

Karl Barth, World's Leading Protestant Theologian, Dies

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BASEL (Switzerland) — (AP) — Karl Barth, 82, the world's leading Protestant theologian, died early today at his home in Basel.

A native of Basel, Barth was praised as the most creative Protestant theologian since John Calvin.

He also was variously damned as a heretic, a narrow-minded biblicist and an atheist in disguise — but even some of his critics called him "the most monumental appearance in our period."

Barth gave the world of religious thought 10 fat tomes, elaborating a formidable and intricate Protestantism that stressed the spiritual nature of true religion — faith in Christ, the church of Christ and the Bible as His witness.

ATTACKS 'LIBERAL'

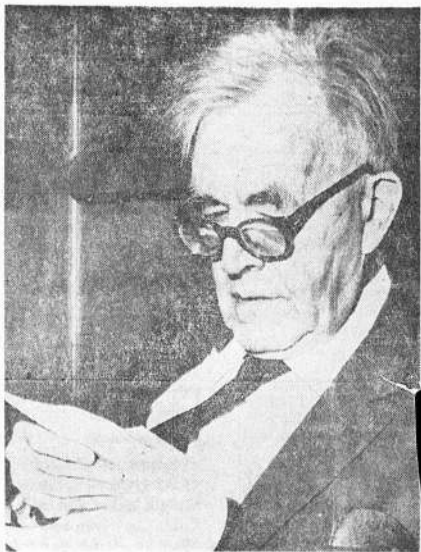
As a young minister in World War I, Barth published his first bombshell in 1918. His "Epistle to the Romans" was a scathing attack on the dominant "liberal" theology of the day.

As a scholar and later a teacher, Barth had little time for politics — "fundamentally uninteresting" — until 1933 after Hitler established the Third Reich.

Then a professor at the University of Bonn, he repeatedly attacked Nazism until he was arrested, tried, found guilty of seducing the minds of German students and expelled from Germany in 1935.

In World War II, Barth volunteered for duty in the Swiss army at the age of 54 and spent much of the duration guarding a bridge on the German frontier.

After the war he returned



DR. KARL BARTH, DEAD AT 82
Protestant theologian was a controversial figure
— AP Photo

briefly to lecture in the bombed-out ruins of his old university in Bonn, then came back to Basel to carry on with the intellectual job he started in 1932: the writing of Church Dogmatics.

REPUTATION

Thought by many to be too eye-wearying and garrulous, Dogmatics was nonetheless hailed as the century's only equivalent to the summa of medieval scholastics, wreathed with a knowledge of 1000 years of Christian writing.

Along with other controversial traits, Barth won a repu-

ers, and received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from the University of Chicago.

The last time the university so honored a single scholar was in 1949, when it conveyed a similar degree on Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the jungle physician, organist and theologian.

tation for anti-Americanism by denouncing "the flesh pots" of a country he never visited until 1962.

His son Markus, a professor of the New Testament at Princeton's Theological Seminary, reported Barth found only two things he disliked — the plight of Negroes in slums and the influence of commercial sponsors on TV programming.

CIVIL WAR BUFF

A Civil War buff, Barth visited Gettysburg, lectured at Princeton, talked for days with carefully selected cross sections of American think-