

# An Overview of Karl Barth's Theology: Focused on the Doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit

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## Abstract

Karl Barth, the founder of neo-orthodoxy, is one of the most influential theologians in the modern Christian world. He has turned the direction of the stream of Protestant theology in the twentieth century. The purpose of this study was to give an overview of the theology of Karl Barth. This is useful in order to gain an accurate grasp of the trends in modern Christian theology. After a brief survey of his life and works, this study provides an overview of Barth's theology, focusing on three major areas of his theology: the doctrines of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. In order to give a better understanding of trends in modern Christian theology, Barth's emphasis upon the transcendence of God, the centrality of Jesus Christ in Christian theology, and the importance of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity cannot be ignored. In a word, Barth's theology has both a continuity with and a discontinuity from liberal theology at the same time.

**Keywords:** *Karl Barth, neo-orthodoxy, transcendence, Christology, Holy Spirit*

## Introduction

Karl Barth (1886–1968) has generally been considered as one of the most outstanding Protestant theological thinkers of the twentieth century (Peerman & Marty, 1965, p. 396), and he could be called a modern “church father.” Torrance (1962, p. 15), in his elaborate study of the theology of Karl Barth, says “it is acknowledged by many in all quarters that Barth must be accorded an honored position among the greatest theologians of the Church [such as] Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin.” In this sense, Mueller (1972, p. 13) says, “Barth dominated much of the theology of the twentieth century and is the father of neoreformation [neo-orthodox] theology.” Thus, it can be said that Barth, the founder of neo-orthodox theology, was one of the most influential theologians in modern Christian theology. Neo-orthodox, also known as dialectical theology, is an approach to theology in Protestantism that was developed in the aftermath of the First World War (1914–1918). It is characterized as a reaction against doctrines of liberal theology in the nineteenth century. It is primarily associated with two Swiss theologians and pastors, Karl Barth (1886–1968) and Emil Brunner (1899–1966). Neo-orthodoxy was characterized by a return to modified forms of orthodox doctrines in contrast with the liberal desecration of such doctrines.

Neo-orthodoxy came to prominence in the wake of World War II. During the 1940s and 1950s, neo-orthodoxy realism was welcome by many in mainline Protestant denominations. As alternative to liberalism and fundamentalism, it offered a fresh means of hearing the Gospel (Reid et al., 1990).

Neo-orthodoxy theology emphasizes the transcendence of God, man's responsibility as a creature, sin and guilt, the uniqueness of Christ as mediator of revelation and grace, and speaks of a personal encounter with God in revelation (Brown, 1978). Barth has turned the direction of the stream of Protestant theology in the twentieth century.

Therefore, it is necessary to have an overview of Barth's theology in order to have an accurate grasp of the trend of modern Christian theology. In other words, having an overview of Barth's theology, though not necessarily exhaustive, will help many students of theology not to have a poor grip of the development of contemporary Christian theology.

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This study deals with three major areas of his theology: the doctrine of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

### **Barth's Life and Works**

In order to have an accurate overview of Barth's theology, it is necessary, as a background, to search and understand his personal life as well as his major theological works.

#### **Barth's Life**

Karl Barth was born in Basel, Switzerland, on May 1886. He was the eldest son of Johann Friedrich (Fritz) and Anna Katharina Barth. Both of Barth's grandfathers were ministers within the Swiss Reformed church. His father was an ordained minister and a professor of theology at a Reformed seminary, and moved to the University of Berne in 1889 as professor of Church History and New Testament Exegesis (Barth, 1966; Busch, 1976). This shows that Barth had grown up under the influence of the Reformed Church and its theological environment.

At the age of sixteen, Barth decided to become a theologian, and at the age of eighteen (in 1904), he began his study at the University of Berne, initially taking instruction from his father. In 1906, Barth came into contact with Adolf von Harnack, whose advocacy of "Liberal Theology" had a huge impact on Barth's thinking. In addition, he was much influenced by Wilhelm Herrmann.

After completing his studies in 1909, Barth was called to be a minister of the Reformed Church and accepted a posting first in Geneva in 1909, and then in Safenwil, located on the border that divided Switzerland and Germany in 1911 (Barth, 1966). Subsequently, he spent about ten years of his ministering and preaching life as a liberal Protestant, especially in harmony with von Harnack's teachings, rather than his father's.

According to his later memories, however, Barth came to reject liberal Protestantism, finding that it was not suitable to address the problems of his parish and useful for his personal journey. These thoughts came especially when he saw his theological teachers, such as von Harnack and other German theologians, reinforce the Kaiser's war policy in 1914. Hence, he became disillusioned with the theology of liberal Protestantism. Godsey (1928, pp. 21–22) said:

On what he [Barth] has called a 'black day' in August 1914, ninety-three German intellectuals impressed public opinion by their proclamation in support of the war policy of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and to his horror he [Barth] discovered that many of his former professors were among them. This convinced him that he could no longer follow them in their ethics, and therefore not in their theology.

Barth's treatments of his shifting views are shown in his maiden work, *Der Römerbrief* (Epistle to the Romans) which was published in 1919. In this theological commentary, he set forth the basic precepts for the theology of 'the Word of God' and 'the otherness of God.' In contrast to the liberal theology he was taught by Harnack and Hermann, Barth saw that, "the Gospel proclaims a God utterly distinct from men. Salvation comes to them from him [God], and because they are, as men, incapable of knowing him, they have no right to claim anything from him" (Barth, 1968, p. 28).

In 1913, while he was ministering in the village of Safenwil, Barth married Nelly Hoffmann, a talented violinist. Together, they had four sons and a daughter. Barth served as a church pastor until 1921, when he started his career as a professor.

In 1921, Barth became a professor of Reformed theology at the University of Göttingen (1921–1925). Afterward, he taught at the Universities of Münster (1925–1930) and Bonn (1930–1935) in Germany. While teaching at Bonn, he commenced to write a complete work of systematic theology based on God's Word with the title *Kirchliche Dogmatik* ("Church Dogmatics"). This was a thirteen-part work, which he continued to develop throughout his later life, but remained incomplete at his death on December 10, 1968.

In 1934, Barth was forced to leave Germany because of his outspokenness against the Nazi party. He returned to Basel (in 1935), where he taught theology until his retirement in 1962. After his retirement, Barth visited the U.S. and lectured at various places such as Princeton Theological

Seminary, University of Chicago, Union Theological Seminary, and San Francisco Theological Seminary. Furthermore, he was invited as a guest at the Second Vatican Council. By 1962, Barth's influence was widespread. It reached out of academic and ecclesiastical circles and into mainstream American religious culture, as was demonstrated through him being featured on the cover of the April 20 issue of *Time*.

One matter that should be noted in an overview of Karl Barth's life is that his relationship to liberal theology was both crucial as well as ironic. Though influenced and trained by liberal theologians, Barth departed from his former training and eventually criticized liberal theology. He concluded that he could not accept an understanding of the Bible as characterized by liberal theologians due to their attempts to understand it through modern biblical criticism and historical criticism. He also opposed new doctrinal views that were taught regarding the Trinity and the Godhead. He accused these liberals of bringing God down from heaven and imprisoning Him in a naturalistic view of reality. This conflicted with Barth's view that God is the object of His own self-knowledge, and revelation in the Bible means the self-unveiling of God, who cannot be discovered by human beings. As a result, Barth evaluated liberalism as hopelessly compromised by worldly agendas and pastorally useless to the church. For Barth, liberalism rejected the supernatural essence of the Christian faith in order to accommodate erroneous anthropocentric explanations of divine realities.

### **Barth's Works**

Barth's theology is central to the history of modern western Christian thought and remains as a major voice in contemporary Christian theology. His writings often have been the subject of intensive scrutiny and re-evaluation. The study of Barth's thought and theology is a significant enterprise. Literature on him and conferences devoted to his works abound. It would therefore be appropriate to say that Barth's works are significant resources for the understanding of modern contemporary Christian theology.

Barth's works, which are of significance in modern contemporary Christian theology, include as follows:

1. *Epistle to the Romans* (1919);
2. *Die Christliche Dogmatik in Entwurf [Church Dogmatics in Draft]* (1927);
3. *The Word of God and the Word of Man* (1928);
4. *Church Dogmatics* (1932);
5. *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Reformation* (1938);
6. 'No!' in *Natural Theology* (1946);
7. *Dogmatics in Outline* (1949);
8. *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum [Anselm's Proof of the Existence of God in the Context of His Theological Scheme]* (1960);
9. *The Humanity of God* (1961); and
10. *Evangelical Theology* (1963).

Among these works and other books, papers, and articles, two notable and influential ones should be mentioned in detail.

The first one is *Der Römerbrief* ("The Epistle to the Romans"), first written in 1919, and later thoroughly modified in 1922. This work is significant as it was Barth's first major work defined by his reaction against German Protestant Liberalism. Many theologians and historians consider the work to be the most important theological treatise of the twentieth century. In this theological commentary, Barth argued that God, who was revealed on the cross of Jesus, challenges and overthrows all attempts to ally God with human cultures, achievements, or possessions. God's saving grace and the insufficiency of the human understanding of God is emphasized in this work, along with many of his other works.

The second one of his most famous works is *Kirchliche Dogmatik* ("Church Dogmatics"). This

thirteen-part work has been widely regarded as one of the most important theological works of the twentieth century. Barth published the first volume of *Church Dogmatics* in 1932 and continued working on it until his death in 1968. The pinnacle of Barth's achievement as a theologian is clearly represented through this work. Barth's theology finds its most sustained and compelling expression through this thirteen-part *magnum opus*.

The *Kirchliche Dogmatik* is divided into four main volumes: (1) the Doctrine of the Word of God; (2) the Doctrine of God; (3) the Doctrine of Creation; (4) and the Doctrine of Reconciliation. Barth initially also had intended to complete his *Church Dogmatics* addressing the Doctrine of Redemption, but has not completed the project until his death (Brown, 1978).<sup>a</sup>

### **An Overview of Karl Barth's Theology**

The purpose of this study is to give an overview of Barth's theology.<sup>b</sup> However, it is impossible to deal with all areas of his theology. Thus, this study tries to cover, though not exhaustively, only three major areas of his theology: the doctrines of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

#### ***Doctrine of God***

This section deals with Barth's doctrine of God into three divisions: (1) the transcendent God; (2) the unknown God; and (3) the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

##### **1) The Transcendent God**

One of the essential ideas of Barth's doctrine of God is that he understood and emphasized the transcendence of God. According to Barth, God is "above us, above space and time, and above concepts and opinions and all potentialities" (Barth, 1960). In his first work, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Barth describes his understanding of the transcendence of God as follows:

God, the pure limit and pure beginning of all that we are, have, and do, standing over in infinite qualitative difference to man and all that is human, nowhere and never identical with that which we call God, experience, surmise, and pray to as God, the unconditioned Halt as opposed to all human rest, the yes in our no and the no in our yes, the first and last and as such unknown, but nowhere and never a magnitude amongst others in the medium know to us, God the Lord, the Creator and Redeemer . . . that is the living God (Barth, 1968, p. 315).

According to Barth, therefore, God can be perceived neither in the world of nature nor in the souls of human beings. There is no such point of context in human beings that they can reach to God. The distinction between God and human beings is too deep and wide for man to approach God. God is in the most noteworthy where human beings cannot reach Him unless He reveals Himself to human beings. In other words, there is an utter separation between the high God and the low world. In a word, God is the "wholly other" and human beings have no capacity for reaching God.

This concept of the transcendence of God is a natural result of Barth's epistemology. For him, it is obvious that if God is "wholly other," then there is no ontological nor epistemological basis for natural theology. The transcendence of God in his philosophical presupposition is the rejecting of the acknowledgement of natural theology, and opposition to the teaching of liberalism (or liberal theology). All modern ideas of the immanence of God are explicitly rejected by Barth's epistemology on the transcendence of God.

##### **2) The Unknown God**

Barth makes it explicit from the beginning of his famous work, *Church Dogmatics*, that God is the unknowable and indescribable God (Barth, 1936). Simply, for Barth, God is the incomprehensible Reality. As he refers to the personality of God, Barth says, "God is personal, but personal in an incomprehensive way, in so far as the conception of his personality surpassed all our views of personality" (Barth, 1955, p. 31). In his comment on Romans 1:19–20, Barth once

again emphasizes the incomprehensiveness of God as follows:

We know that God is He whom we do not know, and that our ignorance is precisely the problem and the source of our knowledge. The Epistle to the Romans is a revelation of the unknown God; God chooses to come to man, not man to God, for he [God] is ever the unknown God. In manifesting himself [God, Himself] to man he [God] is farther away than before (Barth, 1968, p. 48).

Therefore, Barth's assertion that God is unknowable is clear. He rejects natural theology, generally understood as knowledge of God, deduced from general revelation. He states, "We must be clear that whatever we say of God in such human concepts can never be more than an indication of Him; no such concept can really conceive the nature of God. God is inconceivable" (Barth, 1949, p. 46).

The mentioning of his philosophical presupposition seems adequate and necessary in order for one to understand the concept of the unknown God in Barth's theology. His basic presupposition is the limitations of fallen nature to come to a knowledge of God without God's self-revelation. For him, there is no such thing as a propositional truth given by prophetic revelation. It is implied in his theological framework that fallen human beings are incapable of knowing a transcendent, holy God. He uses the phrases "*finitum non capax infiniti*" (the finite has no capacity for the infinite) and "*peccator non capax Verbi divini*" (the sinner has not capacity for the divine word) (Barth, 1956).

### *3) The Revelation of God in Jesus Christ*

As noticed in his two previous presuppositions of God, Barth must have believed that there is no way from man to God to find the transcendent and unknown God. However, according to Barth, there is a way from God to man through Jesus Christ that man could find and know God, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (John 14:9, NASB). Barth claims that Jesus Christ is the sole Word of God to human beings.

According to Barth, Jesus Christ is the Revelation of God, thus identifying revelation with Jesus Christ. He asserts that Jesus Christ is "the authentic Revealer of God as God Himself. Again, He is the effective proof of the power of God as God Himself. Yet again, He is the fulfiller of the covenant as Himself God. He is nothing less or other than God Himself, but God as man" (Barth, 1956). Thus, for Barth, human beings do not have the ability to know God apart from the revelation given through Jesus Christ. Barth asserts that Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, but he considers the Bible as a mere record of revelation, functioning as an authoritative pointer to revelation. According to Barth, the Bible is not the Word of God in the same sense that Jesus Christ is, but only contains the Word of God. He says, "The Bible is God's Word to the extent that God causes it to be His Word, to the extent that He speaks through it" (Barth, 1936, p. 241). For Barth, the Bible is one form of God's Word, not the primary, but a secondary source. He believed that the Bible becomes God's Word whenever God decides to use it to encounter and confront people with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Barth's rejection of the inerrancy of the Bible comes from such views on the Bible. According to him, the Bible is a book of human testimony to Jesus, thus referring to the Bible as a human product. Hence, the statements of the Bible could be wrong at some point, but in spite of its humanness, the Bible is unique because God uses it. In his hermeneutical presupposition, the Bible itself is only a witness to revelation, not revelation itself.

Therefore, according to Barth, the satisfactory solution to the problems raised by the transcendence of God and the incomprehensiveness of God can be found in Jesus Christ. In other words, it is only through Jesus Christ that the impossibilities are combined and the irreconcilables are reconciled (Barth, 1928; Barth, 1968). According to Barth, God has primarily revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, so that revelation does not take place through the form of general revelation in nature, history, and human conscience, or through special revelation in the Bible. Thus, Barth fails to do justice to the fact that God can influence humans through general revelation. In an extreme

sense, to Barth, any revelation which is not “in Christ” becomes an idol by making competitive claims about the knowledge of God.

### ***Doctrine of Christ***

The theology of Barth is “Christo-centric” (Kantzer, 1958). It means, for Barth, that all Christian theology should find its central focus in Jesus Christ, and that all fullness of knowledge of God is obtainable only through Jesus Christ (Barth, 1958b). Barth holds that Jesus Christ, who is the Revelation of God, is the foundation of Christian theology and knowledge of God.

Regarding the relationship between the person and the work of Jesus Christ, Barth insists that the person of Jesus Christ cannot be considered separately from the work of Jesus Christ. In this sense, Barth follows the early church tradition.

In the early history of the church, the two [the person and the work of Jesus Christ] were held together in rather close connection. This approach changed during the medieval period, however. Scholastic theology separated the doctrine of the person of Christ (his divinity, humanity, and the union of the two) from the offices and work of Christ (Erickson, 1998, p. 692).

This means that the study of the person of Jesus Christ must be done in the context of the study of the work of Jesus Christ (Erickson, 1998). In the same way, he insists that the redemptive work of Jesus Christ was and is possible only because of who Jesus Christ is.

It is clear, in Barth’s Christology, that the true divinity of Jesus Christ is affirmed explicitly. Barth strongly believed that Jesus Christ is “very God of very God,” and possessed all the divine attributes during His earthly life, even as a baby born in Bethlehem, and even in His death on the cross of Calvary (Barth, 1936). At the same time, he also firmly believed the reality of the human nature of Jesus Christ. For him, the clear gospel record of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ is enough to believe in the reality of the human nature of Jesus Christ. Essentially, Barth fully accepted the Nicene Creed and the later Chalcedonian formula, presenting two natures united in the one person of Jesus Christ.

However, Barth’s understanding of the sinlessness of Jesus Christ is somewhat ambiguous. In his first work, he says that Jesus Christ is a “sinner among sinners” (Barth, 1968). His assertion that Jesus Christ took a sinful human nature is sharpened, but more ambiguous, in his *Church Dogmatics*. He asserts, “He [Jesus Christ] was not a sinful man. But inwardly and outwardly His situation was that of a sinful man.... He lived life in the form it must take on the basis and assumption of Adam’s act. He bore innocently what Adam and all of us in Adam have been guilty of” (Barth, 1956, pp. 151–152) Once again, Barth insists as follows:

The nature God assumed in Christ is identical with our nature as we see it in the light of the Fall. If it were otherwise, how could Christ be really like us? ... God’s son not only assumed our nature but He entered the concrete form of our nature, under which we stand before God as damned and lost. He did not produce and establish this form differently from all of us; though innocent, He became guilty; though without sin, He was made to be sin. But these things must not cause us to detract from His complete solidarity with us and in that way to remove Him to a distance from us (Barth, 1956, p. 158).

At this juncture, it seems necessary to mention Barth’s view on the relationship of Jesus Christ, the living Word, to the Bible, the written word, and to the church, the proclaimed word. For Barth, God’s revelation to man through His word is communicated through three major mediums: Jesus Christ, the Bible, and the proclamations of the Church (Hart, 1999). On this relationship among the three, Barth is clear that Jesus Christ is the Lord of the Bible and the church. Jesus Christ is the only Lord; the Bible is not, neither is the church. The Bible could be said as having the authority in the church only in the sense that it is the primary witness to Jesus Christ. The church is the context in which the Bible is explained and Jesus Christ is proclaimed. For Barth, all of these three are divine revelations, but each of them centers upon Jesus Christ.

### ***Doctrine of the Holy Spirit***

Barth demonstrates a strong belief in the deity of the Holy Spirit (Barth, 1958a). He fully accepts the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, which, in the relation to the Holy Spirit, says, “1. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord; 2. We believe in the Holy Ghost, the giver of life; 3. We believe in the Holy Ghost, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; [and] 4. We believe in the Holy Ghost ‘who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified’” (Barth, 1936).

Barth also exhibits his belief in the Holy Spirit as the (1) Creator, (2) Reconciler, and (3) Redeemer (Barth, 1993). According to his *Church Dogmatics*, Barth sees that the Holy Spirit was and is with God the Father and the Son. He states, “The Holy Spirit is with the Father and the Son the true, eternal God in so far as, like begetting Father and the begotten Son” (Barth, 1958, p. 56a). In fact, Barth equalizes the Holy Spirit with God Himself:

In both the Old Testament and the New Testament the spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is very generally God Himself to the degree that in an incomprehensibly real way, without on this account being and the less God, He can be present to the creature, and in virtue of this presence of His effect the relation of the creature to Himself, and in virtue of this relation to Himself grant the creature life. The creature needs the Creator to be able to live. It thus needs the relation to Him. But it cannot create this relation. God creates it by His own presence in the creature and therefore as a relation of Himself to Himself. The Spirit of God is God in His freedom to be present to the creature, and therefore to create this relation, and therefore to be the life of the creature (Barth, 1936, p. 450).

Regarding the role of the Holy Spirit, Barth not only views the Holy Spirit as the One who makes the union between God and humanity possible in Christ, but also as the gatherer of the believers as a community (Barth, 1958b), as well as the binder of the believers in Christ (Barth, 1958c). In relation to the event which is called revelation, Barth adds three dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit. First, “the Spirit guarantees man what he cannot guarantee himself, his personal participation in revelation” (Barth, 1936, p. 453) Second, “the Spirit gives man instruction and guidance he cannot give himself” (p. 454) Third, “the Spirit is the great and only possibility in virtue of which men can speak of Christ in such a way that what they say is witness and that God's revelation in Christ thus achieves new actuality through it” (Barth, 1936).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

As mentioned in the introduction, Karl Barth is generally considered as one of the most outstanding Protestant theological thinkers of the twentieth century. As the founder of neo-orthodoxy, he is one of the most influential theologians in contemporary Christian theology. Thus, it is essential to have an overview of Barth's theology in order to have an accurate grasp of the trend of modern Christian theology.

In the first section, as a background necessary for an understanding his theology, the study surveyed the life and the major works of Karl Barth. He was born under the context of the conservative Reformed Church tradition, but was educated under the influence of liberal theologians, such as Adolf von Harnack and Wilhelm Herrmann. However, through experiences of ministering for the local church, Barth found out the importance and the priority of the Bible in the theology and in the practice of Christianity. His two prominent works include (1) *The Epistle to the Romans*, his first publication, and (2) *Church Dogmatics*, his most famous work.

In the second section, this study discussed Barth's theology by trying to cover, not necessarily exhaustively, three major areas of his theology: The doctrine of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

First, Barth understood God as the transcendent God and the unknown God. He also emphasized the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. For Barth, God is not the same God as understood by liberal theologians and the proponents of natural theology. Rather, God is the incomprehensible and unapproachable God by man himself. In this sense, there is a sharp contrast between Barth's theology and liberal theology.

Second, Barth's theology is Christ-centered. For Barth, all theology should find its focal center

in Jesus Christ, as well as all knowledge of God is obtainable only through Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ, who is the Revelation of God, is the foundation of theology and the knowledge of God. Essentially, Barth's Christology is built upon the tradition of the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, and following in the Chalcedonian formula setting forth two natures united in the one person of Jesus Christ. However, Barth's understanding of the sinlessness of Jesus Christ seems somewhat ambiguous. Regarding the relationship of Jesus Christ (the living Word) and to the Bible (the written word), and to the church (the proclaimed word), Barth is clear that Jesus Christ is the Lord of both the Bible and the church. All other elements of the divine revelation and even of theology should be centered upon Jesus Christ.

Third, Barth not only believes in the deity of the Holy Spirit, according to the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, but also places emphasis upon the Holy Spirit as the (1) Creator, (2) Reconciler, and (3) Redeemer. Barth's understanding of the importance of the Holy Spirit in the Trinity as well as his explanation of the work of the Holy Spirit is of significance for believers. He sees the Holy Spirit as gatherer of the believers as a community as well as the binder of the believers in Christ. In relation to the event which is called revelation, Barth adds three dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit (1) ensures man what he can't ensure himself, his personal participation in revelation; (2) gives man instruction and guidance he can't give himself; and (3) helps man to experience God's revelation in Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, Barth's theology has made a turning point in modern Christian theology. His theology was a kind of reaction against liberal theology, but, at the same time, his theology was not able to completely break free from the influence of liberal theology. In other words, Barth's theology has both a continuity with and a discontinuity from liberal theology at the same time. The emphasis on the transcendence of God and the centrality of Jesus Christ in Christian theology made by Karl Barth should not be ignored for a better understanding of modern Christian theology.

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#### Endnotes

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<sup>a</sup> The content of the *Church Dogmatics* is as follows: volume I/1 - the Word of God as the Criterion of Dogmatics; the Revelation of God; volume I/2 - the Revelation of God; Holy Scripture: the Proclamation of the Church; volume II/1 - the Knowledge of God; the Reality of God; volume II/2 - the Election of God; the Command of God; volume III/1 - the Work of Creation; volume III/2 - the Creature: volume III/3 - the Creator and His Creature; volume III/4 - the Command of God the Creator; volume IV/1 - the Subject-Matter and Problems of the Doctrine of Reconciliation; volume IV/2 - Jesus Christ, the Servant as Lord; volume IV/3/1 - Jesus Christ, the True Witness; volume IV/3/2 - Jesus Christ, the True Witness; volume IV/4 - the Foundation of Christian Life; and volume V - Index, With Aids for the Preacher (Brown, C. (1978). Barth, Karl. In J. D. Douglas (Ed.), *The new international dictionary of the Christian church*. Zondervan (pp. 107–108).

<sup>b</sup> For more understanding on Barth's theology, see the following references (Bromiley, G. W. (1979). *An Introduction to the theology of Karl Barth*. Eerdmans; Busch, E. (2004). *The great passion: An introduction to Karl Barth's theology*. Eerdmans; Hartwell, H. (1964). *The theology of Karl Barth*. Westminster Press).