching of the Reformation and recalling the Scottish Confession of 1560.[51]

In 1938, Barth sent a letter to the Czechs through Joseph Hromadka urging them to resist Nazism. This was followed by a letter to the French in December, 1939. Then, in October, 1940, Barth wrote another letter to the French

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[51]These lectures were collected and published under the title The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, trans. J. L. M. Haire and Ian Henderson (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938).

Protestants. With the outbreak of war Barth was enlisted as a captain in the Swiss army and throughout the war he took part in guarding his country's borders. A steady stream of pamphlets and articles flowed from his pen as he warned of Nazism, encouraged Christians, and urged positive actions to defeat the Nazis.

In 1941, Barth sent a letter to the English. As before, Barth wrote at the invitation of Christian leaders. He wasted little time in coming to the point:

> Let me begin with an assertion in which I think most of you will find yourselves substantially in agreement with me: we Christians in all lands find ourselves, as far as this war is concerned, in a situation strikingly different from anything that we experienced twenty-five years ago: that is to say, different in so far as we do not just accept this war as a necessary evil, but that we approve it as a righteous war, which God does not simply allow, but which He commands us to wage.[52]

This strong attitude was also communicated to Bonhoeffer when he was able to visit Barth during the last part of February, 1941. The Confessing Church, robbed of much of its vital leadership, needed help. Niemöller had preached his last sermon on 27 June, 1937. After his arrest that summer, the Church had often ceased to speak of little else than its own persecutions. This distressed Barth. But he continued to do whatever was possible.

In April, 1942, Barth sent a letter to the Norwegian Christians. He followed this with one to the Dutch in July

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[52]Karl Barth, This Christian Cause, intro. J. A. Mackay (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941). No translator is given.

and, finally, one to the Americans in December. The letter to the American Christians revealed Barth's sense of urgency and his keen awareness of the situation both in Europe and in America. He asked the American people:

> Aren't you the least bit disturbed by the trivial realization that obviously it is necessary now, now, now--and if it is impossible now, then at least very soon--to act, help, fight with might and main, because the future may depend on what is done now (or very soon)--or is left undone?[53]

Yet, with the war's end, Barth was the spokesman for the Church in behalf of the German people. He advocated political freedom as the cure for Germany. In the fall of 1945, Barth returned to Germany. He met with the recently released Niemöller and other associates of the Confessing Church. In response to the American criticism of Niemöller, Barth said, "It was wrong. . . . Niemöller was a nationalist but never a National Socialist. He is one of the most trustworthy elements in the new leadership."[54] But, Barth warned, there were problems that must be met to insure that Germany would not again succumb to a radical nationalism. Yet, with leaders like Niemöller, Barth, "declared that he had returned with new hope for the life of the Evangelical Church in Germany."[55]

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[53]Karl Barth, The Church and the War, trans. A. H. Froendt, intro. S. M. Cavert (The Macmillan Co., 1944), p. 36.

[54]Robert Root, "Barth Returns to Germany," The Christian Century, LXII (19 December, 1945), 1412.

[55]Ibid., p. 1411.

Barth also visited with Rudolph Bultmann in Marburg. Since at least April, 1922, the two had corresponded and, despite their profound theological differences, became personal friends. "It is moving to observe how anxious Bultmann always was not to hurt Barth by his critical comments and how humble Barth was in firmly stating his own theological position."[56] But visits with his friends was only part of Barth's work.

He attended the Treysa conference as the only non-German delegate. He left this conference, convened to discuss the German Church situation after the war, with mixed feelings. "Barth urged that the Germans must adopt a more critical relationship to Martin Luther if they are to emancipate German Lutheranism from German nationalism."[57] He felt there were perhaps too many compromises but was grateful for what the conference did accomplish.

Barth's very presence at Treysa was a high compliment to his involvement with the Confessing Church. As before the war, German church leaders looked to Barth for advice. Many remembered his prophetic warnings. In fact:

> It is important to note that Barth was engaged in a public debate with the church authorities concerning the imperilment of the church by their blindness to realities and their indifference to doctrinal issues a full two years before the controversy over the

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[56]Herbert Hartwell, rev. of Karl Barth-Rudolph Bultmann Briefwechsel 1922-1966, ed. Bernd Jaspert (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1971), Scottish Journal of Theology, August, 1973, p. 361.

[57]Root, op. cit., p. 1412.

nazification of the church broke out.[58]

However, Barth resisted any temptations to glory in his perceptiveness. Rather, he turned his attention to the task of reconstruction. With special permission, Barth returned to the University of Bonn in the summer of 1946 to teach one semester of dogmatics. Upon his return to Basel he confided:

> Most people in the Germany of to-day have in their own way and in their own place endured and survived much, almost beyond all measure. I noted the same in my Bonn lads. With their grave faces, which had still to learn how to smile again, they no less impressed me than I them, I who was an alien, the centre of all sorts of gossip from old times. For me the situation will remain unforgetable.[59]

The experience was so pleasant that Barth repeated it in 1947. Then, in the spring of 1948, Barth visited Hungary to talk with leaders in the Reformed Church there. He had already, in 1946, visited Berlin and Dresden to meet with church leaders in East Germany. To both groups he counseled against armed resistance.

> Barth therefore asks Christians living under communist rule to be quite clear about the nature of the State in which they are living, but also and above all not to cease believing that <u>there also</u> the living God is supreme, and that <u>there also</u> it is important to be humbly faithful in whatever situation the Lord of the church has placed us. Beyond that, Barth remains silent. Not only the word of the prophet, but also his silence, can be disturbing and significant.[60]

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[58] James D. Smart, <u>The Divided Mind of Modern Theology: Karl Barth and Rudolph Bultmann 1908-1933</u> (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), p. 209.

[59] Karl Barth, <u>Dogmatics in Outline</u>, trans. G. T. Thomson (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 7.

[60] Casalis, <u>Portrait of Karl Barth</u>, p. 42.

This stance brought much criticism from the West where Barth had been expected to react to Communism as he had to Nazism. Instead, Barth replied to the West, "I regard anti-Communism as a matter of principle an evil even greater than Communism itself."[61] But this did not mean Barth had any inclination at all toward Communism. He wrote, "I decidedly prefer not to live within its sphere and do not wish anyone else to be forced to do so."[62] His point was that the West, in its zeal to stop Communism, was guilty of presenting itself as the blameless angel of light. Yet, he contended, they did not even attempt to understand the situation they had helped create.[63]

After the war, though, Barth was busy with far more than the task of Germany's reconstruction and the encouragement of Christians under Communism. Volume two of the Church Dogmatics had appeared during the war and the first part-volume of volume three was published in 1945. From then until the close of the 1950s this task dominated Barth's time. Seven more part-volumes were published, bringing the total to twelve. Each one was several hundred pages long. Still the end of them was not in sight.

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[61]Karl Barth, "How My Mind Has Changed," How My Mind Has Changed, ed. and intro. Harold E. Fey (New York: World Publishing Co., 1960), p. 27.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Ibid., pp. 27-33. See, Karl Barth, How to Serve God in a Marxist Land, trans. Henry Clark and James Smart (New York: Association Press, 1959).

In 1950, Barth reviewed the theological climate in Germany and warned:

> As I see it, Evangelical Germany will sooner or later have to see another dividing and regrouping directed no less against Bultmann than Communism; and it may be--but who can say?--that the Church Dogmatics will have some part to play in this respect. At any rate, if it is read with understanding it will not contribute either in Germany or elsewhere to the formation of a "Neo-Orthodoxy."[64]

Keen in mind as ever, Barth was still the prophetic voice. But the years were steadily passing. In 1956, he turned seventy. In celebration of his birthday, friends around the world honored him. This great Festschrift produced the important book Antwort.[65] In addition to articles written in tribute to Barth there was included the most complete listing of his publications ever compiled. It listed over four hundred titles.

However, the really significant event, at least so far as Barth was concerned, occurred when he was invited to deliver the memorial address at the celebration of the 200th anniversary of Mozart's birthday. He had authored the 1956 publication Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756-1956, as well as many articles, and was an expert on the composer. He once expressed his feelings by commenting, "Whether the angels

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[64]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, III/3, trans. G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), p. xii.

[65]E. Wolf, Ch. von Kirschbaum, and R. Frey, (eds.), Antwort: Karl Barth zum siebzigstein Geburtstag am 10. Mai 1956 (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1956). Not available in English.

play only Bach in praising God I am not quite sure. I am sure, however, that en famille they play Mozart and that then also God the Lord is especially delighted to listen to them."[66]

The Years of Rest (1960-1968)

The last decade of Barth's life began as busy as the ones preceding it had been. In the summer of 1960, at Strasbourg, he met with students from around the world during the World Student Christian Federation's Teaching Conference on the Life and Mission of the Church. But the year's most significant event occurred on 19 November. Barth and Emil Brunner at last renewed their long friendship, strained since 1934 over the issue of natural theology. Then, in 1961, Barth completed his initial draft of part four of volume four of his Church Dogmatics. It was as far as he would go. The task would remain uncompleted.

Barth delivered his last lecture at the University of Basel on 1 March, 1962. For his final series of lectures he chose the topic, "Evangelical Theology." At the age of seventy-six, Barth was launching out afresh with a new introduction to theology. Appropriately, his last lecture was on love.

In April, 1962, Barth arrived in the United States for his first, and only visit. During his seven week stay

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[66]Karl Barth, "A Letter from Karl Barth," The Christian Century, LXXV (31 December, 1958), 1510f.

he visited ten states, seeing the Grand Canyon and, in what was a special treat in his eyes, the battlefields of the Civil War. He gave lectures at the University of Chicago, Princeton, San Francisco Theological Seminary, and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. Though he had been reluctant to attempt the trip, the prospect of being with his son, Markus Barth, a professor of theology at Chicago, was too much to resist. Later, he summarized his experience with one word, "fantastic!"[67]

After his return to Switzerland, Barth received an invitation to Copenhagen where, on 19 April, 1963, he was awarded the "Sonning Prize," bestowed in honor of his outstanding contributions to European culture. He took the occasion to speak of his relationship to the famed Dane, Soren Kierkegaard, in the address he entitled "Gratitude and Reverence." During his address, "Barth pronounced a woe on any theologian who wants to avoid going through the school of Kierkegaard--only he must not remain there!"[68]

Although he had enjoyed relatively good health, suffering only a broken arm from a fall in 1962, the last part of 1964 saw Barth confined to bed. From September to November he was in the hospital. After his release, Barth suffered a slight stroke in December and was rehospitalized. Following a gradual recovery in 1965, Barth asked for, and

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[67]Karl Barth, Evangelical Theology, trans. Grover Foley (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. vi.

[68]Karl Barth, HCM, p. 77.

received, permission to travel to the Vatican in 1966 to ask questions about the recent Vatican II Council.

Barth had been involved from the winter of 1965 until May, 1966 with writing his autobiography. He interrupted this to travel to Rome and it was never completed. From the time of his return to Switzerland a steadily declining state of health restricted Barth's activities. His last years had been full. In addition to all his other work Barth had found time to continue meeting periodically with postgraduate students to discuss issues. Although he was no longer working on his Church Dogmatics, Barth was keenly interested in the younger theologians. Helmut Gollwitzer, Jürgen Moltmann, and his former student, Wolfhart Pannenberg, especially interested Barth. But increasingly, Barth found himself most interested in the developments in Catholicism.[69]

The last crisis came in August, 1968. Once again illness seized him. On 10 December, 1968, he died.

> Even on the eve of the night in which he died in his sleep he was still 'eifrig und fidel' (eagerly and happily) working on an address he had been asked to deliver during the Week of Prayer in January 1969. . . . It is this persistent, singleminded, and faithful devotion to the service of God's revelation in Jesus Christ right up to the last waking hours of his life which is one of the characteristic marks of Barth's entire life and work.[70]

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[69] Ibid., pp. 81-86.

[70] Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," p. 184.

Note on the "American Revival" of Karl Barth

Even before Karl Barth's death in 1968, theologians in the United States were confidently asserting that the day of his influence had passed. Particularly among evangelicals it appeared that Barth was to be of no account. This no longer seems to be true. In the Reformed Journal, late in 1974, a two-part article by Donald W. Dayton examined seven indications that there is a, "steady growth in the impact of Barth's thought on American theology. . . ."[71]

First, there is a new depth in the understanding of Barth by Americans. Second, a new appreciation of Barth accompanied this understanding. Third, the founding of the "Karl Barth Society of North America," headquartered in Toronto, Canada, focused American investigation and discussion of Barth. This group has been joined by other like concerns. Fourth, new concerns in American biblical studies have directed a second look at Barth. Important books like Brevard Childs' Biblical Theology in Crisis (1970) have contributed to this.[72] Fifth, a new cultural situation in America is creating a new openness and appreciation of Barth's words. Sixth, a controversial new interpretation of Barth, one seeking to use him in connection with radical politics, has risen in Europe and travelled to America.

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[71]Donald W. Dayton, "An American Revival of Karl Barth? (I)" The Reformed Journal, XXIV (October, 1974), 17.

[72]Ibid., pp. 17-20.

Finally, seventh, recent calls for an American "Barmen Declaration" have caused many to reexamine Barth's theology.[73]

Where do the evangelicals fit? Perhaps surprisingly to many, evangelicals have been at the front in producing the best, and in many ways most appreciative, books on Barth. More and more they have come to regard Barth as one among them. Certainly his personal and social conduct in life appears above question. But now his theology must be searched.

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[73]Dayton, "An American Revival of Karl Barth? (II) (November, 1974), pp. 24-26.

Chapter 4

BARTH'S EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY

A PILGRIM THEOLOGY

Reformed Heritage (1886-1907)

Karl Barth was the son of Fritz Barth, a conservative Reformed pastor and theologian. This simple fact, the existential given, has perhaps been too little considered. Yet the influences of his early training, and the context in which it occurred, may very well have played a much more instrumental role in Karl Barth's development than has usually been thought. It has too often been forgotten that Barth's theological training was, until 1906, principally conducted under conservative scholarship. In the light of new understanding provided by the social and behavioral sciences it is no longer permissible to ignore these early influences.[1]

An Uneasy Liberal (1908-1915)

Under the influence of Harnack, Gunkel, and, above

[1]This present study can only call attention to the problem. The resources for further exploration into this area have not been collected by anyone to date and the early influences on Barth have been largely left alone. Whether this problem will be attended to by anyone remains an open question.

all, Herrmann, Barth became an uneasy convert to liberalism. Ritschlian theology as modified and shaped by Herrmann seemed to Barth, at that time, to present the most acceptable way forward. Or, as he later recalled:

> To the prevailing tendency of about 1910 among the younger followers of Albrecht Ritschl I attached myself with passable conviction. Yet it was not without a certain alienation in view of the issue of this school in the philosophy of religion of Ernst Troeltsch, in which I found myself disappointed in regard to what interested me in theology, although for the time being I did not see a better way before me.[2]

Stumbling Steps (1916-1920)

Yet, after taking a pastorate at Safenwil, the young Barth found his liberal theology inadequate. In an important address Barth delivered to a meeting of ministers in Schulpforta, in July, 1922, he explained:

> For twelve years I was a minister, as all of you are. I had my theology. It was not really mine, to be sure, but that of my unforgotten teacher Wilhelm Herrmann, grafted upon the principles which I had learned, less consciously than unconsciously, in my native home. . . . Once in the ministry, I found myself growing away from these theological habits of thought and being forced back at every point more and more upon the specific minister's problem, the sermon. I sought to find my way between the problem of human life on the one hand and the content of the Bible on the other. As a minister I wanted to speak to the people in the infinite contradiction of their life, but to speak the no less infinite message of the Bible, which was as much of a riddle as life.[3]

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[2]Karl Barth, "On Systematic Theology," Scottish Journal of Theology, XIV (September, 1961), 225f. This article constitutes the authorised translation by Terrence N. Tice from Lehre und Forschung an der Univeritat Basel zur Zeit der Feier ihres funfhundertjahrigen Bestehens, dargestellt von Dozenten der Universitat Basel (Basel: Birkhauser Verlag, 1960), pp. 35-38.

[3]Karl Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man,

Aided by his close friend Eduard Thurneysen, and by the preaching of Christoph Blumhardt, Barth plunged into what he termed the strange, new world of the Bible. But immediately he was confronted. "The stone wall we first ran up against was that the theme of the Bible is the deity of God, more exactly God's deity. . . ."[4] When ninety-three German intellectuals, including many of Barth's former teachers, declared their support of the Kaiser's war policy, the final break with liberalism was made.

An Unsettled Dialectic (1921-1930)

Although the first edition of The Letter to the Romans (1919) represented Barth's groping in the dark, the second edition, "was deliberately intended to create an upheaval."[5] Romans changed the course of Barth's life. As a professor and writer Barth soon found himself the voice of a new school of theology. This had never been Barth's intention. He said, "It did not come into being as a result of any desire of ours to form a school or to devise a system; it arose simply out of what we felt to be the 'need and

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trans. Douglas Horton (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928), p. 100. Hereafter cited by WGWM.

[4]Karl Barth, The Humanity of God, trans. J. N. Thomas and T. Wieser (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 41. Hereafter cited by HG.

[5]Thomas F. Torrance, Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910-1931 (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 50. Hereafter cited by KBET.

promise of Christian preaching.' "[6]

The diversity of thought represented by those who were called "Crisis" theologians precluded any permanent union. Barth eventually split from Brunner over the issue of natural theology, and from Bultmann and Gogarten over the question of hermeneutics and the place of an existentialist philosophy in theology. Barth himself was still searching. Although Barth was dissatisfied, he still realized:

> If that which we then thought we had discovered and brought forth was no last word but one requiring a revision, it was none the less a true word.[7]

HOME IN CHRIST

> There were two critical turning points in Barth's life. The first, his conversion from theological liberalism to radical Christianity, took place during World War I and found expression in Romans. The second was his emancipation from the shackles of philosophy and his quest for a genuine theology that could stand on its own feet. This latter process lasted about ten years; it found expression in his little book on the Anselmian proofs for God's existence . . . published in 1931.[8]

Barth's famous "false start," the Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf, had been his first major attempt at systematic theology. It revealed to him how much he was still dependent on existentialist philosophy. But the key to freedom was still lacking. Four years later, in Anselm: Fides

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[6]Barth, WGWM, p. 100. [7]Barth, HG, p. 42.

[8]Hans Urs Von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, trans. John Drury (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 79f. Hereafter cited by TKB.

Quaerens Intellectum, Barth found the key: faith.

Immediately, he turned to the task of the Church Dogmatics. Convinced that theology must be grounded in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, Barth now had the means of proper approach. Rejecting the concept of analogia entis, "as the invention of Antichrist," Barth turned to the only proper object of theology, the Word of God.[9] In the place of analogia entis Barth proposed an analogy of faith.

This work occupied Barth throughout most of his remaining years. But in 1960, an interesting little book entitled The Humanity of God appeared. Comprised of three essays, this book provided a clear glimpse into Barth's still maturing theology. As well, it showed a bit of the great breadth of Barth's expertise for the first essay was historical in nature, the second was both autobiographical and dogmatic, and the third was an exercise in ethics. Within these essays Barth revealed his growing concern to speak in ever more biblical terms about God. This, he declared, meant realizing more fully that:

> Who God is and what He is in His deity He proves and reveals not in a vacuum as a divine being-for-Himself, but precisely and authentically in the fact that He exists, speaks and acts as the partner of man, though of course as the absolutely superior partner. He who does that is the living God. And the freedom in which He does that is His deity.[10]

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[9]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, I/1, trans. G. T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936), p. x. Hereafter cited by CD.

[10]Barth, HG., p. 45.

Not long afterwards, Barth was faced with the fact of retirement. Rather than introduce yet another part of his Church Dogmatics Barth chose to lecture on what, as he put it, "I have basically sought, learned, and represented from among all the paths and detours in the field of evangelical theology. . . ."[11] However, Barth did not wish to do this in the form of a final summary of his theology. Nor did he desire to reiterate what had been said before. So he chose the form of an introductory presentation on evangelical theology, "that theology which treats of the God of the Gospel."[12]

Typically, the publication of Evangelical Theology: An Introduction was not regarded by Barth as his final word. An interesting dialogue recorded during Barth's 1962 visit to the United States makes this clear:

> Question: "When you first began writing Dogmatics, you called it 'Christian Dogmatics.' Then you changed it to 'Church Dogmatics.' Now you've given these lectures under the title of 'Evangelical Theology.' Do these changes indicate changes in your thinking about the task or place of theology?"
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> Answer: "Well, let me try to give a thoughtful answer to this question. Here we have a good example of a theologian who is clearly a human being and who lives in time and moves with time. Why not? It would be a dull sort of theology if I had stayed simply in the 'twenties, or in the 'thirties. No, I must grow old and so here in this question you have an illustration

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[11]Karl Barth, Evangelical Theology: An Introduction, trans. Grover Foley (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. xii. Hereafter cited by ET.

[12]Ibid., p. 3. Note not only the immediate context, but also the relation to pp. xi-xii, where Barth speaks of a "theology of freedom." The greater context of the book is an explication of this relationship.

> of the movement through which I have gone as a theologian. From 'Christian Dogmatics' to 'Church Dogmatics' and now 'Evangelical theology'--I ask you to see this movement as one towards a less formal, more material, less abstract, more concrete kind of thinking. I don't know whether I will ever find a fourth way! This certainly is not the last word, but I think for the moment it is a satisfactory word.[13]

Right through the days until his death, Karl Barth continued to search and find better expressions for the truth of God in Jesus Christ. The evening of his last day found him still laboring over the theology of the Church. In fact, he was exploring the future. He challenged the Church to set out, to return and to confess. In his last words it is still true for Barth that, "in Jesus Christ we may take seriously, and rejoice in what we truly are in him who was and is and will be, even Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior."[14]

THE METHOD

Barth's Intent

Although Barth lived a good and long life, and although he grew and matured as a theologian, certain features of both Barth's life and his thought were constant. It is not impossible to sketch his diversity within this unity. As in any man, being and becoming, essence and act, stood

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[13]Karl Barth, "A Theological Dialogue," Theology Today, XIX (July, 1962), 177. This article is a transcript of a question and answer period held in the Princeton University Chapel.

[14]Herbert Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," Scottish Journal of Theology, XXVI (May, 1973), 203.

inseparably together in Barth. Thus, the pilgrim theologian was never lost when Barth found his home in Christ. The continuity has at times been overemphasized but its existence must be noted.

Therefore, an analysis of Karl Barth's theology must consist of picturing the rich diversity while not losing sight of the complete unity. The developmental aspect of Barth's theology has already been briefly set forth in the context of his biography (chapter 3), and in the short review of these changes within the context of important and representative works (above). But now, further and closer attention must be given to Barth's methodological development. This involves examining both his intent and methods at each place along the way.

From the very beginning Barth's intent was both prophetic and pastoral in orientation. To be more exact, the prophetic nature of Barth's work stemmed from his pastoral concerns. "It is difficult to understand Barth without considering that he started as a preacher."[15] Barth, as a young pastor, was confronted by the peculiar pastoral problem of the sermon. When liberal theology proved inadequate he turned to the Bible. What he found there he expressed in his preface to the first edition of The Letter to the Romans. Barth now believed, and so wrote, that, "If we rightly understand ourselves, our problems are the problems of Paul; and

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[15]Frederick L. Herzog, "Theologian of the Word of God," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 317.

if we be enlightened by the brightness of his answers, those answers must be ours."[16]

In the preface to the second edition, as Barth sorted out the criticisms to the first edition and responded to them, he indicted liberal theology for its bankruptcy in preparing men for the pastoral ministry. He charged:

> I myself know what it means year in year out to mount the steps of the pulpit, conscious of the responsibility to understand and to interpret and longing to fulfill it; and yet, utterly incapable, because at the University I had never been brought beyond that well-known 'Awe in the presence of History' which means in the end no more than that all hope of engaging in the dignity of understanding and interpretation has been surrendered.[17]

Barth's activism, his sense of urgency in the performance of his ministry, demanded more than historical and literary criticism could deliver. He was aware that each Sunday morning, "there is in the air an expectancy that something great, crucial, and even momentous is to happen."[18] The whole situation was one charged with an expectancy of action. It was at this very point that Barth said:

> If then I have not only a viewpoint, but something also of a standpoint, it is simply the familiar standpoint of the man in the pulpit. Before him lies the Bible, full of mystery: and before him are seated his more or less numerous hearers, also full of mystery--and what indeed is more so? What now? asks the minister.[19]

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[16]Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, (2nd edition), trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 1. Hereafter cited by Romans.

[17]Ibid., p. 9. [18]Barth, WGWM, p. 104.

[19]Barth, WGWM, p. 104.

To answer this question Barth examined the content of the pastoral task and its difficulty. He found a common situation in which all ministers were placed and to which they must respond. Barth characterized this by the following formulations:

> As ministers we ought to speak of God. We are human, however, and so cannot speak of God. We ought therefore to recognize both our obligation and our inability and by that very recognition give God the glory. This is our perplexity.[20]

At this point, it seemed to Barth that all he could say was, "The word of God is at once the necessary and the impossible task of the minister."[21] This paradox in which the minister found himself could not, however, remain for Barth the final word. While he continued to speak with dialectical language, he sought to move beyond crisis to resolution. Fully aware of the immensity of saying anything at all, Barth was still convinced of the absolute necessity of having something said. But what he wanted to hear was God's Word.

It was in the midst of his search to find a way out of the dilemma that Barth read Anselm. Soon he could say of Anselm:

> My view is . . . we are confronted by a very pronounced rejection of speculation that does not respect the incomprehensibility of the reality of the object of faith, by a recognition of the indirectness of all knowledge of God, and . . . by the reference to the

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[20]Ibid., p. 186. Cf. p. 212. [21]Ibid., p. 213.

Pattern of faith which is the basis of everything.[22]

Not only could he say this of Anselm, but of himself as well. Philosophic speculation could not speak of God and say anything meaningful for Christian faith. Christian theology, on the other hand, could give God the glory through its affirmations. Thus, deep into his work on his Church Dogmatics, Barth could say:

> Several are seeking to track down the secret of the real or ostensible change of direction which I am supposed to have made sometime between 1932 and 1938, or rather later according to some scholars. From my own standpoint, the comparatively simple truth is that, although I still enjoy debate, I have gradually acquired more and more feeling for the affirmations by and with which we can live and die.[23]

Indeed, as Barth concentrated on these affirmations he discovered two things about himself and his theological vocation. The first was in regard to his twelve years in the pastorate. He recalled, "It was extremely fruitful for me, . . . to be compelled to engage myself much more earnestly than ever before with the Bible as the root of all Christian thinking and teaching."[24] This led Barth to his

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[22]Karl Barth, Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum, trans. Ian W. Robertson (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960), p. 57. Hereafter cited by Anselm.

[23]Karl Barth, CD, III/4, trans. A. T. Mackay, T.H. L. Parker, H. Knight, H. A. Kennedy, J. Marks, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. xiii. Inasmuch as Bromiley and Torrance are the general editors for the work from CD I/2 on, subsequent citations, for the sake of brevity, shall not reiterate this datum.

[24]Barth, "On Systematic Theology," p. 226.

second discovery, the conviction that theological training must orient itself to Scripture if it would serve the Church and prepare the pastor. Thus, he stated:

> The aim of teaching systematic theology, as I see it, consists in the student's learning to orientate his thought as rigorously as possible within the message entrusted to the Church, a practice which is indispensable for his future work as pastor of a church as well as for any academic occupation which may fall to him later on.[25]

As student, pastor, and teacher, Barth was ever mindful of not only the centrality of the Gospel, but of its nature as well. "Its content is message, kerygma, proclamation. Indeed it is message of a special kind, namely, the message which brings and is calculated to awaken joy."[26] Barth, a pastor, because he had to say something, and because this something could only be God's Word, was a prophet. For Barth, however, it was not the latter leading to the former. Rather, one was a prophet simply, and precisely because his pastoral task must always be, "to say that God becomes man, but to say it as God's word, as God himself says it."[27]

There is a note of authority in pastoral proclamation. The prophetic voice, speaking God's Word, is the voice of power and authority. Certainly Barth himself spoke with authority. Critics were sometimes moved to complain that

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[25]Ibid., p. 227. Note: this thought recorded by Barth in 1960.

[26]Karl Barth, CD, IV/4, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), p. 802.

[27]Barth, WGWM, p. 199.

Barth wrote, "as though he were sitting in the lap of God and laying bare the very heart of the Almighty, telling the seeking world just what God has to say about all sorts of things."[28] But such criticism really misses the point. Hans Urs von Balthasar is much nearer the truth:

> The whole pageant of Barthian theology, from its earliest days on, was dominated by the same single-minded preoccupation. Barth was consumed with a passion for God. His outlook and terminology may change, but he resolutely refused to move one inch away from the center where Revelation, biblical man, and the upright believer reside. Not for one moment did he forget that the purpose of creation is to give glory to God. His aim was to spell out this glory, to show his love for it, and to reveal its grandeur. Rarely in Christian circles has love for God echoed so forcefully through a man's lifetime work.[29]

Barth's Method and Message from Romans through Anselm

To extol God was Barth's aim, but to proclaim the Word of God was his means to this end. Simply put, the message of the Church is, for Barth, the Gospel, and the Good News is Jesus Christ, the glory of God. The pastor must preach, and from the beginning Barth sought to answer the questions surrounding the sermon.

> The well-known situation of the pastor working at two desks in his study, the historical-critical and the practical, was deplored by many, but Barth made a

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[28]William C. Fletcher, The Moderns (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), p. 150. Fletcher's chapter on Barth (pp. 110-128) is a somewhat different kind of introduction to Barth, dealing as much with literary concerns as with doctrine. One of the few intelligent studies of any length written by a scholar who is neither Reformed or Catholic, it is sympathetic and generally correct.

[29]Von Balthasar, TKB, p. 151f.

> constructive effort to make one desk out of the two. Herein we may find the strongest impetus which led Karl Barth to put his hand to the plow in an unusually determined way.[30]

In The Epistle to the Romans (first edition), Barth determined, "to see through and beyond history into the spirit of the Bible, which is the Eternal Spirit."[31] But, this did not, as far as Barth could see, mean having to choose between the historical-critical method of investigation and the doctrine of inspiration. Although he confessed that if driven to choose between the two he would "without hesitation" adopt the latter, he was able to also say, "I am not compelled to choose between the two."[32]

Putting his two desks together, the result was startling. The distillation of the first edition provided by Hans Urs von Balthasar is enlightening:

> The theme is dynamic eschatology, the irreversible movement from a doomed temporal order to a new living order ruled by God, the total restoration (apokatastasis) of the original, ideal creation in God. This movement of a doomed world, which still knows its true origin but cannot get back to it on its own, is due solely to God, who shows his mercy in Christ. In Christ he implants life in the dead cosmos. In Christ he implants a seed which will sprout and spread overpoweringly until everything is transformed back into its original splendor. All this will not take place in plain view but will work itself out eschatologically.[33]

This enthusiastic vision was met by mixed reviews. Barth's own growth, aided by the critics, convinced him to

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[30]Herzog, "Theologian of the Word of God," p. 376.

[31]Barth, Romans, p. 1. [32]Ibid.

[33]Von Balthasar, op. cit., p. 48.

rewrite the commentary. In this second edition Barth confessed:

> I know that I have laid myself open to the charge of imposing a meaning upon the text rather than extracting its meaning from it, and that my method implies this. My reply is that, if I have a system, it is limited to a recognition of what Kierkegaard called the 'infinite qualitative distinction' between time and eternity, and to my regarding this as possessing negative as well as positive significance: 'God is in heaven, and thou art on earth.'[34]

By so voicing this conviction Barth understood himself to be a descendent of the theological line running back through Kierkegaard, Luther, Calvin, Paul, and Jeremiah. However, this line did not include Schleiermacher in Barth's estimation because Schleiermacher had an inadequate view of man's need, and because, "one can <u>not</u> speak of God simply by speaking of man in a loud voice."[35] Barth believed that Paul had spoken to him and what had been said was entirely about an awesome, transcendent God. But, despite the distance of the call from God to man, the content of the message was very good news indeed.

In <u>The Letter to the Romans</u>, both editions, Barth was concerned with exegesis. Even as late as 1932, Barth was still pressed by criticism to reassert, "My sole aim was to interpret Scripture."[36] But, intentional or not, a <u>theology</u> emerged from the commentary unlike any other theology of the time. The minister confronted by a sermon to the people

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[34]Barth, <u>Romans</u>, p. 10. [35]Barth, <u>WGWM</u>, p. 196.

[36]Barth, <u>Romans</u>, p. ix.

suddenly found himself preaching to a great many people. Barth, the village pastor, was directed to the task of theologizing.

> It is because he is a preacher that the preacher has forced upon him the critical task of theology, but because he is a preacher he must also go on to take up the positive task of theology, in seeking to unfold and develop the content of the Church's message by the rigorous control of exegesis and under the guidance of the historic confessions of the Church.[37]

The theological method which Barth took up in this period of 1921-1931 was dialectical. In the necessity and impossibility of speaking of God, Barth discerned three possible ways that might be taken in the direction of solving this problem. Dogmatism and self-criticism, the first two, have merit in many dimensions but cannot allow a man to truly speak of God. Neither can the third alternative, dialectics, and, "it is the way of Paul and the Reformers, and intrinsically it is by far the best."[38]

Dialectics is, instead, the way of witness. "The word dialectic . . . refers to a process of setting one word against another . . . in order to point out a direction or find a way through this unavoidable vis-à-vis."[39] By using dialectics, Barth felt he was best able to preserve the hiddenness of God while, at the same time, doing justice to his revelation. In this regard it is the function of dialectics to, "defend the divine quality of Revelation."[40] So the

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[37]Torrance, KBET, p. 47. [38]Barth, WGWM, p. 206

[39]Von Balthasar, op. cit., p. 59. [40]Ibid., p. 67.

pastor who may not speak of God is able to give God the glory by pointing to him.

As Hans Urs von Balthasar has so rightly pointed out, Barth adopted dialectics because, "theology needs dialectics to serve as a continuing warning sign and corrective."[41] Torrance is also correct in seeing how much Barth's dialectical thinking owed to Kierkegaard, and how for both these men the communication through dialectics, "all hinges upon the concrete historical reality of God in Jesus Christ."[42] Both Von Balthasar and Torrance have also pointed out that in his dialectical thinking Barth was engaged in a struggle. Barth had to reckon with the problems of theological and philosophical language. When he had fought through to a resolution of these, he could drop the dialectical form and move to an even more positive manner of theology. This shift was from dialectics to analogy.[43]

During Barth's dialectical period several dominant concerns emerged. First, Barth questioned the pervasive immanentism, reductionism, and anthropocentrism of liberal Protestantism. Against this Barth brought at least two

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[41] Ibid. p. 63. Note the full discussion, pp. 58-73, for what is probably the best treatment of the subject of Barth and dialects.

[42] Torrance, op. cit., p. 83.

[43] See, Torrance, pp. 88-89, and Von Balthasar, pp. 73-100. The summary by Torrance is helpful in describing this shift: "it is no longer a movement of thought setting men apart from God, but a movement referring man back to his source in the grace of God the Creator and Redeemer" (p. 89).

principal charges. In the first place, this theology had forsaken its proper task. Its identification with culture by its subjection to culture ultimately rendered it an anachronism. In the second place, this theology had forsaken the object and content of faith. Instead, it had focused on faith and displaced God with religious self-awareness.

Second, in Barth's teaching a profound and realistic conception of sin became evident. Luther, Kierkegaard, J. Müller, Dostoevski, Kähler, and above all the Apostle Paul, heavily influenced Barth. Several things were stressed by Barth in this doctrine. First, sin is dominant in the world; all of man's existence is conditioned by it. Second, death clearly reveals the negative, broken relationship between God and man. Third, man's sin is bounded and limited by the judgment of God. In other words, sin must also be seen from God's side. Seen from man's side, sin in its loftiest form is religion for it expresses man's utmost possibility, and yet his limitation also. At the point of confrontation between man and God, man steps forward in rebellion. Contrasted to this is grace. This is God's claim on and over man. Grace is the divine possibility for man that establishes the positive truth of religion, the Law, and ethics.

Third, Barth made eschatology a dominant motif. In this he was principally influenced by Blumhardt, Overbeck, and Johannes Weiss. To a lesser extent Bengel and Schweitzer were also influential. Barth gave up a timeless eschatology

to rethink this doctrine Christologically. He began to view eschatology as focused on not eschaton, but Eschatos, that is, Christ who is both the First and the Last.

Fourth, Barth's dialectical thinking became so notorious that it became the name for his theology during this time. This way of thinking stresses that God speaks, man hears, and only then does man speak in obedience what he has heard. Dialectics came about as a new attempt to do justice to the witness of the Bible to the revelation of God. Barth's dialectic was vastly different from that of Hegel in that no synthesis was sought. Rather, both the Yes and the No of God's Word to man were allowed to stand and to speak through each other.

Finally, fifth, Barth became vitally interested in the Church. Early on, Barth found the theological relevance of the Church in its character as the negative counterpart to the Kingdom of God. Somewhat later he corrected this notion. He found the Church to be the place where the God/man relationship in grace takes place. With its source and ground in God's grace, and arising from election and revelation, the Church is the vehicle of God's revelation and grace into the time and history of man. However, the Church is not itself God's revelation nor is its history God's revelation. It is and remains under the judgment of God's grace as it awaits Christ's return.[44]

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[44]Torrance, KBET, pp. 48-95, on "From Dialectical to

The climax of this dialectical period came when Barth's Christliche Dogmatik was published in 1927. Unlike The Epistle to the Romans, this book did not contain the same total rejection of religion. While still viewed as the arch-enemy of revelation it too is open to God's redemption. "Nevertheless, certain themes and motifs from Romans crop up in the Prolegomena; their presence eventually forced Barth to reject his new formulation and to start from scratch once again."[45]

In the summer of 1930 Barth began to study Anselm. When the publication of his results appeared in 1931, it represented, "the decisive turning-point in his thinking, for it marks the final point in his advance from dialectical thinking to Church dogmatics."[46] Among Barth's findings at least six should be identified. First, faith's essential nature is fides quaerens intellectum, that is, faith seeking understanding. Second, God is seen as que mains cogitari nequit, that is, that which no greater can be conceived. This reaffirmed Barth's own thought of the exalted, ultimate objectivity of God. Third, true knowledge of the object in its objectivity involves penetration into its inner rationality. Fourth, the rational nature of knowledge involves a

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Dogmatic Thinking." These five considerations should be compared with those identified by Von Balthasar who, as a Roman Catholic, focuses particularly on Barth's concept of the Church.

[45]Von Balthasar, TKB, p. 77f.

[46]Torrance, op. cit., p. 182.

relation of likeness, or resemblance, between it and the object it approaches. This relation is not, as regards God, a natural point of contact in man. Instead, it arises from God's revelation, his self-communicating. Fifth, the rational nature of theological knowledge involves a correspondence between itself and the object. In other words, theological knowledge works with what is given to it by its object. When God is the object, faith is the specific mode of rationality, for it is only this that the object allows for the establishment and verification of knowledge. To insist on any other approach is the height of irrationality. Finally, sixth, knowledge of the truth in relation to God moves from the ground given it by the object. That is, knowledge of God moves from the ground given it by the object. That is, knowledge of God moves from actuality outward; it is a posteriori, after experience. Theology does not posit the possibility of God but proceeds from God's actuality.[47]

At last Barth was prepared to move on to the task of constructive theology. In 1932, he began publishing his Church Dogmatics. All that had gone on before now stood him in good stead. Divorcing philosophy and discarding his strong dialectical form Barth put to work his new insights. His steady focus on Christology became even more prominent. So, too, did his hermeneutics.

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[47]Ibid., p. 183-193.

Barth's Hermeneutics

"Karl Barth ushered in a new era in Biblical interpretation when he published his Römerbrief at the end of World War I."[48] But the methods by which Barth interpreted Romans brought a storm of criticism. Those who supported Barth became members of a vocal school for a new theology. However, this early hermeneutic was not exactly defined and, in time, each crisis theologian moved it in his own particular direction. For Barth this meant an increased Christological concentration.

Barth's hermeneutical movement can be traced in two directions. First, "he deepened the historical-critical method and supplemented it with a concern for wholeness encompassing text and subject-matter."[49] By so doing, Barth found God's Word in the words of the Bible. But, second, Barth not only went beyond strict historical criticism, he also sought, "to correct Biblicism and the theory of verbal inspiration."[50] He was concerned to stress the wholeness of the words and to take them with a greater seriousness than either liberalism or Biblicism had shown.

Barth faced the hermeneutical problem squarely and formulated a new response to it. This problem, which might

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[48]Bernard Ramm, Protestant Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1970), p. 69.

[49]Herzog, "Theologian of the Word of God," p. 321.

[50]Ibid., p. 322.

be expressed in various ways, can be seen in the form of two questions. The first is rather general: is there any continuity of experience in a world where change appears the only constant? Second, and more particularly, is there any continuity between the biblical world view and ours? These constitute the problem, "to which Karl Barth addressed himself by pointing to die Sache which remains the same, notwithstanding the variety of its linguistic expressions."[51]

In pointing to die Sache, the substance of the biblical text, Barth found relevance for modern man. "The concentration on the subject matter (God, Jesus, grace, etc.) bridges the gap between the centuries, and it does so since they cannot but be the same."[52] This is why Barth found Paul speaking so forcefully. The issues which Paul addressed, and the answers he put forward, speak as eloquently to modern man as to the man of the first century. This is true because God stands above human history.

Barth elevated Christology to an exalted position in his hermeneutic. In doing so he placed himself squarely in the middle of the Reformation tradition. As Brevard Childs has noted:

Calvin's interpretation of the Old Testament has

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[51]J. C. Beker, "Reflections on Biblical Theology," Interpretation, XXIV (July, 1970), p. 304.

[52]Krister Stendhal, "Biblical Theology, Contemporary," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, ed. G. A. Buttrick, et. al., I (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 420.

> been frequently misunderstood by modern scholars. On the one hand, Calvin inveighed against the fourfold use of Scripture that had been practiced by the fathers because it destroyed the certainty and clarity of Scripture. . . . He renounced allegory and demanded that the literal sense of Scripture (sensus literalis) be normative. Yet on the other hand, his own interpretation of the Old Testament frequently spoke of Jesus Christ and the life of the church. The usual explanation of this dual aspect as a sign of Calvin's inconsistency completely misses the point. For Calvin the literal sense of the Old Testament spoke of Jesus Christ. Once the term "literal sense" became identified with the historical sense, which happened in the eighteenth century, Calvin's position became unintelligible. To use another terminology, Calvin's literal sense refers to the plain sense of the text, but when interpreted within the canonical context of the church.[53]

For twentieth century biblical scholarship this was both sensational and revolutionary. "Christological exegesis such as practiced by Luther and Calvin, among the Reformers, or by Barth, Bonhoeffer, or Vischer, among contemporaries, was almost universally eschewed."[54] But Barth brought a fresh vigor to theology with this starting point and sparked the biblical theology movement of the last few decades. However, Barth, characteristically, did not come to be closely identified with the movement. As Childs comments:

> Again, one of the curious things about the whole Biblical Theology Movement was its misunderstanding of Karl Barth's exegesis. . . . Usually it was dismissed by the Biblical theologizns as well as by the older Liberals as 'precritical,' and at best tolerated as an unfortunate reaction against his past. Yet amazingly

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[53]Brevard S. Childs, Biblical Theology in Crisis (Philadelphia: Westminster Press,1970), p. 110. See, in this regard, Interpretation, XXXI (January, 1977). The entire issue is devoted to the subject of Calvin and the Scriptures.

[54]Ibid., p. 52.

enough, Barth remained invulnerable to the weaknesses that beset the Biblical Theology Movement.[55]

As might be expected, Barth's understanding of hermeneutics came out of his pastoral concerns. By the time he had come to constructing the Church Dogmatics Barth's think- had vastly matured. When he addressed himself to the pastoral, and indeed ecclesiastical task of proclamation Barth would not consider the use of any language within the Church that was separated from Scripture. That kind of language would be arbitrary religious language. Rather, the proclamation of the Church, "must be language controlled and guided in the form of a homily, that is, the exposition of Scripture."[56]

Accordingly, principles of interpretation must be not only sound but relevant. Dogmatics and preaching are intimately related. Theology does not operate in a vacuum, but in the Church. Proclamation cannot be empty, but must be the very content of Scripture. Thus, as has been noted by an acute observer:

> In addition to the renaissance of exegesis and biblical theology which Barth's theology helped precipitate, one must recall that from first to last he intended his theology to undergird the preaching of the church. . . . This interest is also evident in the Church Dogmatics--a veritable treasure of biblical exegesis and exposition. . . .[57]

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[55]Ibid., p. 110. [56]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 64f.

[57]David L. Mueller, Karl Barth (Waco: Word Books, 1972), p. 146.

Three fundamental hermeneutical principles supply the foundation for the exegesis found in the Church Dogmatics. First, and determinative for Christian theology, is the Christological principle. It is obvious that, "in Barth's over-all strategy the Christological principle reigns supreme, namely, that Jesus Christ is the clarity of Scripture and the clarity of every doctrine of Scripture."[58] Every text of Scripture stands to bear witness to Jesus Christ. But, perhaps, to speak of this as a principle is to miss the point. Certainly Barth himself would not allow such an abstraction any conscious role in his theology.

Barth was keenly aware that, "God's thoughts in His Word do not come to us in abstracto but in concreto in the form of the human word of prophets and apostles. . . ."[59] Moreover, as Barth realized, "it is the case, then, that the divine Word itself meets us right in the thick of that fog of our own intellectual life, as having taken the same form as our own ideas, thoughts and convictions."[60] It is no mere principle of interpretation that bids the exegete to relate a matter to and through Jesus Christ. It is the very presence of Christ himself, as he is concretely witnessed to

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[58]Bernard Ramm, A Handbook of Contemporary Theology (Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 1966), p. 57. Hereafter cited by RHCT.

[59]Karl Barth, CD, I/2, trans. G. T. Thomson and H. Knight (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 716.

[60]Ibid.

in the Scriptures, who beckons every man to hear and receive the Word of God.

So, in a very real sense it is misleading to refer to a Christological principle. Rather, the presence of Christ necessitates the principle of literal sense as utilized by the Reformers. The sensus literalis always stands in the presence of Jesus Christ. The exegete, then, must aim at the meaning of the text. Barth comments:

> We might glance at this point at the excellent definition which Polanus has given of biblical interpretation: Interpretatio sacrae Scripturae est explicatio veri sensus et usus illius, verbis perspicuis instituta ad gloriam Dei et aedificationem ecclesiae. . . . From this we see that it is a question of (1) the verus sensus and (2) the verus usus of Scripture. Both remain obviously clear in and by themselves. Yet both need explicatio; hence there is a need of interpretation and application. The region of the verba, lying between the two, is problematical. Here there is a need, and there arises a responsibility. It is a question of the verba perspicua in regard both to the sensus and also the usus of Scripture. That the necessary work of communication should be done: ad gloriam Dei et aedificationem ecclesiae, is the task of interpretation, and therefore a matter of the responsibility laid upon members of the Church.[61]

This, in a nutshell, was Barth's own perspective. He utilized observation, reflection, and appropriation. These three stages included the work of historical and literary criticism, the interpretation and absorption of meaning, and a self-identification with the witness of Scripture.[62] In other words, Barth did not engage in a naive manner of exegesis. Nor was his hermeneutic "pre-critical." Most

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[61]Ibid., p. 714. [62]Ramm, RHCT, p. 57.

especially was it not "spiritual" exegesis.

The second fundamental principle of hermeneutics discernible in the Church Dogmatics is the totality principle. "Barth has consistently worked from an avowed theological context, namely, from the context of the Christian canon."[63] The Scripture is the witness to the Church of the Word of God. But it is not a witness in either abstraction or part. Just as it is a concrete witness, so it is a whole witness. Here, however, rises the question of canon. What constitutes the canon? Is every part of the Bible also a part of the canon? Is the canon closed? "Barth's own method of interpreting Scripture by Scripture throughout the whole of the Church Dogmatics is the best indication of his approach to the question of canon. . . ."[64]

With the context of canon, the context of any verse is the entire Scripture. Bernard Ramm has noted:

> Barth defends some of his odd interpretations, especially in the Old Testament, by claiming that he has a right to bring the entire contents of Scripture to bear upon any particular passage. This is a principle difficult to manage, but it does say procedurally or programmatically that the "universe of discourse," the "local," the "habitat" of any passage of Scripture is the total Scripture. It sets the general mood, gives the general perspective, governs the fundamental assumptions, or sets the possible limits of meaning for the interpreter of Holy Scripture.[65]

Both the principles of sensus literalis and canonical

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[63]Childs, Biblical Theology in Crisis, p. 111.

[64]Ibid., p. 241.

[65]Ramm, Protestant Bible Interpretation, p. 138f.

context are implicit in the third. Faith is the hermeneutical principle sine qua non for the Church. Hermeneutics itself is a search for understanding. Or, as Barth learned from Anselm, "Credo ut intelligam means: It is my very faith itself that summons me to knowledge."[66] Credo ut intelligam, that is, "I believe in order that I might understand," stands at the center of Christian hermeneutics and Church dogmatics.

Taken together within the bounds of the Church Dogmatics these principles resulted in a body of invaluable exegesis. As one of Barth's critics commented:

> He gives a great deal of fresh insight into every area of theology, insight which is valid and Scriptural. And he is an able expositor of the Scriptures, bringing out meanings which other commentators miss time after time. He possesses a vast knowledge of the Bible and he usually lets the Bible speak for itself, letting Scripture interpret Scripture.[67]

Barth's exegesis is an essential foundation of the Church Dogmatics. In fact, "a number of the volumes of the Dogmatics are little more than huge commentaries accompanied by theological interpretation."[68] Obviously, these provide a wealth of aids for the pastor. This is just as Barth intended. However, they provide more than simply commentary.

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[66] Barth, Anselm, p. 18.

[67] Fletcher, The Moderns, p. 112f.

[68] Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, trans. and intro. Robert McAfee Brown (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1964), p. 62. See, for example, CD II/2 (on Rom. 9-11), and CD III/1 (on Gen. 1-2).

"They are indispensable to a full understanding of the theological expositions preceding them, and anyone who wants to attack the latter will have to examine first whether the biblical exegesis on which they are based is at fault."[69]

The Construction of the Dogmatics

As fundamental as exegesis was to Barth in constructing the massive Church Dogmatics there were many other contributing factors as well. John Godsey, in 1956, made four general observations about the Dogmatics. First, he noted how its theology is bound to the sphere of the Church. Second, he identified the role of biblical exegesis. Third, he found the incorporation of ethics in an integral relation to its theology. Fourth, he recognized its completely Trinitarian structure.[70]

Godsey also identified twelve of what he considered the more obvious methodological principles employed by Barth. These are:

(1) Dogmatics is a function of the Church.
(2) Dogmatic thinking is based on the Word of God alone.
(3) The first and last question of dogmatics is the question about God.
(4) Dogmatic thinking knows only the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

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[69]Herbert Hartwell, The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 15. Hartwell footnotes this statement to add, "It is at this point that many of Barth's critics fail" (n. 64, p. 39).

[70]John Godsey, "The Architecture of Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics," Scottish Journal of Theology, IX (March, 1956), 236-250.

(5) Dogmatic thinking about the God revealed in Christ is automatically Trinitarian thinking.
(6) Dogmatic thinking relates every part of dogmatics to its Christological centre.
(7) Dogmatic thinking acknowledges its limits and preserves the mystery of God.
(8) Dogmatic thinking insists on the freedom of the Gospel from an a priori relation to human existence.
(9) Dogmatic thinking does not separate ethics from dogmatics.
(10) Dogmatic thinking refuses to admit any dualism and so refuses to take evil as seriously as it does grace.
(11) Dogmatic thinking moves from action to being, from reality to possibility, from Gospel to Law, from God's "yes" to God's "No".
(12) Dogmatic thinking knows that a dogmatics may be both architecturally beautiful and theologically correct.[71]

These constitute a good starting point. In a certain sense, as the above list makes plain, each is united with all the others through the enterprise of dogmatic thinking. Barth was no irrationalist. "Karl Barth belongs to the very centre of the great European tradition which has sought to give reason its fullest place in exact and careful thinking."[72] Those who have seen strains of irrationalism in Barth have simply failed to understand both his approach and thought. A careful reading of Barth's Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum can provide the information needed to avoid such irresponsible judgments.

A part of the problem in interpreting Barth's work has stemmed from the common failure to miss or disregard Barth's own understanding of the history of Church thought.

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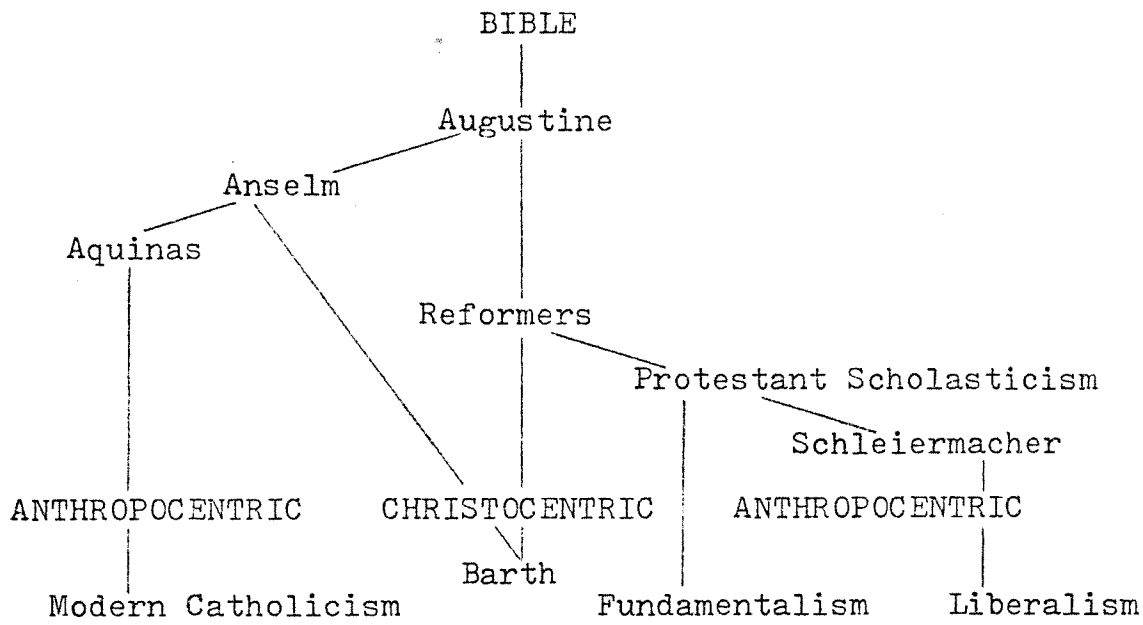
[71]Ibid., p. 248.

[72]Torrance, KBET, p. 32. See, Fletcher, The Moderns, p. 112.

Barth found himself in the company of the Reformers in steering a middle course between two equally rigid and anthropocentric forms of thought. The following chart illustrates this:



On the one side, Protestantism "fell prey to the absolutism with which the man of that period made himself the centre and measure and goal of all things."[73] This happened long before the full devastation of modern liberalism was felt. By the nineteenth century, theologians had come to focus their attention on "man's supposedly innate and essential capacity to 'sense and taste the infinite' as Schleiermacher said, or the 'religious a priori' as later

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[73]Barth, CD, I/2, p. 293. Cf. p. 4ff, where Barth claims that the roots of Neo-Protestantism (his term for liberalism) extend back to about 1700. See also, Barth, HG, p. 13f.

affirmed by Troeltsch."[74] With its center man himself, this theology could not be one of revelation. It was not a theology of revelation "in so far as it asks first what is possible in God's freedom, in order afterwards to investigate God's real freedom."[75]

Also on this side is fundamentalism. This is not a true inheritor of the Reformation. Protestant Scholasticism insisted that every word of the Bible was supernaturally inspired, not only as to style but even as to punctuation. The freedom of the Reformers was exchanged for a rigidity that not only denied the Bible its vitality but its authority also. The Scripture's authority was removed from its proper source in God and his revelation and placed in the hands of man. The true sense of the Scripture's authority, said Barth, "is not the 'fundamentalist' one, which would have it that the sacred text as such is the proper and final basis of knowledge."[76] No, the Bible's authority rests in its existence as the final revelation itself. Barth warned:

> But we should be fools--real fools in the biblical sense of the word--if either to ourselves or others we pretended to be the expert bearers of revelation, appealing for our authorisation . . . to a knowledge of revelation which is either transmitted to us institutionally or infused personally, like the Roman Catholic to the authority of his Church, the "Fundamentalist" to the biblical texts, and the sectarian to his inner

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[74]Barth, HG, p. 21. [75]Barth, CD, I/2, p. 4.

[76]Karl Barth, CD, IV/2, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), p. 119, Cf. p. xii.

voice.[77]

On the other side, Catholicism has centered revelation in the Pope.[78] Tradition's authority, apostolic succession, and Mariology are all elements of a circle that denies God's freedom in revelation. The focus is the analogia entis, that is, the analogy of being. Here a point of contact in man is the ground of natural theology and a natural apprehension of God's revelation. Of this Barth said, "I regard the analogia entis as the invention of Antichrist, and think that because of it one can not become Catholic."[79]

Although Barth later retreated from such strong statements, he remained in staunch opposition to Roman Catholicism's theology of revelation. "The concept 'truths of revelation,' in the sense of Latin propositions given and sealed once for all by divine authority in wording and meaning, is theologically impossible. . . ."[80] Such a concept severs revelation from its freedom in Christ Jesus. It must be theologically impossible, "if it be the case that revelation has its truth in the free decision of God, made once for all in Jesus Christ."[81]

Barth's center in Christ necessitated a full respect for the function of man as witness to God's revelation but

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[77]Ibid., p. 124. [78]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 38.

[79]Ibid., p. x. Note next line!

[80]Ibid., p. 16. [81]Ibid.

never its bearer. He returned to the Reformers and to Anselm for an actualism that moved from the reality of God and his revelation downward to man. He respected the freedom of God's grace. In all this, Barth claimed to represent a truly evangelical theology.

In contrast to God's freedom is that activity of the Church called dogmatics. Between 1927 and 1932, from the publication of Christliche Dogmatik until the first part of the Church Dogmatics, Barth decided on a significant change for the title of his systematic theology. If Barth's view of Church history has been left largely unexamined, his change from "Christian" to "Church" dogmatics has been left equally unquestioned. Part of the reason for this, of course, is that Barth immediately explained the change. He explained that, "dogmatics is not a 'free' science, but one bound to the sphere of the Church, where and where alone it is possible and sensible."[82] However, beyond this, Barth was now sure of his purposes, and freed from bondage to existential philosophy he could speak not only as an individual but for the Church as well. Thus Barth could claim, "The communion, in and for which I have written this book, is the communion of the Church. . . ."[83]

Dogmatics is not a free science because bound to the Church. But it is a real science and its subject is the Christian Church. Again the contribution of Anselm shines

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[82]Ibid., p. ix. [83]Ibid., p. xii.

through in Barth's justification of dogmatics as a science: "The subject of a science can only be one in which the object and sphere of activity in question are present and familiar."[84] Dogmatics works with evidence, the proclamation of the Church. Dogmatics is a critical science. It measures, evaluates, and corrects the proclamation of the Church by the standards of the Holy Scriptures and the confessions of the believing community.

The exercise of dogmatics in the Christian Church is one of faith. This is true because, "in faith self-testing is necessary in view of responsibility before God."[85] Apart from faith dogmatics could only be idle speculation. By faith it is human action related to the reconciling action of God. Because it is the work of faith, dogmatics stands in close relation to prayer. In fact, prayer is "the attitude apart from which dogmatic work is impossible."[86]

However, dogmatics is dogmatic thinking. As a rational operation of and within the Church dogmatics must incorporate within itself an epistemology. Barth had seen that "the only <u>intelligere</u> that concerns Anselm is that 'desired' by faith."[87] Barth was in agreement with this. Like Anselm, he understood that:

Fundamentally, the <u>quaerere</u> <u>intellectum</u> is really

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[84]Karl Barth, <u>Dogmatics in Outline</u>, trans. G. T. Thomson (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 9. See pp. 9-14.

[85]Barth, <u>CD</u>, I/1, p. 18. [86]Ibid., p. 25.

[87]Barth, <u>Anselm</u>, p. 16.

> immanent in fides. Therefore it is not a question of faith 'requiring' the 'proof' or the 'joy'. There is absolutely no question at all of a requirement of faith. Anselm wants 'proof' and 'joy' because he wants intelligere and he wants intelligere because he belives.[88]

Faith seeks understanding because it is characteristic of its very nature. But a problem is present. One must move from the moment of faith to that expression of understanding called theology. A theologian must adopt a stance toward this problem. Barth admitted, "I believe I learned the fundamental attitude to the problem of knowledge and existence of God . . . at the feet of Anselm of Canterbury. . . ."[89]

The epistemological process that Barth adapted from Anselm bridged the gap from faith to theology through God's revelation. For Barth, "Christian faith is the illumination of the reason in which men become free to live in the truth of Jesus Christ and thereby to become sure of their own existence and of the ground and goal of all that happens."[90] Does this mean salvation by knowledge? Not at all, for as Barth also explains:

> Christian faith is the gift of the meeting in which men become free to hear the word of grace which God has spoken in Jesus Christ in such a way that, in spite of all that contradicts it, they may once for all, exclusively and entirely, hold to His promise and guidance.[91]

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[88]Ibid., p. 16f.

[89]Karl Barth, CD, II/1, trans. T. H. L. Parker, W. B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J. L. M. Haire (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), p. 4.

[90]Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, p. 22.

[91]Ibid., p. 15. The phrase, "in spite of all that

In other words, faith is dependent on revelation for its existence but once present faith seeks an understanding of the revelation which is the ground of its existence. Inasmuch as the revelation of God is not static, or present in mere propositions, but alive in the person and history of Jesus Christ, the knowledge sought by faith is also active. In Jesus Christ, God's Word to man, there is, "the mediation and establishment of a specific knowledge, namely, the knowledge whose subject and content is neither directly nor indirectly the man who knows, but He Himself, who also mediates and establishes it."[92] The word of man must be separated and kept distinct from the Word of God. Man is to listen to God's Word, not speculate on it. Barth warned:

> We cannot impress upon ourselves too strongly that in the language of the Bible knowledge (yada, γιγνώσκειν) does not mean the acquisition of neutral information, which can be expressed in statements, principles and systems, concerning a being which confronts man, nor does it mean the entry into passive contemplation of a being which exists beyond the phenomenal world. What it really means is the process or history in which man, certainly observing and thinking, using his senses, intelligence and imagination, but also his will, action and "heart," and therefore as whole man, becomes aware of another history which in the first instance encounters him as an alien history from without, and becomes aware of it in such a compelling way that he cannot be neutral towards it, but finds himself summoned to

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contradicts it," should not have any irrationality read into it. The humanity receiving God's revelation introduces all and any elements of contradiction. The revelation,"the word of grace," may be contradicted, but it is not itself contradictory.

[92]Karl Barth, CD, IV/3a, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh" T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 183.

> disclose and give himself to it in return, to direct himself according to the law which he encounters in it, to be taken up into its movement, in short, to demonstrate the acquaintance which he has been given with this other history in a corresponding alteration of his own being, action and conduct. We can and should say even more emphatically that knowledge in the biblical sense is the process in which the distant "object" dissolves as it were, overcoming both its distance and its objectivity and coming to man as acting Subject, entering into the man who knows and subjecting him to this transformation.[93]

This is knowledge! It is a knowing effected by God's claim on man and received through faith. This total knowledge is instrumental in the transformation of the man reconciled to God. Accordingly, it is to faith that epistemology in the Church is related. "But it is the Word, it is Christ, to whom faith is related, because He gives Himself as object to it, who makes faith into faith, into real experience."[94]

A great deal of the confusion about Barth's theology is centered in the language he used to express his ideas. A simple illustration of this is provided by the interpretations of Bernard Ramm and Gordon Clark. As Ramm evaluated Barth's epistemology and message he discerned that, "Barth's way of writing theology closely parallels the contemporary analytic program in philosophy."[95] Ramm identified five points that demonstrate this relation. First, a theological statement is meaningful if it can be referred to the Word of

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[93]Ibid., p. 183f. [94]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 263.

[95]Bernard Ramm, "Karl Barth and Analytic Philosophy," The Christian Century, LXXIX (11 April, 1962), 453.

God. Second, a theological statement is meaningful if it refers to Jesus Christ. Third, a statement is meaningful if it speaks to the God-and-man covenantal relationship. Fourth, a theological statement is verifiable within the structures determined by God. Fifth, theological statements are verified within the revealedness of the Holy Spirit.[96] Ramm's summation is:

> Barth recognizes the peculiar logical character of theological statements. They are behests (Befehle), not straight factual assertions, and cannot be verified by ordinary empirical methods. They have a content which presumes the faith of the person and the revealedness of the Holy Spirit. . . . A behest grips us as the truth of God as we grasp it in faith and as the Spirit illuminates it in his witnessing power. To speak of verification apart from such a context is therefore meaninglessness.[97]

Clark has an entirely different perspective. He accused Barth of having adopted, "a theory of images and a process of abstraction that is more Aristotelian than Biblical."[98] After citing portions from the first part of volume two of the Church Dogmatics, Clark concluded that, "the same section contains broader epistemological statements

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[96]Ibid., pp. 453-455. These five statements are the general headings by which Ramm has organized his article. Unfortunately, the discussion under each is too limited to be of any real help.

[97]Ibid., p. 455. This is an excellent point worthy of further attention and development.

[98]Gordon H. Clark, Karl Barth's Theological Method (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1963), p. 140.

to the effect that knowledge is based on images."[99] In fact, said Clark, the observer should, "note here the representational theory of truth: we do not directly perceive the object of knowledge; we perceive it only in an image."[100] In all of this, Clark was of the opinion that Barth had created an epistemological problem in regard to the knowledge of God from which successful extrication was at best highly doubtful.

As is evident, two variant understandings of Barth's language, both claiming support from the Church Dogmatics, have led to vastly different interpretations of Barth's message. In this particular instance, it is difficult to say either Ramm or Clark is wholly right or wrong. However, Ramm's analysis does attempt to keep in mind those epistemological guidelines set down by Barth himself. On the other hand, while citing evidence to support his case, Clark seems to force a scheme of thought on Barth that Barth never acknowledged. Thus, while Clark introduces a few good observations his conclusions lack force because of a failure to understand fully the inner dynamic of Barth's epistemology.

Problems of interpretation are not confined to Barth's language. However, it would be impossible to discuss these problems at every point of exposition. Rather, a very simple explanation as to why so many arise is found in the single fact of the immense length of the Church Dogmatics, over

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[99] Ibid. [100] Ibid.

eight thousand pages. The following introduction to the style is helpful:

> The style of the Church Dogmatics is impressive and difficult. It expects its reader to have some knowledge of five languages, and presupposes a considerable background in theology and its history. The format of the work is not an easy one at first; it follows a very loose logical sequence, and repeats its subject matter over and over again from different aspects. Every page or two there is a lengthy insert in fine print, giving a detailed study into a specific, allied problem. Thus it takes some getting used to. But the further one digs into the work, the easier it becomes. Barth's strange style is not unsuited to his thinking, and the more one becomes accustomed to Barth, the more he appreciates it, for it is designed to help the reader cover the ground as rapidly or as carefully as he wishes to. The language, for all its learning, is easy, dramatic, and powerful. It alternates between rigid, scholarly analysis and eloquent preaching, with the preaching element far the dominant one.[101]

It should be obvious that studying Barth is no easy task. But it is immensely rewarding. Barth had the rare capacity to cause men to think and give God the glory. His work is rich in thought and praise to God. Any problems must be faced, but they must not be allowed to stand in the way of a thorough appreciation and appropriation of the insights which Barth put forward. Yet, to gain an accurate and relatively complete picture of the Church Dogmatics demands not only an awareness of Barth's hermeneutics, his view of Church history, his epistemology, language, and style, but also the distinctive methodological features that attend them.

The first of these is what has often been referred

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[101] Fletcher, The Moderns, p. 113.

to as Barth's positivism. Ordinarily, this term refers to a way of thinking that limits acceptable verification of truth statements to verification established solely on the empirical evidence of the physical world. When applied to a theological system it refers to any system built immediately upon some theological foundation and not having any substantial or dependent connection with metaphysical or philosophical foundations. In this sense, Barth was a positivist when he built his theology on God's revelation given in Jesus Christ. Nor was Barth the first to be positivistic in his approach. "Reformation theology also was positivistic in the sense that it renounced the scholastic method of the Roman Catholic theologians and taught the self-credibility (autopistia) of the Christian Scriptures."[102]

Unfortunately, through the influential interpretation of Dietrich Bonhoeffer this concept gained so much popularity it became a convenient label by which to put Barth in a theological corner. What was worse, the manner of Bonhoeffer's interpretation, especially as adapted by the secular theologians of the sixties, caused many to dismiss Barth as irrelevant. Bonhoeffer wrote:

> Barth was the first theologian to begin the criticism of religion,--and that remains his really great merit--but he set in its place the positivist doctrine of revelation which says in effect, "Take it or leave it": Virgin Birth, Trinity or anything else, everything which is an equally significant and necessary part of

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[102] Ramm, RHCT, p. 129.

the whole, which latter has to be swallowed as a whole or not at all.[103]

Bonhoeffer saw in this an unhealthy separation of the Church from the world. He believed Barth was leaving the world to its own devices.[104] But Barth found this a strange accusation. This so-called positivism of revelation, "which Barth, in a letter to Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's biographer, describes as incomprehensible,"[105] is not a matter of stone tablets fallen from heaven. "Revelation, he contends, is not a rigid codex but an appeal to all men and, above all, a story, the story that God has acted, is acting, and will act among men."[106]

Theological positivism is necessitated by the Word of God. Barth had noted that, "in dogmatic systems the presupposed basic view acquires inevitably the position and function which . . . can be ascribed only to the Word of

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[103]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, trans. R. H. Fuller, ed. Eberhard Bethge (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962), p. 168.

[104]Ibid., p. 168f.

Cf. this: "In sum, his objections to Barth appear to be: (1) He identifies revelation with doctrine, so that faith becomes law. (2) Doctrine is understood not as the central articles of faith but as the whole dogmatic system. (3) The world is left alone, to its own devices, because Barth offers no suggestions for a nonreligious interpretation of Christianity. Altogether, this is orthodoxy. . . ." Robert T. Osborn, "Positivism and Promise in the Theology of Karl Barth," Interpretation, XXV (July, 1971), 287.

[105]Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," p. 197.

[106]Ibid.

God."[107] Revelation, however, while indeed the truth, is not a truth fixed and limited in a view, idea, or principle. It can only be reported concretely.[108] As that given by God, revelation alone, and in-and-of-itself, is the sole acceptable foundation of theology.

A far less controversial feature of the Church Dogmatics is its appearance as a scientific theology. The essence of science is the inductive method of proceeding from particulars of datum to general statements. In a strict sense this meant for Barth the movement from the concrete reality of God and his revelation outward. In a less strict sense Barth saw this as the approach utilized by Schleiermacher in his concept of theology regulated by one principle consistently followed. The Reformers also operated in this manner, only not thoroughly enough:

> It was, of course, said that Holy Scripture is the Word of God to the extent that it presents Christ. But the programme of Reformation theology did not allow for any radical consideration of the meaning, importance and function of Christology in relation to all Christian knowledge. For that reason this theology was in many spheres . . . able to think and argue from Christology only very indirectly and implicitly, or not at all.[109]

A variety of terms illustrate Barth's own scientific thrust. It is characterized by objectivism. This foundation

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[107] Barth, CD, I/1, p. 862. [108] Ibid.

[109] Karl Barth, CD, IV/1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. 366. Cf. Ramm, RHCT, p. 24; an instance of his repeated failure to do justice to Barth's dynamism by reducing concrete reality to an abstract "principle"--something Barth studiously avoids.

is the recognition of a reality independent from man and totally non-contingent. Barth's dogmatic theology is also characterized by *in concreto* theologizing. Rather than a process of abstraction, Barth's theology is shaped by the reality of the self-revealing Triune God. Given an objective reality outside man, theology can and must proceed on the basis of that reality, in its "given-ness." Thus, there is a focus on *actuality* as over against possibility. This is descriptive of a movement in thought from reality, from what is given in revelation, and not from philosophical speculation. All of this leads to the *in actu* character of ontology. In other words, Barth's ontology is one of *actualism*, that is, acting and being cannot be separated. It is for this reason that Barth could include ethics in the doctrine of God.[110]

Again, a somewhat controversial feature of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* is the treatment of history. Evangelicals in the United States, in particular, have been confused and troubled at this point. The German terms *Historie*, *Geschichte*, and *Heilsgeschichte*, all referring to history, are sometimes not clear to American evangelicals. Occasionally, an English translation fails to bring out a clear distinction of what in the German original is designated by

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[110]As is obvious, much overlap exists among these features. For a more complete analysis see Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction*, pp. 20-37. Hereafter cited by *TKBI*.

more than one term. Historie has been distinguished from Geschicte as an objectified reportable history is from history as act, or as event. This is not to imply that Geschichte is unknown history. Rather, it is in a sense, existential history. Heilsgeschichte, or "salvation history," is a term popularized by Oscar Cullmann, and is used with reference to the history of the Bible. It is "holy history" because it records the acts of God.

Part of the problem in regard to Barth's view of history has been in the identification of his understanding of Heilsgeschichte with that held by Cullmann. In his classic Christ and Time, Cullmann repeatedly expressed his separation from Barth at crucial points. To be sure, there is a fundamental unity in their approach as well. But Cullmann believed he found in Barth, "the last traces of a philosophical and non-Biblical statement of the relation between time and eternity."[111] In this regard, Hartwell's treatment of Barth on this subject is deficient although what he has said about Barth's view of Heilsgeschichte is good as far as it goes.[112] Unfortunately, Hartwell is not alone in passing over this distinction and the protests of

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[111] Oscar Cullmann, Christ and Time, trans. F. V. Filson (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), p. 60n. Cf. p. xiii. See, also, p. 12, where Cullmann reserves final judgment in anticipation of Barth's CD, V, never-written but planned as the treatment of eschatology.

[112] See, Hartwell, TKBI, p. 30-32. Hartwell's analysis is good but some reference to Cullmann would have been helpful. However, the reader familiar with both Barth and Cullmann can discern differences on the basis of Hartwell's discussion.

Cullmann have, by and large, gone unheard.

Brevard Childs is a notable exception. He has noted, "Barth's own concept of Bundesgeschichte should not be identified with the classic Heilsgeschichte."[113] That is, Bundesgeschichte, the "covenant history," is determinative for Heilsgeschichte. With this understanding Barth's view becomes much clearer:

> The history of salvation is the history, the true history which encloses all other history and to which in some way all other history belongs to the extent that it reflects and illustrates the history of salvation. . . . No other history can have any independent theme in relation to this history, let alone be a general and true history in the context of which the history of salvation can only be one among others. The covenant of grace is the theme of history. The history of salvation is the history.[114]

Bundesgeschichte differs from Cullmann's Heilsgeschichte in its conception of time. For Cullmann, Heilsgeschichte is Offenbarungsgeschichte, that is, the "history of revelation." Time is linear and the biblical time line consists of a succession of individual saving-events. Eternity is simply the line extended so that time is unending, or is an infinite series of ages.[115]

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[113]Childs, Biblical Theology in Crisis, p. 241n. This is in reference to Childs' observation that Barth "would have nothing to do with Heilsgeschichte. . . ." and thus avoided a weakness that beset the Biblical Theology Movement (p. 110).

[114]Karl Barth, CD, III/1, trans. J.W. Edwards, O. Bussey, and H. Knight (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), p. 60.

[115]David H. Wallace, "Oscar Cullmann," Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, ed. P.E. Hughes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 1966), p. 168.

On the other hand, for Barth Offenbarungsgeschichte is within Bundesgeschichte. The stress is not on the history of revelation but on revelation history. "Revelation is never a predicate of history; on the contrary, history is a predicate of revelation."[116] The event of revelation in time means God has time for man. However, time and eternity are qualitatively different. Eternity is related to time as pre-temporality, supra-temporality, and post-temporality.[117]

God's covenant is seen in history. Specifically, it is displayed in time, and time is marked by creation as the first among God's works. "All the things distinct from God begin with it."[118] The Bible witnesses to this act of God. To this most American evangelicals can readily agree. But Barth has taken one further step that appears suspicious.

"In accordance . . . with the unique nature of its theme, the biblical history of creation is pure saga. . . ."[119] At once questions are raised. Does the term "saga" denote something that is false? Is "saga" history? What is really meant by "saga"? How does it differ from myth? To each of these Barth had an answer.

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[116] Otto Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics: An Introductory Report on Volumes I:1 to III:4, trans. Arthur C. Cochrane (Philadlphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 58. See also, Barth, CD, I/2, pp. 45-70; Hartwell, TKBI, p. 31f.

[117] Barth, CD, I/2, p. 45; CD, II/1, p. 619.

[118] Barth, CD, III/1, p. 43. [119] Ibid., p. 82.

First, the concept of "saga" must be distinguished from "history." This does not mean "saga" describes an imaginary event. According to Barth, "A saga is a poetically designed picture of a concrete once-for-all pre-historical 'Geschichtswirklichkeit' [historical reality], subject to temporal-spatial limitations."[120] Klaas Runia, conservative scholar and author of an important book on Barth, has examined this definition closely and put forward some observations. These clarify the relation of "saga" to "history."

Runia notes first that in a more general definition the "pre-" on the word "historical" would be omitted. It appears here in connection with the creation event and story which is, at least in terms of man, pre-history. The definition embraces two elements. In the first place, "saga" deals with an event that did happen. Creation, for example, did happen. But, in the second place, this event is not such that it can be expressed by ordinary human language. Runia explains:

> They are "geschichtliche" (historical) reality and belong to the succession of time-filling events. But they are not "historische Geschichte" (historical history), i.e., they are outside the reach of all historical observation and record. They cannot be described in our ordinary words and concepts.[121]

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[120]Klass Runia, Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 1962), p. 92, citing H.N. Ridderbos, Heilsgeschiedenis en Heilige Schrift (1955), p. 143f. City and publisher unavailable for Ridderbos.

[121]Runia, Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture, p. 92f. Despite all this, Runia still states, "The whole idea of saga is to be utterly rejected. . . .," (p. 95)! This, however, is unreasonable.

Second, the concept of "saga" must be distinguished from "myth." Barth very carefully made this distinction on the basis of the respective definitions of "saga" and "myth." There is no artificial distinction because each term very definitely points to something and in each instance what is pointed at cannot be truly labelled by the other term. Barth clearly defined myth.

> The customary definition that myth is the story of the gods is only superficial. In myth both the gods and the story are not the real point at issue, but only point to it. The real object and content of myth are the essential principles of the general realities and relationships of the natural and spiritual cosmos which, in distinction from concrete history, are not confined to definite times and places. The clothing of their dialectic and cyclical movement in stories of the gods is the form of myth. The fairy tale, which is more interested in details than in the whole (as are legend and anecdote in relation to saga), and which inclines not to concrete history but to all kinds of general phenomena, truths or even riddles of existence, is a degenerate form of myth as are legend and anecdote of saga.[122]

Obviously, then, "saga" is a literary term used to describe various portions of the biblical material. It does not denote something false. It does describe events that actually happened. It is not the same as "myth." Yet, despite this, questions still remain in the minds of many. Why is this? Two reasons might supply the answer. First, the term "saga" has unsavory connotations to many people, scholarly and unschooled alike. Second, the general tenor of Barth's language is unusual enough to keep many

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[122]Barth, CD, III/1, p. 84.

cautious minds unsettled and suspicious, especially when Barth talks about such crucial events as the Resurrection.

Therefore, a few concluding remarks are in order. Since Barth's understanding of the Resurrection is suspect to some, this must be examined. William Hordern has noted that, "Barth's whole system was built upon the historical nature of the revelation, that it was an event that happened--that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin and raised from the dead."[123] But this testimony is, of course, not enough. However, Barth was himself quite clear on the matter.

In an exegetical study of Matthew 28:16-20, Barth made two significant observations about what he termed "the fact of Easter." These were:

> 1. We must be quite clear that these accounts relate a real event in space and time, and not just some thought or idea.
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> . . . . . .
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> 2. These texts speak of an "historically" inconceivable event, but do not mean that this event was subsequently interpreted or construed, much less invented by the faith and piety of the Church.[124]

Certainly this is unambiguous enough to perceive what Barth meant. Nevertheless, a few further remarks are in order. First, Barth also remarked in the same place that, "to speak here of a 'myth' would be to confuse

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[123]"Faith, History and the Resurrection" (Appendix), History & Christianity, John Warwick Montgomery (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1964-5), p. 86.

[124]Karl Barth, "An Exegetical Study of Matthew 28: 16-20," trans. Thomas Wieser in The Theology of the Christian Mission, ed. G. H. Andersen (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), pp. 56-57.

categories. Easter is an absolutely unique event."[125] However, "these narratives are recounted not in the style of history but, like the story of creation, in the style of historical saga."[126]

One cannot read the Church Dogmatics (or anything else by Barth) without quickly coming to the realization that, as far as Barth is concerned, everything in theology begins, ends, and continues throughout solely on the objective actuality of God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ, who as the Son of God and Son of man was born, lived, died, and, yes, resurrected in the framework of history. "Saga" does not deny history. Yet a few still persist in reading a subjective twist in Barth because, as Carl Henry expressed it, "the objectifying elements Barth introduced into his system are not really objects of historical research."[127] This criticism was met by Hordern who first asserted that history as the investigation of what has happened in the past was indispensable to Barth in his whole system. History in this sense is present in the witness of the Scripture. However, Hordern went on to add:

> But if by history you mean what so many people mean today, that which can be verified by modern historical method (and when that in truth means that by definition any miracle cannot have been historical),

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[125] Ibid., p. 56.

[126] Ibid., p. 57. Here the words "style" and "historical" must be emphasized to retain Barth's thrust. The Resurrection really did happen.

[127] "Faith, History and the Resurrection," p. 85.

> then it seems to me that Barth is forced to say that historical criticism cannot help the Christian faith, or that it cannot produce anything other than a non-biblical Jesus. By definition it cannot, if this is what one means by historical method, and this is what is widely meant. That is why Barth, speaking of the resurrection, can say, Of course this is not historical if by history (I am not quoting him verbatim) you have the concept that miracles are not historical by definition. But, he says (and I can imagine the twinkle in his eye), that doesn't mean it didn't happen. In other words, Barth is arguing that more has happened objectively . . . than what would be discovered by historical method.[128]

There is nothing of radical discontinuity between Barth's view of history and that espoused by some evangelicals. His language may have been different but the central conviction was thoroughly orthodox. But another feature of Barth's Church Dogmatics has seemed very unorthodox indeed. This is Barth's rejection of natural theology and, in particular, the concept of analogia entis.

As was noted before, Barth rejected the analogia entis, or "analogy of being," as from the Antichrist. He considered it the single sufficient reason for separation from Roman Catholicism. Moreover, it was the issue of natural theology that caused the sharp break between Barth and Brunner in 1934. Barth rejected natural theology on theological, logical, and biblical grounds.

Theologically, natural theology is opposed to God's freedom in revelation. Barth had acquired from Anselm the understanding of theological knowledge as that rational

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[128] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

operation induced by faith, conducted through faith, but dependent on faith's source, that is, grace. In other words, theological knowledge is rational and scientific only insofar as it is limited to what its object of inquiry yields to it. Natural theology abrogates God's revelation in Christ because it denies that this revelation stands alone and not as one revelation, albeit the greatest, among many. Natural theology is not truly theology, that which proceeds from God, but anthropology, that which proceeds from man.[129]

Logically, natural theology leads first to the perversion of the Gospel and then to its setting aside. This is so because natural theology means more than just a natural knowledge of God. When Barth used the term he included, among other things, "all doctrines concerning man and all moral doctrines which lay claim to defining a relationship to God independent of Christian Revelation."[130] From the possibility of theological knowledge outside God's revelation in Christ it is but a very small step to the restructuring of Christianity. "Natural theology is the doctrine of a union of man with God existing outside God's revelation

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[129]See, Barth, CD, II/1, pp. 128-178, esp. pp. 139, 143f. Note also, p. 4, on Barth's indebtedness to Anselm. See, Hartwell, TKBI, p. 48, and Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, pp. xxi-xxvii.

[130]Henri Bouillard, "A Dialogue with Barth: the Problem of Natural Theology," Cross Currents, XVIII (Spring, 1968), 208.

in Jesus Christ."[131] Just such a theology can have devastating consequences.

By means of demonstration, one need only to look to history. Robert McAfee Brown, in the introduction to his translation of Casalis' Portrait of Karl Barth, has done precisely that. He comments"

> All of Barth's fears about what happens when men reason from themselves to God were confirmed by what happened in Germany in the thirties. The "German Christians" found it possible to start with natural theology and move easily and comfortably to an acceptance of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party as expressing God's will in their own day, since they had no criterion drawn from revelation by which to judge the rightness or wrongness of their assessment of Hitler. It was clear to Barth that when one judged all of God's work in the light of his revelation in Jesus Christ, no peace could be made with Hitler.[132]

Although this instance might be protested as unique, and certainly not a necessary corollary of natural theology, it nonetheless serves to support Barth's essential contention: such an outcome in history is impossible apart from natural theology; God's revelation in Jesus Christ precludes the existence of a "German Christian" church. How, then, is it possible that such a theology is not only present in the Church but also vital? For Barth, "the only answer he can find to this question is that man resists

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[131] Barth, CD, II/1, p. 168.

[132] Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, pp. xxi-xxii. Surprisingly, not many have explored this particular point. It is, however, another example of Barth's way of seeing theology actualized in history (in this instance negatively).

living exclusively in terms of grace."[133]

The insidious character of natural theology is masked by its pretense of Christian innocence. "By the very fact that it grants a place to and admits the preeminence of revelation, it absorbs revelation and domesticates it; instead of a question which confronts man, revelation becomes an answer which man gives."[134] This again is the vitality of natural theology; "the vitality . . . is the vitality of man as such."[135] But, of course, its vitality is also the ground of its illegitimacy. Natural theology is an illusion, but a deadly illusion, one that perverts revelation by its modest identity with revelation.[136]

Biblically, natural theology is untenable. From the start Barth had declared, "Our thesis, that the knowability of God is to be equated with His grace and mercy in the revelation of His Word and Spirit, is based on the witness of Holy Scripture."[137] However, Barth immediately confessed:

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[133]G. C. Berkouwer, The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth, trans. H. R. Boer (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Co., 1956), p. 155. Hereafter cited by Triumph of Grace.

[134]Henri Bouillard, The Knowledge of God, trans. S. D. Femiano (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 15. This is a nice summary statement of a primary critique offered by Barth, CD, II/1, pp. 128-178, esp. 137-140.

[135]Barth, CD, II/1, p. 165.

[136]Ibid., pp. 165, 137. "Everything depends on whether we really refer to Jesus Christ" (p. 165); this is the issue that when answered either dispels or protects the illusion.

[137]Ibid., p. 97f. Barth's exegetical portions

> At this point, too, it is best for us to begin with an open concession. There are not only individual passages, but a whole strand running through Scripture, in face of which we can certainly raise the question whether we are not invited and summoned to natural theology by Holy Scripture itself. Indeed, we must raise it in order that we may give it a correct answer.[138]

Accordingly, Barth undertook the exegetical task and brought to bear the canonical witness on each text commonly put forward as supportive of natural theology. Not surprisingly, he gave special attention to the celebrated text in the first chapter of Romans. It is, of course, infeasible to reproduce or evaluate all of Barth's particular textual studies. Nevertheless, these are too important to pass by without at least an analysis of one. Therefore, it is to Barth's exegesis of Romans 1:18-32 that attention must be drawn.

The exposition of this text is given in two complementary passages. In the second part of volume one (pages 306-307), Barth's treatment is in the context of his discussion of religion as unbelief. In the first part of volume two (pages 119-121), the exposition is included in discussion on the knowability of God. When carefully harmonized and brought together the two passages produce one exposition. In vastly reduced form this can be outlined as follows:

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concerning natural theology are primarily located here in II/1, pp. 97-128, and CD, I/2, pp. 303-307. Texts examined include: Gen. 1-2, Psalms, Acts 17:22-31, Rom. 1:18-32; 2:12f.

[138]Ibid., p. 99.

Q. Does Paul actually stand in this first chapter within the development of the theme announced in 1:17?
1. We must bear in mind that the very words which are so often regarded as an opening or summons to every possible kind of natural theology are in reality a constituent part of the apostolic kerygma. . . .
2. The passage is the formulation of an accusation. . . .
3. If Rom. 1:18-21 existed for us on its own . . . we should hardly have any other choice than to acknowledge that it says that man in the cosmos in himself and as such is an independent witness of the truth of God. But as a matter of plain fact, it stands in a quite definite context in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. In this context it does not say this, and what is more, it cannot say it. . . .
4. It is a Christian statement presupposing . . . the event which took place between God and man in Christ that he says that the knowledge which the Gentiles have of God from the works of creation is the instrument to make them inexcusable and therefore to bring them like the Jews under the judgment and therefore under the grace of God. . . .
5. It is, therefore, not the case that Paul was in a position to appeal to the Gentile's possession of a knowledge of the invisible nature of God as manifested from creation. . . . In his proclamation of Jesus Christ he could not let it appear even momentarily that he was speaking of things which were already familiar by virtue of that "primal revelation." . . .
6. He is not, then, speaking of man in the cosmos in himself and in general. The Jews and the heathen of whom he speaks are very definitely characterized as Jews and heathen objectively confronted with the divine ἀποκάλυψις in the Gospel (1:15-16). . . . There can be no doubt that Paul meant by this the revelation of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. . . .
7. Now that revelation has come and its light has fallen on heathendom, heathen religion is shown to be the very opposite of revelation: a false religion of unbelief.[139]

The crux of the issue in rightly determining the meaning of this text is in correctly answering the question

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[139]Barth, CD, I/2, pp. 306-307; CD, II/1, pp. 119-121. The breakdown is as follows: Q, 2, 3, 6 (CD, II/1); 1, 4, 5, 7 (I/2). This harmony is not invalid inasmuch as: 1. the text being exposited is the same; 2. Barth, in II/1, refers to his earlier treatment for comparison; 3. the contexts in the Dogmatics are related.

about Paul: "Does he speak in this chapter too as the apostle of Jesus Christ, or does he, between 1:18 and 3:20, speak anthropologically, as a religious and historical philosopher?"[140] Of course, what this implies is the necessity of a decision about a basic hermeneutical issue: the delimiting of context. Especially, too, the question, and indeed Barth's whole exposition, again moves toward reconsidering exegesis as a work undertaken in the context of the Christian canon. If it is true, and Barth said it is, that the whole canon is the proper context, and if it is true, and Barth said it is, that the canon's theme is the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, then it must be true that each text be seen in light of the theme of the entire canon.

Thus far, then, Barth had set forth theological, logical, and biblical reasons for rejecting natural theology. Yet, he said, all this evidence must not be used to attack natural theology. The lines of argument are not eristic or apologetic at all. Rather, the grounds for rejecting natural theology rest in, and only in, the perspective provided by grace. Here, natural theology is seen to be an illusion, but the knowledge of its illusory character cannot be turned against it. To attempt such is to fall victim to it; "to strive against this . . . as such is meaningless. In this sphere it is inevitable."[141]

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[140] Barth, CD, II/1, p. 119.

[141] Ibid., p. 169; 165-172.

Finally, then, natural theology must remain outside the Church but not outside the Church's interest. So long as pagan man exists the Church must be ready to persuade and convince him that the matter is otherwise than he thinks. However, to do this, the Church must be free of the snare. It must stand free in God's gracious revelation. When this happens the profound contrast between the Church and the world is once more apparent. Outside the Church, "natural theology is the only comfort of the natural man in life and death."[142] But within the Church, "we have . . . complete comfort for the whole man."[143] Jesus Christ is that comfort.

Barth, however, was not content to let the matter rest at this point. In an exercise of constructive theology he proceeded to present an understanding that frees the Church from natural theology and renders the analogia entis an unnecessary explanation for man's knowledge of God and relation to him. But, as Barth developed his counter-proposal he was subjected to intense criticism and strange interpretations. Hans Urs von Balthasar perceived in this, amazingly enough, a move, not away, but actually toward an acceptance of the analogy of being![144] Berkouwer criticized

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[142] Ibid.

[143] Karl Barth, The Heidelberg Catechism for Today, trans. Shirley C. Guthrie, Jr. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 30. Note pp. 28-33 in this same connection.

[144] Von Balthasar, TKB, pp. 93-94, 147, et. al. "Used badly, it may well be the invitation of the Antichrist, as Barth said, but it is offered to man as a good tool. Barth might have been able to accept this idea

Von Balthasar's analysis and pointed out that such a move was inconceivable within the framework of the Church Dogmatics. Rather, Berkouwer saw both Barth's rejection of the analogia entis and his alternative as steps in the consistent defense of God's triumph of grace.[145] Hans Küng, like von Balthasar an astute Catholic observor of Barth's theology, believed "Barth's fundamental objection to Catholic teaching can be rejected as unjust and untenable. . . ."[146]

What occasioned all of the debate was Barth's introduction of the analogia fidei, the analogy of faith. Barth had by no means denied the concept of analogy. Rather, taking his cue from Romans 12:6, he described the analogy of faith as: "the correspondence of the thing known with the knowing, of the object with the thought, of the Word of God with the word of man in thought and in speech. . . ."[147] The analogia fidei explains Paul's turning human knowledge of God into man's being known by God. The analogia entis

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withoug feeling that he betrayed his basic outlook . . ." (p. 147).

[145]Berkouwer, Triumph of Grace, ch. 7, "The Triumph of Grace in its Antithesis to Rome," esp. pp. 185-190.
"We are of the opinion that von Balthasar's interpretation . . . is in error at a decisive point and that therein the fundamental fallacy of his masterful and in certain respects irenic book is to be found" (p. 186).

[146]Hans Küng, Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection, trans. T. Collins, E. E. Tolk, and D. Granskou, with a letter by K. Barth (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1964), p. 193; see pp. 190-193. Hereafter cited by Justification.

[147]Barth, DC, I/1, p. 279. The term appears as early as p. 11.

shifts the emphasis on the knowledge of God to an innate capacity within man; the analogia fidei restores the emphasis to man's being known by God.[148]

In all of this Barth was intent on preserving an appreciation for the freedom of God. In fact, the concept of freedom is one of the most distinctive features of the Church Dogmatics. Until recently, this feature was often set aside and left unexamined.

> In his essay Der Theologe Karl Barth, carrying the striking subtitle Zeugnis vom freien Gott und freien Menschen [Witness to the free Man], Jürgen Fangmeier, pointing out that Barth never understood how his theology could be reduced (by his critics) to the formula 'God is everything and man is nothing', rightly states that God's freedom for man and man's freedom for God is one of the main concepts of Barth's theology.[149]

The concept of freedom is probably the dominant expression of Barth's actualism to be found in the Church Dogmatics. In fact, Barth, in another work, said: "The words 'free grace' by their very juxtaposition indicate first and last nothing other than the nature of Him whom Holy Scripture calls 'God.'"[150] The revelation of God is an expression of this free grace. It is God's freedom in

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[148]Ibid., See, von Balthasar, TKB, pp. 148-150; Berkouwer, Triumph of Grace, pp. 181-185; Bouillard, The Knowledge of God, pp. 97-104. Note the identification of other terms of analogy, e.g., analogia relationis, analogia gratiae. All of these speak to the same essential concern.

[149]Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," p. 187.

[150]Karl Barth, God Here and Now, trans. and intro. Paul M. van Buren, intro. R. N. Anshen (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), p. 28.

Jesus Christ that is at work in election. God is free for man in Christ. But, man is called to be free toward God in Jesus Christ too. In fact, man is only free as he is free toward God.[151]

Part of God's freedom is that enjoyed in the Trinity. Or, perhaps it should be said that the Trinity of God means also his freedom within that Trinity. If the Church Dogmatics suggest anything about God's freedom, or theology in general, it is that it is within a Trinitarian framework. One of the amazing and very distinctive features of the work as a whole is its Trinitarian ground. "Barth's doctrine of the Trinity represents the most imposing attempt in modern times to restate the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. Above all, it is grounded upon God's revelation of Himself in Christ."[152]

"In Christ": the words reverberate like the triumphant theme in the gospel of God's grace. Is this Barth's theme? "For all Barth's works want only to point to Him, the Alpha and Omega."[153] It is true, and of course all who have read Barth at all carefully realize this, that God's revelation in Jesus Christ was Karl Barth's all-consuming

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[151]Barth, CD, I/1, pp. 132, 352; II/1, pp. 297-321; III/1, pp. 265ff.; vol. III/4, et. al.

[152]Colin Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967), p. 76; see pp. 67-76; see Hartwell, TKBI, pp. 73-77; see esp. von Balthasar, TKB, p. 74.

[153]Robert W. Jenson, Alpha and Omega: A Study in the Theology of Karl Barth. (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1963), p. 171.

passion. Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, in Barth's theology. Yet, the statement of this in a single theme has eluded even the best scholars. Berkouwer's understanding of the theme as one of "the triumph of grace" has merit but is much more abstract than Barth allowed. So, too, with any that might be put forward for consideration. It must suffice to affirm that the person and work of Jesus Christ stand at the center of every part and of the whole of Barth's theology. The "primary *theologia crucis* . . . is wholly and exclusively that of the cross of Jesus. . . ."[154]

THE MESSAGE

The several thousand pages of the *Church Dogmatics* develop in a powerfully consistent manner all the distinctive features of its varied parts and massive whole into one resounding message centered and united in the person of Jesus Christ. The size not withstanding,[155] the *Church Dogmatics* has its own kind of simplicity. One observer reduced Barth's efforts to the single declaration that "the task of theology is to expound the Bible correctly."[156]

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[154]Barth, *CD*, IV/2, p. 264

[155]See, Karl Barth, *CD*, II/2, trans. G. W. Bromiley, J. C. Campbell, I. Wilson, J. S. McNab, H. Knight, and R. A. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), p. ix; esp. "May it not be that I have been too short and not too long at some important points?"

[156]Daniel D. Williams, *What Present Day Theologia Are Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 56. No

While this is certainly true, it is also true that in the service of this task Barth brought into his work a keen interaction with others both within and outside the Church; as a historian of the Church, Barth was superb.[157] He was exegete, historian, dogmatician, and, above all, preacher.

The Church Dogmatics must be understood as a part of Barth himself. He was, as H. Richard Niebuhr said it so well, "the theologian who does not disappear in his theology."[158] Barth was the pastor claimed by the Word for the lifetime work of proclamation. This proclamation unfolds in four major volumes. Originally, Barth had intended five volumes. In addition to his Prolegomena and treatment of the doctrine of the Word of God, Barth planned that, "the second volume should contain the doctrine of God, the third the doctrine of Creation, the fourth the doctrine of Recon ciliation, the fifth the doctrine of Redemption."[159]

William's elaboration (p. 57):

"Three things can be asked of any Christian theology. It must preserve and express the message of the Gospel. It should interpret the faith in a way which brings Christian belief into some kind of intelligible order with human knowledge and experience. Finally it should give an account of how faith may be presented to the unbeliever so that the way is opened for him to understand how it is related to his own experience. On all three counts Barth's theology stands impressively. . . ."

[157]"When Karl Barth decided to become a systematic theologian, Protestant historical scholarship lost a man who was potentially the greatest historian since Adolf von Harnack" (from the intro. by Jaroslav Pelikan), Karl Barth, Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl, trans. Brian Cozens (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959), p. 7.

[158]Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, trans. George Eliot, intro. K. Barth, foreward by H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. vii.

Unfortunately, the years passed too quickly and the last volume was never attempted.

Despite, or perhaps because of Barth's personality the Church Dogmatics has the ring of authority that results from a close correspondence to the Gospel. Barth is always there, too, but as a prophet and preacher. It is his voice, but no, it is God's voice that is heard. The reader sees Barth, yet, he sees the Gospel too. Barth is never so powerful a figure that he obscures the person of Christ, but because of Christ Barth is never so powerful as when he preaches loudly. Nevertheless, and this is a very great nevertheless, Barth was also simul iustus et peccator, "at the same time justified and still a sinner." Barth never forgot that; neither did his critics--nor must anyone who studies him. The Church Dogmatics is a flawed work. But, and this must be the final word, as the steadfast witness to the glory of God this work, as the man himself, must be viewed not only in the world but in God's grace as well.

With these thoughts in mind, the following exposition of the four volumes of the Church Dogmatics can include only incidental comments about the praise and criticism that stand attendant to nearly everything Barth wrote. The purpose here, as before, is not to criticize but to learn through exposition. Of course, what follows cannot be

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[159]Barth, CD, I/1, p. xiv.

substituted for a reading of the original sources. This is necessarily brief.[160]

The first volume, published in two parts under the title "The Doctrine of the Word of God," is comprised of four chapters. It is "an exposition that occupies all of fifteen hundred pages and is definitive for everything that follows."[161] Beginning with a prolegomena that discusses the nature of theology, the bulk of this volume is a development of the basis of true theology, the Word of God in its three forms. These are: the Word of God as preached, the written Word of God, and the revealed Word of God.

The Word as preached is likened to the sacrament of the Last Supper. It is God's vehicle through which he speaks to man today. As with the sacrament, proclamation does not make human words divine but allows the divine Word to be heard. There are four decisive connections between the Word of God and proclamation. First, proclamation rests upon what God has given, namely the Word of God. In this sense, the Word is a commission, in fact, the commission. Second, the Word is the object of proclamation. Only so long as the Word is the object is proclamation real proclamation. Third, proclamation is judged by the Word of God. Proclamation is only real proclamation when it stands submitted to this

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[160]See Appendixes D and E.

[161]Gustaf Wingren, Theology in Conflict: Nygren, Barth, Bultmann, trans. Eric H. Wahlstrom (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1958), p. 108. Hereafter cited by Theology in Conflict.

judgment and reveals itself as true language which rightly demands obedience. Fourth, and finally, "the Word of God--and here at last we utter the decisive word--is the event itself, in which proclamation becomes real proclamation."[162]

The written Word of God is Holy Scripture. It is an entity like proclamation but also different and superior to it. The Church's proclamation is subject to the canon. As Barth explained:

> By recognising the existence of a canon, the Church declares that particularly in her proclamation she is aware of not being left alone, that the commission on the basis of which she proclaims, the object which she proclaims, the judgment to which her proclamation is liable, the nature of real proclamation as an event must come from another source, from without, and concretely from without, in the complete externality of her concrete canon--as an imperative, categorical yet utterly historical, becoming articulate in time. And by acknowledging that this canon is actually identical with the Bible of the Old and New Testaments, with the Word of the prophets and apostles, she declares that this connection of her proclamation with something concrete and external is not a general principle or a mere determination of form, the content of which might be this or even a totally different one, but that this connection is completely determined in content, that it is an order received, an obligation imposed, that this bit of past happening composed of definite texts is her directions for work, her marching orders, with which not only her preaching but she herself stands or falls. . . .[163]

The content of the Bible can be summed up in the declaration: "the prophetic apostolic Word is the word, the witness, the proclamation and the preaching of Jesus Christ."[164] Like proclamation, the Bible has an event character. "In this event the Bible is the Word of God, i.e.

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[162]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 104; 98-111.

[163]Ibid., p. 113f. [164]Ibid., p. 121.

in this word the human word of prophets and apostles represents the Word of God Himself. . . ."[165] But what does this mean? Does this mean the Bible becomes the Word of God?

"For me the Word of God is a happening, not a thing. Therefore the Bible must become the Word of God, and it does this through the work of the Spirit."[166] This candid admission by Barth has caused a great deal of unnecessary worry and unevangelical-reaction on the part of conservatives. They have tried to understand Barth on the basis of incomplete evidence. Some have accused him of saying there is a divine Word which must be separated from the human words, and then by human judgment. Others have accused Barth of saying that the Bible is only the Word of God to the degree that a man so accepts it, and then only in those parts where he decides for himself that he hears God.[167] But these are irresponsible judgments bearing no resemblance to what Barth actually said.

"This very fact of the language of God Himself becoming an event in the human word of the Bible is, however, God's business and not ours."[168] Here man is put in his

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[165]Ibid., p. 122f.

[166]Karl Barth, Karl Barth's Table Talk, ed. John D. Godsey (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962), p. 41.

[167]In the interest of charity, no names will be named; no stones will be cast. Fortunately, this is a study in constructive theology.

[168]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 123.

place! "The Bible is God's Word so far as God speaks through it."[169] Here there is no decision required of man but that of obedience or rebellion. As William Hordern emphasized about Barth: "He very definitely believed--quite apart from man's knowledge of it--that God was in Christ, that the Bible is . . . the Word of God, and that this is true whether or not man recognizes it."[170] Of course, "the statement, 'The Bible is God's Word,' is a confession of faith . . . [but] it does not become God's Word because we accord it faith. . . ."[171] Rather, the Bible becomes God's Word by the act of revelation. Only now does Barth's celebrated statement become clear:

> The Bible therefore becomes God's Word in this event, and it is to its being in this becoming that the tiny word "is" relates, in the statement that the Bible is God's Word.[172]

However, other important objections have arisen in relation to Barth's treatment of Holy Scripture. Some object to the description of Scripture as a witness to revelation. But most of the objections in this regard again stem from misunderstanding. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, American evangelical theologian, an instructor at Fuller Seminary, and co-editor of the English translation of the Church Dogmatics, has explained:

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[169] Ibid.

[170] Montgomery, History and Christianity, p. 86.

[171] Barth, CD, I/1, pp. 123-124. Cf. CD, I/2, p. 506.

[172] Ibid., p. 124.

> The word "witness" is a dangerous one if used in its ordinary sense, but if we think of the Bible as a witness in the way in which the Bible itself describes the prophets and apostles as witnesses--"he that receiveth you, receiveth me"--it is perhaps not quite so objectionable as some critics of Barth suppose. This is at least how Barth himself is thinking of it, and in this sense it has the merit of being a word which the Bible uses even about itself (cf. John 5:39).[173]

Finally, some have accused Barth of a faulty view of Scripture because he said, "The men whom we hear as witnesses speak as fallible, erring men like ourselves."[174] If this is indeed a denial of inerrancy, then where is Scripture's authority? Why, in the first place, did Barth posit such an idea? To this latter question attention must be redirected to Barth's central convictions. It must be recalled that the Church Dogmatics are rooted in the ground of God's free revelation in his Word, Jesus Christ. The Bible is not, in and of itself, the Word of God. If it were then it would exist as an independent source of knowledge about God, an independent witness to God's revelation in Jesus Christ. Instead, it is the dependent witness that arises from revelation and, in its identity, by virtue of its true witness-proclamation, is one with the Word of God. In short, it becomes the Word. But this is a miracle, and miracles are a stumbling block; ". . . that sinful and erring men as such speak the Word of God: that is the

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[173]G. W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of Inspiration" (paper presented at the 929th Ordinary General Meeting of the Victoria Institute, 18 April, 1955), p. 69, cited by Colin Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p. 32. See Barth, CD, I/2, pp. 457-537.

[174]Barth, CD, I/2, p. 507

miracle of which we speak when we say that the Bible is the Word of God."[175] But the offense of Scripture is grounded in the mercy of God:

> For that reason every time we turn the Word of God into an infallible biblical word of man or the biblical word of man into an infallible Word of God we resist that which we ought never to resist, i.e., the truth of the miracle that there fallible men speak the Word of God in fallible human words--and we therefore resist the sovereignty of grace, in which God Himself became man in Christ, to glorify Himself in His humanity.[176]

This is, as Barth acknowledged, a hard thought to accept. But it is the line of thinking that shows clearly that Scripture has not its own authority but the authority vested in it by God's action. Moreover, it is not man's place to sit in judgment upon the Bible--indeed, he is judged by it. "The Word of God is so powerful that it is not bound by what we think we can discover and value as the divine element, the content, the spirit of the Bible."[177]

Holy Scripture is inspired by God and "the inspiration of the Bible cannot be reduced to our faith in it. . . ."[178] Its trustworthiness is always before man waiting and able to prove itself. Ontologically, it is not infallible--if, that is, ontology is all that is being considered. Again, though, Barth's actualism resolves the matter: the Scripture is not an in-itself, for-itself entity

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[175]Ibid., p. 529.

[176]Ibid. Note carefully the portion that follows this in CD, I/2, pp. 529f.

[177]Ibid., p. 531. [178]Ibid., p. 534.

but exists in the act of God's revelation for God and for man as the Word of God to man in the words of man himself. It proves itself functionally infallible only in the act of God's gracious opening of man's eyes to see Christ--and once opened man's eyes behold the glory of God in the earthen vessel of man's own words. Such a man understands the inspiration of Scripture. Thus, Barth's conclusion states:

> Scripture is recognized as the Word of God by the fact that it is the Word of God. This is what we are told by the doctrine of the witness of the Holy Spirit. . . . When we say "by the Holy Spirit" we say that in the doctrine of Holy Scripture we are content to give the glory to God and not to ourselves.[179]

But another objection has been raised. Klaas Runia, while sympathetic to Barth's viewpoint in many regards, nevertheless separates from him on the issue of the Bible's fallibility. However, Runia is no alarmist. He, as well as Barth, speaks from a Reformed position. He is appreciative of Barth's attention to the human element in the composition of Scripture. Still, he finds himself forced to declare:

> Here we strongly disagree with Barth. In our opinion Barth is guilty of a leap of thought which has no adequate grounding. Humanity and fallibility may indeed coincide on the purely human level, as we all experience daily, but this gives us no right to draw the same conclusion with regard to the Bible. For--and this is the decisive point--we are not on a purely human level here. We have to do with the inspired Word of God, i.e., with the Word that came into being not by human activity only, but in and through this human activity by the operation of the Holy Spirit. There is therefore no

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[179]Ibid., p. 537.

ground for such a straightforward identification of humanity and fallibility.[180]

Runia's logic is not very compelling in view of his own leap of thought. He assumes that in order for the Holy Spirit to be operative with human activity this demands a superintending that raises man above his fallibility. In what other manner does his concluding sentence make sense than this? But is Runia in more agreement than Barth with what the Bible claims not only about itself but about God too? Can and does God truly work with and through man at the purely human level? Must God superintend in such a manner as to present man with an infallible document?[181] Is not his own infallible person enough? Does God fall if the doctrine of infallibility falls? If God must raise man above his own created nature as fallible, dependent image-of-God in order to communicate sufficient truth to direct man back to his source, then the Fall itself means very little, for man in his original state was also so separated he could not have discourse with God. No, the criticism fails because God allows humanity to stand as

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[180]Runia, Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture, p. 74. Note his preceding comments, pp. 65-73, for his "cordial agreement with Barth's great stress upon the humanity of the Bible" (p. 65).

[181]One must also ask why, if God did so produce such a document, he then allowed its inerrant autographs to perish. Surely, if he allowed this to happen to avoid bibliolatry, then why did he bother with inerrant originals of these books in the first place? The question must be raised afresh: is the evangelical more concerned about inerrancy than God himself?

fallible and performs his miracles even there.[182]

Finally, the revealed Word of God is Jesus Christ. "Revelation in fact does not differ from the Person of Jesus Christ, and again does not differ from the reconciliation that took place in Him. To say revelation is to say, 'The Word became flesh.'"[183] In this regard, "for Barth the crucial text in the New Testament is John 1:14. . . ."[184] Jesus Christ, the revealed Word, is the ground of Scripture and proclamation. The former attests the past revelation and, "to attest means to point in a definite direction beyond oneself to something else."[185] The Bible, in turn, stands between the revelation in Christ and the proclamation of the Church; ". . . the promise in proclamation rests upon the attestation in the Bible, the hope of future revelation upon faith in that which happened once for all."[186] The authority of both Scripture and the Church's proclamation

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[182]See Barth, CD, I/2, pp. 506f., 512-514; in fact, ch. 3, "Holy Scripture" is pertinent to this whole area. The point is this, if inerrancy is to be held at all it must cease to concentrate on the Bible as an in-itself, for-itself entity. Instead, a review of the doctrine that does not separate ontology from function is needed. This failure to account for an actualism in the doctrine of Scripture is apparent in Runia's analysis and critique of Barth.

[183]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 134.

[184]S. Paul Schilling, Contemporary Continental Theologians (New York: Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 23. This comment actually anticipates CD, I/2, where twelve references to John 1:14 occur.

[185]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 125

[186]Ibid.

is located in the revealed Word of God.[187]

This emphasis is disturbing to Gustaf Wingren. He finds an "unexpressed presupposition" in Barth's doctrine of the Word of God. This presupposition is Barth's anthropology which, Wingren claims, ". . . is in reality definitive for Barth's theology. We could express this in another way by saying that his anthropology determines his hermeneutics."[188] Wingren admits the strangeness of his accusation.[189] However, he stands by it and maintains that it is at root the cause for the distortion of the Gospel that he finds in Barth. Wingren complains:

> Barth has a tendency to shift the emphasis in the gospel of Christ from the death and resurrection to the incarnation, the birth, the miracle of Christmas. When the death and resurrection stand in the center--as they do in all the four gospels and in the rest of the New Testament--the gospel has the character of a struggle.[190]

For Wingren, this shift undermines the Gospel message. It forces a reinterpretation that minimizes the sense of conflict in the New Testament, that sets the death and

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[187]Ibid., p. 126f.

[188]Wingren, Theology in Conflict, p. 108. This strange accusation makes sense in Wingren's framework because he has already found that, "it is clear that Barth remains within the framework of Schleiermacher's theology . . ." (p. 25f.). Not only that, but Wingren also believes that "the positions of Barth and Luther are incompatible and cannot at all be reconciled" (fn. 6, p. 26)! Cf. von Balthasar, TKB, pp. 23, 65, 74, 134, 172-174, et. al.; Torrance, KBET, pp. 96, 216, et. al.

[189]Ibid., p. 34; "It is strange that we must make this statement, but it is necessary: in Barth's theology man is the obvious center."

[190]Ibid., p. 109.

resurrection of Jesus to one side, and that makes the problem of the knowledge of God preeminent. Above all, Barth's view of sin seems to Wingren to represent an unbiblical position that both contributes to Barth's lack of any sense of conflict as it appears in Scripture and also is the product of Barth's unhealthy emphasis on the incarnation.[191]

Wingren's criticism highlights a very real possibility of danger inherent in Barth's position. It is possible to lose sight of sin's power, to exalt the triumph of God's grace at the expense of forgetting how much it did indeed cost God. It is possible, and undesirable, to start with the incarnation and never do justice to the crucifixion and resurrection. However--and this is the issue--did Barth fall to such temptations? Was he forced by his presuppositions to an unbiblical position?

Wingren's conclusions presuppose an anthropological foundation in Barth that is at odds with Barth's own best intentions. Of course, Barth could have been blind to his own real assumptions. But were all his critics likewise blind? Wingren's analysis stands alone in this respect. Yet, this does not invalidate his claims. For that, attention must be directed to the Church Dogmatics.[192]

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[191] Ibid., pp. 110-128.

[192] A full rebuttal to Runia (above) was not possible here and neither is one to Wingren. The criticisms of both men deserve full exploration. In regard to Barth's doctrine see CD, III/3, pp. 289-368. Cf. Küng, Justification, p. 279, who identifies various inherent "weaknesses" in Barth's theology, including his doctrine of sin, but who says,

Barth neatly summarized the interrelationships between proclamation, Scripture, and the revealed Word as follows:

> The revealed Word of God we know only from the Scripture adopted by Church proclamation, or from Church proclamation based on Scripture.
>
> The written Word of God we know only through the revelation which makes proclamation possible, or through the proclamation made possible by revelation.
>
> The proclaimed Word of God we know only by knowing the revelation attested through Scripture, or by knowing the Scripture which attests revelation.[193]

From the exposition of the three forms of the Word of God, Barth moved to his exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity. Even in his earlier discussion the doctrine of the Trinity was present though unexpressed.[194] But in the second chapter of volume one, part one, Barth moved to a full discussion of this doctrine. In placing this doctrine so early in his Dogmatics Barth stood common procedure on its head. "Handbooks on Christian doctrine usually begin with an account of their principles of authority and method."[195]

"these trends, while present in Barth's fundamental position, do not become errors nor irresponsible exaggerations." Cf. also Berkouwer, Triumph of Grace, pp. 215-261, who starts from a much different point from Wingren. Finally, cf. Hartwell, TKBI, pp. 116-123; Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, pp. 119-123.

[193]Barth, CD, I/1, p. 136.

[194]Ibid. Barth states, "the doctrine of the Word of God in its threefold form is itself the sole analogy to the doctrine which will fundamentally occupy us in unfolding the concept of revelation; the doctrine of the three-in-oneness of God."

[195]Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p. 67.

But Barth had his reasons for this approach. As G. W. Bromiley noted:

> The Word is God Himself in His self-revelation. But the God thus self-revealed is the triune God. Hence the primary theme of Christian dogmatics is the doctrine of the Trinity, to which there correspond the three aspects of revelation as revealer, thing revealed, and act of revelation.[196]

Barth knew that Christian theology is necessarily Trinitarian theology. In fact, in light of the prominence given by Barth to this doctrine, charges of Christomonism appear rather empty. While fully accepting the ancient formulations of this doctrine Barth also realized they were not the final word on the subject. Accordingly, he offered as his own understanding one that was shaped in the givenness of God's revelation:

> We mean by the doctrine of the Trinity . . . the proposition that He whom the Christian Church calls God and proclaims as God, therefore the God who has revealed Himself according to the witness of Scripture, is the same in unimpaired unity, yet also the same in unimpaired variety thrice in a different way. Or, in the phraseology of the dogma of the Trinity in the Church, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Bible's witness to revelation are the one God in the unity of their essence, and the one God in the Bible's witness to revelation is in the variety of His Persons the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.[197]

In part two of volume one the three forms of the Word of God are each examined again, only in greater depth than before. The revelation of God is seen in the

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[196] G. W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth," Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p. 33. For an excellent presentation on Barth in a few pages this is without a doubt the very best.

[197] Barth, CD, I/1, p. 353.

incarnation of the Word. "The Word or Son of God became a Man and was called Jesus of Nazareth; therefore this Man Jesus of Nazareth was God's Word or God's Son."[198] Jesus Christ is both the objective reality and possibility of revelation; the Holy Spirit is both the subjective reality and possibility of revelation. This latter means:

> Subjective revelation can consist only in the fact that objective revelation, the one truth which cannot be added to or bypassed, comes to man and is recognized and acknowledged by man. And that is the work of the Holy Spirit. . . . Subjective revelation can be only the repetition, the impress, the sealing of objective revelation upon us; or, from our point of view, our own discovery, acknowledgment and affirmation of it.[199]

After concluding volume one with its discussion of the Word of God, Barth gave volume two to "The Doctrine of God," also published in two part-volumes. In this volume the knowledge and reality of God are explored. Here the fides quaerens intellectum proves decisive to the former problem and the actualism of the living God to the latter.[200] In the second part of this volume Barth's important treatment of election is developed. The volume concludes with the ethical dimensions of everything previously discussed under the doctrine of God.

Barth's doctrine of election is revolutionary. "Karl Barth has attempted to give the doctrine of election

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[198]Barth, CD, I/2, p. 13.

[199]Ibid., p. 239; cf. pp. 203-279

[200]Barth, CD, II/1, pp. 3-256; 257-678.

an entirely new formulation. . . ."[201] In contrast to the past, Barth concentrates on viewing election in full relation to Christ. His high view of election is summed up in the declaration: "The election of grace is the sum of the Gospel--we must put it as pointedly as that. But more, the election of grace is the whole of the Gospel, the Gospel *in nuce*."[202] This is not an arbitrary statement at all. Barth had already explained:

> The doctrine of election is the sum of the Gospel because of all words that can be said or heard it is the best: that God elects man; that God is for man too the One who loves in freedom. It is grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ because He is both the electing God and elected man in One. It is part of the doctrine of God because originally God's election of man is a predestination not merely of man but of Himself. Its function is to bear basic testimony to eternal, free and unchanging grace as the beginning of all the ways and works of God.[203]

In his review of the classic formulations of this doctrine Barth discovered many elements of value that needed to be retained. However, both the positions of supralapsarians and infralapsarians need reconstruction. Polman has identified four suppositions in these positions that

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[201] Ramm, *RHCT*, p. 40.

"He attempts to find a way that is neither orthodox Calvinism with its absolute decree nor watery Arminianism. His chief objection to the former view is that it makes the pre-temporal and therefore secret decree of God more determinative than the open and historical counsel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus the pre-temporal secret decree is in reality the deeper and prior word of God than that word spoken in the death and resurrection of Christ. The complaint against Arminianism is that it fails to do justice to the freedom and grace of God."

[202] Barth, *CD*, II/2, p. 13. [203] Ibid., p. 3.

Barth discovered and rejected. First, for both positions man, not Christ, is the object of predestination. Second, both positions posit a system of election to which God is bound since he created it. Third, there is a balance created where God's mercy is perfectly matched with his judgment but in a double predestination where some are elected to grace while others are consigned to damnation. Fourth, the notion of a divine absolute decree is set independent of Jesus Christ; "in the background God stands alone and not in Jesus Christ."[204]

Nevertheless, those who have in the past taken this doctrine seriously have been united in certain points of agreement. "All serious advocates of this doctrine see God's freedom, God's mystery, and God's righteousness authenticated in election by grace."[205] However, Christ must be central. God's election is not apart from Christ:

> It is the name of Jesus Christ which, according to the divine self-revelation, forms the focus at which the two decisive beams of the truth forced upon us converge and unite: on the one hand the electing God and on the other elected man.[206]

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[204]A. D. R. Polman, Barth, trans. Calvin D. Freeman (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1960), p. 34; pp. 33-34. Cf. Barth, CD, II/2, pp. 3-76, 127-145.

[205]Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, p. 94. Cf. Barth, CD, II/2, pp. 18-22; (free, divine grace of God, p. 19; hidden and inscrutable divine resolve and decree, p. 20; God does that which is worthy of himself, p. 22).

[206]Barth, CD, II/2, p. 59.

Bromiley notes, "Since God's election of Jesus Christ is His eternal will, a reconstructed supralapsarianism naturally follows."[207] What takes place in election takes place in Christ and is so established from before the Fall. With his starting point in Christ, Barth could speak in concrete terms. As Weber enthusiastically observed, "We are not speaking about an abstract God but about God in Christ! And we are not speaking about an abstract man-in-himself, but about the man Jesus Christ!"[208]

God's election in Christ focuses on Jesus Christ as the electing God, the elected man, and the rejected man. Again Barth is quite firm in this matter. Election cannot be separated from the person and work of Jesus Christ. It is useless to look for God's election anywhere else. Barth reaffirms:

> We must not ask concerning any other but Him. . . . There is no such thing as a decretum absolutum. There is no such thing as a will of God apart from the will of Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus Christ is not only the manifestatio and speculum nostrae praedestinationis. And He is this not simply in the sense that our election can be known to us and contemplated by us only through His election, as an election which, like His and with His, is made (or not made) by a secret and hidden will of God. On the contrary, Jesus Christ reveals to us our election as an election which is made by Him, by His will which is also the will of God. He tells us that He Himself is the One who elects us.[209]

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[207] Bromiley, in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p. 40.

[208] Weber, loc. cit. Cf. Barth, CD, II/2, pp. 59, 63f., 94-145.

[209] Barth, CD, II/2, p. 115.

Barth's key texts here are Ephesians 1:4 (referred to over twelve times), and John 1:1,2 (referred to eight times). In regard to the former text Barth observed that it was a keen reminder "that knowledge of the election is only a distinctive form of the knowledge of Jesus Christ."[210] No one, he maintained, should be surprised at his treatment of this doctrine. As he commented, "It is not as though we are really making an innovation when we describe the name of Jesus Christ as the basis of the doctrine of election."[211]

But Jesus Christ is not the electing God alone. "He is the Rejected, as and because He is the Elect."[212] This is Good News for elected man. The judge has taken the place of the judged; the elect are fully acquitted. Those whom God elects in his Son are indeed set free. They are made free to be what God has intended for man from the beginning:

> In the One in whom they are elected, that is to say, in the death which the Son of God has died for them, they themselves have died as sinners. And that means their radical sanctification, separation and purification for participation in a true creaturely independence, and more than that, for the divine sonship of the creature which is the grace for which from all eternity they are elected in the election of the man Jesus.[213]

There is, however, a shadow side to election. There

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[210] Ibid., p. 60. Here is Barth's exegesis of the text as well as citations of other passages. Cf. pp. 112f., where Barth also discusses John 1:1,2.

[211] Ibid. [212] Ibid., p. 353. Cf. pp. 340-409.

[213] Ibid., p. 125.

is a praedestinatio gemina, a double predestination. Some still resist the grace of God. Some still try to take upon themselves what Jesus Christ has already borne. These are the men who live in the shadow of God's election. Their rejection is the futile self-imposition of a wrath already poured out upon Christ.[214]

Berkouwer is critical of Barth at this point. He complains that "the rejection of man has a place in Barth's doctrine of predestination only in the sense that it is carried, put away and destroyed, by Christ."[215] Among other accusations, Berkouwer charges Barth with teaching a doctrine of universal election.[216] Colin Brown, who also finds fault with Barth on this doctrine feels "it is important to notice how flimsy is the exegetical support for this momentous doctrine."[217] However, he is not in complete agreement with Berkouwer as to where this doctrine must lead Barth. Brown notes, "If this line of thought brings Barth to the brink of universalism, he hesitates to take the final step."[218]

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[214]Ibid., pp. 352, 449-506.

[215]Berkouwer, Triumph of Grace, p. 107.

[216]Ibid., p. 292; cf. pp. 262-296.

[217]Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message, p. 107. About this charge one must ask what criteria determines sufficient textual support. Barth is not interested in counting texts but expositing them. Besides, the texts he does adduce are several. It must also be remembered that Barth is always interested in the whole canon and its message.

[218]Ibid., p. 132. It must be noted that even

Barth himself was quite clear in his opposition to universalism. The doctrine of the apokatastasis panton, the restoration of all things, denies the freedom of God's grace. "Apokatastasis Panton? No, for a grace which automatically would ultimately have to embrace each and every one would certainly not be free grace. It surely would not be God's grace."[219] Yet, at the same time, Barth was compelled to remark:

> But would it be God's free grace if we could absolutely deny that it could do that? Has Christ been sacrificed only for our sins? Has He not, according to 1 John 2:2, been sacrificed for the whole world? Strange Christianity, whose most pressing anxiety seems to be that God's grace might prove to be all too free on this side, that hell, instead of being populated with so many people, might someday prove to be empty![220]

At first glance such a statement certainly seems to open wide the door to universalism. But, in truth, it only cracks open the door just wide enough to allow God in His freedom to upset even the best theologies of man. Barth would not have any man, including himself, put God in a box. Weber captures the essence of Barth's thought when he observes that in Barth's doctrine, "God's electing and rejecting bears in itself nothing fixed and static at all, nothing of a universal law settled in advance. On the contrary, it possesses the 'character of actuality.'"[221]

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[219]Barth, God Here and Now, p. 34. Cf. Barth, CD, II/2, p. 295,417, 422, 476. He declares that "it is not legitimate to make the limitless many of the elect in Jesus Christ the totality of all men" (II/2, p. 422).

[220]Ibid. See Barth, HG, p. 61f.

[221]Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, p. 98.

Thus in the final analysis all abstract ideas about what God could or should have done must be set aside in preference to what God has done. Arnold B. Come has rightly summarized Barth's theme in this doctrine by the striking warning: "Any attempt to separate election from Jesus Christ allows it to slip into the irrational darkness of an unknown God."[222]

Barth's concluding portion of volume two examines ethics as God's commandment. Barth contended that ethics is a task of the doctrine of God. "As the doctrine of God's command, ethics interprets the Law as the form of the Gospel, i.e., as the sanctification which comes to man through the electing God."[223] The command is also God's claim on man. Barth said:

> As God is gracious to us in Jesus Christ, His command is the claim which, when it is made, has power over us, demanding that in all we do we admit that what God does is right, and requiring that we give our free obedience to this demand.[224]

Barth examined God's commandment in three sections. The first, the commandment as God's claim stresses his righteous power in demanding man's obedience. The second, the command as the decision of God, emphasizes that "His command is the sovereign, definite and good decision

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[222]Arnold B. Come, An Introduction to Barth's "Dogmatics" for Preachers (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 98f.

[223]Barth, CD, II/2, p. 509; cf. pp. 509-551.

[224]Ibid., p. 552; cf. pp. 552-630.

concerning the character of our actions. . . ."[225] The third, the command as the judgment of God, means "He judges us in order that He may make us free for everlasting life under His lordship."[226] In all three aspects, and indeed in every aspect of the relation of ethics to the divine command, the covenant between God and man is presupposed.[227]

Volume three of the Church Dogmatics examines closely this covenant in the context of the Doctrine of Creation. "The doctrine of Creation turns our attention for the first time directly to a reality different from the reality of God, the reality of the world."[228] Divided into four part-volumes the discussion is a comprehensive treatment that takes up more than two thousand pages.[229] The part-volumes explore, in succession, creation and covenant (III/1), doctrine of man (III/2), the nihil (III/3), and ethics (III/4).

Creation stands first in the order of God's works. "The world is then a reality in itself, a proof of the mercy

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[225]Ibid., p. 631; cf. pp. 631-732.

[226]Ibid., p. 733; cf. pp. 733-781.

[227]Ibid., p. 509. For further discussion on Barth's ethics see Robert E. Willis, The Ethics of Karl Barth (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971); Hartwell, TKBI, pp. 154-165.

[228]Karl Barth, Credo, trans. J. S. McNab, foreward by R. M. Brown (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 28. Cf. Barth, CD, III/1, p. 3.

[229]A statistic all the more amazing in light of Barth's comment, "In taking up the doctrine of creation I have entered a sphere in which I feel much less confident and sure" (CD, III/1, p. ix).

of God who agrees to the existence of something outside of himself."[230] It both marks the beginning of all that is distinct from God and the beginning of time too. About this latter character of creation it must be said: Since it contains in itself the beginning of time, its historical reality eludes all Historical observation and account, and can be expressed in the biblical creation narratives only in the form of pure saga.[231]

Accordingly, a clear distinction must be made between Historie and Geschichte as well as between saga and myth. If the biblical account is to be taken seriously, and that means honestly, then it is absolutely essential that these distinctions be made. Thomas Ogletree notes about Geschichte and Historie:

> In Barth's usage, the former refers to the reality of history christologically understood, history as determined by the sequence of encounters between God and man which has come to a decisive climax in the person of Jesus Christ. The latter designates the notion of history which is characteristic of modern historical thinking--history in the "historicist" sense.[232]

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[230]Karl Barth, The Faith of the Church: A Commentary on the Apostle's Creed According to Calvin's Catechism, brans. Gabriel Vahanian, ed. Jean-Louis Leuba (London: Fontana Books, 1960), p. 40.

[231]Barth, CD, III/1, p. 42; cf. pp. 81-94 where Barth gives an extended treatment of saga and carefully differentiates it from other literary forms.

[232]Thomas W. Ogletree, Christian Faith and History: A Critical Comparison of Ernst Troeltsch and Karl Barth (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 192.

Ogletree understands Barth as viewing Historie with a double usage: "On the one hand, it refers to a particular conception of the nature of the actual course of the events of history. On the other hand, it refers to a

After distinguishing between creation, history, and creation history, Barth proceeded to his main subject.[233] This is "the demonstration of the relationship between creation and covenant."[234] Simply expressed the relationship is as follows: creation is the external basis of the covenant; covenant is the internal basis of creation.[235] There is only one covenant, and it is of redemption in Jesus Christ.

"Creation is not itself the covenant."[236] The two must not be either equated or in any way blurred; a sharp focus must be kept. It must always be made clear that "the covenant is the goal of creation and creation the way to the covenant."[237] As the external, but only the external, basis of the covenant, creation occupies an indispensable position. Küng's excellent summary notes:

> Creation makes the covenant technically possible; it sets aside the spaces and furnishes the subjects for it. It requires the existence of man and the world, and love presupposes the existence and reality of the beloved. Barth makes all this clear in a long exegesis of the first creation account (III/1, 97-251).[238]

The internal basis of creation "consists in the fact that the wisdom and omnipotence of God the Creator was not

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corresponding kind of portrayal of those events in history writing" (p. 192).

[233]Barth, CD, III/1, pp. 42-92.

[234]Ibid., p. 94. [235]Ibid., pp. 94-228; 228-329.

[236]Ibid., p. 97. [237]Ibid.

[238]Küng, Justification, p. 19; cf. p. 11f.

just any wisdom and omnipotence but that of His free love."[239] God the Father willed a covenant with man through Jesus the Son. This purpose of God is the raison d'être of creation. But man rebelled. Yet God, the Creator, had said Yes to what he had created. As Barth expressed: "The work of God the Creator consists particularly in the benefit that in the limits of its creatureliness what He has created may be as it is actualized by Him, and be good as it is justified by Him."[240]

The second part-volume of the doctrine of creation focuses on man. "Barth's doctrine of man is the most consistent one of its kind and is revolutionary in content."[241] Not surprisingly, this is because Barth once more started with Jesus Christ. "The nature of the man Jesus alone is the key to the problem of human nature. This man is man."[242] This is again a movement from the particular to the general. It renders anthropology a theological and particularly Christological character.[243]

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[239]Barth, CD, III/1, p. 231.

[240]Ibid., p. 330. Creation is viewed as benefit (pp. 330-344), actualization, (pp. 344-365), and justification (pp. 366-414). See Küng, Justification, pp. 18-27; Hartwell, TKBI, pp. 112-115; von Balthasar, TKB, pp. 108-112.

[241]Hartwell, TKBI, p. 123; cf. pp. 123-131.

[242]Karl Barth, CD, III/2, trans. H. Knight, G. W. Bromiley, J. K. S. Reid, and R. H. Fuller (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), p. 43.

[243]Ibid., p. 46; Barth states:

"Hence in our exposition of the doctrine of man we must always look in the first instance at the nature of man

The third part-volume on this doctrine contains three great themes: "the fatherly providence of God, His kingdom on the left hand, and the ministry of angels. . . ."[244] Whereas in the previous part-volume Barth explored the relationship between Creator and creature in the light of Jesus Christ, in this part he has turned to the continuation of this relationship under the providence of God. Thus, this part-volume begins with an examination of the ground and structure of the doctrine of providence.

> The simple meaning of the doctrine of providence may . . . be summed up in the statement that in the act of creation God the Creator as such has associated Himself with His creature as such as the Lord of its history, and is faithful to it as such.[245]

Once the doctrine has been established and described it is immediately discussed in more detail under the rubric of God the Father as Lord of his creature.[246] However, "there is opposition and resistance to God's world-dominion."[247] This problem is the problem of <u>das Nichtige</u>, the Nothingness.[248] Yet even here <u>das Nichtige</u> cannot be known

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as it confronts us in the person of Jesus, and only secondarily--asking and answering from this place of light--at the nature of man as that of every man and all other men."

[244]Karl Barth, <u>CD</u>, III/3, trans. G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), p. xi.

[245]Ibid., p. 12; cf. pp. 3-57.

[246]Ibid., pp. 58-288.

[247]Ibid., p. 289; cf. pp. 289-368.

[248]This term warrants a special footnote; in fact, it did in III/3 as well! It reads as follows:
"Many terms have been considered for <u>das Nichtige</u>,

or explained apart from Christ. To comprehend it one "must revert to the source of all Christian knowledge, namely, to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. . . ."[249]

Several facts readily become apparent about das Nichtige. In the first place, "it is not a creaturely element confronted by others as elements of good."[250] But, das Nichtige is real. Barth urged that, "we cannot argue that because it has nothing in common with God and His creature nothingness is nothing, i.e., it does not exist."[251] On the contrary, das Nichtige exists and manifests, in its opposition to the Creator and creature, a definite character. "The character of nothingness derives from its ontic peculiarity. It is evil."[252] Yet, about das Nichtige it must finally be said:

> What is nothingness? In the knowledge and confession of the Christian faith, i.e., looking retrospectively to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and prospectively to His coming again, there is only one possible answer. Nothingness is the past, the ancient menace, danger and destruction, the ancient non-being which obscured and defaced the divine creation of God but which is consigned to the past in Jesus Christ, in whose death it has received its deserts, being destroyed with this consummation of the positive will of God which is as such the end of his non-willing. Because Jesus is

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including the Latin nihil which has sometimes been favoured. Preferring a native term, and finding constructions like 'the null' too artificial and 'the negative' or 'non-existent' not quite exact, we have finally had to make do with 'nothingness.' It must be clearly grasped, however, that it is not used in its more common and abstract way, but in the secondary sense, to be filled out from Barth's own definitions and delimitations, of 'that which is not'" (p. 289).

[249]Barth, CD, III/3, p. 302. [250]Ibid.

[251]Ibid., p. 349. [252]Ibid., p. 353.

Victor, nothingness is routed and extirpated.[253]

This part-volume is concluded by a discussion entitled, "The Kingdom of Heaven, the Ambassadors of God and Their Opponents."[254] The volume as a whole concludes with Barth's massive part-volume on ethics. In this part an ethic of freedom is developed as first, freedom before God; second, freedom in fellowship; third, freedom for life; and fourth, freedom in limitation.[255]

Volume four, also published in four part-volumes, is the Doctrine of Reconciliation. The entire volume can be summarized in three statements. "The first is that in Jesus Christ we have to do with very God."[256] This statement is elucidated in the remainder of this part-volume under the thought, "Jesus Christ, the Lord as Servant." However, this is only a part of the picture. "The second christological aspect is that in Jesus Christ we have to do with true man."[257] This is the theme of the second part-volume as it is developed under the title "Jesus Christ, the Servant as Lord." But there is yet one more statement that

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[253]Ibid., p. 363. [254]Ibid., pp. 369-531.

[255]Barth, CD, III/4, pp. 3-685. The sections are as follows: first (pp. 47-115), second (pp. 116-323), third (pp. 324-564), fourth (pp. 565-685). On the doctrine of creation see Barth, "A Theological Dialogue," p. 172f.; Berkouwer, Triumph of Grace, pp. 52-88; von Balthasar, TKB, pp. 108-126.

[256]Karl Barth, CD, IV/1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), p. 128; cf. pp. 157-780.

[257]Ibid., p. 130; cf. Barth, CD, IV/2, pp. 3-840.

must be made.

> The third christological aspect to which we must now turn is at once the simplest and the highest. It is the source of the two first, and it comprehends them both. As the God who humbles Himself and therefore reconciles man with Himself, and as the man exalted by God and therefore reconciled with Him, as the One who is very God and very man in this concrete sense, Jesus Christ Himself is one. He is the "God-man," that is, the Son of God who as such is this man, this man who as such is the Son of God.[258]

In the doctrine of God's active reconciliation of man several important things about man come to light. However, these matters are still known only through Jesus Christ. Since that is the case, God's purpose stands firmly prior to man's Fall. The work of reconciliation, therefore, "is the fulfilment of the covenant between God and man."[259] Reconciliation is the manner of covenant fulfillment that God has chosen to meet the problem of human sin. In view of this Bromiley has noted:

> In a preparatory survey of the doctrine Barth then points out: (1) that this divine work is still grace; (2) that it is not part of a higher dialect; (3) that it cannot be deduced; (4) that it is sovereign; and (5) that it is a fact in Jesus Christ.[260]

Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and man.[261] Through him man is truly known. "The first man was immediately the first sinner."[262] The Fall was man's word to God

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[258] Ibid., p. 135; cf. Barth, CD, IV/3a, pp. 3-478; IV/3b, pp. 481-942.

[259] Ibid., p. 22.

[260] Bromiley, in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, p. 46.

[261] Barth, CD, IV/1, pp. 122-128. [262] Ibid., p. 508.

but a word unknown to man himself. In fact, apart from God there is no knowledge of sin.[263] But, "from the particular christological standpoint which is our present norm. . . . the sin of man is the pride of man."[264]

The answer to the problem of sin is reconciliation. To the doctrine of reconciliation also belongs the doctrine of justification. "Pardon--by God and therefore unconditionally pronounced and unconditionally valid--that is man's justification."[265] On the human side it must be said that man is justified sola fide, by faith alone. Faith is "the human action which makes a faithful and authentic and adequate response to the faithfulness of God. . . ."[266] In its simple, concrete form, "faith is the humility of obedience."[267]

Justification by faith has a divine promise attached to it. "And the pardon of man, declared in the promise concerning him, the reality of his future already in the present, is no less than this: totus iustus."[268] The promise holds within itself three aspects: the forgiveness of sins, the giving of the rights of a child of God, and the placement of man in a position of hope.[269] "The justification

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[263]Ibid., p. 359f. [264]Ibid., p. 413.

[265]Ibid., p. 568; cf. pp. 568-608.

[266]Ibid., p. 618; cf. pp. 608-642.

[267]Ibid., p. 620.

[268]Ibid., p. 596. [269]Ibid., pp. 596f., 599f., 601f.

of man begins in his past and it is completed in his future."[270]

Sanctification, the complement to justification, is presented in the second part-volume of the doctrine of reconciliation. Barth explained that:

> What is meant by sanctification (sanctificatio) might just as well be described by the less common biblical term regeneration (regeneratio) or renewal (renovatio), or by that of conversion (conversio), or by that of penitence (poenitentia) which plays so important a role in both the Old and New Testaments, or comprehensively by that of discipleship which is so outstanding especially in the synoptic Gospels.[271]

The third part-volume, published in two half-parts, is under the title "Jesus Christ, the True Witness." Here a major section is given over to a discussion on the vocation of man. Barth knew about the elect that, "In believing in Him they are acknowledging that when He died and rose again, they too, died and rose again in Him, and that, from now on, their life, in its essentials, can only be a copy

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[270] Ibid., p. 594. On the doctrine of justification see Küng, Justification, about which Barth, in a letter to its author (published in the book), stated, "you have fully and accurately reproduced my views as I myself understand them . . ." (p. xix).

[271] Barth, CD, IV/2, p. 500; cf. pp. 499-613. Barth, in regard to this doctrine, has the highest regard for Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship, trans. R. H. Fuller (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963). See IV/2, p. 533f. Also on this doctrine see Arthur C. Cochrane, "The Doctrine of Sanctification: Review of Barth's Kirchlicke Dogmatik, IV/2," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 376-388.

and image of His."[272] What this means in its fullness and completeness is but one thing. "The purpose of a man's vocation is that he should become a Christian, a homo christianus."[273]

The final part-volume of this doctrine, and the final segment of the Church Dogmatics, is but a fragment of what Barth had projected. Barth had planned that "the volume was to deal with Christian (human) work as this corresponds to, and thus has its own place in respect of, the divine work of reconciliation. . . ."[274] But this was not to be. The hoped for portions on the various practical aspects of Christian life under the guidance of the Lord's Prayer, and the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, were left incomplete. Only the fragment on Baptism, as baptism with the Holy Spirit and then baptism with water, was included.[275]

A FINAL NOTE

In conclusion, this chapter must in some sense stand with the testimony of Thomas F. Torrance:

> If it be true that 'the man is the sphere which his activity doth fill', then it is in his works that we must look for the greatness of Karl Barth, and in the fertility and enlightenment which his thought has cast upon a vast range of questions that we must assess the

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[272]Karl Barth, Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5, trans. T. A. Smail, intro. Wilhelm Pauck (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956), p. 34f.

[273]Karl Barth, CD, IV/3b, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1962), p. 521.

[274]Barth, CD, IV/4, p. ix. [275]Ibid.

theological stature of this man. Yet his childlike simplicity, his irrepressible humour, and sheer human grandeur are qualities that no one who has had the privilege of being his student can ever forget.[276]

Chapter 5

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY ON THE MOVE

BARTH AS AN INSPIRATION

Karl Barth can stand as an inspiration to American evangelicalism. His life was conducted in such a manner that evangelicals should see in him a witness pointing to Christ. Earlier, a brief biographical sketch was presented. Now this must be completed by the data pertaining more particularly to Barth's life as a Christian man, Christian scholar, Christian minister, and Christ's disciple. Of course, any delineations such as these are necessarily artificial. In fact, they violate Barth's own intentions; he would not have himself the focus of a portrait. He once wrote, "To make an oration over a man means to speak over his body, and that is to bury him finally, deeper and without hope, in his grave."[1]

Nevertheless, a portrait can also teach. It can also point beyond itself to the man and his message.

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[1]Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans (2nd Edition), trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 18. Hereafter cited by Romans. See Boniface Willems, Karl Barth: An Ecumenical Approach to His Theology, trans. M. J. vanVelzen (Glen Rock: Paulist Press, 1965), p. 11, where Willems quotes these words and says they "may be understood as a verdict on all those . . . who would sketch a biography of Karl Barth himself."

Accordingly, Karl Barth as himself the Christian man this portrait has as its object. However, in deference to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, this portrait can only be understood in the light of the knowledge of Christ. If it points to Barth, it also points beyond him to Jesus Christ.

Karl Barth, the man, was a Christian by confession. Unlike so many, his was an open, outspoken confession. Yet, if a man is to be known it must be by his relationships and his work in the world. In this regard Barth can stand as an example in several ways. Of course, it is obvious that no man is perfect. But the purpose here is to promote the integration of ethics and doctrine in constructive evangelical theology by demonstrating how the ethic of Barth's life complemented his doctrine and thus stands as an example even as his doctrine stands as a guide.

The insistence on the integration of ethics and doctrine was also one of Barth's great concerns. Godsey notes that "Barth had in manuscript form in 1928 a two-volume work on Christian ethics, which he refused to publish, mainly on the grounds that he did not wish to perpetuate the questionable practice of separating ethics from theology!"[2] A preliminary caution is in order though. Barth's warning "that man condemns himself to death by his question about the good, because the only certain answer is

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[2]Karl Barth, How I Changed My Mind, intro. and epilogue, John Godsey (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 31. Hereafter cited by HCM.

that he, man, is not good . . .,"[3] is the judgment on all ethics of man as viewed from the divine side. Barth knew as well as any man that justification is by faith alone. However, as the large part-volumes in the Church Dogmatics show, ethics is a vitally important part of life for the Christian who is placed by God's claim under the divine command and who both can and must respond in obedience. This is love.

The Christian Man

Karl Barth learned obedience as the eldest son of a minister of the Swiss Reformed Church, Fritz Barth.

> From him (Fritz Barth), the capable theologian, the son inherited the love of science and the talent for scientific work. From him, the Kleinbasler, he also received the sober objectivity and, besides this, perhaps also the joyous carefree spirit. From his mother, a Sartorius, a twofold inheritance has come to him: from the grandmother, who stemmed from an old Basler home, the critical basler mind; and from the grandfather, a native German, the nimble and aggressive German mind. Finally, from the paternal grandmother, who was born a Lotz, he got a powerful shot of hot blood, the quick temper of the Lotzes. A not unfavorable mixture. . . .[4]

Barth received his first instruction in the Christian

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[3]Karl Barth, The Word of God and the Word of Man, trans. Douglas Horton (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1928), p. 167. See also, on Barth's ethics in his doctrine, Hans Urs von Balthasar, The Theology of Karl Barth, trans. John Drury (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 86-90; Robert E. Willis, The Ethics of Karl Barth (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971).

[4]Dienet dem Herrn mit Freuden (Gedenkschrift zum Rucktritt von D. Lukas Christ, Pfarrer von Pratteln-Augst 1911-1948), hrsg. vom Synodalrat der reformierten Kirche Baselland, p. 18, cited by J. Godsey in Barth, HCM, p. 17.

faith under the Swiss Reformed Church. "For all his later movements, this has left an abiding impress on his dogmatic work. The majestic phrases of the Heidelberg Cathechism resound through the Dogmatics."[5] In the years of his youth in Bern, "deep and lasting foundations were laid at home, in church, and at school, where his faith was nourished in positive evangelical theology. . . ."[6] Despite his theological pilgrimage Barth never left the Swiss Reformed Church and in 1909 was ordained a minister within it.

As an obedient son, Karl Barth respected his father's wishes in regard to his university education. Although reluctant in obedience, he was not rebellious.[7] Later, in the preface to the first edition of his momentous The Epistle to the Romans, Barth paid this tribute to his father:

> The understanding of history is an uninterrupted conversation between the wisdom of yesterday and the wisdom of to-morrow. And it is a conversation always conducted honestly and with discernment. In this connexion I cannot fail to think with gratitude and respect of my father, Professor Fritz Barth. For such discernment he signally displayed throughout his whole active life.[8]

During his student years Barth established

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[5]Geoffrey W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth," Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, ed. P. E. Hughes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 27.

[6]Thomas F. Torrance, Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910-1931 (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 15. Hereafter cited by KBET.

[7]Cf. pp. 89-90 of this study.

[8]Barth, Romans, p. 1.

acquaintances that would be renewed over the years. Despite their profound theological differences, Barth and Bultmann remained friendly and kept up a lively correspondence. Barth and Brunner met as young pastors and also established a friendship which though interrupted for many years by theological differences was renewed in 1960. In these friendships and others Barth displayed those personal characteristics which led Bonhoeffer to declare: "I was even more impressed by his conversation than by his writings and lectures. In his conversation the whole of him is present. I have not met anything like it before."[9]

The relationship of Bonhoeffer to Barth has already been noted. However, it is interesting to observe the reaction of Bonhoeffer after his first extended visit with Barth on 23 July, 1931. "The younger man put questions, argued, and put more questions, and he found to his surprise that 'Barth was even better than his books.'"[10] Afterwards, Bonhoeffer wrote:

> He has a frankness, a willingness to listen to criticism, and at the same time such an intensity of concentration on the subject, which can be discussed proudly or modestly, dogmatically or tentatively, and is certainly not primarily directed to the service of his own theology.[11]

Despite the twenty years difference in their ages,

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[9] Gesammelte Schriften, I (2nd ed.;) (Munich: Kaiser Verlag, 1965-9), p. 20. cited by Eberhard Bethge, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, trans. E. Mosbacher, P. and B. Ross, F. Clarke, and W. Glen-Doepel, ed. E. Robertson (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 132.

[10] Ibid. [11] Ibid.

Barth treated Bonhoeffer as a complete equal. Over the next few years, until the imprisonment of Bonhoeffer by the Nazis, they maintained a sporadic correspondence. "In the younger man's letters there was always a trace of respectful distance, but the older man respected no barriers."[12]

Bonhoeffer was not the only young man befriended by Barth during his years as a world-renowned author and speaker. Barth always enjoyed a good relationship with his students, meeting privately with individuals and continuing small group discussions with them until he was well into his late seventies.[13] There is no indication that Barth ever attempted to produce among his students a school of "Barthians." Robert McAfee Brown, in recognition of this, has indicated that, "it can be taken for granted that it would be theologically improper as well as personally dishonoring to try to produce 'Barthians'. . . ."[14] In fact, as Tillich once observed, "Barth's greatness is that he corrects himself again and again . . . and that he strenuously tries not to

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[12]Ibid.

[13]See Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, IV/4, trans. G. W. Bromiley, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1969), pp. vii-viii. Hereafter cited by CD, with deletion of reference to the general editors who served in this capacity for I/2-IV/4.

[14]Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, trans. and intro. Robert McAfee Brown (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1964), p. xv.

Brown also observes: "Barth, it is reliably reported, having seen the woodenness and theological rigor mortis that can infect the disciple of a human master, has been heard to mutter, 'Thank God I am not a Barthian!'" (p. xiii).

become his own follower."[15]

In his early years as a pastor and teacher Barth began two rather different and significant friendships. One of these was with Friedrich Gogarten. Barth had read Gogarten's essay entitled "Zwischen den Zeiten" ("Between the Times") in 1920. Afterwards he wrote his companion Thurneysen about the article and remarked concerning its author: "I sent him a greeting at once and called upon him to cry aloud."[16] Later, Gogarten visited with Barth in Safenwil. When, in 1922, Barth and Thurneysen founded the journal Zwischen den Zeiten they were joined by Gogarten, by now a close associate of Barth.[17] Yet, this was a remarkable friendship in that it was sustained as a close working relationship despite profound differences in personality. Parker has written of Gogarten:

> The most ruthless of theologians, anything savouring of subjectivity was the special object of his hatred, and he rode out to destroy Schleiermacher, pietism, and "Christian" culture. Gogarten was in truth what Barth was commonly and unjustly supposed to be, a fierce and

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[15]Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 5.

[16]Karl Barth, and E. Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making: Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence, 1914-1925, trans. James D. Smart (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 52.

[17]Cf. p. 95f. of this study. See also, R. Birch Hoyle, The Teaching of Karl Barth: An Exposition (London: SCM Press, 1930), pp. 19-39, esp. p. 22f.; Karl Barth, "The Paradoxical Nature of the 'Positive Paradox': Answers and Questions to Paul Tillich," The Beginnings of Dialectical Theology, I, trans. K. R. Crim, ed. James M. Robinson (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1968), p. 142.

stern foe, capable of uttering only the negative.[18]

Gogarten broke away from Barth in 1933. However, Barth's friendship with Eduard Thurneysen was never broken. The two had first met in Marburg in 1908. With the coming of Thurneysen into a pastorate at Leutwil in 1913, the friendship was renewed and strengthened. Parker writes:

> But now there developed a relationship perhaps unique in the history of theology. Masters and pupils, or collaborators in a specific task, can be found in abundance. But for two men to be in such accord without either surrendering his individuality and independence is surely most rare. . . . In this friendship there was no junior partner. . . . They were frequently in each other's house, sitting day-long in talk; they preached in each other's church; they carried on a regular and full correspondence.[19]

This friendship continued on throughout the long years. Meanwhile, Barth was accumulating a wide circle of friends. One observed, "To those who know him, Karl Barth is . . . one of the outstanding persons of our time."[20] In part, this is because, as Jenkins also commented, "He is a brisk and vigorous man of bursting eloquence and lively humor, with a face of the greatest authority and distinction."[21] But, of course, there were other qualities that attracted people to Barth. Mueller recalls, "He was marked by an unusual intellect, a great capacity for work,

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[18]T. H. L. Parker, Karl Barth (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), p. 38.

[19]Ibid., p. 18. Cf. pp. 91-92 of this study.

[20]Daniel Jenkins, "Karl Barth," A Handbook of Christian Theologians, ed. Martin E. Marty and D. G. Peerman (New York: World Publishing Co., 1965), p. 396.

[21]Ibid.

seriousness of purpose, a democratic spirit, an appreciation for the arts--especially music--and finally, by a wry and engaging sense of humor."[22] Finally, the testimony of Torrance is most revealing:

> (1) Barth has the most searching, questioning mind I have ever known. Never have I heard or read of anyone who asks questions so relentlessly or who engages in such ruthless criticism, not with any negative intention, but in order to let the truth bespeak itself clearly and positively.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> (2) Barth has an uncanny ability to listen which is accompanied by an astonishing humility and childlikeness in which he is always ready to learn. That is what overwhelms the student as he enters into the great man's study for the first time. He goes in fear and propounds his questions with trembling, but soon finds that the Professor has turned the tables on him, and is asking him questions, drawing him out and listening to him as if he were the disciple and the student were the teacher. Few men are really able to listen like that, and fewer still are able to maintain a genuine listening attitude while posing such searching questions, but with Karl Barth ruthless criticism is made the servant of his will to listen.
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> . . . . . .
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> (3) Another typical characteristic of Barth to which we must give attention is his sheer creative power, his ability to produce something new.
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> . . . . . .
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> (4) There is one other aspect of Barth, both as a man and as a theologian, which we must select for mention: his joy and his humour.
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> . . . . . .
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> There can be little doubt about the fact, that, if Barth's writing even when it is most serious ripples with laughter . . . it is because he has been swept off his feet by the music of the angels announcing the Incarnation, *gloria in excelsis deo*, and has himself as a faithful servant entered into the joy of his Lord, for what describes him as man or theologian is above all the

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[22]David L. Mueller, *Karl Barth* (Waco: Word Books, 1972), p. 14.

Augustinian expression frui Deo, the enjoyment of God.[23]

Of course, Barth had his shortcomings too. Yet, the significant matter is that he recognized these, accepted them, and worked to mature by correcting them. Two examples in this regard must suffice. First, as has already been noted, Barth had a natural inclination toward anger. Simply put, he was short tempered. However, an incident that occurred at the International Summer Conference for Students at La Chataigneraie, Switzerland, in 1934, is illustrative of Barth's manner in handling this problem. After an address he had delivered to the Conference, Barth was involved in a period of questioning and discussion. After a series of questions posed in opposition to Barth's address he replied:

> In looking at the situation in which I am facing you, I feel like a man who is making a vain attempt to swim against a torrent. It is quite evident that this conference is against me. Were I to use a biblical picture, I would compare my mood with that of the prophet Jonah in Nineveh. . . . I shall not follow the prophet's example, however. . . . I shall try to reply without anger, even if you persist in contradicting me. It must be so.[24]

Nor was Barth of such a dour nature that he could not see the funny side of an issue even in the midst of his anger. In this connection, Torrance writes concerning

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[23]Torrance, KBET, pp. 19-25. See also Barth, HCM; Karl Barth, CD, II/1, trans. T. H. L. Parker, W. B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J. L. M. Haire (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), pp. 653ff.

[24]Karl Barth, God in Action, trans. E. G. Hamrighausen and K. J. Ernst, intro. J. Friedli (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1936), p. 132.

Barth of "the rich spice of humour even in his angry Nein to Emil Brunner, which Anglo-Saxons seem almost invariably to read with a Teutonic lack of humour."[25] Thus, Barth was able to respond to this shortcoming in a redemptive fashion. That is, he mastered his anger, turned its energy into constructive outlets, and even modified its sting by the use of humor.

Second, Barth was also tempted by pride. Obviously, with all the attention and praise accorded him this must have been a daily temptation. Of course, "impressive as Barth's work has been, it is far from being beyond the reach of criticism."[26] Barth did not allow himself to forget this. During the years of Barth's greatest productivity, H. R. Mackintosh observed: "He criticizes his own statements, often, by modifying them. . . . He warns us vehemently against canonizing his results. . . ."[27] Once again, the power of Barth's humor, his ability to laugh at himself, helped guard against pride. "As Barth is wont to say, his Church Dogmatics is written not in heaven but in Basel, not by an angel but by a man!"[28] Or, as Mackintosh commented:

> Fitly, therefore, he exhibits a most rare and excellent combination of humility and humour. 'It is a real question,' he has suggested, 'whether there is as much joy in heaven as there is on earth over the growth

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[25]Torrance, op. cit., p. 24.

[26]Hugh Ross Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology (London: Collins Press, 1964), p. 253.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Godsey, in Barth, HCM, p. 9; cf. p. 14.

of the Barthian school.'[29]

Barth was also glad to praise others. This is evident in his Church Dogmatics. In the third part of volume four, in the preface penned in 1959, Barth reflected on the deaths of so many of his close contemporaries. Typical of the manner by which he paid tribute was his praise of K. L. Schmidt, who Barth claimed was "far superior to me in both learning and pugnacity, but always so stimulating."[30] Of all these men Barth could claim that they were "steadfast," "trustworthy," filled with "loyalty," and "fidelity." But Barth's final word was: "There now shines on them the eternal light in which we adhuc peregrinantes, shall some day need no more dogmatics."[31]

Special mention must be made at this point of Charlotte von Kirschbaum. From 1930 until the end of 1965, she was Barth's assistant and a member of his household. In 1950, in the preface to the third part of volume three, Barth wrote:

> I should not like to conclude this Preface without expressly drawing the attention of readers of these seven volumes to what they and I owe to the twenty years of work quietly accomplished at my side by Charlotte von Kirschbaum. She has devoted no less of her life and powers to the growth of this work than I have myself. Without her co-operation it could not have advanced from day to day, and I should hardly dare contemplate the future which may yet remain to me. I know what it

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[29]Mackintosh, loc. cit.

[30]Karl Barth, CD, IV/3a, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. xii.

[31]Ibid.

really means to have a helper.[32]

The presence of Fräulein von Kirschbaum as a close associate of Karl Barth and a member of his household was only possible because of the strong marital relationship enjoyed by Karl and Nelly Barth. Charlotte von Kirschbaum's presence and relationship to the family is perhaps best explained by Barth's understanding of Christian marriage. It is monogamous, permanent, a vocation, and a work or art. But it is even more. Barth wrote:

> When marriage is seen in the light of the divine command, it is clear that it is an exclusive life-partnership. It is actualized, of course, in an environment with which it is connected in many varied respects, as it is also related to other men and women in more distant or close or even very intimate ways. With or without a family, it builds and shapes a home where many may go in and out, including women who will be more inclined to the husband or men to the wife. Marriage conceived as a full life-partnership not only tolerates this but makes it possible, for in this way it is fruitful outwards and also richer and more active within. But it is always presupposed that it is an exclusive life-partnership. It does not know any third party, male or female, in the mystery of that element of life and joy which forms the centre of the whole. . . .[33]

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[32]Karl Barth, CD, III/3, trans. G. W. Bromiley and R. J. Ehrlich (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), pp. xii-xiii. Cf. Barth, CD, IV/4, p. viii, where he related:

"It so happened that my faithful assistant Charlotte von Kirschbaum, who had been indispensable from 1930 onwards, suffered an even more serious illness than mine (definitively from the end of 1965 and beginning of 1966), so that she was out of action in relation to the Church Dogmatics, in whose rise and progress she had played so great a part." See also, Barth, HCM, p. 10.

[33]Karl Barth, CD, III/4, trans. A. T. Mackay, T. H. L. Parker, H. Knight, H. A. Kennedy, and J. Marks (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1961), p. 195; cf. pp. 183-223, which is also in the booklet entitled On Marriage (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968).

Barth married Nelly Hoffmann on 26 March, 1913. She was "a pretty young woman whose charm was enhanced by her talent as a violinist."[34] Nelly Barth was also known as "the small, soft-spoken lady."[35] To the Barths were born five children, a daughter and four sons.[36] Barth's final part of his Church Dogmatics was dedicated to Nelly, "with great gratitude"; it is the only dedication to appear in the series. The couple enjoyed a long and happy married life. Hartwell has observed the effect of this relationship on Barth when he addressed the subject of Roman Catholic preaching. Hartwell records:

> As regards the second requirement of a good sermon, nearness to life, Barth holds that at this point R. C. preaching is weak because, he contends, the R. C. preachers lack the personal inward experience of actual life, where life in its humaneness is most human and has its nerve-centre, that is, life lived in love, in matrimony, and within the bosom of a family. Barth describes--and one can sense that he speaks here from his personal experience of a happy married life--what it means to have a wife at one's side.[37]

As a father, Karl Barth enjoyed a good relationship with his children. His eldest son, Markus, once remarked about his father, "He has always been my best friend, a close comrade who reflects and encourages true attachment and true freedom."[38] Two of his sons, Markus and Christoph,

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[34]Godsey, in Barth, HCM, p. 20. [35]Ibid., p. 11.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Herbert Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth, Scottish Journal of Theology, XXVI (May, 1973), 199.

[38]Godsey, in Barth, HCM, p. 11, citing Together Magazine (August, 1963), p. 21.

followed the example of their father and also entered into the pastoral ministry. Markus became an instructor in theology in the United States and Christoph served eighteen years on the foreign mission field in Kalimantu and Java.[39]

Karl Barth also learned from his sons. In addition to citing their works at various points in his own Church Dogmatics, the final fragment, on baptism, owed much to the influence of Markus on his father. Barth called his son, "by far my superior in specialised New Testament studies."[40] Further, he admitted that, "In face of the exegetical conclusions in my son's book, I have had to abandon the 'sacramental' understanding of baptism. . . ."[41] Thus, he gladly said, "I must acknowledge a debt of gratitude to my learned son. . . ."[42] Finally, Barth observed:

> This is perhaps an instructive instance of the fact that the relation between the generations, even in our own time, may sometimes be (cf. the prophecy of Mal. 4:6) very different from that portrayed in contemporary journalism.[43]

The Christian Scholar

The vocation of Karl Barth was that of a Christian scholar. As a young lad growing up in Bern the various influences of home, church, and school contributed to the fact that "sacred scholarship in the service of the Gospel

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[39] Godsey, ibid., p. 11.

[40] Barth, CD, IV/4, p. X. [41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid. [43] Ibid.

entered, as it were, into his very blood."[44] After his education, during the years of his pastorate in Safenwil, Barth still found time to devote to scholastic work. "When he was still a young professor at Göttingen, Germany, he gegan the habit of writing out his lectures in full."[45] Casalis once noted:

> To Barth, study, research and intellectual creativity are not impositions to be endured grudgingly and unhappily. On the contrary he has a passion for just such things, so that his work is saturated with a love of learning, a curiosity, and a willingness to push ideas to their logical conclusion, that are little short of amazing.[46]

In addition to his innate abilities and acquired skills Barth had accumulated to himself a great store of knowledge before he ever began work on the Church Dogmatics. Meticulous in his work, the story has been told of how he once ended a lecture abruptly with the announcement, "Gentlemen, due to the difficulty of today's subject matter, this is as far as I have gotten. We shall have to leave it at that. Class dismissed!"[47]

There are also evidences within the Church Dogmatics to this same sense of precision. For instance, in the preface to the first part of volume four, Barth corrected several minor, but "annoying," errors that he had committed in previous volumes. He concluded by admonishing, "Those

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[44]Torrance, KBET, p. 15.

[45]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, p. 9.

[46]Ibid. [47]Ibid., p. 10.

who possess the volumes are requested to correct all this nonsense."[48]

It is little wonder that Pauck, in 1930, could write of Barth and his The Epistle to the Romans:

> Equipped with an astonishing knowledge of the world's literature, endowed with the critical wisdom of a theologian conversant with the profoundities of religions and religious thinkers, gifted with a remarkable power of analysis of the contemporary movements of civilization, fully aware of the baffling problems of Western culture, the author of this commentary lets Paul preach to our own time.[49]

Barth's commentary revealed a scholar with a prophetic vision and voice. But if his message spelled out judgment and wrath on man's religions, it also wrote a triumphant record of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Barth was no gloomy prophet. Instead, he was a scholar with a sense of humor and a joyful task. As far as Barth was concerned, "Of all the sciences which stir the head and heart, theology is the fairest."[50] At the same time, he was very much aware that theology is not the easiest task. Even, or perhaps it should be said especially, exegesis is difficult if rewarding work. Barth could say honestly, "True exegesis involves, of course, much sweat and many

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[48]Karl Barth, CD, IV/1, trans. G. W. Bromiley (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. x.

[49]Wilhelm Pauck, Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity? (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931), p. 54.

[50]Barth, God in Action, p. 39.

groans."[51]

The Christian Minister

Karl Barth was a scholar for a cause. Casalis once marvelled that "Barth has never forgotten that theology is at the service of the church as the dynamic, nourishment and corrective of its preaching, and he has continually made this clear by his own vigorous preaching."[52] Barth served eleven years in the pastorate while at Safenwil. Then he moved to a career as an instructor and author. Yet he never forgot those years and that work. In 1951, he wrote: "For three decades I have no longer been taking any direct share in this work. But what I have done has been intended for its benefit."[53] Moreover, Barth was able to speak from his own experience when he said:

> I can visualise what it means to spend forty years in giving instruction to first communicants, in seeking the right spiritual word at a graveside or for young married couples, in being pastor to every conceivable kind of folk, and above all in expounding the Gospel Sunday by Sunday and proclaiming the Word of salvation for the community and world of to-day, in face of all kinds of afflictions, irritations and hostilities, of the suspicion of the times and (not least, but above all) of all one's own unbelief.[54]

Barth had been confronted by the same problems that in one form or another arise before all ministers. As he recognized, the greatest of these is doubt. No Christian always at every moment stands fully free of disbelief. It

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[51]Barth, Romans, p. 17.

[52]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, p. 62.

[53]Barth, CD, III/4, p. xi. [54]Ibid.

is the shadow that cannot face the light of God's grace but which nevertheless still clings somehow to a man's form. Yet, for Barth, dangerous unbelief could be--and was--swallowed up in the confession of faith. God's grace in Jesus Christ still reigned. As Barth once proclaimed in a sermon:

> Some of you have perhaps heard it said that in the last forty years I have written a great many books and that some of them are very fat ones. Let me, however, frankly and openly and even gladly confess that the four words: 'My grace is enough' say much more and say it better than the whole pile of paper with which I have surrounded myself. They are enough--something that I am very far from being able to say about my books. Whatever might be good about my books could at best only consist in pointing out from the distance what these four words say. And when my books have long since been superseded and forgotten, and the books of the whole world with them, then these words will still shine on in all their eternal richness: My grace is enough.[55]

Christ's Disciple

"'Come unto me!' What does Jesus want of us? He wants nothing of us but that we come. He does not want ours but us."[56] These words, from one of Barth's early sermons, are characteristic of Barth's evangelical conviction and zeal. In the pulpit, through lectures, and by sermons, Karl Barth persistently pointed to Jesus Christ. "His consistent attempt to build a theology around the act of God in Christ and his joyous expression of Christian faith will win

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[55]Karl Barth, Call for God, trans. A. T. Mackay (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 78.

[56]Karl Barth and E. Thurneysen, Come Holy Spirit, trans. G. W. Richards, E. G. Hamrighausen, and K. J. Ernst (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1934), p. 78.

followers for many years."[57]

Barth's very presence could move men to wonder. In his 1962 visit to the United States, Barth met with Billy Graham, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Carl Henry among other American religious leaders.[58] But it was in his series of lectures and discussion sessions at various universities that Barth's presence was most keenly felt. At the University of Chicago, evangelical representative E. J. Carnell observed: "Commented one of the journalists attending the lectures: 'Merely to watch Karl Barth walk into the auditorium is a religious experience.' I agree."[59] At the end of his time with Barth, after he had said farewell to the Swiss man of God, Carnell remarked: "I also thanked him for the Christian quality of his life as shown to us during the week. My debt to him is beyond repayment."[60]

Undoubtedly the highest tribute that can be paid to any man is to point to him as one who is a faithful witness to Jesus Christ. Many men have so pointed to Karl Barth. But perhaps John A. Mackay expressed the feelings of many in the best way when he wrote:

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[57]William E. Hordern, A Layman's Guide to Protestant Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1968), p. 148f.

[58]See Karl Barth, Evangelical Theology: An Introduction, trans. Grover Foley (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. viii.

[59]E. J. Carnell, "Barth as Inconsistent Evangelical," The Christian Century, XXIII (6 June, 1962), 714.

[60]Ibid.

> For me, personally, Karl Barth is the theologian who has done greatest justice to the first and most basic Christian creed, "Jesus Christ is Lord." It is his christological emphasis and his passion for Jesus Christ, the Christ of the New Testament and of Grunewald's famous painting of the Crucifixion, where John the Baptist points his long finger at the "Lamb of God," that leads me today to thank God for his servant Barth. No one in our time, or in any time since the New Testament was written, has done more to set forth the Lordship of Christ in the whole gamut of creation and redemption as found in the Bible, in the Church, in the world, and in the Christian soul.[61]

But one final word must be given. No tribute to Karl Barth can stand apart from an invitation to those who hear to also enter into that same joy. Karl Barth, Christ's disciple, always and only wanted to say just this: "You may meet Him, the Eternal, the Holy One, the Merciful One; this is the message of the Bible; for this Jesus Christ came into the world."[62]

Reflections

Karl Barth lived as a Christian. His life demonstrated the fruits produced by God's grace in the life of any man who has gladly given himself over to obedience to Jesus Christ. Precisely because he was an imperfect man, and precisely because he was a man reconciled to God, Karl Barth must always stand among those witnesses to Jesus Christ who surround us and bid us behold the glory of God.

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[61] John A. Mackay, "Bonn 1930--and After; A Lyrical Tribute to Karl Barth," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 291. Hereafter cited by "Karl Barth."

[62] Karl Barth and E. Thurneysen, God's Search for Man, trans. G. W. Richards, E. G. Hamrighausen, and K.J. Ernst (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1935), p. 233.

The above portrait has somewhat fleshed out the skeleton sketch of chapter three. What now remains is to suggest a few concrete ways in which Karl Barth may stand as an inspiration to evangelical theology.

First, as a Christian man, Karl Barth exhibited the character of one who confesses Jesus Christ as his Lord. As an obedient son, faithful and joyous friend, loving husband, and strong father, Barth's life fully complied with the Scripture's requirements for a leader in God's church:

> [He] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money. He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way; for it a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil; moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders, or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.[63]

Second, as a Christian scholar, Barth displayed both a remarkable breadth of knowledge and depth of understanding. He applied himself to his work with discipline and care. But above and beyond his talents and skills Karl Barth dedicated himself to <u>constructive</u> theology. Of course, he did not ignore polemics when and where they seemed appropriate. Indeed, he was very sharp in disputation. Yet, he was primarily interested in positive statements. This is evident, for example, in the final fragment of his <u>Church</u>

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[63] I Timothy 3:2-7 (Revised Standard Version); cf. 3:10,13; 6:11-16.

Dogmatics where he first told of his debt to his son's work but went on to say, "Nevertheless, I have had to accept in the main his predominantly negative thesis and incorporate it into my own predominantly positive thesis."[64]

Third, as a Christian minister, Barth evidenced both a breadth of character and a depth of commitment. Even in the days of his life when Barth was most influenced by liberal theology, he was still anxious to relate to his people the very words of God. He became a member of the Social Democrats as an expression of his desire to stand with the people to whom he preached each Sunday.[65] In later years he also chose to minister to those around him through preaching, writing, visiting, and even public confrontations.[66] But above all, as a minister Barth was concerned to witness to Christ by word and deed.

Finally, as Christ's disciple, Karl Barth exhibited in life what he wrote in his many books. "The evangelical heart of Barth's theology is the doctrine of Christ as the divine Reconciler."[67] Barth exemplified a life and ministry of reconciliation. In this regard one example must suffice. From 1934 until 1960, Barth and Emil Brunner had little

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[64]Barth CD, IV/4, p. x.

[65]See p. 92 of this study. Note that this political affiliation was never a significant part of Barth's life after Romans; cf. p. 99 of this study.

[66]See chapter three.

[67]Thomas F. Torrance, "Karl Barth," Scottish Journal of Theology, XXII (March, 1969), 4.

personal contact with one another although only a short distance separated them between Basel and Zürich. A mutual friend of the two men, John Hesselink, an American theology student, arranged the meeting which took place on 19 November, 1960. The two men and their wives spent the time in renewing their friendship.

> Although both couples approached the encounter with considerable apprehension, the occasion turned out to be a most enjoyable one which succeeded, not in reconciling theological differences, but in clearing the air and cementing personal relationships.[68]

Afterwards, Barth commented, "He remains my friend. . . . In human relations we are amicable and on good terms. But as to theology nothing is changed."[69] At the same time, Barth was quick to admit wrongs he had committed and to correct them. Thus, in the preface to the second part of volume four, Barth wrote:

> As I hurry to the end of this Preface, I must not forget to make some necessary amends. . . . I am thinking . . . of the fierce attack which I made on Dutch Neo-Calvinists <u>in globo</u> in the Preface to III,4. The wrath of man seldom does that which is right in the sight of God, and never when it is <u>in globo</u>. . . . I should like to withdraw entirely the generalized and therefore ill-founded words which after many years of provocation I then suddenly unleashed.[70]

Barth was also a tireless and courageous witness. During the years in Germany before the Second World War,

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[68] Godsey, in Barth, <u>HCM</u>, p. 78.

[69] News, "The Elephant and the Whale," <u>Christianity Today</u>, VI (25 May, 1962), 850.

[70] Karl Barth, <u>CD</u>, IV/2, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), p. xii.

he was steadfast. "The chief prophetic voice in those years was that of Barth."[71] In his later years, from 1954 onward, Barth began to exercise the ministry of prison visitation. He often preached to them of God's grace to set men free.[72]

Finally, in a day when a confusion of voices proclaimed to have the truth, Barth continued to preach Christ and avoid disputes over empty philosophies. However, he could always utter a strong word on occasion. As Godsey recorded:

> Barth waxed eloquent when I inquired about his reaction to what is happening in theology today; for example, in Bishop John A. T. Robinson's "Honest to God" movement or in the "new hermeneutics" of the Bultmann school: "When I am irenic, I say this is 'flat-tire theology.' The pneuma . . . has gone out of it, and when the pneuma goes out of a tire, the automobile is likely to have an accident. Or at least it doesn't go anywhere. But when I am angry, I think of the entire Bultmann school as the Company of Korah."[73]

What does all this mean to evangelicalism? The answer must depend on those who recognize that Karl Barth's life may be presented as a model to teach the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. All that this study has already portrayed about Barth is but a beginning. Only a few suggestions have been offered as to how Barth stands as an inspiration. In the final analysis, each reader must draw from the resources those items that will encourage him on

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[71]Mackay, "Karl Barth," p. 292.

[72]See, for example, the sermons in Barth, Call for God.

[73]Godsey, in Barth, HCM, p. 83.

his own path of obedience. This much must be said however: over every word of man that can be said concerning Karl Barth stands the one Word of God. If Karl Barth is to be an inspiration to the renewal and reformation of evangelical theology it must be as one who has glorified God, now enjoys him eternally, but always and ever looks not to himself but to God in Jesus Christ.

BARTH AS A GUIDE

> One of the most famous German existentialist philosophers, Karl Jaspers, also teaches at the University of Basel. Near the conclusion of his recent course on "Philosophic Faith in Relation to Christian Revelation," Jaspers paid a remarkable tribute to Karl Barth. Jaspers indicated that while he and many of his associates are making only scattered contributions to scientific thought, the really great significance of Karl Barth lies in the fact that he has thought through the whole field of theology and reworked it for himself.[74]

These words, penned in 1960, only serve to emphasize more strongly the tremendous significance of Barth's theology. In order to see ways in which this theology can serve as a guide to the reformation and renewal of evangelical theology a few guidelines are in order. First, Barth must be examined as a constructive theologian. Second, he must be considered as a dynamic theologian. Third, he must be reviewed as a dogmatic theologian. Accordingly, the emphasis is on how Barth can serve as a guide, with ideas drawn from his theology as desirable.

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[74] Fred H. Klooster, The Significance of Barth's Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961), p. 27f.

Karl Barth, the constructive, dynamic, and dogmatic theologian had something to say about nearly everything. Not even church building architecture escaped his attention.[75] But above everything else Barth's theology glorified Christ. If reformation and renewal is to come to evangelical theology it must come from Christ. He must increase, he must be at the center.

The Constructive Theologian

Barth was an individual of the Church. During his life he was a prophet, a pilgrim, a preacher, and a pastor. As a prophet his Romans sent forth a strong word about man's sinfulness, the awesome sovereignty of God, and the great gulf separating man from God. As a pilgrim, Barth adopted the language of dialectics to speak about God while he sought restlessly for a more adequate way. As a preacher, Barth wrote his Church Dogmatics for the proclamation of the Church. As a pastor, Barth not only preached but passed the tasks of his Christian vocation on to those who were of the new generation. Yet at every step along the way Barth was a member of the Church dedicated to the service of the Church as service to the Lord.

As a positive theologian, Barth shaped his theology by constructive action, not reaction. This meant a good confession, a Gospel, and a Bible undisturbed by the higher

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[75]"Images and symbols do not have any place in a Protestant church building." Karl Barth, "Protestantism and Architecture," Theology Today, XIX (July, 1962).

criticism. At the same time, however, Barth was not one to retreat and hide, or claim that 'ignorance is bliss.' He refused to allow apologetics any place in his theology for the obviously simple reason that the Gospel had no need of them. He would not leave room for Brunner's "eristics" either. Brunner acknowledged:

> Karl Barth's hostility to Apologetics is, however, to this extent justified, because it is true that discussion with non-Christian thought cannot be the basis and the starting-point for dogmatics itself. His opposition to "eristics" was necessary, so long as this was proclaimed as the "foundation" of dogmatics.[76]

It was because of the power of the Gospel, and his confidence in it, that Barth could risk--in fact, feel compelled--to speak of "legend" to describe certain portions of the Bible. He was seeking an exactness of language for the Church's proclamation. Narratives like the creation account seemed to be other than historie, but clearly not "myth." When Barth used the term "legend" he meant by it something very unambiguous. This was quickly recognized by other theologians like Brunner who replied: "The word 'myth' is to be preferred (in spite of its ambiguity) to 'legend' (which Barth suggests), because 'legend' refers to historical fact."[77]

At every turn, Barth set forth the Gospel of Jesus

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[76]Emil Brunner, Dogmatics: The Christian Doctrine of God, I, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), p. 101.

[77]Emil Brunner, Dogmatics: The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption, II, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1952), p. 74, n. 1.

Christ. H. R. Mackintosh once wrote of him that, "Barth's mind is dominated by the thought of God which emerges from the Bible. In the service of that thought he finds perfect freedom."[78] This was unabused freedom. It was the freedom of the Christian mission.

Constructive theology is necessarily mission theology. This is true because the most positive message that can be proclaimed is that of God in Jesus Christ. Mission theology for Barth was also necessarily Trinitarian and Christo-centric theology. According to Barth, when Jesus was delivered up to Pilate and the Gentiles by the leading representatives of Israel itself it was "the event which necessarily transformed the mission to Israel (Mt. 10:1f)."[79] Missions, in essence, is "a reflection of the way which God Himself went from those who have all things to those who have nothing."[80] Here, as everywhere else, the center is Jesus and the message is the Gospel.

The Dynamic Theologian

The constructive efforts of Barth were supported by his dynamic outlook. Simply put, this means he, as one member within the Body of Christ, was still but one member who needed to be in dialogue with others. Barth was adept at dialoging from Scripture, dialoging with past theologians, dialoging with present thinkers, and then challenging future

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[78] Mackintosh, Types of Modern Theology, p. 285.

[79] Barth, CD, IV/2, p. 171. [80] Ibid.

theologians to think, rethink, and think through every issue.

Gabriel Vahanian once said of Barth that he was "truly faithful to the intentions and structure of the rediscovery of the gospel that took place in the period of the Reformation."[81] This was because Barth did not canonize their conclusions. Like the reformers, he was in the process of creating the Christian tradition, not cementing it. Dialog was at the heart of Barth's work. But this meant more than just speaking. Much more it meant listening and learning from others.

The Dogmatic Theologian

The results of Barth's dialog were expressed in the science of dogmatics. Within the context of the Church and by the standards of the Christian canon Barth conducted the work of reviewing the language of the Church, reflecting on the mission of the Church and its contemporary expression, and renewing the language of the Church so as to best express and fulfill that mission. Was he successful?

Colin Brown has voiced the opinion that "the real significance of Karl Barth is that he has brought fundamental questions back into the centre of attention."[82] But,

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[81] G. Vahanian in Karl Barth, The Faith of the Church, trans. and intro. G. Vahanian, ed. Jean-Louis Leuba (London: Collins Press, 1958), p. 7.

[82] Colin Brown, Karl Barth and the Christian Message (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1967), p. 152.

Barth had also focused the issues and, as Brown noted, "He has also raised again key themes of the Bible which are regularly pushed into the background in the church today. . . ."[83] Barth was very successful in his task. Torrance wrote:

> Both in its grandeur and in its profundity Barth's massive explication of our knowledge of God has established such contact with reality that it will be a constant source of surprise and discovery for students who may have something of the same awe and humility, the mingled joy and wonder and responsibility, that characterised Karl Barth himself.[84]

Barth's dogmatic theology cannot be ignored. It represents a constructive theology actively engaged in productive dialog. It demonstrates one way to review, renew, and reform the theology, the proclamation, and the life of the Church. Perhaps Bromiley said it best when he wrote:

> Here is a dogmatics which seeks its starting-point in faith, which depends for its strength on prayer, which consciously orientates itself to the Lord, and which finds its true climaxes in praise. Reverence is, of course, no substitute for truth; yet the truth is not honored without reverence. Hence these are qualities in Barth's theology which we cannot fail to respect, which we may seek to emulate even in our criticisms and which we should covet earnestly for all theological endeavor.[85]

Reflections

Norman F. Langford once remarked that, "Barth is above all a theologian for practical preachers and

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[83] Ibid., p. 153.

[84] Torrance, "Karl Barth," p. 1.

[85] Geoffrey W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth," Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, ed. and intro. P. E. Hughes (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 59.

teachers."[86] Even for those who find the complete reading of the Church Dogmatics impossible they still can serve as excellent resources for classroom and pulpit. But the real value of Karl Barth as a guide is ultimately much deeper. He has shown the way for evangelical theology to move with the times without capitulating to the current situation of any given moment. Theology is always theologia viatorum, theology along the way. It is the proclamation of an eternal message in a moment-by-moment relevancy of expression. God's revelation is neither irrelevant nor ethereal.

> On the contrary, the event of revelation as described for us in Scripture has everywhere a natural, bodily, outward and visible component--from the creation (not only of heaven but also of earth), by way of the concrete existence of the people of Israel in Palestine, the birth of Jesus Christ, His physical miracles, His suffering and death under Pontius Pilate, His physical resurrection, right down to His coming again and the resurrection of the body.[87]

There are a multitude of ways in which Barth may serve as a guide for the work of constructive evangelical theology. Moreover, today is truly a day when every resource must be utilized. The pressures always upon the community of faith have been increased by the new attention being directed toward American evangelicalism. The words of Nels Ferré, himself not an evangelical, though given more than twenty years ago nevertheless speak as well for the

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[86]Norman F. Langford, "How Barth Has Influenced Me," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 361.

[87]Karl Barth, CD, II/1, trans. T. H. L. Parker, W. B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J. L. M. Haire (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1957), p. 265.

evangelical today:

> We have great need to return to main Christian assumptions. In method Barth puts faith first: the faith of revelation, of the Bible, and of the Church. In doctrine he is a thorough-going supernaturalist of a decisive evangelical faith. His stress on the Bible and Christ magnifies God and refuses to be bound by all narrow limits of history and experience. How mightily he combines the sovereignty of God and his limitless love! In eschatology, although he rightly eschews all human predictions and basis for hope, he announces the final victory of God in clear and unmistakably Christian terms. How can any Christian teacher be thankful enough to Karl Barth![88]

Perhaps the most profitable way to see how Barth may guide evangelical efforts today is to examine his final message to the Church. "It is no accident that Barth in his very last work intended to challenge . . . Christians . . . to set out, to return, and to confess."[89] Each of these must be examined. Together they comprise a way forward into the future.

Three features in particular form the peculiar marks of a genuine and right setting out of the Church. First, it is "an affirmation of the Church's future and only then, and because of it, the abandoning of the past."[90] In this regard, it is not enough to criticise, protest, or hold contempt of the past. Second, "the setting out of the Church is genuine and right if the Church envisages as the New, and therefore as its future, the unambiguous and definite Promise

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[88]Nels F. S. Ferré, "How Barth Has Influenced Me," Theology Today, XIII (October, 1956), 361.

[89]Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," p. 200.

[90]Ibid., p. 201.

given to the Church by Jesus Christ."[91] This means a purposeful change, not a random movement into chaos. Thus, third, "the genuine and right setting out of the Church must be performed in orderly fashion. . . ."[92]

The setting out of the Church is but one part of the movement into the future. "The movement of the Church is, secondly, a vigorous returning to what has taken place at the beginning."[93] This means that the setting out is guided by the past. It is, in fact, a return to the past. But the return is not to any other point in the past than the very beginning. "The crucified and risen Jesus Christ is both the Old and the New to whom the Church must turn in that it returns."[94] Hence, the Old and the New are at one.

The third aspect of the one movement of the Church is its confessing. This aspect was not developed in written form by Barth. The evening of these final thoughts was his last evening in this life. But it should be noted that in his outline:

> The last key-word 'Fröhlich ernstnehmen' (let us take seriously and rejoice) is a comforting legacy to future generations. It could be the epitaph to the life and work of Barth himself, who once described himself as 'God's joyful partisan.'[95]

Here then is the challenge to the evangelical churches not only in the United States but abroad as well. Yet as evangelicalism is on the move it must be careful in its

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[91]Ibid. [92]Ibid. [93]Ibid. [94]Ibid., p. 202.

[95]Ibid.

witness, life, and theology. Its witness must be to Jesus Christ, the Lord, from Scripture, in proclamation, and with experience and a developing tradition in its trail. Its life must be in Christ. Its theology must be biblical and communicable. In this last respect, evangelical theology must sharpen and refine its language through meaningful dialogue. Dogmatics has its place and cannot be ignored.

The resources provided by the life and work of Karl Barth remain ready for profitable use by evangelicals. He who dialogs with Barth has already taken the first important step in creating an ever more positive presentation of evangelical theology. It is not necessary to accept every--or even any--thought of Barth without revision or qualification. But it is necessary to hear him, learn from him, and with him point to Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

A final note of caution must be sounded. The work of Karl Barth must be used rightly. His life must not become an idol. His work must never be canonized. It seems safe enough to say such possibilities are very slim in the foreseeable future of evangelicalism. Indeed, the overwhelmingly positive character of this study is due primarily to the great resistance of evangelicals to Barth. The absence of criticism of Barth in this study is in the interest of constructive theology as it must present itself in the face of overwhelmingly negative and ignorant, even

irresponsible, reactions by the members of a community who stand to profit greatly from Karl Barth.

Nonetheless, the caution must still be sounded. Karl Barth should serve as an example: as an inspiration and a guide. But there can be no room for Barthians! Finally, he must be critically evaluated after, during, and in the midst of a continuing appeal to the standards of Scripture. Barth did not fear such a testing process; indeed, he invited it. Put him to the test! He will stand for his Master is able to make him stand.

Evangelical theology is on the move. Perhaps in some quarters there is resistance, even rebellion, but the move continues. Despite divisions, uncertainties, fighting and fear, the evangelical churches are moving into the future. As long as they look steadfastly to their Lord and glorify him the future will be enjoyable. But the needs of the present still beckon. The Church is still being transformed, still being conformed to the image of Christ. Renewal and reformation are still necessary and they will come. Karl Barth is no longer with us and yet he remains. His life still presents an inspiring example. His work still provides valuable resources. Will the evangelical community accept his help? Or is it still true that a prophet is without honor in his own country?

On the day of Karl Barth's death Gerald F. Moede penned what must rest as this study's final word:

> When he is taken seriously the church and its healing message will be continually reformed and renewed;

when his thought is neglected, theology will be detoured by exciting but nevertheless enervating and extra-curricular pursuits. Why is this so? Simply because he recalled the church to the New Testament elements which have underlain each reformation of its history.[96]

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[96] Gerald F. Moede, "The Humanity of Karl Barth," The Christian Century, LXXXV (25 December, 1968), 1617.

APPENDIXES

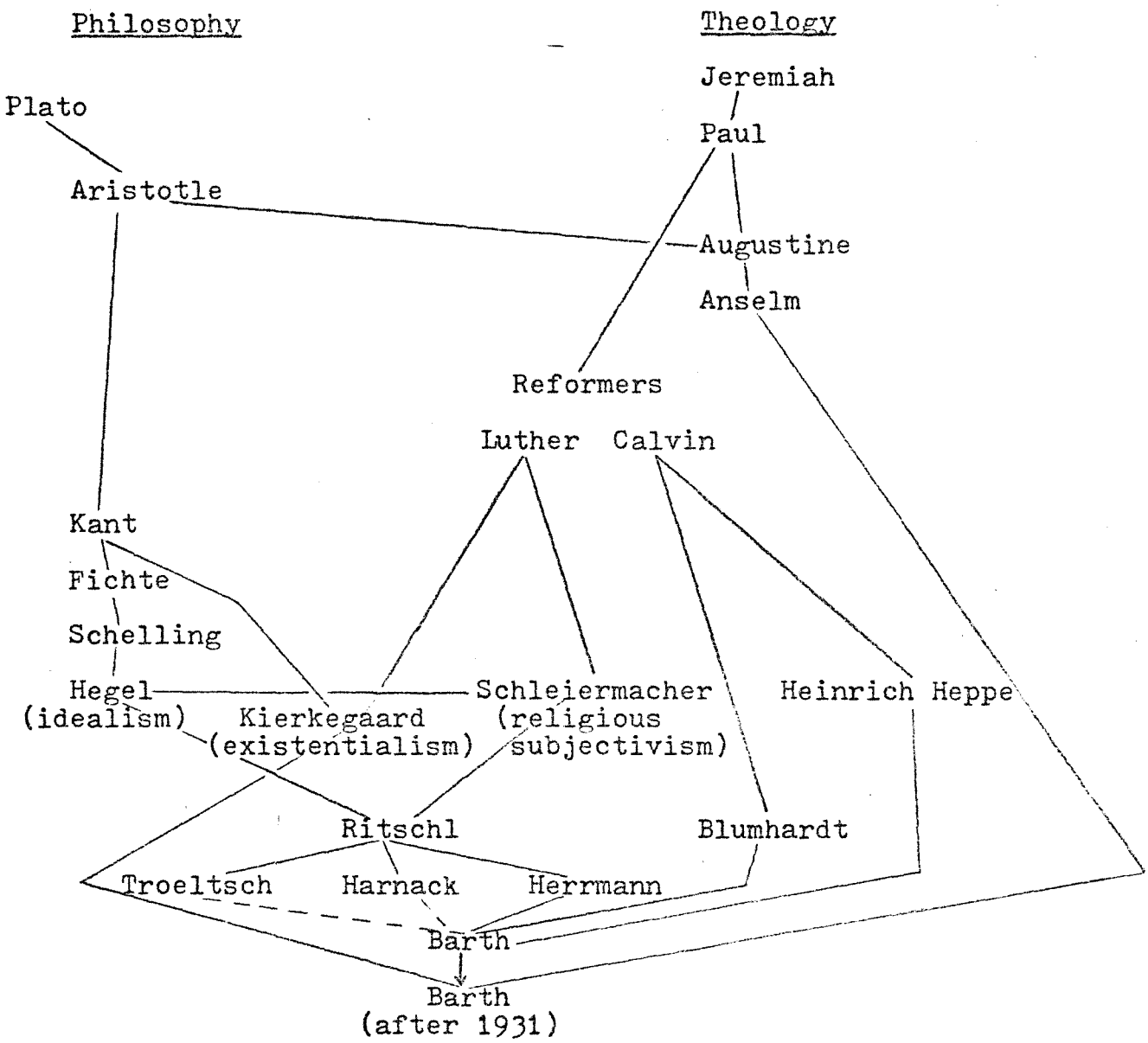
APPENDIX A

Table of Abbreviations

CD	Church Dogmatics, Karl Barth
ET	Evangelical Theology: An Introduction, Karl Barth
HCM	How I Changed My Mind, Karl Barth (w/J. Godsey)
HG	Humanity of God, Karl Barth
KBET	Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910-1931, Thomas Torrance
RHAP	A Religious History of the American People, Sydney E. Ahlstrom
RHCT	A Handbook of Contemporary Theology, Bernard Ramm
TKB	The Theology of Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar
TKBI	The Theology of Karl Barth: An Introduction, Herbert Hartwell
WGWM	The Word of God and the Word of Man, Karl Barth

APPENDIX B

Barth's Precursors



APPENDIX C

Karl Barth: A Biographical Time-Line

1886 Born 10 May in Basel, Switzerland; son of Professor Fritz Barth.

1889 Family moves to Bern. Here Barth and his brothers grow up.

1902 Age 16, his first interest in systematic theology kindled by Confirmation instruction course.

1904 Study at Bern under his father; systematic theology under Hermann Lüdemann, a liberal. Vital interest in Kant and Schleiermacher.

1906 Study at University of Berlin during Fall Semester. Heard K. Holl, H. Gunkel, and J. Kaftan, most attracted to Adolf von Harnack. Study at Bern, summer term. Keen desire to study under W. Herrmann.

1907 Study at University of Tübingen. Instructors included T. Häring and Adolf Schlatter.

1908 Study at University of Marburg for three semesters. Instructors included Johannes Weiss, Adolf Jülicher and most importatly, Wilhelm Herrmann.

1909 Passed theological examinations at Bern. Ordained at age 23; becomes editorial assistant on staff of Christliche Welt, in Marburg. Returns to Switzerland late in the year.

1910 Assistant pastor in Swiss Reformed Church at Geneva.

1911 Begins pastorate at Safenwil, a village in Aargau, north central Switzerland.

1912 Fritz Barth dies.

1913 Marries Nelly Hoffmann. Friendship begun in student days with Eduard Thurneysen is continued; Thurneysen pastors a church in neighboring village of Leutwil. Discovers work of Soren Kierkegaard.

1914 In August, ninety-three German intellectuals, including many of his former instructors, proclaim support of Kaiser Wilhelm II's war policy.

1915 Joins Social Democratic Party.

1916 Delivers addresses indicating his changing thought as he moves away from liberalism.

1917 With Thurneysen publishes a volume of their sermons.

1918 Composition of Der Römerbrief.

1919 1,000 copies of Der Römerbrief are printed; it is a revolutionary work.

1920 Personal confrontation with A. Harnack in April as both deliver lectures at the Aargau Student Conference.

1921 Leaves Safenwil in October to be installed at Göttingen as Honorary Professor of Reformed Theology.

1922 Receives Honorary Th.D. from University of Münster. With Thurneysen and Friedrich Gogarten, the journal Zwischen den Zeiten is founded.

1923 Georg Merz becomes editor of Zwischen den Zeiten and publication begins.

1924 First lectures in dogmatics entitled "Instruction in the Christian Religion" given.

1925 Begins in Autumn to teach at University of Münster in Westphalia as Professor of Dogmatics and New Testament Exegesis.

1928 First English translation of one of his works.

1930 Moves to the University of Bonn where he becomes Professor of Systematic Theology. Charlotte von Kirschbaum becomes his secretary.

1932 Begins work on the Church Dogmatics.

1933 On 25 April the "Evangelical Church of the German Nation" is created as the state church and the "German Christian" movement affirms Nazism. In July, along with Thurneysen, he founds a new journal, Theologische Existenz heute; the final issue of Zwischen den Zeiten is published.

1934 The Confessing Church is formally organized; the Barmen Confession issued at Barmen in Wuppertal, Germany on 31 May, of which he is the chief architect.

1935 Forced from Germany by the Nazis. Returns to Basel as Professor at the University.

1936 Visits Italy and Hungary (1936-1937).

1937 Delivers 1937/1938 Gifford Lectures on natural theol- at Aberdeen, Scotland.

1938 Writes letter to Czechs urging resistance to Nazism.

1939 Writes letter to French Protestants of warning and encouragement.

1940 Second letter to French Protestants.

1941 Visited by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in late February. Sends letter to English Protestants.

1942 Letters to the Norwegians (April), the Dutch (July), and the Americans (October).

1943 Serves throughout the war as a Swiss border guard.

1945 Visits Germany at the war's end. Turns to speaking in behalf of charity toward a defeated Germany.

1946 Teaches one semester of dogmatics at Bonn. Visits Berlin and Dresden, meets with Church leaders in East Germany.

1947 Returns to Bonn to teach another semester.

1948 Visits Hungary to talk with leaders of Reformed Church there. Participates in the meeting held in Amsterdam to form the World Council of Churches.

1949-1955 Continues teaching at Basel and publishing works.

1956 Celebrates seventieth birthday; delivers memorial address at celebration of 200th anniversary of Mozart's birthday.

1957-1959 Continues at Basel.

1960 Meets in summer at Strasbourg with students from around the world during the World Student Christian Federation's Teaching Conference on the Life and Mission of the Church. Meets with Emil Brunner on 19 November.

1962 Formally retires, with last lecture 1 March. Spends seven weeks in U.S.A. (April-May). Visits ten states,

lectures at University of Chicago, Princeton, San Francisco Theological Seminary and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia.

1963 19 April, awarded in Copenhagen the "Sonning Prize," bestowed in honour of his outstanding contributions to European culture.

1964 Spends September to November in the hospital; suffers slight stroke in December.

1965 Leaves the hospital in January, gradually recovers.

1966 Travels to Rome to discuss and evaluate Vatican II in September.

1967 Last part-volume of the still unfinished Church Dogmatics published.

1968 Dies 10 December.

APPENDIX D

Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics

Word of God

Introduction

1. The Task of Dogmatics
2. The Task of Prolegomena to Dogmatics

Ch. 1 The Word of God as the Criterion of Dogmatics

3. Church Proclamation as the Material of Dogmatics
4. The Word of God in Its Threefold Form
5. The Nature of the Word of God
6. The Knowability of the Word of God
7. The Word of God, Dogma, and Dogmatics

Ch. 2 The Revelation of God

Part 1. The Triune God

8. God in His Revelation
9. God's Three-in-Oneness
10. God the Father
11. God the Son
12. God the Holy Spirit

Part 2. The Incarnation of the Word

13. God's Freedom for Man
14. The Time of Revelation
15. The Secret of Revelation

Part 3. The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

16. The Freedom of Man for God

17. God's Revelation as the Annulment of Religion
18. The Life of the Children of God

Ch. 3 The Holy Scripture

19. God's Word for the Church
20. Authority in the Church
21. Freedom in the Church

Ch. 4 The Proclamation of the Church

22. The Commission of the Church
23. Dogmatics as a Function of the Listening Church
24. Dogmatics as a Function of the Teaching Church

<u>God</u>

Ch. 5 The Knowledge of God

25. The Knowledge of God in Its Consummation
26. The Knowability of God
27. The Limits of the Knowledge of God

Ch. 6 The Reality of God

28. God's Being as the One Who Freely Loves
29. God's Perfections
30. The Perfections of the Divine Loving
31. The Perfections of the Divine Freedom

Ch. 7 God's Gracious Election

32. The Task of a Correct Doctrine of God's Gracious Election
33. The Election of Jesus Christ

68. The Holy Spirit and Christian Love

Ch. 16 Jesus Christ, the True Witness

69. The Glory of the Mediator

70. Man's Falsehood and Damnation

71. Man's Calling

72. The Holy Spirit and the Sending of the Christian Community

73. The Holy Spirit and Christian Hope

Ch. 17 The Commandment of God the Reconciler

<u>Redemption</u>

APPENDIX E

Brown, Robert McAfee, "What's Where in Barth," The Christian Century,

Karl Barth's imminent arrival in this country means that people must be able to converse knowledgeably about him in the months ahead. Since 11 of the 12 extant volumes of Church Dogmatics are now available in English, it is no longer possible to plead ignorance of things Barthian. Indeed, so zealous is the hardy Scottish team of translators that there is some fear it may end up giving us more volumes in English than Barth has written in German.

When a Church Dogmatics is 12 volumes strong and still far from completion, it becomes a bit difficult to remember what's where. And when the main volumes are broken down into "part-volumes" it gets even harder. Nevertheless, now that Barth himself is to visit us we are all required to be able to converse about his mammoth production. For those who do not have time before April 23 to read the 6 million words, the following guide may prove helpful in remembering What's Where in Barth:

I/1--In English, "one-one" means a tie; no conclusion reached. I/1 therefore is introductory and methodological, pointing toward future volumes.

I/2--"One, two, buckle my shoe." A shoe is what you stand on. I/2 deals with that whereon the Protestant stands; i.e., the authority of Scripture.

II/1--Here we turn from nursery rhyme to mathematics. Two plus one equals three. Three is the number of persons in the godhead. Therefore II/ (plus) 1 deals with the doctrine of God. (Note: Since in Barth's system the unity-in-trinity is also a trinity-in-unity, we find more on the doctrine of the trinity in I/1 [or 1^1--one primed, to emphasize Barth's rigorous monotheism].)

II/2--Here we resort to the French and render the volume number as Tout? Tout!"--which, roughly translated, goes: "Is everyone saved? Yes, everyone!" This, then, is the volume on the doctrine of election. (Note: This isn't quite fair to Barth, who is not a universalist. If Barth is ever hanged for heresy, however, it won't be for espousing a doctrine of limited atonement.)

III/1--Easy: "Three, one, cre-a-tion." Not only does it rhyme, but "creation" has three syllables: thus no need to get confused and say "Two, one, creation" or even "Four, one, creation." III/1--creation.

III/2--Here III stands for God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and 2 stands for man. (Note: In Barth's anthropology "man" is understood in terms of male and female.) Thus III/2 deals with the doctrine of man.

III/3--Since this volume deals with providence, angels, the nihil and all sorts of other subjects, we say "Three, three, pot-pourri." If you can't remember where somethings goes [sic], chances are it belongs in III/3. (Note: Theological purists who dislike this may resort to the following mnemonic equation: II/3 equals 3 times 3 equals Nien equals no equals nothing equals the nihil or das Nichtige. III/3 therefore treats of the nihil.

III/4--Time for another jingle: "Three, four, shut the door." This is very specific, down-to-earth advice. And what do we find in III/4? Very specific, down-to-earth advice about such ethical issues as war, suicide and marriage. III/4, then, deals with ethics.

IV/1--This volume deals particularly with justification. Barth puts great stress on the cosmic victory, already achieved, by which we are justified in the sight of God. So: "Four, one, the battle's won."

IV/2--Barth now turns to sanctification; he stresses that this is a real possibility for all men. So: "Four, two, there's hope for you."

IV/3(1)--Here is where Barth oversteps all bounds of numerical decency by dividing the third part of the fourth volume into halves. Our best clue is to reflect quietly about what should be the fate of any author who numbers a tome "Volume IV, Part Three, First Half," and be led from this to recall that IV/3(1) gives considerable attention to "the damnation of man."

IV/3(2)--This is large enough to be a new phone number. When we hear someone say "Barth 432" we naturally reply, "Who's calling?" The rest is easy, for IV/3(2) treats the doctrine of the calling.

There's going to be a fifth volume. How many "part-volumes" it will contain is known only to Barth and the angels, and Barth is not exactly sure himself. Since I'm not on very good terms with the angels (except the fallen ones), I think we'd better leave things as they are for now.

In the meantime, on to Aquinas and his 24-volume Summa.

APPENDIX F

Barth's German Publications Time-Line

Tables of Abbreviations

Periodicals

CW	Christliche Welt
ET	Evangelische Theologie
GV	Gesammelte Vortrage
NW	Neue Wege
STZ	Schweizerischen Theologischen Zeitschrift
TE	Theologische Existenz heute
TE,NF	Theologische Existenz heute, Neue Folge
TS	Theologische Studien
ZTK	Zeitschrift fur Theologie und Kirche
ZdZ	Zwischen den Zeiten

Publishers

CK	Christian Kaiser Verlag
EA	Einsichten und Ausblicke
EB	Evangelische Buchhandlung
EV	Evangelischer Verlag (A.G.)

Books

KD	Die Kirchliche Dogmatik

1909 "Moderne Theologie und Reichgottesarbeit," ZTK, XIX, 317-21.

"Antwort an d. Achelis und D. Drews," ZTK, XIX, 479-86.

1912 "Der christliche Glaube und die Geschichte," STZ Heft 1 and 2.

1914 "Der Glaube an den persönlichen Gott," ZTK, XXIV, 21-32.

1916 "Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes," NW, X no. 47.

1917 Suche Gott, Sowerdet ihr leben (with E. Thurneysen), Bern: G. A. Baschlin.

1919 Der Römerbrief, Bern:

1920 Der Christ in der Gesellshaft, Patmosverlag.

Biblische Fragen, Munchen: EA

Zur inneren Lage des Christentums, München.

"Uner ledigte An fragen an die heutige Theologie"

1921 Der Römerbrief, Second Edition, München.

1922 "Das Wort Gottes als Aufgabe der Theologie," CW, XXXVI, 858-73.

"Not und Verheissung der christlichen Verkundigung," ZdZ Heft 1, 1-25.

1923 "16 Antworten an Herrn Professor von Harnack," CW, XXXVII, 89-91.

"Das problem der Ethik in der Gegenwart," ZdZ Heft 1, 30-57.

"Antwort auf Herrn Professor von Harnacks offenen Brief," CW, XXXVII, 244-52.

"Ansatz und Absicht in Luthers Abendmahlslehre," ZDZ Heft 4, 17-51.

"Reformirte Lehre ihr Wesen und ihre Aufgabe," ZdZ Heft 5, 8-39.

1924 Komm, Schöpfer Geist (with E. Thurneysen), München.

Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie, München: CK

Die Auferstehung der Toten, München: CK

"Brunners Schleiermacherbuch," ZdZ Heft 8, 49-64.

1925 "Schleiermachers Weihnachtsfeier," ZdZ III, 38-61.

"Menschenwort und Gotteswort in der christlichen Predigt," ZdZ III, 119-40.

"Das Schriftprinzip der reformierten Kirche," ZdZ III, 215-45

"Die dogmatischen Principienlehre bei Wilhelm Herrmann," ZdZ III, 246-80.

"Möglichkeit und Wunschbarkeit eines allgemeinen reformierten Glaubensbekentnisses," ZdZ III, 311-33.

1926 "Die Theologie und die Kirche," GV II.

"Kirche und Theologie," ZdZ IV, 18-40.

"Die kirche und die Kultur," ZdZ IV, 363-84.

Von christlichen Leben, München: CK

"Das Wort in der Theologie von Schleiermacher bis Ritschl," GV II, München: CK

1927 "Ludwig Feuerbach," ZdZ V, 10-40.

"Das Halten der Gebote," ZdZ V, 206-27.

"Rechtfertigung und Heiligung," ZdZ V, 281-309.

"Der Begriff der Kirche," ZdZ V, 365-78.

"Schleiermacher," ZdZ V, 422-64.

Erklärung des Philipper briefs, München:

Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf. I. Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes, München

Die Lehre vom Wort Gottes; Prolegomena zur christlichen Dogmatik, München: CK

"Polemisches Nachwort," ZdZ V.

1928 "Der romische Katholicizmus als Frage an die protestantische Kirche," ZdZ VI, 274-302.

Die Theologie und die Kirche, München: CK

1929 "Schicksal und Idee in der Theologie," ZdZ VII, 309-48.

"Die Lehre von den Sakramenten," ZdZ VII

1930 "Zur Lehre vom Heiligen Geist" (with Henrich Barth), ZdZ Heft 1.

"Die Theologie und der heutige Mensch," ZdZ VIII, 374 96.

"Quousque tandem?" ZdZ VIII.

1931 Fides Quaerens intellectum, Anselms Beweis der Existenz Gottes, München: CK.

"Die Not der Evangelischen Kirchen," ZdZ IX, 89-122.

Fragen an das Christentum, Geneva

1932 "Vorwort zur englischen Ausgabe des Römerbriefs," ZdZ X, 285-94.

KD I/1 Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes, München: CK

"Protestantismus der Gegenwart: Jugend und Krisis der Kultur," Internationale Zeitschrift für Kultur und Kanst.

"Theologie und die Mission in der Gegenwart," ZdZ X, 189-215.

1933 "Fuer die Freiheit des Evangeliums," TE Heft 2.

"Die Kirche Jesu Christi," TE Heft 5.

"Lutherfeïr 1933," TE Heft 4.

"Reformation als Entscheidung," TE, Heft 3.

"Theologische Existenz heute," TE Heft 1.

1934 Weihnacht, München: CK

"Offenbarung, Kirche, Theologie," TE Heft 9.

"Der Christ als Zeuge," TE Heft 12.

"Der Gute Hirte," TE Heft 10.

"Gottes Wille und unsere Wünsche," TE Heft 7.

"Nein! Antwort an Emil Brunner," TE Heft 14.

1935 Credo München: CK

Die Grosse Barmherzigkeit (with E. Thurneysen) München

"Das Bekenntnis der Reformation und unser Bekennen," TE Heft 29.

"Das Evangelium in der Gegenwart," TE Heft 25.

"Evangelium und Gesetz," TE Heft 32.

"Die Kirche und die Kirchen" TE Heft 27.

1936 "Calvin" TE Heft 37.

"Calvin feier 1936" TE Heft 43.

"Gottes Gnadenwahl" TE Heft 47.

1938 "Rechtfertigung und Recht" TS Heft 1.

Not und Veheissung im deutschen Kirchen kampf, Bern: BEG Verlag

KD I/2 Die Lehre Vom Wort Gottes, Zürich: EB.

Gotteserkenntnis und Gottesdienst nach reformatorische Lehre, Zollikon-Zurich.

"Evangelium und Bildung," TS Heft 1.

1939 "David Friedrich Strauss als Theologie," TS Heft 6.

"Die Souveränität des Wort Gottes und die Entscheidung des Glaubens," TS Heft 5.

1940 KD II/1 Die Lehre von Gott, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Die Neuorien tierung der Prot. Theologie in den letzten dreiszig Jahren," in Kirchenblatt für die Ref. Schweiz, Volume 7.

1942 KD II/2 Die Lehre von Gott, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Karfreitag und Ostern (with E. Thurneysen) Basel: EB.

1943 Der Kirchliche Lehre von der Taufe, Zollikon-Zürich.

"Der Kirchliche Lehre von der Taufe," TS Heft 14.

"Der Dienst am Wort Gottes" TE Heft 13.

Eine Schweizer Stimme 1938-1945, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A. G.

1945 KD III/1 Die Lehre von der Schöpfung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Wie Konnen die Deutschen gesund werden, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A. G.

Die Deutschen und Wir, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1946 "Christengemeinde und Buergergemeinde," TS XX

Die christliche Verkuendigung im heutigen Europa, Müchen: CK

"Zwei Vorträge," TE,NE Heft 3.

1947 "Die lebndige Gemeinda und die freie Gnade," TE,NF Heft 9.

"Die Botschaff von der freien Gnade Gottes," TS Heft 23.

Christus und Wir Christen, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Dogmatik in Grundriss, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Die Schrift und die Kirche," TS Heft 22.

Die protestantische Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert: Ihre Vorgeschichte, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1948 KD III/2 Die Lehre von der Schöpfung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A. G.

Die christliche Gemeinda im Wechselder Staatsordnungen (Dokumente einer Ungarnreise), Zollikon-Zurich: EV A.G.

Die christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Das christliche verständnis der Offenbarung," TE,NF Heft 12.

Die Unordnung der Welt und Gottes Heilsplan, Zollikon-Zürich: EV

1949 Die ökumenische Aufgabe in den reformirten Kirchen der Schweiz (with E. Brunner and E. Studer), Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Gespräche nach Amsterdam (with J. Danielou and R. Niebuhr), Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G. "Amsterdamer Gragen und Antworten," TE,NF, Heft 15.

Die Kirche Zwischen Ost und West, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Die Frage nach der Taufe," ET 1949-50 Heft 4.

1950 KD III/3 Die Lehre von der Schöpfung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Humanismus," TS Heft 28.

"Die Wirklichkeit des neuen Menschen," TS Heft 27.

1951 KD III/4 Die Lehre von der Schöpfung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1952 "Rudolph Bultmann: ein Uersuch ihn zu verstehen," TS Heft 34.

Christus und Adam nach Römer 5, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

"Politische Entscheidung in der Einheit des Glaubens," TE.NF Heft 34.

1953 KD IV/1 Die Lehre von der Versöhnung

"Das Geschenk der Freiheit" TE Heft 39

1955 KD IV/2 Die Lehre von der Versöhnung

"Dietrich Bonhoeffer und Karl Barth," (Ein briefwechsel Aus den Jahre 1933-1934) ET Heft 4-5.

1956 Evangelium und Gesetz, München

Die Menshlich Keit Gottes, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Das Geschenk der Freiheit, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Kurze Erklärung des Römerbriefs, München

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1957 "Die Menschlichkeit Gottes," TS Heft 48

1959 KD IV/3 part 1 Die Lehre von der Versöhnung

KD IV/3 part 2 Die Lehre von der Versöhnung

Den Gefangenen Befreiung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1962 Ein führung in die evange lische Theologie, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1965 Rufe Mich An!, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

1967 KD, IV/4 Die Lehre von der Versöhnung, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

Ad Limina Apostolorum, Zollikon-Zürich: EV A.G.

APPENDIX G

Basic Bibliography (Topical) of Translated Works by Barth

I. Dogmatic Works

A. Shorter

"The Christian Hope," Episcopal Church News (April 6, 1952).

Credo, A Presentation of the Chief Problems of Dogmatics with Reference to the Apostles' Creed, trans. by J. Strathearn McNab. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962.

Dogmatics in Outline, trans. by G. T. Thomson. New York: Philosophical Library, 1949; Harper Torchbooks, 1959.

Evangelical Theology: An Introduction, trans. by Grover Goley. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963. Garden City: Doubleday and Company (Anchor Books), 1964.

The Faith of the Church, trans. by Gabriel Vahanian. New York: Meridian Books, Inc., 1958.

God, Grace and Gospel, trans. by J. Strathearn McNab. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959.

God Here and Now, trans., with an Introduction, by Paul Paul M. Van Buren. New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1964.

God in Action, trans. by E. G. Homrighausen and K. J. Ernst. New York: Round Table Press, 1936 and 1963.

The Holy Ghost and the Christian Life, trans. by R. Birch Hogle. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1938.

The Humanity of God, trans. by J. N. Thomas and T. Wieser. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960.

The Knowledge of God and the Service of God, trans. by J. L. M. Haire and Ian Henderson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

Natural Theology (with E. Brunner), trans. by P. Fraenkel. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946.

"The New Humanism and the Humanism of God," trans. by Frederick L. Herzog, Theology Today, VII (July 1951), 157-166.

"Protestantism and Architecture," Theology Today, XIX (July 1962), 272.

"The Real Church," trans. by J. W. Edwards, Scottish Journal of Theology, III (December 1950), 337-351.

"Revelation," in John Baillie and Hugh Martin, eds., Revelation, trans. by F. O. Cobham and R. F. C. Gutteridge. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937.

The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism, trans. by Ernest A. Payne. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1948.

The Word of God and the Word of Man, trans. by Douglas Horton. Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1928. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957.

B. Church Dogmatics

Church Dogmatics, ed. by G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-1969.

I/1 The Doctrine of the Word of God, Prolegomena, Part 1, trans. by G. T. Thomson, 1936.

I/2 The Doctrine of the Word of God, Prolegomena, Part 2, trans. by G. T. Thomson and H. Knight, 1956.

II/1 The Doctrine of God, Part 1, trans. by T. H. L. Parker, W. B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J. L. M. Haire, 1957.

II/2 The Doctrine of God, Part 2, trans. by G. W. Bromiley, J. C. Campbell, Ian Wilson, J. Strathearn McNab, H. Knight, and R. A. Stewart, 1957.

III/1 The Doctrine of Creation, Part 1, trans. by J. W. Edwards, O. Bussey, and H. Knight, 1958.

III/2 The Doctrine of Creation, Part 2, trans. by H. Knight, G. W. Bromiley, J.K.S. Reid, and R. H. Fuller, 1960.

III/3 The Doctrine of Creation, Part 3, trans. by G. W. Bromiley and R. Ehrlich, 1960.

III/4 The Doctrine of Creation, Part 4, trans. by A. T. Mackay, T. H. L. Parker, H. Knight, H. A. Kennedy, and J. Marks, 1961.

IV/1 The Doctrine of Reconciliation, Part 1, trans. by G. W. Bromiley, 1956.

IV/2 The Doctrine of Reconciliation, Part 2, trans. by G. W. Bromiley, 1956.

IV/3 The Doctrine of Reconciliation, Part 3, Vols. i and ii, trans. by G. W. Bromiley, 1961 and 1962.

IV/4 The Doctrine of Reconciliation, Part 4, trans. by G. W. Bromiley, 1969.

Volumes I, II/1 and IV/1 have been published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

II. Exegetical Works

A. Commentaries

Christ and Adam: Man and Humanity in Romans 5, trans. by T. A. Smail. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957; Collier Books (paperback), 1962.

The Epistles to the Philippians, trans. by James W. Leitch. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962.

The Epistle to the Romans, trans. by Edwyn C. Hoskyns. London: Oxford University Press, 1933.

"An Exegetical Study of Matthew 28:16-20," in G. H. Anderson, ed., The Theology of the Christian Mission, trans. by Thomas Wieser. New York: McGraw Hill, 1961, pp. 55-71.

The Great Promise, trans. by Hans Freund. New York: Philosophical Library, 1963.

The Resurrection of the Dead, trans. by H. J. Stenning. New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1933.

A Shorter Commentary on Romans, trans. by D. H. van Daalen. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959).

B. Sermons

Call for God, trans. by A. T. Mackay. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1967.

Come, Holy Spirit (with E. Thurneysen), trans. by G. W. Richards, E. G. Homrighausen and K. J. Ernst. New York: Round Table Press, 1934.

Deliverance to the Captives, trans. by Marguerite Wieser. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961.

God's Search for Man (with E. Thurneysen), trans. by G. W. Richards, E. G. Homrighausen and K. J. Ernst. New York: Round Table Press, 1935.

III. Historical and Political Works.

A. Historical

Action in Waiting, trans. by

Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum, trans. by Ian W. Robertson. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1960.

"Feuerbach--An Introductory Essay," in Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity; trans. by J. L. Adams. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957, pp. x-xxxiii.

"Liberal Theology: Some Alternatives," trans. by L. A. Garrard, The Hibbert Journal, LIX (April 1961), 213-19.

Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl, trans. by B. Cozens and H. H. Hartwell. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959.

Revolutionary Theology in the Making: Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence, 1914-1925, trans. by James D. Smart, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1964.

"Rudolf Bultmann: An Attempt to Understand Him," in Hans Bartsch, ed., Kerygma and Myth, Vol. II; trans. by R. H. Fuller. London: S.P.C.K., 1962, pp. 83-132.

B. Political

Against the Stream (Shorter Post-War Writings), ed. by Ronald G. Smith; trans. by E. M. Delacour and Stanley Godman. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1954.

The Christian Churches and Living Reality, trans. by Elkan Allan. London: Hutchinson & Company, 1946.

The Church and the Political Problem of Our Day. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939.

Church and State, trans. by G. R. Howe. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1939.

The Church and the War, trans. by Antonia H. Froendt. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1944.

"The Church Between East and West," Cross Currents, II (Winter 1951), 64-77. Alsoin World Review (June and July, 1949).

Community, State and Church, trans. by A. M. Hall, G. R. Howe, and Stanley Godman. Garden City: Dougleday and Company (Anchor Books), 1960.

The German Church Conflict, trans. by P. T. A. Parker. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965.

The Germans and Ourselves, trans. by R. G. Smith. London: Nisbet & Company, 1945.

How to Serve God in a Marxist Land (with Johannes Hamel), trans. by Henry Clark and J. D. Smart. New York: Association Press, 1959.

"A Letter to American Christians," Christendom: An Ecumenical Review, VIII (Autumn 1943), 441-58.

Letter to Great Britain from Switzerland. London: The Sheldon Press, 1941.

The Only Way, trans. by Marta K. Neufeld and Ronald Gregor Smith. New York: Philosophical Library, 1947.

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This Christian Cause. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941.

Trouble and Promise in the Struggle of the Church in Germany, trans. by P. V. M. Benecke. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938.

IV. Miscellaneous

Ad Limina Apostolorum, trans. by Keith R. Crim. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1968.

The Christian Life, trans. by J. Strathearn McNab. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1930; Hodder and Stoughton, 1935.

Christmas, trans. by B. Citron. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959.

The Church and the Churches. Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1936.

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The Holy Ghost and the Christian Life, trans. by R. Birch Hoyle. London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1938.

How I Changed My Mind (intro and epilogue by John D. Godsey). Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966).

Karl Barth's Table Talk (recorded and edited by John D. Godsey). Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963.

"A Letter from Karl Barth," in H. E. Fey and M. Frakes, eds., The Christian Century Reader. New York: Association Press, 1962, pp. 102-105. (First printed in The Cnristian Century, December 31, 1958.

"On Systematic Theology," trans. by T. N. Tice. Scottish Journal of Theology, XIV (September 1961), 225-28.

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"Remembrances of America," The Christian Century (January 2, 1963), pp. 7-9.

Selected Prayers, trans. by Keith R. Crim. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965.

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"A Theological Dialogue," Theology Today, XIX (July 1962), 171-77.

APPENDIX H

Representative English Reviews On Barth's Works

Action in Waiting: On Christoph Blumhardt (1969):

n.a., n.t., Theology Digest, XVIII (Autumn 1920), 279.

Ad Limina Apostolurum: An Appraisal of Vatican II (1968):

Rudolph J. Ehrlich, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XXI (March 1968), 110-111.

n.a., "Three Views of Vatican II," Christianity Today, XII (7 June 1968), 891.

n.a., n.t., Theology Digest, XVIII (Autumn 1968), 261.

Against The Stream; Shorter Post-War Writings (1954):

Kenneth J. Foreman, "Multum in Parvo," Interpretation, IX (January 1955), 112-114.

Roger L. Shinn, n.t., Theology Today, XI (October 1954), 415-416.

Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum (1960):

Gordon H. Clark, "Karl Barth: Teacher and Preacher," Christianity Today, V (5 June 1961), 784.

James W. Leitch, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XIV (September 1961), 297-299.

Herndon Wagers, "Faith Seeking Understanding," Interpretation XVI (April 1962), 213-16.

Call For God (1965):

Andre Bustanoby, "Preaching to Prisoners," Christianity Today, XII (March 1968), 555-56.

n.a., n.t., Theology Digest, XV (Winter 1967), 296-97.

Christ and Adam (1956):

Cornelius Van Til, "Barth's View of Man," Christianity Today, II (3 February 1958), 34.

The Church and the War (1944):

John C. Bennett, n.t., Theology Today, I (January 1945), 552-553.

Church Dogmatics I/2 (1956)

Arthur C. Cochrane, "Ecumenical Theology," Interpretation, XI (January 1957), 98-100.

Church Dogmatics II/2 (1957):

George S. Hendrey, n.t., Theology Today, XV (October 1958), 396-404.

Church Dogmatics III/1 (1958):

J. I. Packer, "Barth's Dogmatics," Christianity Today, V (16 January 1961), 334.

Church Dogmatics III/2 (1959):

A. C. Cochrane, n.t., Theology Today, XVIII (July 1961), 221-223.

Church Dogmatics III/3 (1960):

Colin Brown, "Barth on Creation, Part 3," Christianity Today V (31 July 1961), 949.

Daniel L. Deegan, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XV (March 1962), 74-83.

B. A. Gerrish, Creation and Covenant," Interpretation, XVI (April 1962), 216-20.

Geraint Vaughn Jones,"God and Negation," Scottish Journal of Theology, VII (September 1954), 233-244.

Church Dogmatics III/4 (1961):

Colin Brown, "Barth's Free Man In Christ," Christianity Today, VI (16 March 1962), 598.

Daniel L. Deegan, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XV (December 1962), 400-412.

Charles West, n.t., Theology Today, XX (July 1963), 288-292.

J. Rodman Williams, "The Ethics of Karl Barth," Interpretation, XVII (January 1963), 84-89.

Church Dogmatics IV/2 (1958):

G. W. Bromiley, "The Doctrine of Reconciliation: A Survey of Barth's Kirchliche Dogmatik IV/2," Scottish Journal of Theology, X (March 1957), 76-85.

Arthur C. Cochrane, n.t., Theology Today, XIII (October 1956), 378-388.

Church Dogmatics IV/3 (1961):

G. W. Bromiley, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XV (June 1962), 193-203.

Colin Brown, "Christ's Prophetic Office," Christianity Today, VI (22 January 1962), 949.

John B. Cobb, Jr., "The Strange New World--Real or Not?" Interpretation, XVI (October 1962) 472-275.

Church Dogmatics IV/4 (1969):

Herbert H. Hartwell, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XXIII (February 1970), 96-99.

Deliverance to the Captives (1961):

Gordon H. Clark, "Karl Barth: Teacher and Preacher," Christianity Today, V (5 June 1961), 784.

McMurray S. Richey, "Preaching For All Prisoners," Interpretation XVI (July 1962), 319-321.

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D. M. Baillie, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, I (September 1948), 221-224.

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George S. Hendry, n.t., Theology Today, VII (April 1950), 114-116.

The Epistle to the Romans (1933):

n. a., n.t., Theology Digest, XVI (Winter 1968), 336.

The Epistle to the Phillipians (1962):

E. F. Harrison, "Worth Waiting For," Christianity Today, VI (11 May 1962), 806.

E. Kenneth Lee, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XVII (June 1964), 239.

Evangelical Theology: An Introduction (1963):

G. W. Bromiley, "A Theology That Walks the Earth," Christianity Today, VII (4 January 1963), 344-345.

Daniel L. Deegan, n.t., Theology Today, XX (January 1964), 568-570.

James D. Leitch, n.t., Scottish Journal of Theology, XVI (September 1963), 304.

German Church Conflict (1965):

n.a., n.t., Theology Digest, XIV (Summer 1966), 161.

God Here and Now (1964):

James Daane, "A Clear Overview," Christianity Today, VIII (5 June 1964), 847-848.

n.a., n.t., Theology Digest, XII (Winter 1964), 242.

God In Action (1936):

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The Heidelberg Cathecism for Today (1964):

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APPENDIX I

Gallup, George, "Gallup Poll: 50 Million Say They Are 'Born Again' Christians," The Oregonian (26 September 1976), A19.

The dramatic rise to political prominence of Jimmy Carter, a "born again" Christian, has focused attention on the evangelical movement in America.

The latest nationwide Gallup Poll survey shows one person in three (34 per cent) saying he or she has been "born again"--that is, has had a turning point in his or her life when they committed themselves to Jesus Christ. This figure projects to nearly 50 million Americans, 18 and over.

Among Protestants alone, nearly half (48 per cent) say they are "born again" Christians, which projects to 43 million adults. "Born again" Christians, accounting for one-third of the electorate, represent the core of Carter's support. Although this group tends to be more conservative in political ideology than the electorate as a whole, they currently support Carter over President Ford by a wide 58-33 per cent margin.

Although numerous churches define themselves as "evangelical," a "born again" fundamentalist has an outlook or state of mind which pervades the membership of many churches, including the Roman Catholic church. About one in five (18 per cent) Catholics says he or she has had a "born again" experience.

A high proportion of "born again" Christians also have a literal interpretation of the Bible and a belief that one has an urgent duty to spread the faith--to witness. An evangelical or "born again" Christian also places great emphasis on the personal relationship between the individual and God. In addition, they believe in a strict moral code.

The survey shows four in 10 persons nationwide (38 per cent), nearly one-half of Protestants (46 per cent), and about one-third of Catholics (31 per cent) believing the Bible to be the actual word of God and to be taken literally. These results indicate that fundamentalism is still a very powerful force in religion in America.

To measure conversion efforts, or witnessing, the Gallup Poll asked a sample of the nation's adults if they have ever tried to encourage someone to believe in Jesus Christ or to accept him as their savior.

A remarkably high proportion answered in the affirmative--47 per cent. The figure is even higher among Protestants alone--58 per cent.

A far higher proportion of persons of the evangelical group of churches than among the nonevangelical or mainline denominations have had a "born again" experience, hold a literal interpretation of the Bible, and

witness to their faith.

The greater missionary zeal of the evangelical group of churches may be an important reason why these churches are experiencing a spectacular growth in membership while certain mainline churches are experiencing serious membership losses.

This question was asked first:

"Would you say that you have been 'born again' or have had a 'born again' experience--that is, a turning point in your life when you committed yourself to Christ?"

Here are the results nationwide and by key groups:

Have Had "Born Again" Experience

Nationwide	34%
Protestants	48
Catholics	18
Men	28
Women	39
College	27
High School	36
Grade School	42
18-29 years	29
30-49 years	33
50 and over	39
East	23
Midwest	34
South	55
West	20

The following question then was asked to determine the respondent's interpretation of the Bible:

"Which one of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible?" (Respondents were handed a card with the following statements: A. The Bilbe is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word; B. The Bible is the inspired word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word; C. The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history and moral precepts recorded by men.)

Here are the results:

Interpretation of Bible

	Actual word of God	Inspired word of God	Men wrote it	None of these	Can't say
Nationwide.....	38%	45%	13%	1%	3%
Catholic.....	31	55	10	1	3
Protestants....	46	42	8	x	4
Men.....	33	45	16	2	4
High School....	42	45	9	1	3
Grade School...	60	23	7	3	7
18-29 Years....	32	45	17	2	4
20-49 Years....	34	50	13	x	3
50 and over....	45	41	9	1	4
East.....	27	52	15	1	5
Midwest.....	42	43	9	1	5
South.....	49	39	9	x	3
West.....	30	48	20	1	1

X--Less than one per cent.

APPENDIX J

Special Note

Busch, Eberhard. Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts, trans. John Bowden. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976. 569 pages. $19.95.

Busch's book was not received until after the completion of this study. However, the article by Herbert Hartwell, "Last Thoughts of Karl Barth," Scottish Journal of Theology, XXVI (May, 1973), was available and utilized. This article is a review of the German original, Letzte Zeugnisse. The appearance of this work can only mean that no future study of Barth will be sufficient apart from the material collected and organized by Busch.

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INDEXES

PERSON INDEX

SUBJECT INDEX