

## **Modernism & Ecumenicism**

*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. We pray that we might 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 moment in history. We ask this, Father, for Jesus' sake. Amen.*

The next section that I want to move on to now arises from several other articles Schaeffer wrote, right around the same time that he wrote the little review of Buswell's review of Connell's apologetics. This next section is on the state of the church in the 1940s and in particular on the state of modernism.

There were some months when Edith Schaeffer and the children were in Philadelphia and Francis was traveling around the United States. He gave a series of lectures during that period in several different churches that were then reprinted. There were basically four lectures. The whole thing is called *Here We Stand*, as it was reprinted later by the Independent Board for Foreign Missions. But the articles were "The Need of Europe," which was published in *Christian Life and Times*; "Modernism, Barthianism, and the Ecumenical Movement," which was published in *The Baptist Bulletin*; "Revolutionary Christianity," and "The Oneness of Unbelief," which were published in *Biblical Missions*, the organ of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. These four articles were given first as lectures in many different churches around the United States, first in Presbyterian churches and then in other churches—Baptist churches, Methodist churches all around the United States. They were published in these different magazines and then brought together in this little booklet, *Here We Stand*. He also wrote several other articles during that period of several months and in the year or two afterward about the state of the church at that time. Some of them look at the similarities between Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, and modernism (and we can look at that later).

Today I want to look in particular at this article, "Modernism, Barthianism, and the Ecumenical Movement." This was first published in *The Baptist Bulletin* in 1948 and then reprinted in various different forms—in this little booklet, *Here We Stand*, and also by the American Council of Christian Churches. Now, what does he have to say in this article? In the introduction, he looks back at the Reformation and shows how at that time there was a unity and diversity in Reformation churches. There was a unity on basic issues of doctrine, about the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the resurrection of Christ, justification through faith, and so on. And above all, he points out, the major branches of the Reformation were agreed on the absolute authority of Scripture, on *sola Scriptura*, that we stand under the Word of God. They had disagreements on all sorts of other issues that were not so central, that did not define what the Christian faith is. But they were agreed on, they were united on, basic doctrines.

He goes on in the article to point out, second, that in all the Protestant denominations since the Reformation you find something similar. That is, across all Protestant denominations there has been agreement, unity, on basic issues of doctrine. This is what he calls "the stream of historic Christianity." That is a phrase he used over and over again from that point onward, right through the rest of his life: "the stream of historic Christianity." Thus Protestant churches had this unity, this agreement on central doctrines, all undergirded by a commitment to the authority of the Bible.

But there were, at the same time, differences on secondary but important issues. He points out that though sometimes people could be very divisive on these secondary issues and regard them as if they had the same importance as the central issues on which they were agreed, nevertheless one could look back through the whole

time since the Reformation and see that there was general agreement on the nature of Christianity. And all Protestants were very much agreed on this, in terms of the basic issues.

The third point he makes in the introduction to this article is that when we come to modernism, we find something completely new. (He is using “modernism” to refer to what is more commonly known as “liberalism” today). He points out that the difference with modernism is that it differs at the points of agreement where all the rest of historic Christianity has agreed—on the virgin birth, on the resurrection of Christ and the deity of Christ, and particularly on the commitment to the authority of Scripture. The difference with modernism is that at all these points it has a different position, a new position. In particular, modernism rejects the authority of the Bible. Modernism, he says, equals German higher criticism, which was the other way at that time that what we call “liberalism” was referred to. He carefully distinguishes between German higher criticism and textual criticism, which is looking at the text to see what the genuine text is and what it has to say. German higher criticism simply rejected wholesale large parts of Scripture on a literary basis or on a subjective basis. Then he gives a brief, historical summary of German higher criticism, or of modernism. He says it is approximately 150 years old, going back to about 1800. It has held sway and been the dominant force in the theology in Germany for 100 years, from 1850 up to the time of his writing in 1948. It has held absolute dominancy in the churches in Germany during that time. It has been tremendously dominant and active in England for a period of 75 years, going back to about 1875. And in the United States, particularly since 1900, it has been increasingly influential. He makes the point that in the United States its primary entrance was through Union Theological Seminary in New York, from 1900 onward. That is his introduction.

Then we come to the main point of his paper. What he does is suggest that there are three phases of modernism of which his readers or hearers should be aware. This is interesting, looking at his analysis of the development of modernism, or liberalism. He suggests that the first phase of modernism was the phase of “Tolerate me.” The Liberals or Modernists were saying to the rest of the people in the church, to the Bible-believing Christians, “Tolerate us. Tolerate me in the name of love.” And he gives some interesting history on that. He says that during this first phase of modernism, while the modernists were in the minority in the major denominations and they appealed for toleration, there was some discipline carried out by the Bible-believing Christians. The example that he gives is the instance of the discipline of Charles Briggs of the Presbyterian Church, USA. Briggs denied the inerrancy of Scripture. Dr. B. B. Warfield led the movement against him, to have him disciplined. He was, in fact, tried for heresy and suspended from the church. Schaeffer points out that it was not that Dr. Briggs was not liked personally, or that people questioned the strength of his scholarship. But in the light of the holiness of God, and the obligation to be faithful to God, church discipline was carried out; a biblical separation was practiced. He was disciplined and suspended from his ministry. This was the first phase of modernism: the phase of toleration, the demand for toleration by the modernists, and this instance of discipline, this one instance of discipline. He says that basically from the period 1900 to 1920, while the Modernists were largely being tolerated after this one instance of discipline, the Bible-believing church fell asleep.

That brings him to the second phase. He describes the second phase of modernism as “the battle.” By the 1920s, Bible-believing Christians woke up again, after their 20 years of sleep. They discovered that the modernists were no longer a small minority in their denominations, but in some cases were the majority. And not only were they the majority, but they had seized control of many of the institutions and organizations of many of the mainline denominations. So Bible-believing Christians suddenly woke up, became alarmed, and joined in the battle to try to do something about the modernists. They wanted to try to discipline them, to try to have them suspended from their ministries, to make pure their denominations by standing up for the truth. But by the time the battle was joined, it was too late to do anything. The modernists had been tolerated for so long, and there were now really too many of them to do anything about it. Schaeffer says, “In that battle, as you look at it, at first there were thousands and thousands of ministers, teachers, Bible-believing Christians who stood up and

fought for the disciplining of the modernists. However, when it gradually became apparent that they [the Bible-believing Christians] could not win and could not purify their denominations, the thousands dwindled to a handful.” There were very few who carried on in the battle when it became obvious that the battle was a very huge one, that it was too late to join the battle, and that very little could actually be done. He says that the consequence here was that the great majority of Bible-believing Christians in the mainline denominations dropped separatism.

Up to that point they had believed, in theory, in separation; that is, the separation of disciplining those who were wolves in the church, as Paul uses that expression, those who deny central biblical doctrines. As he points out, that was the position of the church really for the whole previous 400 years, back to the Reformation. As you look back through all that time, even though the church was plagued at various times by Unitarianism, by deism, by all sorts of other problematic teachings at central points, the mainline denominations had held firm to the view that it was important to try to maintain the purity of the church and to discipline those who were teaching falsehood. All through that period, those who rejected the central doctrines had to leave the church. Thus unbelief was outside the church. Now there was a new situation, and unbelief was inside the church on all the central issues, particularly with regard to the authority of Scripture. But suddenly, he says, in the 1920s and early 1930s, many Bible-believing Christians dropped their commitment to separation—that is, their commitment to the purity of the Christian church. And this was simply because they could not win against the liberals. And now separation meant not disciplining people; separation ought to have meant leaving the church themselves. They could no longer purify the church. They could no longer discipline those who denied cardinal elements of a biblical faith. He says what should have happened at that point is separation in reverse. By “separation in reverse” he means, “If we cannot get rid of them by disciplining them—because they are now in the majority or have such dominant influence that there is nothing we can do—we should still practice separation. When we cannot discipline them, we should withdraw ourselves and form new denominations.”

Schaeffer points out that this second phase of the battle was parallel to the Reformation in three ways. First, the whole church had gone astray from the central teachings of God’s Word, just as it had at the time of the Reformation. The Reformers were faced at the beginning of the sixteenth century with basically the whole church having turned away and ceased from teaching the central truths of God’s Word: the authority of Scripture alone, salvation through faith alone, and salvation through grace alone. In this way the whole church had gone. It would be possible to stay in the church only by forgetting the concept of the purity of the church based on the holiness of God. Thus the period the church faced in the 1920s and 1930s was parallel to the time of the Reformation in that huge sections of the church, more or less the whole of the many of the major denominations, had become dominated by teaching that was contrary to biblical Christianity.

The second parallel he draws to the Reformation is this: the whole church was lost because the battle was fought too late. Of course, at the time of the Reformation it was different. The battle had been lost hundreds of years before. But basically the issue was the same, that the church woke up too late to do anything about it. He says we have the same problem now in the twentieth century. In the 1930s and 1940s, we were in a situation where the battle was lost because we woke up too late to fight the battle and put out those from the church who were teaching unbiblical doctrine.

Then he draws a third parallel, and this is a particularly interesting one. He draws a third parallel between the time of the Reformation and today. He says that there were many people at the time of the Reformation who agreed with Luther’s problems with the Roman Catholic Church. There were many people who agreed, “Yes, Luther, you are right to criticize the Catholic Church. There are all sorts of real problems. There is a lot of corruption and all sorts of departure from biblical doctrine.” They agreed with Luther’s attack, but they did not agree with Luther’s way of dealing with the problem. Luther insisted on standing up for the truth, really, outside the church. We see new denominations forming all over Europe during this time. For example, the Lutheran

churches in Germany and Scandinavia, the Reformed churches in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, and France, and the Anglican churches in England. But there were many people at the time of the Reformation who disagreed with this way of dealing with the problem. They said, "What we need to do is not to have a revolution, not to start new churches, but rather to reform the Catholic Church from within." Schaeffer says that, of course, is the cry of many people in our day. Even though it is too late to discipline anyone, even though it is too late to put anyone out, even though they may reject every essential doctrine of Scripture, what we must do is work at reforming the church from within.

Schaeffer points out what the reform movement in the sixteenth century led to. It led, he suggests, not to the transformation of the Roman Catholic Church, but to a counter-reformation. And the counter-reformation brought about the Inquisition, the rigorous persecution of anyone who disagreed with the Church of Rome. It brought about the Jesuit order, a new militancy within the Roman Catholic Church to promote its teachings. And it brought about the Council of Trent, which strengthened the power of the papacy, placed tradition on equal footing with the Bible in an authoritative way, and led to a careful definition of Catholicism over against the Protestant position. Thus the efforts of those who wished to reform the church from within led not to what they wanted, but to a tremendously strong reaffirmation and a total domination within the Catholic Church of a tremendously strong form of Roman Catholicism. These things resulted, rather than the moving of the Roman Catholic Church in a more biblical direction.

In light of this, Schaeffer then asks the question, are those who work for reform today within the denominations now dominated by modernism doomed to bring about the same kind of result as that of those who worked for reform within the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation? He says the parallel is very similar. He says, "The church is gone. The historic stream for the most part now runs outside the channel of the old, established churches. There are those who are staying in, saying their principles are the same as ours, but we are going about the solution in a wrong way. They, like the counter-reformation, want reform, not revolution." He then goes on to say very carefully, "I mean it with all my soul. I hope that their effect is not to put in subsequent history a chapter as appalling and tragic as the counter-reformation at the time of Luther. However, to this moment, the parallel is strikingly similar." Thus he is not saying the same kind of thing will certainly happen in our day, that the control of liberalism within the mainline denominations will increase as time goes by. He says that he hopes that will not happen, but there is a parallel with the Reformation.

That brings him to the third phase of modernism. He calls that "control." The third phase of modernism in the United States is control. There are several points he makes here. First of all, he says the modernists are now in control absolutely in many major denominations. But did they build new churches? Where were churches full? No, he points out that the church in fact was losing its impact. Many of the modern or liberal churches were dying. He gives the example of New England. You can see this very clearly today. You could go up around New England and already in the 1930s and 1940s there were churches dwindling so much in their numbers because of modernism that they were closing their doors. The churches were being boarded up and used for other purposes, just as in Western Europe. Of course, in Western Europe today that direction has led to the fact that now the great majority of people never go near a church, because the church has nothing to say. This powerful teaching of modernism in most of the major denominations and in many of the churches had led not only to the churches dying, but also to an increase in atheism among young people. Because the church was not preaching the Word of God and was not giving the people of the United States or of Europe the true Word of God, the culture as a whole (and particularly the younger generation) drifted toward atheism, toward rejecting Christianity and God altogether. We may say that Schaeffer is absolutely right about that. The children of liberals, the next generation, are almost always humanists, agnostics, or outright atheists. Liberal Christianity very rarely carries on to the next generation, because there is really nothing to carry on. Schaeffer said the drift here and the church's loss of its hold on the younger generation became such a huge thing that the modernists themselves began to realize the need for a new and more vibrant religion.

This brings us to Schaeffer's second point under the control phase. This is really the heart of his article. Into this acknowledged need for a more vibrant religion stepped Karl Barth. Schaeffer says, "Karl Barth had an idea. In some ways it was the most stupendous idea that has ever come from the mind of man." Now, what was this idea? As he spells it out, this idea was how to reconcile the German higher criticism and the need for a more vital religion. How you can have at the same time what were called even then "the assured results of modern scholarship"? That is, the results of the critical approach to Scripture, by which we are required to no longer believe what the Bible says in many areas. It is subject to literary, historical, and subjective criticism. Barth had an idea of how to reconcile that and the need for a more vital religion.

At this point Schaeffer makes a little digression. This is an important digression, because it is an idea that crops up again and again in his teaching over the next 35 years, up until his death. He points out that in the past all philosophers, from whatever school, going right back to the Greeks, have agreed on a certain principle. And that principle is that there is such a thing as objective truth. What does he mean by that? He says, "People may have had all sorts of different ideas about the universe. They may have been materialists, or idealists, or dualists. But they all agreed that a thing that is true is true and a thing that is false is false." He points out that a new direction in modern philosophy, which was called pragmatism or sometimes irrationalism in the United States, was to believe that something can be true today but false tomorrow. Or that it can be true for you but false for me. Thus the truth is no longer regarded as something that is objective, true whether I believe it or not. Rather, truth depends on the individual. Truth is subjective, we might say (though it is not a phrase he uses here). Truth is subjective rather than objective. He gives an example: "It has been stated that some of the irrationalists have said that someday someone will put a kettle on a stove, and it will freeze instead of boil." There are no objective facts. There is nothing that is objectively true. Truth, if you like, is "what works for me." Or truth is what I think is the truth. Or truth is what a particular culture or particular people think is true at a certain moment in time, and at a later moment in time they may reject that and believe something quite different. And then that is true for them.

When Schaeffer was saying this in the context of the churches he was lecturing at, it was a very new idea to challenge people with. Today, of course, that is just a fundamental part of our whole culture—that people have whatever morality they want to because it is true for them, and they can have whatever belief they want to because it is true for them. At that time this was an idea that I think most Christians had not even begun to think about when he started talking about it in the 1940s. Today you can read *Habits of the Heart*, for example, by Robert Ballard and others, which looks at the values of the American people. The major point of this book, as it goes around and looks at the value system of Americans today, is that the great majority of American people think the truth is only true for them. It does not have to be true for someone else. "Truth is what matters to me." Thus our whole culture now has been completely shaped by this idea. But this was a radically new idea in the twentieth century. It marks a departure from the whole previous history of Western philosophy.

Now, Schaeffer says that what Karl Barth has done is to take this kind of thinking and apply it to theology. Something can be false in history but also religiously true at the same time. I am quoting Schaeffer now: "Karl Barth brought at least some of this thinking over into his theology. He states that a thing can be false in history and yet religiously true. To Barth, history does not matter." You may regard the Bible as not the Word of God and yet still find it subjectively true for yourself or at least parts of it. Schaeffer says, "To Barth the Bible is not the Word of God, it just contains the Word of God. What may be the Word of God in it to you may not be to me. And what may be the Word of God today to either of us may not be at all tomorrow. Thus, basically the Bible is under subjective judgment just as it was under the older modernism." Now he has a little parenthesis on Barth here. I will quote this paragraph in full, because it is important:

Now, in fairness we have to say this: Barth seems to be coming more and more to the Christian position. He personally may be a saved man. It seems very definite that he is now nearer the Christian position concerning the Bible than he was 10 years ago [Schaeffer is writing in 1948]. That is why I say that perhaps he is a Bible-believing Christian. Some Bible-believing Christians in Switzerland who know him told me that they believe he is. However, whether this is so or not, this weakness of his concerning history has loosed a flood upon the world. The teaching of Karl Barth is bad, but the teaching of those who follow him is worse. They take him not as he is now, but as he was 10 years ago, and they go further than Barth ever would have gone. This school of thought we may call neo-Barthianism [what came to be called neo-Orthodoxy]. These men have carried Barth's position to such an extreme that a woman in Paris last summer told me her daughter heard Barth say, "I am not a Barthian!" In other words, even Barth himself wished to distinguish himself from some of his more extreme followers.

Thus he says, "I am not in a position to judge where Karl Barth stands personally before God, but without any doubt, his approach to Christianity, theology, and Scripture has loosed a flood on the world—on the theological world, on the world of the church, on the whole of society. Rudolf Bultmann is an example of one of Barth's more extreme followers. Bultmann said that there needed to be no historical basis whatsoever for anything that the New Testament says. We may have a personal faith in Christ regardless of whether He ever existed or not, regardless of anything that He ever did or not. What is important is our personal response to Him and the transforming effect that has on our lives, not what may be true in history. He said that we may demythologize everything in the New Testament and still hold on to our faith. So Schaeffer acknowledges that Barth himself would not go to that extreme position, that he himself had been heard to say, "I am not a Barthian!" when he looked at what some of his followers had done with his position. And he does not know where Barth stands personally in terms of his relationship with God. But without any question, the fundamental idea of Barth's has had a huge effect on the church, an enormously destructive effect. Basically the effect is an application of the thinking of the world to the Christian faith: Christianity no longer involves objective truth, but it is simply a matter of subjective response. Schaeffer then gives several examples of some of Barth's followers. He refers to Reinhold Niebuhr at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Schaeffer speaks of him as one of the most dangerous teachers of this school of thought anywhere in the world. Schaeffer says that basically, with this position it does not matter what you believe. It does not matter what you believe to the person influenced by this view.

Schaeffer says that this is what dominates in the Federal Council of Churches in the United States and in the World Council of Churches. It really does not matter what you believe to the person who holds this position, that truth is no longer objective but simply subjective and relative to the individual. Thus you can build an ecumenism regardless of what people believe, whether they are Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, old-line modernists, Barthians, neo-Barthians, or Bible-believing Christians—you can have them all together. They may have completely opposite doctrines, but they are all correct, because they all have a valid religious experience. We all share the same faith, in other words, because we all have our own personal response to Christ, though we may define who He is and what He has done in completely different ways. Now, again, this is the way so many people think about Christianity today. This is no longer a new idea, but it is just a part of the whole life of the church today. And it is certainly how the whole culture regards religious truth. There is no doubt that there is hardly a single person—of course, there are some, but the vast majority of American and European unbelievers today assume it really does not matter what you believe and that even Christians do not think it matters what you believe, as long as you are having some kind of religious response that is valid for you. In other words, he is saying that the ecumenical movement, new ecumenism, is based on the loss of objective religious truth. Schaeffer quotes a pastor he spoke to in Saint Louis, Missouri. He called this man to invite him out to have lunch with him. The pastor, a neo-Barthian or neo-Modernist pastor, said no, he did not want to. Schaeffer asked, "Why not? I had lunch with a Roman Catholic priest last week, and while we disagree about things, we had a very nice time together. I would be very happy to get together with you." But the man still said, "No, I do

not want to get together with you.” Schaeffer asked, “Well, why not?” The man said, (and I quote now from Schaeffer), “‘The fundamental difference is this: the Roman Catholic priest and you have something in common that we do not have.’ I asked him what that was, and he answered, ‘You and he agree that one is right and the other is wrong. We say you are both right.’ ”

Schaeffer’s point is this: in one sense the Bible-believing Christian and the Roman Catholic have something in common. We are agreed that there is truth about Christ and salvation that can be discovered, though we disagree about what it is. But on that point we are agreed, that there is truth that can be found and we disagree about, whereas the neo-modernist, the neo-Barthian, says, “You can believe whatever you like, and it does not matter. You are all right. Everyone is the same. What is important is your valid religious experience, that it is true for you.” Thus all religious traditions become equally valid.

What is the religious experience that someone who, let us say, denies the historical resurrection of Christ has? I remember hearing on the radio once on a program about the resurrection by an English theologian, “The meaning of the resurrection for me is that even though I know death is the end, I can have hope anyway.” You may ask, what does that mean? That just sounds like a form of nonsense. This is a very difficult question to answer, because people have fundamentally made a distinction between objective fact and religious experience.

Let me give an example from *The Myth of God Incarnate*. One of the writers in this book, who teaches, I think, at Nottingham, is Frances Young. Her chapter is called “The Clouds of Witness.” This is the best chapter in the book, really worth reading. What she does is something very similar to what Schaeffer was to do later on in talking about the lower and upper story, though at this point he had not yet developed that idea. What she basically says is that there are two kinds of truth. There is what she calls “trivial truth”; she borrows this phrase from Arthur Kessler. The two kinds of truth, then, are the “trivial” and the “tragic.” That is Arthur Kessler’s phrase being used by Frances Young in *The Myth of God Incarnate*. She says that the trivial is things like chairs, the weather, the ordinary facts of our daily experience, and the things science can look at, measure, and understand—the things that can be quantified. The tragic is the level of meaning. She says that in the level of meaning we are no longer talking about facts. We are talking about analogy, metaphor, and parable, but not about facts. We are not talking about literal truth. We do not assign the things in the area of the tragic any literal meaning. Thus she says, “I will carry on going to church. And I will carry on taking the Sacraments. And I will carry on praying, saying the creeds, singing the hymns, and enjoying the religious experience that those things give. But I will not think that my prayers can actually alter history.” So we pray for our nation, we may even pray for the weather, and so on. But we do not actually believe that our prayers will alter history, because the two levels of the tragic and the trivial do not ever come together. The tragic is a completely different area. And to make it very clear that we understand what she is saying, she uses an illustration.

The only way you can really ever understand these things is by using an illustration. This is because when you are trying to set down ideas like this in blunt proposition, you are left with something that does not seem to make sense because you are basically, as Schaeffer says, saying something is both true and not true at the same time. All this is both true and false, but it is all right anyway. She uses the illustration of the musical piece, “Mass for the Dead.” She says, “It has the power to convict me and terrify me even though I may assign no literal meaning to the idea of a final judgment, to the fact of facing God, to the reality of an afterlife. I know on the level of the trivial those things are not true, they are not real, they are not facts, they are not literal. But the music has the power to convict me and to terrify me.” Schaeffer was to use much later the illustration of Heidegger saying, “Listen to the poet.” In other words, “You cannot have any rational meaning in your life, but listen to the poet. Poetry can move you.” Frances Young is using exactly the same kind of illustration, that music can move you. In the same way, prayer, adoration of God, reciting the creeds, and reading the Scripture has the power to move you and even to transform you without you necessarily assigning any literal truth to it. It

is true only on the level of the tragic, on the level of meaning, not on the level of actuality or fact or something literal.

Now, our response to that, I think, has to be the same as Paul's in 1 Corinthians 15:13-19: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men." Either Christianity is based on actual, historical fact—either it is really true in the real world of trivial, everyday events, or else it is completely wrong. Either it is true in the sense that if I had been there at the grave of Christ, I would have seen the empty tomb, and if I had been in the garden at the right time, I would have seen Him raised from the dead, I could have touched Him and eaten fish and bread with Him on the lake—either it is true in that sense or it is not true at all.

Schaeffer suggests that particularly what Barth did and then particularly what Barth's followers did is to say that we can have faith even though it is no longer historically, scientifically, or factually true. Now, I do not know where Barth stood with the Lord, but I do know that not long before his death he came here to the United States. Various people had interviews with him. And Carl Henry, I think it was, who was editor of *Christianity Today* at that time, asked him the question, "If there had been a television camera at the empty tomb, would it have recorded anything?" Karl Barth did not answer the question. Rather, he said, "Did you say you were from *Christianity Yesterday*?" Carl Henry's response was, "Christianity yesterday, today, and forever." In other words, it is really always the same. But Barth simply avoided the question. For him it was an irrelevant question. It does not matter.

Well, the New Testament says it does matter. If the resurrection did not happen, then we should stop being Christians. But if you ask what someone's religious experience is, it is a purely religious experience. That is why Schaeffer and I keep saying here that Christianity stands or falls on the fact that it is true. He later started talking about "true truth"; here he talks about "objective truth." But his point is if it is not true for everyone, regardless of whether anyone believes, then it is not true at all. And if it is not true tomorrow as well as today, it is not true at all. It is either true or it is false. It cannot be both. The Christian must not give up that traditional understanding of philosophy—and not just of philosophy, it is what all ordinary human beings believe.

I know perfectly well when I go outside here that I have to drive on the right-hand side of the road. I cannot drive on the left as well or I will get killed. In the real world, in the actual world God has made, things cannot be both true and false at the same time. But in modern theology they are. They are false in the trivial level and true in the tragic level, to use that illustration. This illustration is remarkably similar to Schaeffer's "lower and upper story" illustration, which is a perfect illustration of this. Something in the lower story is false, so you put it in the upper story and have meaning there.