

Questions posed during the *Reading Barth Together* webinar  
*Note: These have been neither edited nor organized but have been anonymized.*

**Session 4: Holy Spirit *et al.***

- hello! Will you dabble in talking about the potential that Barth could have leaned towards Christian Universalism (in the best sense of the phrase)
- How do we understand Barth's claim that God never rests in light of Genesis 1's sabbath.
- I appreciated the email that noted that Barth's brevity on the third article follows the balance of the Apostles Creed. But... Barth spends 72 pages on Jesus Christ and 4 pages on the Holy Spirit. This can't be right. Can you discuss further Barth on the Holy Spirit? Is this an example of his fear of promoting pietism and Schleiermacher?
  - Surely this is inevitable, given that the series is structured on the Apostles Creed.
  - This seems to be a broader trend in his theology, correct?
- Can you guys further differentiate Barth's "difference" between the Church and the Kingdom/Reign of God?
- How might Barth respond in this moment for Churches to reopen in the name of their "essential" character? Thinking especially in light of the conversation about politics and ecclesiology and visibility and Barth's statement about too much being said of the church? Or maybe better, what would a conversation about this question of church closure and opening in the time of Covid between Hauerwas and Barth sound like?
- Bonhoeffer felt that Barth did not emphasize enough the role of the church -ethics really, and accused Barth of revelational positivism, a kind of Gnosticism where we are only have to know certain things about the work of the God-head. Yet, later, Barth wrote in CD IV.4, "God doesn't do everything." What role does the teachings and earthly life of Jesus offer us? This is not about having Christian homework, but about Paul's admonishment, to "work out your salvation" as the response to God's work in Christ, through the Spirit.
- Barth is somewhat notorious for de-elevating the role and significance of the sacraments. Do the two of you see a role for the sacraments in Barth's event language that perhaps he didn't connect together himself? Would that not thread together with Stanley's assertion about say-ability and visibility?

- This sort of shared reading, this 'reading together,' seems generous in bringing forward the richness of an extraordinary theologian, Karl Barth, as well as the thoughtfulness, critical patient-kindness, of Will and Stanley. Reading Barth with Wittgenstein at hand goes toward language realism, and with the gospels, or New Testament, theological realism. Is there a distinction worthwhile in the making between this sort of reading moving toward preaching vis a vis reflection philosophically/ theologically?
- Can you expand a little on Barth's understanding of the Church's "Apostolicity"? cf. pp.145-8
- Would you speak some more about the Church/world distinction? I understand that the Church is a people set apart for a particular purpose by a particular God, but isn't this particular God the creator of the world? When Dr. Hauerwas says that the Church's job is to make the world the world, what does that mean exactly? To show the world that it does in fact belong to God? Or to let the world be what it is without transforming the world?
- I was told at General Seminary in the mid 1960s that ecclesiology is the study of church buildings. I didn't believe that then now.
- thanks for discussing trump
- Fascinated by Barth's claim here: "Credo Ecclesiam means that I believe that the congregation to which I belong, in which I belong, in which I have been called to faith and am responsible for my faith, in which I have my service, is the one, holy, universal Church."
- Does Barth's alleged marital infidelity raise a question about his comments on King David's sin and on sin in general?
  - I'm uncertain how and what this infidelity is actually what we would judge as infidelity but it might be from the outside, confusion
- In a very embodied way does not Barth's view of resurrection for Christians as being a guest at the Lord's Table constitute a Barthian realized eschatology?
- What does Barth's ecclesiology have to teach United Methodists at this time?
- What are some specific works by theologians that Barth is responding to that you would recommend we read next? (other than Schleiermacher, since that seems obvious)
- That you choose to go through "Dogmatics in Outline" during the time of corona-crisis; is that in reality a way of carrying out Barth's advice how theologians are to react to

political events: "do theology as if nothing as happened (though maybe in a slightly louder voice"?)

- The theme of witness plays an underlying role throughout Dogmatics in Outline, and starts - albeit briefly - to come to the fore in the final chapters. Given that Stanley gave his Gifford Lectures on the topic of Barth and witness, I was wondering if the two of you could spend some time talking about witness, particularly as it pertains to Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, the Christian life/discipleship, etc. Possible lines of conversation could be "who are witnesses?" "what does it mean to witness?" "what about 'fallen' witnesses? (i.e. Vanier, Yoder, etc.)"
- I would love to hear their thoughts regarding Pentecost and how Barth might try to preach the Acts 2 story today.
- Would you explain further Barth's teaching on God's judgment? How does that relate to his saying that omnipotence and grace are identical? What are the strengths and weakness of his teaching on judgment for the needs of our day?
- Echoing the question about the Church/world distinction: what does Barth's claim that the worldliness of the world exists as "the world in the midst of which Jesus Christ was crucified and rose again" (132). How does that transform the way view the world?
- I read Wesley and I know Wesley was a believer of apokatastasis. Why did Barth not consider apokatastasis viable?
- Didn't Barth say that in Acts, the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Risen Christ were virtually indistinguishable? This is part of why he says little about the HS, because he sees the presence of the risen Christ and the HS as connected in scripture.

### **Session 3: Christ**

- Some of us will be celebrating ascension Sunday this week. Do you have any comments as to its importance in Barth's theology and perhaps its importance given the current situation many of us worship?
- I would to know more about Barth's hermeneutic in interpreting scripture. He seems to play fast and loose with the biblical text.
  - That's quite an accusation. Do you have examples to support such a claim??
  - Yes, I'd be interested in the examples.
  - If you don't give examples (which is very difficult to do in this "chat" context), this claim amounts to slander.

- Reading chapter 11 I wondered about Barth's view of the "state of grace" of modern Judaism, and about his general view of the modern state of Israel. (I realize the lectures were given just prior to the establishment of modern Israel.)
- Prof. Hauerwas, you mention the necessity of the whole life of Jesus to properly understand his Person and work. Many contemporary theologians who fall 'under the tutelage' of Barth have made much of the justifying/sanctifying process of deification/theosis to do just that. (Think, for example, of Kathryn Tanner, Robert Jenson, etc.) Could you speak to Barth's conception of theosis as concerns the Second Article?
- Could we talk some about ch9 on Heaven and Earth? I think that'd be helpful bridging the first article and the second as Barth explicates them.
- Barth is clearly against Bultmann's demythologization in insisting upon the historical resurrection and ascension. At the same time, he is less specific than Calvin and Luther in naming the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper. How does Barth 'locate' the resurrection/ascension body of Christ?
- You say that Barth does not go into theories of reconciliation, but he seems to imply penal substitution in various other places in Chapter 17. What is your view?
- I have a question about the accusation of Christomonism leveled against Barth due to his Christocentric theology. How can we express his theology in a trinitarian grammar?
- What does Barth have to say about the concept of hell that Jesus spoke about in the gospels?
- What might Barth say about the distinction in contemporary conversations between anti-Semitism and Zionism?
- In chapter 19 Barth distinguishes between Christ's work and the church, explaining that "it should not be said that the work of Jesus Christ simply continues in the life of Christians and the existence of the Church...That would contradict His 'It is finished'. What happened in Jesus Christ needs no continuation." (Barth soon clarifies that Christ's accomplished work still leaves room for human participation.)
- Could you comment on the significance of this distinction between Christ's work and the church's, and what difference it can and should make for the church today? At the same time, how can this distinction leave room for Paul's comment in Colossians 1:24, "I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions..."?

- How would answer the charge that Barth's high Christology loses the humanity of Jesus in discussing suffering, humiliation, etc.
- In Barth's moral theological objection to nationalism as an attempt to displace God into the systems of human progress, what would Barth say to Evangelicals today who do the same while proclaiming the uniqueness of the Gospel?
- Because of his emphasis or overemphasis on Jesus Christ, some theologians criticize Barth that he promotes the danger of Christomonism. What would you think about this criticism?
- I'm not sure American evangelicalism's rejection of Barth is about pietism vs. election. It's more about Barth's doctrine of revelation and how that relates to scripture -- i.e. scripture is not propositional inerrancy. Those neo-Calvinist evangelicals occupy a strange space in American evangelicalism, notwithstanding their broad influence -- they're really the heirs of the New Light Calvinists of First Great Awakening who saw a spiritual experience as a sign of election. I also don't think it's fair to say "American evangelicals" reject Barth -- that depends on how you define "American evangelicals." At Fuller Seminary, say, you'll hear plenty positive about Barth; at some others you won't.
- Anthropologically, it seems that the Christological orientation is not a direct move. How does Barth understand humanity through Jesus Christ, what moves does he take here?
- If Pilate was contingent, what methodology do we use to draw the line between necessary acts and events in the life (death, resurrection, ascension) of Christ, and contingent ones?
- Barth's emphasis on the historicity of Christ (Pontius Pilate!) would seem to indicate the necessity of historical criticism in Biblical research in the academy, of course, and in the pastor's study. Miroslav Volf says to approach this task with a "hermeneutic of respect." How can this be done in Barthian terms, with Barthian parameters?
- Maybe the fact that God heals (in a medical way...) only very few persons, is a sign that God also reveals part of his mystery in persons who are sick, have disabilities. Being sick or disabled doesn't mean one is not whole, does it? (Talitha)
- Barth said he wanted to include Bonhoeffer's Discipleship into KD. Could that in some way add something to the question on a presumed theology on sanctification.
- Along with the Jewish people and the Christians, how would Barth understand the natural revelation which underpins and incorporates Gentiles in Romans (particularly found in in Chptrs. 1-3)?

- Jenson differs from Barth in many ways - not least in relation to the 'logos asarkos' - do you find Jenson's account of the unfleshed word satisfactory?
- How does NT eschatology about the Reign of God fit in with Barth's notion of Israel and Jesus the Jew who fulfills Israel's role; especially with regard to the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension?
- How can I read Wesley as a Barthian? Nor can I read him as a pietist. Can we read John Wesley as John Wesley?
- Does Barth have too much faith in preaching and teaching as the basis for the Christian Life?
- What is the specific title of this book on the Ascension of Christ?
  - Douglas Farrow's 'Ascension Theology' is the more accessible version of 'Ascension and Ecclesia'. Both very good.
- How would Barth feel about throwing entire classes of people under the bus?
- Will did not make Barth Wesleyan but, is he was trying to make Trump supporters communists?
- Do you think American Evangelicals avoid Barth's personal life? Is it evangelical judgementalism that leads them to block him out?
- Ascension: How would Barth talk about the relationship between Jesus' historical being and his risen humanity? How do we make this relationship intelligible in our proclamation of the ascension?
- Is there any room for talking about the Universal Christ, or Christ consciousness, in Barth's theology/Christology?
- I wonder if Barth would've thought differently had he been aware of recent developments in theoretical physics, namely quantum mechanics, and its implications for our cosmology and phenomenology. What can we know really, when what we know is subject to our observation of it?
- Dorothy Sayers' *Mind of the Maker* is probably one of the best books on the Trinity!
- What is the "best" biography of Barth?
  - Mike, Eberhard Busch's book, *Karl Barth: His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts* by E. Busch might be a good one. Busch is the last research assistant of Barth at University of Basel!

- on 123, when Barth says we cannot consider the Resurrection as a spiritual event does that mean that we cannot adopt the resurrection for our own present life? What is the limits of adopting the resurrection or using the resurrection as a metaphor for other areas that preachers often transmute?
- If Jesus' salvation is not a response to sin, what is His incarnation, death, and resurrection for?

## Session 2: God

- Barth seems rather allergic to the traditional notion of deification but has no problem saying that "God of Himself lets us participate in His nature, in His life and essence" (p. 45). I find it difficult, here and in other places, to understand Barth's notion of participation. Can you shed some light on these two sides of Barth?
- My question is for Stanley - on p. 58 Barth speaks of the goal of creation, in which he refers to creation as "the theatre of His glory." Briefly, he then touches on man as "the witness to this glory." I was wondering if you could reflect further on this in relation to With the Grain of the Universe and your other work on witness, both how this is representative of/differs from Barth's other work on witness, and how your work on witness has been shaped by Barth's, esp. re: what is (briefly) stated here.
- Can Barth's theology be ever reconciled with so called "contextual theologies", i.e. "Asian" theologizing, "African" theologizing? or are their presuppositions totally contradictory?
  - If this question doesn't get addressed, I recommend Daniel Lee's book: [https://www.amazon.com/Double-Particularity-Contextuality-American-Theology/dp/150641852X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=daniel+lee%2C+barth&qid=1589294799&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Double-Particularity-Contextuality-American-Theology/dp/150641852X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=daniel+lee%2C+barth&qid=1589294799&sr=8-1)
- in differentiating between myth and saga, (p51) it seems that Barth creates a distinction without a difference...could you comment?
- Does Holy Scripture's primary use and direct endorsement of "God as Father" throughout the NT to describe a "way of being" for the Triune Christian God that excludes the metaphor of "God as Mother"? Lots of scholarship has been done on the benefits of "God as Mother" metaphor that seem to capture something relevant and good. What would Barth say? What do you two say?
- In Chapter 5 Barth asserts that we don't move from our definitions of things like "father" or "love" and then use those to understand God's Fatherhood, but that it's the other way around. Do you think Barth would allow us to extend this to all words and activities of God? As in, could we say we learn what the word "unites" or "bears" means

only from God? And what about “motherhood”? Can we learn what mother means from God’s revelation of God’s self, or only what father means?

- Carsten, I’m more interested if we can learn anything about what motherhood means from looking at God.
- as in, I have no problem with God as father, but what other words can we learn by looking at God and what are the limits of that method?
- Aren’t words symbols like art? Creating meaning.
- Can you say something of Bonoeffe’s notion of power in the prison letters in relation to Barth?
- With regard to the Trinity, why does Barth choose the modalist option ("ways of being")?
  - I think this is a break down in the English translation of Barth. The German doesn't have this connotation.
  - The same question could be levelled at Rahner, too....
  - From the editor's preface of Church Dogmatics: "In regard to Seinsweise Karl Barth himself once agreed with us that “way of being” might be a better rendering in English than “mode of being,” if only to avoid any hint of “modalism,” which he completely rejects. Yet his intention here to refer back to the Cappadocian τρόπος υπάρξεως\* and the modus entis\* of Protestant Orthodoxy made it evident that it would be best to preserve the rendering “mode of being” adopted by Thomson. In any case, “way of being” appears in some contexts to detract from Barth’s determination to move behind an “economic” to an “immanent” (i.e. an ontological) Trinity."
- At the end of chapter 5, Barth says that we cannot make images of God and that “this entire ‘spectacle’ of Christian art, [is] well-intentioned but impotent.” Can we do art as an expression of faith? Obviously, we cannot perfectly do art, but is it possible, according to Barth, for art to be useful for us in our worship of God?
- Barth advises to not talk about the 'creator' or 'God' but "the thing we begin with, is God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (p. 53) Do we have examples of Barth explaining or preaching to non-Christian or atheistic audiences? How does he practically accomplish his proposal?
  - Check page 93
  - Will do. Ha, SH is reading it right now! Well done.
- On pages 55-57 Barth is talking about God's relationship to Space and Time, declaring him the Lord of Space and Time. TF Torrance expands on this in his "Space, Time, and Incarnation" and "Space, Time, and Resurrection". I was wondering if you could speak about about how God relates to Space and Time?



- Can we not say that there is a universal longing for God, while not saying so as a “proof” to reason our way to God? Can we not get to this universal longing by starting with God’s revelation of God’s own self?
- You spent some time talking about Barth’s assertion on page 36 that God is not independently “found” or “discovered,” but is wholly known through God’s own revelation. How do you understand this assertion of Barth in light of Paul’s sermon to the Athenians, and his own appeal to the Greek’s “unknown god” as in fact a shrine to God? It seems to me Barth might be in conflict with this scene from Acts.
- In ch.7, Barth talks about God as possibility. How is this different from Aquinas’ (and Aristotle’s) distinction between potentiality and actuality?
- So, the problem is not conceiving of Barth as an “epistemologist”, but thinking his epistemology follows Descartes cogito ergo sum rather than Anselm’s credo it intelligam?
  - love his commentary on 1 Cor, where he riffs on Descartes, "I am thought of, therefore I am"
  - I think this is a great way to put it. Barth refuses to subscribe to Cartesian epistemology, and that’s a good thing.
  - Thanks, Sam. David, that’s so good, thank you. Great to see your name! Blessings.
- Would love to hear both give a short definition of “pietism.”
- I’m part of a church that is doing a 7 week sermon series called ‘God is in control’. based upon the book of Daniel. I’m wondering how you think Barth would respond to such a sermon series. (Really I’m looking for the affirmation that it is Christian of me to despise this series as much as I do)
- Different question: Stanley, where do you get those nice shirts? particularly the ones with all the extra buttons. I have been really interested in them, but I have not been able to find them anywhere.
- Is Barth then actually freeing us from orthodoxy in a challenge to our language? In some respects is he then our first Liberation Theologian, even more so than Bonhoeffer, where orthopraxis becomes more significant than orthodoxy?
- As one in the Reformed tradition, how does Barth handle Calvin's idea of the "sensus divinitatis"?

- Dr. Hauerwas -- you refer to the concept of analogy -- and Aquinas -- I think you're reading of what Aquinas is really doing in the Five Ways is correct -- but -- if we want to use analogy at all, don't we need to correct Barth's extreme position against the analogy of being (ala von Balthasar's reading of Barth)?
- Barth distinguishes between God's power as potentia and the chaotic power of potestas. While God is not characterized by 'unlimited power' - that, indeed, is the definition of Satan! - so Barth is 'opposed to every kind of powerlessness.' How might that dialectic inform our understanding of kenosis?
- Didn't God create the worldly powers, too?
- I have two requests. I'd love to hear you both discuss:
  1. The recent conflicts between a more classical model of trinitarian personhood and social trinitarianism. And specifically how they pertain to Barth's language of "ways of being."
  2. The McCormack/Hunsinger debate concerning the logical priority of election and Trinity in Barth.
- Hans Kung: "Barth was the first postmodern theologian." Do you see this as correct?
- Did Israel know that the world was Creation?
  - and would Barth claim that Israel did not know that the world was creation?
- Very general question here — Barth seems somewhat ambivalent, if not antagonistic towards philosophy, but his discussion throughout seems to presuppose philosophical concepts (metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics), how does he attempt to reconcile this issue, if at all?
- P54 - "Creation is grace..." - to what extent, if at all, does this affirmation ground human speech about God, even before Christ is named? Does this stand in any kind of tension with Barth's claim that God can be truly spoken of ONLY in Jesus?
- What is the connection between a religion centered on our subjectivities and the political order Barth wants to resist?
- As a Methodist do you see any of Barth's influence in E. S. Jones?
- Would love to hear either of them "pray us out" at the end
- I have three questions to suggest for consideration—
  1. Is Barth a modalist? Or somewhat more orthodoxy, is his notion of the Trinity a (pragmatic) epistemological one rather than a Nicene one?

2. Does Barth's approach to God the creator manifest any point of appreciative contact with process theology?
  3. How does Barth's notion of a "man" centered view of heaven and earth interact with current moves toward green theology?
- Do you think Barth offers a helpful corrective to the way in which many Christians understand God's omnipotence (cf. 48-9)?
  - Could you comment on Barth's understanding of the relationship between creation and covenant (i.e. Jesus Christ) [cf. 57-8]?
  - We are "reading Barth together"; how is that compared with, say, the discussion of Trinitarian Ontologies of late at Cambridge? (Stanley elsewhere characterized himself: me reading Barth, (Barth) reading the New Testament).
  - What is the actual etymology of the word, 'God'?
  - "He who says God in the sense of Holy Scripture will necessarily have to say Jesus Christ over and over again." - YES and YES.  
HOWEVER - Barth in his Dogmatics preserves a great deal of space for the "hiddenness" of God even in his revelation. Can you talk about how that works in Barth?
  - Given Barth's affection for Thomas Aquinas, I find it a little confusing that in chapter 7 (p. 46), Barth speaks of "possibility" in God. Is this what Thomas labels "potentiality," and says (if memory serves) that this "potency/potentiality" cannot exist in God?
    - Is the difference that Barth is in no way employing an Aristotelian metaphysics?
  - Isn't it the Western tradition that is obsessed with proof? Isn't Jesus-Emmanuel the living presence? Isn't it YHWH - I AM WHO I AM - something for us to meditate upon and adore and obey? To become like? As a friend?  
Who is it that wrote "God is all in all"? Isn't that the "God is closer to me than I am to myself?"  
How can we unite the wonder of the Word the Love that does not insist on its own way with the experiential joy of cultivating the discipline to follow - through the prayer of Jesus Christ, given through the Holy Spirit?  
I like "God is another name for reality"! Thank you!
    - God as "all in all" – 1 Cor. 15:28
    - God as "closer" – Check Augustine's *Confessions* 3.6.11
  - I am wondering how Barth's epistemology relates to that of Frei?
    - i feel like my question has been answered
  - Will, in light of your statement that Barth was hard on artists, can you comment on his love of Mozart, saying in his short text on Mozart (1956) that he started each day with

Mozart as well as the newspaper and scripture; and saying that Mozart may have found his freedom to create in the paintings of Raphael and Botticelli.

- Can you talk about how Barth reworked the word “Law”?
- Aren’t all of Barth’s statements about our inability to know God, to make abstractions, and all of his other qualifications about the way we can know about God apart from God’s own self-revelation — how are these NOT a priori assumptions about God?
- The question of Barth as (anti)epistemologist is an interesting one. In p. 71 of the Church Dogmatics (to be tangential for a moment), Barth talks about knowledge (illumination) as the result of union with Christ. Could you say more on Barth's stance re: epistemology in light of this later claim about knowledge and union?
- Why do you think Barth didn't like using the word person when talking about the Trinity but mode? There are a whole lot of misconceptions about his trinitarian theology.
- Jews and Muslims believe in the world as God's creation but without belief in Christ. What does Barth's theology here imply about their belief in creation?
- How far is Holy Saturday the lens through which we look at the world today?
- Could you say a bit about how the futility of human proofs for God (p. 37) relates to the modern church’s interest in apologetics, as opposed to dogmatics.
- Central to Barth’s whole theology is the doctrine of God’s objective self-revelation. But how can we know God’s “objective revelation” without “human subjective experience?” Can you please discuss about this comparing and contrasting Barth and Tillich?
- Re feminine nature of God - Bobby McFerrin, Psalm 23

The Lord is my Shepard, I have all I need  
She makes me lie down in green meadows  
Beside the still waters, She will lead

She restores my soul, She rights my wrongs  
She leads me in a path of good things  
And fills my heart with songs

Even though I walk, through a dark and dreary land  
There is nothing that can shake me  
She has said She won't forsake me  
I'm in her hand

She sets a table before me, in the presence of my foes  
She anoints my head with oil  
And my cup overflows

Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me  
All the days of my life  
And I will live in her house  
Forever, forever and ever

Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter  
And to the Holy of Holies  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be  
World, without end

Amen

- Can you speak to Barth influence on Lesley Newbigin and the historical development of missional theology?
- Joe R. Jones, in his Grammar of the Christian Faith, uses "modes" language, and qualifies it by stating that he does not mean what Sabellius meant. Is "modal" language useful for us? Is this what Barth is doing?
- Could you not understand motherhood from that of the Church...Christ existing as Church community?
- How does Barth consider knowing and believing informed by the Holy Spirit given that knowing and believing is after the materialization of things. Knowing and believing is at the end of things

### **Session 1: Dogmatics and Faith**

- Dr. Hauerwas, you have written extensively on the distinct language and grammar of the Christian Church - the linguistic forms that are necessary for the gospel to be proclaimed and lived aright.  
What do you make of Barth's contention in ch. 4, "Faith as Confession," that while the Church has a distinctive language - a "language of Canaan" (31) - its confession "must be fundamentally translatable into the speech of Mr. Everyman"? Do you find yourself at least in a creative tension with Barth's dialectic realism on this point?
- What resources can you point me to research the similarities between Barth and Tillich?
  - <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0040573618785338> You might check out this essay by the great Barthian George Hunsinger.

- mccormack also has an article somewhere on barth and tillich
- Barth writes of freedom in the early chapters. Would you comment on what you see freedom is for him and perhaps how that compares with freedom proclaimed by America?
- Is a rejection of the Wesleyan understanding of prevenient grace built into Barth's perspective on faith?
- That was actually a note I made as I read on pg 24: to have faith/knowledge "is brought about simply by God Himself." I saw a similarity there with Prevenient grace. I'd be interested to see what our speakers say.
  - Yes, I concur. I made a note about prevenient grace on pg. 24 too.
- upon re-reading, I was shocked to read, "where the creed is uttered and confessed knowledge should be, is meant to be, created" (p. 23, at the top). I would have expected "revealed", or that a "point of contact" for knowledge is created, but knowledge itself is created?!
- To what extent do you both understand Barth as an heir to premodern/pre-Enlightenment theological interpretation of Scripture, especially in the central notion of "communion with God" as the goal of interpretation and as the goal of Christian dogmatics?
- Please give the title of the book and the author.
  - Eberhard Busch "The Great Passion: An Introduction to Karl Barth's Theology"
- Modern science seems to hold as fundamental, the doctrine of skepticism. Does Barth's understanding of dogmatics/theology as a science allow for skepticism?
- Question on "The Gospel"
 

"What as Christians do we really have to say?"

"...in our time of need to-day the question is more insistent than ever, what the content of Christian proclamation ought to be."

/// Whether it be a 30-seconds in an elevator or 30-minutes in a sermon, what ought we be communicating as "the gospel" according to Barth? In what ways would you affirm this or nuance it?
- How does Barth's claim that Dogmatics is a science differ from Aquinas's claim that Sacred Doctrine is a science?

- He says “Christian dogmatics will always be a thinking, an investigation and an exposition which are relative and liable to error.” If this is true, how will dogmatics (on Barth’s account) transcend opinion and be “knowledge.”
- What might Barth suggest is a faithful confession for Christians to embody today, in the context of a global pandemic?
- There has also been a strong tradition of pre-modern apophaticism (Dionysius, Nicholas of Cusa...). What do you make of this?
- Who was the Oxford Philosopher that Stanley referenced?
  - Stephen Mulhall at New College
- Barth says on page 19 that “in faith is involved a ‘may’, not a ‘must’.” Does faith rid us of all demand? Is the freedom and permission of faith really opposed to the demands of the law?
- do we have any evidence that after the war, Barth actually learned or paid attention to the witness of the church, as in input for his reflection, rather than just writing and teaching theology?
- If theology can’t be a system, why is it a science, or “an attempt to see, to hear, and to state definite facts”? Sciences generate systems of knowledge.
- Could you give some examples of what a translation of the Church's Confession would be for the "Everyman" in our American culture today? (pg. 32).
- What would Barth make of the nature of God language debate? As to gender specific language?
- And doesn't Barth shortly thereafter call faith 'activity'?
  - I believe so. He also calls faith a 'choice' in ch 4 (p.29) if I'm reading it correctly. For KB, this must be preceded by the work and word of God, of course - but, I'm eager to hear their thoughts on this.
- What is this conversations with Barth work? Reference for further reading? :)
  - I think Stanley was talking about the *Barth in Conversation* series which has a [Vol. 1](#), [Vol. 2](#), and [Vol. 3](#). You might also check out Will’s [Conversations with Barth on Preaching](#) book though!
- Hasn't Luther argued for the objectivity of faith? In what way is Barth special or original?

- Abraham Joshua Heschel, in his *God in Search of Man*, underscores how God reaches out to us, do you see some affinity in Barth's *Dogmatics*? Question 2, as far as you know did the two ever meet?
- I understand Barth to be saying that Christianity is irreducible to what it is within the context of the church – and so in some sense untranslatable to the outside world. And yet he urges his listeners to translate their experience to the larger world and that the German church failed to do this to tragic end. Can you reflect on this seeming incongruity? And what is the content of what is to be translated?
- I would like to hear the distinguished speakers tackle the self-revelation of God in how that is achieved. Is only gained from reading Scripture, is given through the Holy Spirit, through community.
- If there can be no other starting point to talk about God than God's self-revelation, and scripture is merely a witness to that self-revelation, where do we get language to speak about God in and from scripture while simultaneously not making scripture a false foundation of our reflection on God's action in the world?
- How does Karl Barth today help us to navigate a post Covid-19 church and world and all that this means about talking about God and what it is to be human?
- What account would you give of faith as knowledge as it relates to people with severe cognitive disabilities?
- I have always been edified by Barth's theology. Particularly, as a student of pragmatist and ordinary language philosophy, I have always appreciated the insights that seem very compatible with ways of knowing found in pragmatist and ordinary language philosophy. One thing I have always been unsure of, however, is how Barth understands how a Christian should go about revising historic faith commitments in light of new human experiences and cultural developments. The pragmatists and ordinary language philosophers have a way of doing it in terms of how the normative status of performances are left behind/altered/revised if they social world they were meant for no longer takes them up. How does Barth think about God's self-revelation and our being born into a set of beliefs but also how our experience sometimes challenge those beliefs?
- I just felt like dropping this question now. I hope it's not too early. Please can you explain what Barth meant by faith having a character *indelibilis* in a person? Did he believe in the Calvinist doctrine of the perseverance of the saints?



- Could you define what Barth means by “determines”? Is there a possibility of another “determination”? For example, could God as the God for us determine to be God against us?
- I wonder if we do ourselves a disservice if we approach God as an object, as opposed to a subject. Is God a guarantor of our worldview, or that which disrupts our worldview, opening us up to the possibility of participating in God (as opposed to pure speculation of or about God)?
- I like Barth’s understanding of faith as meeting with God and becoming free to hear. What does it mean the Church to participate in that by our works in the world?
- Would Barth designate ‘God’ or the history of communion between God and human beings as the object of dogmatic science?
- Have we substituted God and our experience of God with God and our language about God?
- Can we talk about God or believe in Him apart from any experience?
  - No. The point I hear Barth making is not to FOCUS on the experience. Focus on Christ.
- Does Barth ever distinguish between faith and belief? Trust, enthusiasm, absurdity - these things seem to qualify as faith more so than belief.
- Barth is oft quoted in the work of practical theologians who are using qualitative research to think about the experiences of Christians. Yet here we hear that we should not focus on the experience but on Christ. How does this marry together, can a practical theologian be a Barthian?
- Dr. Hauerwas suggested that Barth’s aversion to Pietism—and also potentially certain varieties of Wesleyanism—was based in large part on his belief that it often leads to protestant liberalism. I’m curious: what would our distinguished presenters make of the argument—made in one version or another by thinkers ranging from Cornelius van Til to Gary Dorrien—that Barth never really fully left “liberal modernism” behind?
- Can theology in Barth’s understanding be interdisciplinary?
- Is the story of faith, as Barth understands it, a definite and adequately big “world-image”?
- I’m curious as to how both of you were first introduced to Barth and what your first impressions were.