

DR. BARTH GIVES VIEW ON THEOLOGY

Sips Cognac as He Tells of
Theories at Princeton

By GEORGE DUGAN

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PRINCETON, N. J., April 30
—A genial, 75-year-old Swiss Protestant theologian has captured the hearts and minds of this college community in a little less than twenty-four hours.

He is the Rev. Dr. Karl Barth, who last night began a series of five lectures in the Princeton University Chapel to explain the meaning of Barthianism, or evangelical theology.

Dr. Barth is a special guest of Princeton Theological Seminary, which last week opened a year-long celebration of its 150th anniversary. This is his first visit to the United States.

The theologian has written scores of books on his favorite subject. In essence, Barthianism opposes the humanistic approach of a man-centered theology, fairly common in Protestantism, in favor of a God-centered approach with His word supreme.

In a brief, pre-lecture interview today, Dr. Barth was asked if evangelical theology could be classed as a sort of middle ground between so-called liberal theology and the fundamentalist, which is the strict literal interpretation of the scriptures.

Stand on Own Feet

Between sips of cognac on the rocks and some adept pipe-packing, he insisted that Barthianism stood firmly on its own feet and in effect took both schools under its wing.

In the seminary's crowded snack bar at noon faculty members and students alike were unanimous in their praises of Dr. Barth's personal warmth, his sense of humor and his contagious devotion to theology.

During the interview, the churchman jovially took issue with those who have hailed him as a modern theological "giant." He said he liked the word "dwarf" better.

Despite this protestation, Dr. Barth was described last night as the "leading theologian of the twentieth century and one of the greatest theologians of the Christian era."

They were the words of another theologian, the Rev. Dr. John A. Mackay, president emeritus of Princeton Seminary.

Dr. Mackay recalled that thirty-two years ago in Bonn, Germany, he became Dr. Barth's first instructor in the English language.

Fond of Detective Stories

"My student," Dr. Mackay observed, "has become a master of the English language. His excellence in this regard, however, is not due to the Scotsman who was his first English teacher, but rather to the pupil's subsequent devotion to detective stories in the language of William Shakespeare and John Bunyan."

In his lecture tonight, Dr. Barth declared that "ever since the end of its illusory splendor as a leading academic power during the Middle Ages, theology has taken too much pains to justify its own existence."

"It has tried too hard," he said, "especially in the nineteenth century, to secure for itself at least a small but honorable place in the sun of general science. This attempt at self-justification has been no help to its own work. The fact is, it has made theology to a great extent hesitant and half-hearted. And this uncertainty has not earned theology greater respect for its achievements from the world than a very modest tip of the hat."

Tomorrow morning Dr. Barth will hold a press conference in New York at the offices of his publisher, Holt, Rinehart & Winston. He will end his lecture here Friday.

From then until his return to Switzerland about the middle of May, Dr. Barth will visit Washington, Gettysburg, Pa., [he is a Civil War buff] San Francisco and Chicago.