

## II. What Is Barthianism?

### Why it is difficult to define

By KENNETH S. KANTZER, Ph.D.

**W**HAT is Barthianism? "A retreat to the dark ages," one Modernist labels it. "The old Fundamentalism with a new face lift," says another.<sup>1</sup> Fundamentalists, on the other hand, tend to debunk Barthianism as "The New Modernism" or "A New Heresy in the Christian Church."<sup>2</sup>

Barthians themselves hail it "a breath of fresh air," and "a revival of Reformation Christianity in terms which make it intelligible to men of the twentieth century."<sup>3</sup>

What is the reason for this basic disagreement as to what constitutes Barthianism or Neo-Orthodoxy? The answer in part is simply that there are many radically different kinds of Neo-Orthodoxy. Karl Barth himself once declared, "I am not a Barthian." Many followers of Barth have departed so far to the left of their master that he no longer cares to be associated with them. Barth, for example, declares his faith in the Virgin Birth of Christ. Brunner, whose name is closely associated with Barth in Europe, rejects the Virgin Birth, but vigorously affirms faith in the deity of Christ. Reinhold Niebuhr, the most famous American member of this school, not only rejects the Virgin Birth but also the true deity of Christ.<sup>4</sup>

### The Continual Change in Barth's Views

A second explanation for this amazing disagreement as to what is Barthianism lies in the continual change that Barth's own views have undergone down through the years. In his early commentary on Romans Barth spoke with deep feeling about sin and the discontinuity between God and man. Since that time he has strengthened immeasurably his doctrines of the grace of God, of Christ, and of inspiration. Still more recently Barth has tended to tone down his insistence upon the discontinuity between God and man. Formerly he

As stated in the Times last week, Dr. Kantzer attended Dr. Barth's lectures on theology last year in Basel, Switzerland. This is the second article in a series of four on the teachings of the famous theologian. Dr. Kantzer is professor of Theology and chairman of the Department of Bible and Philosophy at Wheaton College. His third article will be published next week.

was combating a humanistic Modernism which tried to reduce God to the level of man. Against this Barth set forth the sovereignty and total "otherness" of God. Now he is combating the contemporary philosophy of despair; and in so doing, he speaks of the nearness of God to man in Christ.

The fundamental reason for the widespread lack of agreement on what constitutes Barthianism lies in the paradoxical nature clearly evident in Barth's own thinking. Some have attributed this characteristic in Barth to trickery. Barth wishes to satisfy evangelicals, and so he preaches evangelical doctrine. On the other hand, he wishes also to please the Modernists, so he redefines his conservative doctrines in such a way as to define them away.

While not every liberal can be exonerated from such a dishonest practice, this certainly is not the case with Barth. Instead of seeking to appease both conservatives and liberals, he seems deliberately to go out of his way to tell Modernists how dead wrong they are and how they ought to be more conservative in their doctrine. At the same time he very pointedly chides Fundamentalists for "obscurantism."

Nevertheless, divergent and even contradictory streams of thought are very apparent in Barth's own thought. Because of his early training under Modernists, he became convinced that scientific errors abound in Scripture, that the conservative view of the unity and authorship of books of the Bible is impossible to hold to, that there are mistaken doctrines set forth in the Bible, that there is absolutely no evidence for the truth of the evangelical Christian faith, that miracles are unreasonable, and that even theism cannot be defended in any rational way. Yet, in spite of all this, Barth wishes to hold on to evangelical faith. It would require more than a genius to weld together such radical contradictions as these.

Barth in fact has never attempted to bring these divergent streams of thought together, but insists that the truth can

be held only in paradox. This paradoxical method of arriving at truth and of expressing the truth is the root cause for most of the contemporary misunderstanding of what constitutes Barthianism.

The knowledge of God, Barth is convinced, lies in a wholly different realm from ordinary knowledge of mere human and finite things. He expresses this by saying that God is totally "other," or that God is sovereign Lord. The moment, therefore, man begins to speak about the infinite God, his capacity as finite man, limited by finite language, breaks down. The real truth can only be expressed with a certain amount of inaccuracy. We proceed indirectly by a "yes" and "no"! "Yes, God is good; but no, God is not good in the mundane way in which we human beings think of good." This "yes" and "no" statement and counterstatement, method of arriving at the truth is known as the dialectical method, and in this dialectical and paradoxical method lies the clue to Barth's whole presentation of the Christian faith. In his revolt against Modernism he has never been able to free himself from its negative, rational criticisms of evangelical Christianity. At this point, Barth argues, the Modernists were right. Natural revelation or reason, say they, leads man only to idolatry; the time-honored evidences for the resurrection of Christ and for the deity of Christ drive clear-thinking men to skepticism. We must, however, affirm faith in God and in Christ. How can we secure such faith? Not by reason. Christian faith is above reason and even contradictory to reason. Faith has nothing to do with reason. Reason can only lead men astray as it did with the Modernists. Faith must be "attained in a flash." It is an immediately given, divinely implanted intuition, that in Jesus Christ God has spoken.<sup>5</sup>

### The Bible in Barth's System

What place has the Bible in Barth's system of thought? Both the orthodox and the Modernists were wrong, declares Barth. The orthodox dethroned Jesus Christ and instead made the Bible the object of their faith, thus becoming Bibliolaters. The Modernists were worse, for they refused even to take the Bible seriously, picking and choosing from the Bible only that which suited their fancy.

Barth's own view of the Bible may be outlined as follows: First, Barth flatly rejects the "doctrine of the general, equal, and permanent inspiration of the

<sup>1</sup> See Henry N. Wieman and others, "Religious Liberals Reply" (Boston; Beacon Press, 1947); and L. Harold De Wolf, "The Religious Revolt Against Reason" (New York; Harper, 1949).

<sup>2</sup> See Cornelius Van Til, "The New Modernism, An Appraisal of the Theology of Barth and Brunner" (Philadelphia; The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1946); and William H. Chisholm and Harold Stigers, "A New Heresy in the Christian Church: The Subtle Danger of Barthianism" (Sunday School Times, December 14, 1946).

<sup>3</sup> See John A. Mackay, "A Preface to Christian Theology" (New York; The Macmillan Co., 1941).

<sup>4</sup> Niebuhr, like many another liberal, agrees to the deity of Christ—providing he can define what he means by the term. His definition, however, turns out to be a denial of the true deity of Jesus Christ. See "The Nature and Destiny of Man" (2 vols., New York; Scribners, 1941). II, 61.

<sup>5</sup> "The Doctrine of the Word of God" (Vol. I, Part I, Kirchliche Dogmatik (Edinburgh; T. and T. Clark, 1936), p. 14.

Bible" with its "mechanical doctrine of verbal inspiration." On the contrary, the Bible is rather a humanly formed record and a human interpretation of the true Word of God, Jesus Christ. "The Bible," Barth explains, "is not itself and in itself God's past revelation. In the one case God says, in the other Paul says, these are two different things."<sup>6</sup>

In this respect the Bible is like a sermon. A sermon is not the Word of God itself but rather the word of man, the preacher. It is the preacher's understanding or interpretation of the real Word of God. The purpose of the preacher is to point beyond himself and his word to the real Word of God. The Bible, likewise, is not in itself the Word of God but is a human word, whose purpose is to point beyond itself to the real Word of God, Jesus Christ.

Second, as a human book, the Bible partakes of the fallibility inherent in any truly human production. A preacher, to continue the analogy, can point men to Christ without being infallible. His sermon may contain error, it may twist Scripture a bit here and there. It may even err in some doctrine. Still it can be used to bring men to God. So, according to Barth's understanding, the Bible is a fallible human book. He writes, "The prophets and apostles even as such, even in their office, even in their function as witnesses, even in the act of writing down their testimonies [were] really, historical, and therefore in their deeds sinful and in their spoken and written word capable of error and actually erring men like us all."<sup>7</sup>

Third, the Bible may become the Word of God. Of any good preacher we would say, "He preaches the Word of God." By this we do not mean that his sermon has ceased to be human, or that it is free from the defects of which we have just spoken. We mean only that men by hearing it and acting upon what they have heard may really be saved.

In this same fashion the Bible may be spoken of as the Word of God. "Sinful and erring men as such spoke the Word of God, that is the miracle of which we speak when we say that the Bible is God's Word."<sup>8</sup>

Fourth, The method by which the Bible becomes the Word of God is not by an inspiration of the prophets as a past act in history but by a contemporary work of God upon the human soul today using the written Bible as an instrument. For the orthodox, inspiration constituted the Bible as God's Word at its writing, and it retains this character independently of man's reading it or receiving it as God's Word. For Barth, "The inspiration lies not before us as the Bible lies before us, and as we

read the Bible." Rather, "The Bible is God's Word so far as God lets it be His Word, so far as God speaks through it." Unless God creates this response in its readers, the Bible is not the Word of God. Unless, in short, God speaks now through the Bible, it is not God's Word but only man's words. It is not, as with the orthodox, the way in which the Bible came into being that constituted it as God's Word, but with Barth it is the present fact that God now speaks through its words as we read them that constitutes the Bible as His Word.<sup>9</sup>

This is not to imply, avers Barth, that our faith transforms the Bible into God's Word. Rather God's actual speaking through its words makes it God's Word.<sup>10</sup>

Fifth, This erring human book, the Bible, which becomes God's Word, is the standard for all right teaching in the Christian Church. This, of course, is a great paradox. Man's erring human word becomes God's Word, the rule of the Church. With some hesitation Barth is even willing to speak of verbal inspiration. "Verbal inspiration does not signify," he adds, however, "infallibility of the Biblical Word in all its verbal, historical, theological character as human word. Verbal inspiration does signify: the fallible and failing human word is now as such taken by God into His service and in spite of all its human fallibility as such to be accepted." God "speaks what this text speaks." If God deigns to speak through the language of sinful, finite human beings, so Barth argues, even He must say what He has to say to us men in words that contain error.<sup>11</sup>

What then is the basis of Barthian theology? It is the Word of God, by which Barth means Jesus Christ the living voice of God to us. This word is not reached by man's searching or by or through evidences, but rather by God's own act He causes us to hear himself speaking when and where He wills. This God-given faith comes as an immediately given intuitive "flash."

The Bible in itself is a book of "preaching," containing errors of facts and doctrines, but paradoxically the Bible is the divine instrument (along with other preaching) by which the flash comes. The whole of the Bible, moreover, in all its parts (and in this the Bible differs from other preaching in that it is the standard for other preaching), is to be taken by us seriously as the divinely given instrument to lead us to this immediately given knowledge of Christ.

What kind of theology can Barth build on this fallibly yet "verbally inspired" Bible whose purpose is in all its parts

to lead us to Jesus Christ? See next week's TIMES—Part III: "The Doctrines of Karl Barth."

(To be continued)

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## A Vacation Trip to Hawaii

IT IS gratifying to see reservations come in for this fall's Christian Fellowship Tour to Hawaii from those who have in previous years gone to Alaska. There is no question about it, the fellowship with other Christians on extended tours of this kind provides an enjoyment that will always be remembered.

The tour to Hawaii, starting from Chicago on September 28 and returning thereto on October 18, was organized as a result of requests made by tourists of the Alaska tours of previous years. Here is a chance to resume old friendships and to form new ones.

The rail trip westward to Seattle will be one of genuine delight on the vista-dome North Coast Limited. In the Montana-Idaho Rockies snowy slopes and rugged mountain summits will be seen on every hand. As the train nears Seattle, the thrilling Cascade Mountains scenery will climax a journey that will not be forgotten.

A full day of sight-seeing in Seattle with opportunities for shopping will add much to the enjoyment of these vacation days. The trip to Hawaii in a big DC-6B plane is an experience of air travel that cannot be excelled in comfort. Plans have been made to give the Christian Fellowship tour party a full time of constant pleasure on the Islands in the center of the Pacific Ocean, where the temperature is in the mid-seventies, and in a season when rain is very unlikely and sunshine is assured. Eleven days will be spent at the lovely Moana and the Royal Hawaiian Hotels, with visits to three of the Islands and extensive sight-seeing.

For instance, here is a day's program out of the itinerary for Wednesday, October 3: "Hawaii National Park day. Early morning transfer to the airport for breakfast and a two-hour flight. From the air you see the Hawaiian Islands like gems in the sea, including Molokai, where work with the lepers is carried on; Lanai and Maui, where the mighty Mauna Kea, a 10,000-foot volcanic peak, rises into the clouds. You arrive at Hilo, tour about this interesting city, and go to Rainbow Falls, the Giant Fern Forest, orchid farms, and the lava flows and craters. Hawaii Volcanic National Park is a strange and spectacular area. You lunch in the heart of the park at Volcano House, continue the tour in the afternoon, and in early evening fly back to Honolulu for late dinner at your hotel."

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 125 and 126.

<sup>7</sup> Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol. One, Part Two, p. 587.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 563; and "The Doctrine of the Word of God," p. 123.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>11</sup> Kirchliche Dogmatik, Vol. One, Part Two, pp. 591 and 592.

### III. The Doctrines of Karl Barth

What is revealed when two touchstones  
are applied to his theology

By KENNETH S. KANTZER, Ph.D.

ANY attempt to describe the theology of Karl Barth, so one Fundamentalist theologian declares, "is like a description of the shape of a cloud driven and tossed by a turbulent wind with many cross currents."<sup>1</sup> That this judgment is not merely due to the prejudice of a Fundamentalist is evidenced by a similar reaction in Liberals as well. After vainly trying to analyze the doctrines of Barthianism one Liberal theologian in despair finally throws up his hands and laments that, according to Neo-Orthodoxy, "these doctrines have some important element of truth in them, but are not true in the form in which they were traditionally accepted, while any attempt to say what is true in them ends in logical incoherence."<sup>2</sup>

Even Emil Brunner, who next to Barth is the best known Neo-Orthodox thinker in the world, admits that he does not understand Barth's doctrine of man as outlined in the "Church Dogmatics." The difficulty, Brunner charges, lies not merely in his difficult style but in the plethora of contradictory statements he sets before his reader.<sup>3</sup>

#### Abounding in Paradoxes

In view of the foundation upon which he rests his theology, Barth's thought must necessarily abound in paradoxes. The discontinuity between God and man is so great that God cannot reveal Himself to man in the written Scripture without involving Himself in error.

A rigid application of logic, therefore, would drive Barth to skepticism, but Barth is not bothered by logic. "I do contradict myself. So ist das Leben ('Life is that way')." he insists.<sup>4</sup>

However much logic ought to reduce Barth to silence, Barth himself is overwhelmed by the conviction that God has spoken; and when God speaks, man must listen with humble attention, understand as best he can, and, above all, obey. Karl Barth feels constrained by divine command to declare forth to others the Word of God which he himself has received.

The touchstone of Karl Barth's theology, as of every theology, is his answer to the question: "What think ye of Christ?" Barth himself maintains that his theology is first and last a Christology. For him Jesus Christ is the God-

In this third article of his series of four on the widely known Swiss theologian, Dr. Kantzer gives a very keen analysis of Barth's views of many of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. The concluding article, "Orthodoxy Faces Neo-Orthodoxy," will be published next week.

Man, the second member of the Trinity become incarnate. In his labored analysis of the Nicene Creed he expressly repudiates the Arian view that Jesus is some lesser sort of "created God." Such a view, he affirms, is mere polytheism. There is only one God and this one God became man, the God-Man, Jesus Christ.

God, moreover, became man not in some vague manner possible for all human beings. The incarnation, according to Barth, is definitely not a poetic expression for the God who indwelt Jesus as He indwells all believers. It is not the height of Godlikeness in character achieved by Jesus as mere man. It is not the success story of a man who fanned the spark of divinity naturally within him until it burst into full flame. The incarnation of Jesus Christ, avers Barth, is nothing less than what the Bible states it to be—namely, that He who is eternal God became at a point in time also man. Whatever it means to be truly God, Jesus Christ is that; and whatever it means to be truly man, Jesus Christ is also that.<sup>5</sup>

Barth's statement of the virgin birth is exceptionally fine: "The incarnation of the Son of God out of Mary cannot indeed consist of the origination for the first time, here and now, of the Son of God, but it consists in the Son of God taking to Himself here and now this other thing, which exists previously in Mary, namely, flesh, humanity, human nature, humanness. It claims that the man Jesus has no father (exactly in the way in which as the Son of God he had no mother)."<sup>6</sup>

The resurrection of Christ, Barth also affirms unequivocally. He does not arrive at this doctrine, however, because of any "infallible proofs" for the bodily resurrection of Christ. Faith in the Resurrection does not rest upon the historicity of the Biblical narrative. "This tomb may prove to be definitely closed or an empty tomb. It is really a matter of indifference. What avails the tomb

proved to be this or that, at Jerusalem in the year 30 A.D." <sup>7</sup>

Because of such statements as these, Barth has often been accused of holding that the body of Jesus did not really rise from the dead. The "resurrection" is not a matter of actual history, but lies in some nebulous sphere vaguely to be described "super-historical" or even "mythological."<sup>8</sup>

By no means, however, does this represent Barth's real position. Clearly Barth is not certain as to precisely what happened at the tomb on the first Easter morn. Clearly also Barth is unwilling to defend the complete truthfulness of the resurrection narratives set forth in the Gospels. These "minor details" he considers utterly unimportant. The Biblical narrators may teach error at point after point, but they are nevertheless right on the main point. Jesus Christ really did rise from the dead. Even on this main point, moreover, Barth's conviction of the truth of the Biblical teaching is not a conclusion based on the convincing historical evidence which substantiates the truth of the Resurrection. On the contrary, Barth argues, Christian faith in the resurrection of Christ is dependent solely upon an immediately God-given faith that the living Christ now speaks. Whatever may be true as to details, whatever the historian may see in history, Jesus Christ really did rise from the dead; and this resurrection took place as an actual event in the stream of history.<sup>9</sup>

#### Not Grounded Upon Any Proofs

Barth's faith in the deity of Christ, like that in the bodily resurrection, is likewise not grounded upon any "proofs." He writes, "Jesus Christ in fact is also the Rabbi of Nazareth, historically so

<sup>1</sup> "The Resurrection of the Dead" (Trans. J. H. Stenning, New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1933), p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> This misinterpretation of Barth is made easy by the fact that it is the view of many Neo-Orthodox thinkers. See Reinhold Niebuhr, "Beyond Tragedy" (London: Nisbet & Co., 1947), pp. 19ff.

<sup>3</sup> The difficulty of understanding Barth's intricate flow of thought is aggravated in English translation by the ambiguity of the word "historical." In German "historisch" means that which has to do with the scientific study of records about human events. "Geschichtlich" means that which actually occurred as an event in time and space. According to Barth, therefore, the resurrection of Christ is not "historisch" ("historical" in this sense), but it is "geschichtlich" ("historical" in this other sense). See the difference this makes for the interpretation of Barth's thought in Miner B. Stearns' "A Conservative Interviews Barth" in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 1949, Vol. 106, p. 197.

<sup>4</sup> See J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., "Karl Barth's Theology: A Book Review," *the Bible Today*, June-September, 1950, p. 262.

<sup>5</sup> Wieman, "Religious Liberals Reply," p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Emil Brunner, "The New Barth: Observations on Karl Barth's Doctrine of Man," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 1950, Vol. 3, p. 124.

<sup>7</sup> See Letter to Prof. Samuel Hamilton cited in "Karl Barth's Theology," p. 262.

<sup>8</sup> "Kirchliche Dogmatik," Vol. I, Part II, pp. 145ff.

<sup>9</sup> "The Doctrine of the Word of God," Vol. I, Part I, p. 556.

difficult to get information about; and when it is gotten, one whose activity is so easily a little commonplace alongside more than one other founder of a religion and even alongside many later representatives of his own religion." Such a statement as this would be impossible for one who believed in the inerrant authority of Scriptures. It would be impossible, likewise, for one who held that "evidences" may lead to faith or may confirm faith in Christ. Such a statement is inconsistent with acceptance of the deity of Christ as an act of faith divorced from evidences. Jesus Christ, Barth asserts, did not prove himself in history to be the Son of God: He was, and is and now in the moment of our decision reveals himself to be the Son of God.<sup>10</sup>

One of the most disturbing elements in Barth's Christology relates to the sinlessness of Christ. In his commentary on Romans he remarks, "Jesus stands among sinners as a sinner." In his "Church Dogmatics" Barth amplifies his view. When God became incarnate, He assumed not an ideal perfect humanity, alien to us, but rather identified Himself with us sinners and adopted our sinful human nature. He not only looked like a sinner outwardly, but was indeed possessed of all our sinful disabilities. He differed from ordinary sinners, however, in that they succumb to their sinful natures and actually sin. Jesus Christ, being true God, did not sin but overcame sin. The One who did this, by the mere fact of who He was, of course, was from the very first certain of victory; but the recognition of who He was and thus of His certainty of victory could only be known by faith, not by looking at the historical situation.<sup>11</sup>

A second touchstone of any man's theology is his answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

Man's need of salvation is set forth by Barth in unmistakable language of great vigor: "Man stands before God as a sinner, as a being who has sundered himself from God, who has rebelled against being what he may be." "This sinning leads man into inconceivable need: he makes himself impossible before God," Barth, therefore, judges man lost and damned.<sup>12</sup>

To redeem lost man is the purpose for which Jesus Christ came into the world. "God comes in our place and takes our punishment upon himself," declares Barth. "What befalls Christ is

what ought to befall us." Jesus is our "sin offering"—the Lamb who took the place of the Old Testament sinner, in death upon the altar.<sup>13</sup>

The work of Christ is appropriated by the sinner through faith. Faith is an act of decision, a divine miracle worked in the human soul by God. Even as early as his commentary on Romans, Barth taught clearly that salvation is by grace through faith alone. He wrote, "Righteousness by the blood of Jesus (iii.25) is always righteousness apart from the works of the law; apart, that is, from everything human which may, before God and men, be declared righteous."<sup>14</sup>

The result of the work of salvation in the heart of the believer is to produce those works that are traditionally labeled justification, regeneration, adoption, and sanctification. This work of grace centers in the idea of forgiveness. Indeed, Barth's thought betrays a notable absence of anything going beyond forgiveness—a lack of emphasis specifically upon victory over sin in the daily life of the believer.

At one point, Barth's doctrine of salvation becomes extremely confusing. Like any double predestinarian, he argues that God Himself ultimately passes upon men the "decision as to my faith or unbelief, my obedience or disobedience, i.e., the divine decision as to whether my act is faith or unbelief, obedience or disobedience, correct or incorrect hearing." This double predestination, moreover, finds its focus in Jesus Christ. In Him we are all elected by God and in turn all rejected by God. Election and rejection in Christ are attributed not to different classes of individuals, but both to every individual

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 117-119.

<sup>11</sup> "The Epistle to the Romans," p. 112.

man. Of all men, therefore, it may be claimed, "There is bestowed upon him unconditional participation in the glory of God." Every man apparently by his creation and fall participates in the salvation secured for him by Christ. By this Barth certainly cannot mean that man may hope to receive ultimate salvation without repentance and faith. But it certainly does imply that for every man, repentant and unrepentant, we may assuredly hope for ultimate restoration to God.<sup>15</sup>

One cannot help but feel that Barth has not really endeavored to draw his doctrines directly from the Bible. For all his warning that we must take the whole Bible seriously just as it is written, he is not really Biblical. Profession to the contrary, he does not make exegesis of Scripture the foundation of doctrine.

Rather, as perhaps we might suspect from his view of the inspiration and authority of the Bible, Barth presents a combination of Biblical insights and a non-Biblical philosophical framework. At times his Biblical exegesis is primary and his doctrine shines forth true to evangelical faith. At other times the framework becomes basic and upon it he stretches and tortures the teaching of Scripture.

Of the origin of this philosophical framework Barth himself gives us the clew when he writes, "If I have a system, it is limited to a recognition of what Kierkegaard called the 'infinite qualitative distinction' between time and eternity . . . and the relationship between such a god and such a man."<sup>16</sup>

In rebellion against Modernism, which

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 153; and "Kirchliche Dogmatik," Vol. III, Part II, pp. 155ff.

<sup>16</sup> "The Epistle to the Romans," p. 10.

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## X. Teacher Training With the Master Teacher

The lure of wealth (Mark 10:23-31)

By CLARK S. BEARDSLEE, D.D.

CHRIST'S comment, as the young ruler retires. "Only at dire pains can a man of wealth enter the kingdom of God."

(a) Fix the occasion. The rich youth declines the Kingdom rather than surrender his goods. He is sidling awkwardly away. Christ takes note of all his darkening selfishness. He has offered to the man His own companionship, the wealth of Heaven, all the un-mixed joy of human charity. He deeply knows the values He presents. But the youth has turned his back. And now the Master faces toward His followers. They have watched the battle, and seen the youth withdraw, and heard the Saviour's solemn estimate. They utter their

dismay. It seems to close to men of wealth the door of life. Right here you may wisely pause and learn to use your eye. It is a critical teaching scene. The engaging youth has not been won; His own disciples are in a maze of wonder. What will the Master do?

(b) He reiterates His awful word, but with augmented accept and solemnity. Take the measure of His stately deliberateness. Weigh its dreadful burden. "To save a rich man is all but hopeless. God must intervene." Mark Christ's rigor here. The disciples are stunned. The youth is verging beyond Christ's call or reach. The outcome is awful. It is of the Lord's own conscious ordering. But He leaves it fixed. He does

<sup>10</sup> "Doctrine of the Word of God," Vol. I, Part I, pp. 474ff.

<sup>11</sup> "Kirchliche Dogmatik," Vol. I, Part II, p. 173. This view is known in English theological literature as the Irvingite theory of the incarnation and atonement and was condemned by the Scottish Church in the early nineteenth century.

<sup>12</sup> "Dogmatics in Outline" (translated by G. T. Thomson. New York: Philosophical Library, c. 1949), p. 88.