Course description

Karl Barth is perhaps the most significant Protestant theologian of the 20th century. This course gives an introduction to the formation, content, and development of his theology, with a special focus on the following topics: theological knowledge, election, Trinity, the Word of God, the divine perfections, creation and covenant, providence, sin, reconciliation.

The course is designed to foster discussion of the primary texts we will be reading, with the class time equally divided between lecture and guided discussion.

Learning outcomes

- You will be able to integrate Barth in a theological trajectory spanning medieval, reformation, modern, and contemporary theology;
- You will be able to critically assess Barth’s theological proposal;
- You will grow in your understanding of essential elements of Christian doctrine, especially Christology, doctrine of Scripture, doctrine of the Trinity, and soteriology.

Required textbooks

- Webster, John: *Karl Barth*, 2nd ed., 978-0826474636
- Allen, R. Michael: *Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics: An Introduction and Reader*, 978-0567152190
- Barth, Karl: *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum: Anselm's Proof of the Existence of God in the Context of His Theological Scheme* (Pittsburgh Reprint Series 2) 978-0915138753
- Additional articles and excerpts are provided in PDF form through the online site of the class.

Class and readings schedule

1) Barth’s Theological Method in *Fides Quaerens Intellectum*
   a) Barth, *Fides Quaerens Intellectum* - in toto
   b) Webster, ch. 1
   c) S. Hauerwas, “The Witness that Was Karl Barth”, in *With the Grain of the Universe* (PDF) - 30 pp
2) “The Humanity of God”
   a) K. Barth, “The Humanity of God” - PDF [supplied through the online portal]
   b) Webster, ch. 2
3) The Word of God
   a) Allen, ch. 2.
   b) Webster, ch. 3
4) The Trinity
   a) Allen, ch. 3
   b) Webster, ch. 4.
5) The Perfect God
   a) Allen, ch. 5
   b) Webster, ch. 4
6) The Election of Jesus Christ
   a) Allen, ch. 6
   b) Hunsinger, “Election and the Trinity: Twenty-five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth”,
      *Modern Theology* (PDF)
   c) McCormack, “Election and the Trinity: Theses in Response to George Hunsinger.”
7) Theological Ethics
   a) Allen, ch. 7
   b) Webster, ch. 7
8) Creation and Covenant
   a) Allen, ch. 8
   b) Webster, ch. 5
   c) Crisp, “Karl Barth on Creation”, in *Retrieving Doctrine* (PDF)
9) Providence
   a) Allen, ch. 9
10) Reconciliation in Christ
    a) Allen, ch. 11
    b) Webster, ch. 6
11) Justification and Sanctification
    a) Allen, ch. 12
12) The Living Christ and the Promised Spirit
    a) Allen, ch. 13
    b) Webster, ch. 8

**Assignments:**

1. By the end of Week 4 (not counting Reading Week) (Sat, Mar 2), the student will provide a document specifying the following:
* The broad topic of the final paper (ex: Universalism in Barth’s Theology)
  * A list of sources that were studied, comprising of at least 300 read pages, all counting towards the final reading count and the final bibliography of the final paper. The sources can be selected in conversation with the instructor, and they should be of a general and introductory nature in relation to the chosen topic of the paper. Introductions to Barth’s theology as a whole are acceptable, in conjunction with more specialized treatments.

**Weight: 20%**

2. By the end of Week 9 (not counting Reading Week) (Sat, Apr 13), the student will provide a document specifying the following:
   * The working thesis of the paper: what the paper aims to demonstrate;
   * An approximate final outline of the paper, including brief chapter descriptions and how they relate to the thesis.
   * An additional list of sources studied, comprising of at least 300 read pages, all counting towards the final reading count and the final bibliography of the final paper. Efforts should be made to narrow the sources to texts that are more specialized treatments of the topic of the paper.

**Weight: 20%**

3. The final paper is due May 6th, at 5PM and it will be dropped off at my office. No late papers will be accepted. All extensions are to be handled through the Registration Office - no exceptions. The requirements for the paper will be explained below.

**Weight: 50%**

- Final research paper requirements:
  - You are to critically explore a particular aspect/topic of Barth’s theological work, combining a close reading of the relevant primary texts with an engagement with the secondary literature.
  - 3500-4000 words
  - The final bibliography must include at least 15 sources
  - It must use a consistent citation system, whether, Harvard, Chicago, APA.
  - A grading rubric for the final paper will be handed out at the beginning of the class.

4. Class participation is also graded. You must demonstrate a willingness to engage in conversation about the primary source material under discussion in order to pass this requirement. I will do my best to create an inviting and friendly atmosphere for our class discussions.

**Weight: 10%**

**Miscellanea**

- The student is encouraged not to use any electronic devices in class (laptop, phone).
- Audio or video recording of any kind is not permitted under any circumstances.
• No more than 2 absences are permitted; any non-attendance beyond that will incur an F grade.
• All extensions are to be handled through the Registration office.