

Lecture 13: Modernism, Barthianism & the Ecumenical Movement

Father we want to thank You that You are the Lord of all the universe, the Lord of all truth. We pray Father that as we study together, as we think together that You will teach us. We thank You for this man whom You raised up to speak Your word very clearly at a particular point in history and we pray that we may have the same clarity of thinking and the same boldness today and the same prophetic vision to see what needs to be said fearlessly in our own moment of history. We ask it Father for Jesus' sake, Amen.

Review and Introduction: Having finished an analysis of Dr. Schaeffer's article on apologetics in the last lesson, Professor Barrs now proceeds to review another of Schaeffer's articles, written during the 1940's.

Modernism, Barthianism & the Ecumenical Movement

I. Reprinted Lectures: *Here We Stand*

- A. "The Need of Europe"
- B. "Modernism, Barthianism and the Ecumenical Movement"
- C. "Revolutionary Christianity"
- D. "The Oneness of Unbelief"

II. "Modernism..." Introduction

- A. The Reformation period
 - 1. Unity in basic doctrine
 - 2. Disagreed on other issues
- B. Post-Reformation period
 - 1. Unity on basic issues; "the stream of historic Christianity"
 - 2. Differences on secondary but important issues
 - 3. A general recognition of the nature of biblical Christianity
- C. Modernism: completely new
 - 1. Differences on all basic issues
 - 2. Especially rejection of Bible's authority
 - 3. Equals German "Higher Criticism"
 - 4. Union Theological Seminary, New York

III. Three Phases of Modernism

- A. "Tolerate me (in the name of love)"
 - 1. Discipline of Dr. Charles Briggs (Dr. B.B. Warfield)
 - 2. The church fell asleep
- B. The Battle
 - 1. By the 1920's, Modernists in the majority
 - 2. Parallels to the Reformation
 - a. The whole church had gone astray from central teachings
 - b. The whole church was lost because the battle was fought too late
 - c. Many wanted to reform the church from within, which led to "The Counter-Reformation"
- C. Control
 - 1. Losing impact
 - 2. Generations drifting away from the church

IV. Karl Barth

- A. Digression
 - 1. Philosophers and objective truth

2. “Pragmatism”
 - a. “True today but false tomorrow”
 - b. Depends on the subjective
- B. Barth applied this thinking to theology (“Modernism...”—page 41)
 1. False historically but true religiously
 2. Barth’s personal faith
 3. Reinhold Neibuhr
- C. The World Council of Churches—all religious traditions become equally valid
- V. Question & Answer Session