

DOWNLOAD PDF CONCLUSION: KARL BARTH AND AN UNFINISHED PROJECT FOR RELIGIOUS PLURALISM.

Chapter 1 : A Discussion with Peter Berger, Professor Emeritus at Boston University

CONCLUSION: Karl Barth and an Unfinished Project for Religious Pluralism (pp.) So far in this book I have discussed Barth's theology in light of its connection with contemporary issues so that his theology of God's Word is revealed as being grounded in God's action for the world.

Evangelical, Catholic, and reformed: Christians, Jews, Muslims, and people of conscience speak out Book 5 editions published in in English and held by WorldCat member libraries worldwide In this hard-hitting volume two dozen scholars, activists, military officers, and religious leaders call for an immediate end to the practice of torture, paying particular attention to its use in the American war on terror. Torture Is a Moral Issue begins with background material, including vivid firsthand accounts from a torture survivor and a former U. The heart of the book contains respectively Christian, Jewish, and Muslim arguments against torture, and the final part charts a way forward toward a solution, offering much principled yet practical advice. Hunsinger also discusses important issues in trinitarian theology and Christology that extend beyond the contemporary Barth debates. This major statement will be valued by professors and students of systematic theology, scholars, and readers of Barth For the sake of the world: Karl Barth and the future of ecclesial theology Book 6 editions published in in English and held by WorldCat member libraries worldwide For the Sake of the World gathers the presentations from one of the most successful Barth conferences ever held in the United States. Organized as a dialogue between the contributors, this volume features cutting-edge studies of Barthian themes, which are each followed by substantial critical responses. The volume ends with a winsome memoir on "Barth as a Teacher" by John Godsey. Each Beatitude finds its primary definition in Jesus himself. For example, he himself defines what it means to be ""poor in spirit. The Beatitudes are divided into two sets of four, with the ninth serving as the overall conclusion. The final Beatitude pertains to religious persecution. The discussion of each Beatitude ends with a practical application. The topics considered with respect to The Needy are Christian responsibility to the poor, the ministry of listening, the spirituality of meekness, and the proper care of the earth. With respect to The Faithful, the topics include what mercy looks like in action, purity of heart as sacramentally based, restorative justice as a contemporary example of peacemaking, and dramatic instances of nonretaliation on the part of the righteous being persecuted. The book concludes with a meditation on persecution: The hope of universal salvation is raised at the end by attending to Catholic, Evangelical, and Eastern Orthodox voices Thy Word is truth: Barth on Scripture Book 4 editions published between and in English and held by WorldCat member libraries worldwide "Over the past two decades studies on Karl Barth have become increasingly technical. The ironic result is that although Barth wrote chiefly for preachers, scholars have become the primary gatekeepers to his rich theological thought. The first section deals with Torrance and Barth on the Sacraments. He also develops a post-Barthian appreciation of Jews and Judaism. In the second section Hunsinger discusses such figures as Hans W. Frei, Ernst Troeltsch and H. Niebuhr in terms of their contribution to Postliberal Theology. The final section offe.

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Chapter 2 : Karl Barth : Paul S. Chung :

In his recent book, Karl Barth: God's Word in Action (James Clarke,), Chung closes with a valuable chapter on Barth's "unfinished project for religious pluralism", including a discussion of Barth's relation to Buddhism and to Korean minjung theology.

David Little Against a background of growing official support for control of religion, church bodies began to speak out with renewed resolution in favor of a universal right to freedom of conscience and religion, in some cases going so far as to denounce altogether the resort to force in resolving international conflicts. Conflicting developments reflected the very different experiences of the American and French Revolutions and Building on the ideas of Williams and Locke, figures like Isaac Backus of New England, and George Mason, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, all contributed significantly to ensuring the rights of free conscience as part of the founding document of the American Republic. The American founders often spoke of a substantial role for religion in civil and political life, both as a school of virtue and as a limitation on government, but they occasionally had different views of the matter. Washington asserted in his farewell address that religion produces "dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity. Their virtue must have some other foundation. But the French concept of religious freedom developed in a radically different way from that of the United States. On the other hand, the French Revolution, driven by a strong anticlerical impulse, led to the suppression and punishment of unpopular religious beliefs on the part of individuals. Catholic priests and nuns were executed and exiled. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy forcibly placed the Catholic Church under popular rule and required the election of bishops. Partly as a consequence, the French are to this day deeply suspicious of any public expression of religion or any suggestion that religion might contribute to civic virtue, the common good, or to limiting the power of government. During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the United States, Europe, and many other parts of the world experienced challenges to their respective emerging concepts of religious freedom. Despite the guarantees of the First Amendment, America tolerated an informal establishment of Protestant Christianity. In state after state, Jews, Catholics, Mormons, and non-mainline Protestants were excluded from public office or subject to hostile legislation such as the Blaine amendments and the Edmunds-Tucker Act. Protestant symbols and beliefs were favored in public schools and elsewhere. And yet, notwithstanding these developments, the promise of the First Amendment led the American Catholic Bishops in the late nineteenth century to praise the American system of religious freedom. European countries in this period, like Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany, were consumed with imperialist campaigns that, more often than not, rewarded religions offering blessings and encouragement to those campaigns, while disadvantaging religious groups that dared to challenge or resist them. It is true that the agents of imperialism, frequently promoted and accompanied by Christian missionaries, inadvertently carried with them a self-incriminating message, which in part proved to be their undoing by the middle of the twentieth century. Subjected peoples eventually called imperialists to account according to their own liberal standards, including their advertised commitments to the equal rights of conscience. In some cases, however, Christian missionaries themselves condemned the imperialist pretensions of their own countries. Furthermore, according to exhaustive analysis by Robert Woodberry, Protestant missionaries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were a crucial catalyst initiating the development and spread of religious liberty, mass education, mass printing, newspapers, voluntary organizations, and colonial reforms in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, thereby creating the conditions that eventually made stable democracy more likely. These reform efforts often drew on the biblical and theological sources of the Christian tradition. In general, the Catholic Church displayed a deep suspicion of religious freedom throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century, with encyclicals such as as *Mirari Vos*, issued in , and *The Syllabus of Errors*, issued in These and other official statements were in part a reaction to the religious indifferentism believed to be the inevitable result of institutionalized religious freedom, and in part a reaction

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to the severe anti-Catholicism of French, Italian, and German political reforms. In , however, with the adoption of the papal encyclical *Dignitatis Humanae*, the church articulated its official endorsement of the civil right to religious freedom, grounding it in both faith and reason. While some nations showed signs in the first half of the twentieth century of opening the door to greater religious freedom, the experience of religious people and institutions during World War II decidedly hastened this process. Likewise, Catholic theologians such as John Courtney Murray, Karl Rahner, and Jacques Maritain persistently endeavored to protect religious freedom against the threat of state domination. States, for their part, saw a reduction from past anti-clericalist posturing, with the overall result of a friendlier climate for religious freedom following World War II. Agitation of this kind by Christian and other religious leaders contributed significantly to the drafting and acceptance in of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly. Without such influence it is unlikely that human rights would have found favor among the drafters of the UN Charter. Of course, there remain deep differences of opinion among members of the Christian tradition over these matters, not to mention similar differences between and among members of other religious and philosophical points of view. Still, there seems widespread agreement among Christians and others that, whatever the differences on detail, all people of conscience have a profound stake in resisting the threat of collective domination, indelibly vivified during the twentieth century by the fascist and communist experiments. By the early twenty-first century, however, the need to protect religious liberty seemed greater than ever. Christians and others began to witness the extraordinary reappearance of religious persecution on a global scale. Of all the religious groups who were victims of worldwide religious persecution as of , Christians fared the worst. Discover similar content through these related topics and regions.

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Chapter 3 : A Three-Pronged Defense of Salvific Exclusivism in a World of Religions

Karl Barth: God's Word in Action By Paul S. Chung. An insightful analysis of the writings of the German theologian Karl Barth, emphasising the political and social relevance of his thought.

A sermon by Kim Fabricius There was an old minister who, on his deathbed, asked to see the local MP and a prestigious lawyer who were both members of his congregation. The dying minister, however, said not a word. But things have changed. Another seismic shift in the landscape of death in the 21st century has to do with dying as much as death itself. How do people want to die? Almost unanimously people will say that, above all, they want to die quickly – in their sleep would be ideal, next best a stroke that kills you before you hit the floor. But, again, no Maker, no meeting – and so no need for preparation: But how can it be that Christians themselves have slipped into this cultural attitude of indifference? Could it be that, for all intents and purposes, we have become practical atheists? Thus have the heights of the Christian hope been reduced to an abyss of morbid designer banality. We live in a culture of youth and beauty, with the chemicals and the cosmetic surgery to keep us artificially young and beautiful actually, more like grotesque. And when reality finally, inexorable strikes, well, freeze-dry me today and thaw me out tomorrow. And with our changing attitudes to death and dying there goes – what else? Coffins are as likely to be draped with photos, flags, or sports memorabilia as with Christian symbols. There is mounting pressure on ministers to collude in this make-believe, to direct and choreograph it. And then there is the committal. Once the committal was the public climax of the service, now it is fast becoming a private affair, a family-only ceremony, in the US even an undertaker-and-minister-only ceremony. Sometimes the committal is no longer even a committal, rather the coffin is left on the catafalque for discreet disposal after the people depart. Ministers of course – me too – collude in this cover-up. As the American theologian Thomas Long observes: Imagine, if you will, a baptism without the baby, a confirmation without a new member, an ordination without a new minister, a wedding without the couple. I am concerned that these are not healthy developments at all. They are signs that not only is society becoming post-Christian, which we know, but also that even the church itself is becoming post-Christian – and we are not even aware of it. We do not deny death. No one really believes that – and Christians least of all. But what kind of comfort and consolation? And the answer to that question turns on the recognition that, fundamentally, our services of death and resurrection are not about us, they are about this particular person who has been a part of our lives and, if a fellow Christian, a part of the life of the church. Which is why of course the service of Christians should take place in the church, and why of course the body should be there. You have loved this embodied person. In heaven, when we meet again, will it be as ectoplasm? It will be as what St. Here in church the dead was baptised, indeed baptised into the death and resurrection of Christ. Here in church the dead was made a member, and perhaps married. Here to church the dead came to worship week by week, to celebrate Communion month by month, to hear the Easter message. And here, I conclude, in church the dead should be brought on the last stage of his or her earthly journey, that the church family may mourn, yes, but more, that our mourning may be transformed, not just by memory but by hope, as in worship we accompany the dead as God draws them through the thin space between time and eternity. Funerals may be for the living, but they are about the dead, and they are in and through the dead yet living Jesus Christ. If we ever forget that Christian services of death and resurrection are about the management of our mourning only insofar as they are about the meaning of the message, then we of all people, in self-pity, are most to be pitied. The world is in denial and confusion about death, dying, and the afterlife. The Christian Church should not be. Our teaching is clear: In Christ shall all be made alive! The truth is often hard and always odd, but only the truth will set people free.

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Chapter 4 : The Gottingen Dogmatics - Karl Barth : Eerdmans

Karl Barth: God's word in action. Karl Barth and an unfinished project for religious pluralism. Conclusion: Karl Barth and an unfinished project for.

Now, however, even this central idea to the Rule of Faith is questioned. If one holds that Christ is confined to Christianity, one has chosen a god that is not sovereign. The rest of the world, graced from within, has been steadily proving us wrong. According to Selmanovic, neither the revelation of God Himself nor of His grace is contained or confined to Jesus Christ. Without recognizing God, grace, and goodness outside of the boundaries we have made and without the possibility of expanding our understanding of God, grace, and goodness, we have come to a place where Christianity as we know it must either end or experience another Exodus. They want an unmanaged God. Barth paints a very different picture in his Dogmatics, however. While Selmanovic believes that God is simply best defined by the historical revelation in Jesus Christ, Barth insists God is only defined by Jesus Christ. Rather than experiencing the knowledge of God and His grace apart from Jesus Christ, both are intimately connected to Him. It is only in Jesus Christ that we know and understand God and His grace, which is revealed in the gospel that defines life. Or does God place his truth in others too? Well, God decides, and not us. The gospel is not our gospel, but the gospel of the kingdom of God, and what belongs to the kingdom of God cannot be hijacked by Christianity. Many Christians believe that the Kingdom of God that Jesus spoke about is inseparable from knowing the person of Jesus. If so, the question begs to be asked: Is the Kingdom of God present in all of life, among all people, throughout history, or is the Kingdom of God limited to the historical person of Jesus and thus absent from most of life, most people, and most history? The answer to this question depends greatly on whether Christians are willing to make their religion take a backseat to something larger than itself. Not only does Selmanovic believe that the kingdom of God apart from Jesus Christ reveals God, he denies that God is revealed fully and exclusively in Him. In response Barth would adamantly declare it is really not all about God. It is really all about Jesus Christ. You may need to check your spam folder and mark me as un-spammy, just to be safe. You can unsubscribe at anytime.

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Chapter 5 : Christianity and Religious Freedom in the Modern Period (")

Karl Barth as a theologian who discovers Judaism for Christian theology The liberative dimensions in Barth's theology Conclusion: Karl Barth and an unfinished project for religious pluralism.

Eric Gregory joined the faculty in , and was promoted to Professor in . His interests include religious and philosophical ethics, theology, political theory, law and religion, and the role of religion in public life. A graduate of Harvard College, he earned an M. Among his current projects is a book tentatively titled, *The In-Gathering of Strangers: Global Justice and Political Theology*, which examines secular and religious perspectives on global justice. At Princeton at large, he is chair of the Council of the Humanities. He also serves on the the editorial board of the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. Gregory Department Area Requirement: University of Notre Dame Press, , Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou New York: Fordham University Press, , *Tradition, Theory, and Society*, edited by Frederick V. Simmons and Brian C. Georgetown University Press, , Cambridge University Press, , Eerdmans, , *Perspectives on Peter Singer*, ed. John Perry Cambridge University Press, , Colorado and Justin D. Klassen University of Notre Dame Press, , Oxford University Press, , Bailey, and Craig Hovey Grand Rapids: Paul Oslington New York: Routledge, , Daniel Migliore Eerdmans , Singer and Helga Kuhse Blackwell , *Religion and Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Douglas Hicks and Mark Valeri Eerdmans ,

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Chapter 6 : Eric Gregory - Department of Religion

Justification, for Barth, is unconditional divine pardon. Because Barth's doctrine of election reduced the total number of both all elect and reprobate persons down to one, Jesus Christ, the God-man is really the only one who is justified as well as condemned.

Insights from the Bible and the Early Church. I read this text recently as a part of a seminary course on World Religions. A highly recommended read Moreover, a single and unified conclusion within the Christian tradition has neither been subscribed to in the past, nor has it been arrived at in the present. McDermott does not hesitate to explore this aged and difficult question. Instead, McDermott engages the biblical witness, i. While it is a central conviction of the Christian faith that in Jesus the fullness of God has been revealed Col 1: Melchizedek, Zarephath, adaptation of names for Yahweh, creation and flood stories, etc. Furthermore, this practice carried over into the early church, as Christians continued to engage the philosophies and religious teachings of their context in efforts to develop and understand their conviction of Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Even more, Origen was sure to remind Christians that embedded within other religions was the dialectic of truth and falsehood; therefore, Christians were to be cautious in their interactions. Nonetheless, the biblical witness and the traditions of the early Christians charges contemporary believers not to dismiss with ease and ignorance, but to engage with wisdom and concern the religious and philosophical plurality of our contexts, especially as such interactions lead to improved understandings of Jesus, who is the Divine Logos revealed. This question is unable to be answered definitively, neither in the affirmative nor negative. However, McDermott is quick to note a variety of biblical texts to suggest that, for Israel, and quite possibly early Christianity, monotheism was not as clearly embraced or developed as often assumed. The New Testament writers pose similar notions and affirm not only the existence of these deities and principalities, but also the need to resist and hold fast to Jesus who is Lord over them Gal. The third, vehement missionary exclusivism, denies any and all deities other than Yahweh. Finally, cosmic war view affirms the cosmic realm of spiritual forces that wage against humanity and the created world. Each of these schools of thought can be supported and thwarted by biblical texts and early Christian witness, which reminds us over and over again that unanimity in regards to the existence of pagan deities is unable to be attained. Nonetheless, wherever one stands on the spectrum, one must be careful neither to delegitimize nor over-indulge alternative religious philosophical traditions. The possibility of revelation found within the very real existence of religions other than the Christianity leads to a final musing, why has God allowed this? Clement suggests that religious systems and traditions, along with their respective deities, were given as a covenant to nations beyond Israel in order to lead them eventually to the gospel found in Jesus. Irenaeus, prominent within the same century as Clement, also noted that God, as the great pedagogue, could use even pagan religious systems to lead them to sufficient revelation and ultimately Jesus. However, it was Clement who devised a three-fold response to the above question and for the purpose of the Church. First, other religions serve a didactic function for the church to engage people far and wide in the religious traditions of their cultural contexts and demonstrate that in Christ all promises have been fulfilled. Second, other religions serve as an apologetic tool to compare and contrast the Way of Jesus with the ways of alternative deities and religious experiences. Finally, other religions help the Christian understand his or her own faith on a broader and deeper level, even with the possibility of correcting and rebuking errors in his or her thinking and being in the world. The interaction with world religions, as noted by Clement, is a significant and necessary discipline for Christian communities. Sadly, many of the pools our contemporary congregations swim in are shallow at best, empty at worst, and we still manage somehow to drown. The ability of each chapter to remain both faithful and conversant is a gift to the church and generous towards those religious traditions outside Christianity. And we should not fight them! That believers of other religions are not our enemy also means patient persuasion, not hostile argument. It means loving witness to others who sincerely believe they have the truth. These words remind the

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Christian that God can use any vehicle God chooses for the purpose of revelation and liberation. In the process, we would do well to listen, engage, and, above all, work towards love and grace [2]. These are the hallmarks of the Christian Way and Path that should saturate any and all religious discourse.

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Chapter 7 : Hunsinger, George [WorldCat Identities]

The book also clarifies Barth's early interest in social and political ideas, and explores the political dimension in his later dogmatic writings, particularly in relation to his theology of Israel and issues of theologia naturalis and religious pluralism.

Peter Berger January 20, Background: Is the world, present and future, essentially secular or religious? Few scholars have had as marked an influence on this debate as sociologist Peter Berger. More interesting, he changed his position on the topic, noisily, he says. Early in his career he accepted as a given the generally accepted view that religion was declining in importance as modernization advanced—the secularization thesis—but he came later, after , to argue that religious forces are as robust as they have ever been. He now believes that the simplistic dichotomy, religious versus secular, does not explain the many intersections and he is presenting what he terms a new paradigm. In this conversation with Katherine Marshall—which draws also on an April interview at the Berkley Center—Berger emphasizes that his new theory has major implications for understanding religious phenomena in modern societies, including religious freedom, and especially for government policies that affect relationships between religious institutions and the state. He describes his personal trajectory in coming to understand pluralism and its interactions with modernity. This includes his experience working in South Africa and Mexico, research on Pentecostals, and cooperation with Samuel Huntington. In the decade I have known you, religious pluralism has been a recurring melody in your presentations. What is the new dimension that your paradigm, highlighted in *Many Altars of Modernity* published in September , brings? Albert Einstein could express his theory in one formula. It is more difficult to do that for my theory in a simple sentence that distills its complexity. However, the essential is that contrary to what the pope says, we live in a religious age. Charles Taylor wrote a large volume on the topic, *A Secular Age*. But that too is wrong. The fact that the two are both true and false, and that we live in a pluralist age, has enormous implications. There are two central realities that I have spoken and written about for a long time—that in the modern world pluralism is a common feature, and that religion is, contrary to many assumptions about its demise, alive and well. Most of the world is fiercely religious. What is new is to take as a fundamental fact that we actually live in a secular as well as a religious world, and the two coexist and interact in many ways. Understanding the intersections is essential. I must start by making clear that my theory is in no way linked to my religious beliefs. I am a bad Lutheran and a modern person. My insights that led to the new paradigm came particularly during the time I spent in central Texas, teaching at Baylor University. I interacted with many including petroleum engineers, who could not be much more modern. But they were also intensely religious. They were able to balance their modern personas and their religious commitment, in compartments, side by side. Thus pluralism is not only a question of diverse denominations and religious traditions occupying the same space but a pluralism of mind and practice involving religious and the secular. This pluralism has implications for people, for churches meaning religious institutions broadly , and for the state. Can you describe those implications briefly? I have written before about how modern pluralism affects the individual. The plethora of religious choices makes it inescapable that religion is not destiny but a choice. In the modern world religious adherence is at the core an act of individual decision. For churches, which I have also written about before, the proliferation of different religious choices means that churches are in competition. Pluralism goes with religious freedom, and where that exists there has been an explosive multiplication of denominations which is an American term that must live in civic peace. Rodney Stark wrote about this aspect of the supply side as a part of his work on American democracy; it makes the American democracy unusual. Pluralism plus religious freedom contributes to a situation that is reasonable to call a market. For the state, in the U. How does your new thinking affect your view of American policies on religious freedom? State Department] will have his work cut out for him in implementing the policies that are mandated for the American government. These seem to center on a process, involving both the U. But it is not

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clear what a country, say Switzerland, needs to do to not be a country of concern. That is an interesting question. It opens the U. How should the judgment be understood? Where are the limits? Another problem is that the U. There are many different forms of interaction between the state and religious institutions that in practice support religious freedom. What about the U. Is Russia a country of concern, with the complicated role of the Orthodox Church? Thus the political implications of religious freedom are complex. My own view is that the best approach is that the government approaches religion from a neutral stance. That is most likely to succeed. The approaches of the U. In policies aimed at promoting religious freedom it is important to ensure that the approach and actions at the very least do no harm. The American constitution gets it essentially right; a religiously neutral state with some form of freedom of religion is the most efficient way of handling the question of religious freedom. How do you see religious freedom in relation to human rights? Religious freedom and human rights are empirically tied together—freedom of belief and freedom of expression. It is artificial to try to divide or to order them. Religious freedom is essentially about human freedom. What about a case that seems to pit the human right of freedom of speech against the human right pointing to respect for religious beliefs the Charlie Hebdo case? I had never heard of the publication and what I have seen seems tasteless. But freedom of speech is essential and government interference is not helpful. It is obviously not good for a harmonious society if you persecute people. It produces nothing but discord. Is that your understanding? The formula that ended the 30 Days War is an example. Before that the de facto notion was a territorial pluralism, Cuius regio, eius religio. The ruler decided the religion of the people. If you are Catholic, you go there, and if you are Protestant, you go elsewhere. This was an improvement over being killed or forcibly converted, but it would be very hard to do today, though some have tried. There was a territorial separation of church and state. Confucianism had a kind of pluralism, which was tolerated, that could also be called a formula of peace, as could the Ottoman millet system. Thus in the basic constitution of human beings there is a pluralism. It must always have been the case. As the child grows up, they must deal with an enormous number of different individuals with cognitive assumptions and norms. Some situations are more complex than others and complexity is a feature of modernization. There are thus countless situations of relative pluralism and today in much of the world, the numbers of interactions are high and increasing. Thus there has always been pluralism, but today it is much more complicated and much more global. But the world is also ferociously secular, and many parts of modern life, for almost everyone, even individuals and communities that are highly religious, life involves substantial engagement with those secular dimensions of life. The deeply committed Catholic brain surgeon is an example; when he operates he operates in an entirely secular paradigm. That presents dilemmas for governments. The solutions they reach to handle the two realities differ but must address this duality, of the secular and the religious. I believe that the best solution is one where the state is neutral, and that should be the essential principle of religious freedom. Where you have problems is when the state tries to control or to use religion. This has ancient as well as modern precedents. The problems come when rulers and governments try to use or to control religion. You are invoked often as having converted from the classical secularization theory to an appreciation of the importance of religion. My thinking about this topic as a sociologist has nothing to do with my religious beliefs. But my view of modernity has changed considerably. Among the experiences that shook my initial understanding were research on and encounters with Pentecostalism and observing the counter culture emerge in America. This new age culture smelled religious to me, and it was religious, in the midst of the secular West. Where did you first meet the Pentecostal movement? I was looking for a topic, and was interested in religion. Puerto Ricans were coming in masses to New York, and, while many thought they were all Catholic, in fact they were not. There are quite a few Protestants. The minister suggested that somebody should look into this. So I tried and found virtually no material about the phenomenon beyond a couple of useless newspaper articles. I first interviewed a bunch of Catholic priests.

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Chapter 8 : Faith and Theology: On Korean theology, and Karl Barth's reception in Korea

Dupuis' Christian theology of religious pluralism and Raimundo Panikkar's trinitarian account of religious experience (along with Ewert Cousins' efforts to link Panikkar's proposal to the vestige tradition).

This paper has not yet been published. None of its content may be copied or republished whether in print or online. Abstract The reality of religious pluralism in our modern societies is a matter of urgent concern for Christian theology. The two themes explored are Christocentric ontology, which describes the transformation of believers into the form of being that is called being for others, and Christocentric alterity which recognizes Christ as the center of the world and acknowledges the boundary of divine transcendence as emerging in the encounter with the religious or non-religious other. Lastly, the dialectic between Christocentric ontology and Christocentric alterity is discussed in order to clarify the function of the claim that Jesus is Lord within the context of the pluralism proposed in this article. Introduction The question of how to engage a pluralistic society remains a pertinent one for theology. There is the philosophical question of truth claims. If the claim is that the Christian faith should be radically pluralistic, how well does it perform in the face of the counter-claim that such pluralism is not demanded? In other words, the claim is itself an absolutizing exclusivist claim. How does one do so as a Christian when being a Christian actually implies subscribing to the confession that Jesus is Lord? Next to the philosophical and confessional dimensions, however, is the greater urgency of the fact that our societies are characterized by such a pervasive plurality of beliefs, world views, and spiritual practices that embracing a pluralistic stance becomes the condition of possibility for religious dialogue if not religious existence. Moreover, our Western societies depend on a successful model of pluralistic existence for their well-being. For the Christian Church, the alternative to effective pluralism is being marginalized and become a subculture that has lost all relevance. The answers people give to the question of pluralism usually range from a holding on to the absolute claim of the lordship of Christ to an admittance of defeat in the face of the postmodern deconstruction of any claim to exclusivity. Proposals are usually constructed along a continuum that ranges from exclusivity to inclusivity to pluralism. Such proposals are measured with regard to how firmly truth claims are held or how one participates in the saving act that takes place. Typically relativism and pluralism go together just as absolutism and exclusivism seem to form a preferred combination. Typically, approaches in Christian theology will resort to pneumatology to formulate an inclusivistic answer to the challenge of pluralism. If Christ represents the absolute claims to lordship over all, one can still find in the work of the Spirit in the world valuable movements toward God that are related to this lordship in various degrees of preciseness. In the approach suggested in this article, however, the focus will be on Christology. As will become clear, even though Christology typically has a focus on cognation with its emphases on the eternal Word becoming flesh and on exclusivity because of the unicity of Christ, there is a resource within Christology that can be taken into a completely different direction. In taking a specifically Christological approach, an alternative to the question of pluralism emerges that de-emphasizes the epistemological question in favor of a performative Christocentric exocentricity that is ontological and hermeneutical in nature. The basic elements of such an approach can, this article suggests, be found in the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. This article aims to describe the contours of a proposal for such a pluralistic approach for Christian theology and praxis. These are no more than contours, since the pluralism suggested here is consciously incomplete. It embraces the paradox of engaging the pluralistic debate through self-erasure and considers it an initial but required step. The argument needs to be prefaced with four important observations regarding the use of Bonhoeffer in this article. How should the Church engage a pluralistic world? How may one fruitfully participate in the interfaith dialog? As a result, it may look like his thought is used as a systematic whole. There are however recurring patterns in his thought and these inform the constructive proposal of this article. It is the express intention to draw from his academic work as the roots of his intellectual development lie there. Bonhoeffer cannot be properly understood without reference to his

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intellectual development. It is not the intention to portray Bonhoeffer as the pluralist but that elements in his early theology lend themselves to pluralism especially given the direction in which his theology developed later on in Ethics and the prison literature. In its execution, however, this approach loses its opacity, i. What will become clear in the course of this article is that the early theology of Bonhoeffer particularly in its critical dialogue with Barth offers, as *theologia crucis*, a genuine contribution to the discussion of religious pluralism, esp. Two recent approaches come to mind that seek a similar engagement with the pluralistic question by a way of a retrieval of and emphasis on the exclusivist truth claims in the Christian faith. I see the current proposal positioned alongside these two, except that its contribution is based on the theology of the cross. Toward the end of this article these two theologians will be briefly looked at again. Both of these patterns are Christocentric in nature. The first pattern can be described as a Christocentric ontology. Christians are gathered in the community called the Church. Bonhoeffer describes the Church as Christ-existing-as-community. Christians are to be like Christ in the way they relate to each other in their communal praxis. This being like Christ entails a kind of being in the world. This being is not merely an adoption of a strategy or a memetic behavior but entails an ontological transformation of the believer. We find Christ in the other, whoever she may be. The otherness of the other is the location of the emergence of Christ. This pattern of thinking is deeply connected with themes Bonhoeffer developed in his dissertation, *Sanctorum Communio*. After all, Bonhoeffer wrote his sketch less than two months after a letter in which he wrote about a world come of age and a religionless Christianity. It is meaningful to quote Bonhoeffer at length here: That is not a genuine experience of God but just a prolongation of a piece of the world. Encounter with Jesus Christ. Faith is participating in the being of Jesus. Becoming human [*Menschwerdung*], cross, resurrection. The transcendent is not the infinite, unattainable task, but the neighbor within reach in any given situation. God in human form. The human being living out of the transcendent. In less than a year he was going to be hanged. The text is rich with meaning and depth. In this passage, the Christocentric ontology shows up being-for-others and Christocentric alterity the neighbor as the transcendent is hinted at. In order to unpack this passage, it is imperative to go back to earlier times when Bonhoeffer wrote his second dissertation. The initial concern with theological method How can one still make meaningful claims about God in the post-Kantian era? Bonhoeffer rejects this essentially idealistic approach for the simple reason that such a concept of God leaves God without permanent being in the world. It yields a concept of revelation that is not historicized. And where God is not genuinely present, salvation is at stake. This being-theology provides a way of thinking in which act idealism and being realism are synthesized. Instead of an act of self-mastery, whereby the subject draws for itself the boundary between itself and the unknown transcendent, one encounters an act of relinquishing of the self in faith, the outward movement of letting go of control. This act of faith is set in motion in response to the encounter with Christ or, technically speaking, the being of revelation. As per the *theologia crucis*, revelation equals the body of Christ, for that is how is God is present among humanity: The act of faith draws the subject out of herself into the reality of Christ. Faith thus leads to participation in and with the body of Christ. Concretely this means that the believer participates in the Church, which is, as Bonhoeffer repeatedly says, Christ-existing-as-community. This reflection on faith and participation in Christ brings us to the ontological phenomenology of Heidegger. Heidegger had caused a revolution with his insistence that Western thought had thus far simply overlooked the being of beings. He sets out to develop another way of human knowing of the world to overcome the calculated categorization of modernist rationalism. He posits *Dasein* as that form of being that is able to question the being of its own being. As such *Dasein* already participates in what it tries to come to know. *Dasein* proceeds to come to such an understanding by its existential embodied engagement with the world in which it finds itself thrown. *Dasein* uses what is at hand in order to express its care for the world. *Dasein* finds itself always already thrown into the world and typically simply part of the they. The analogy works as follows. This body of Christ finds its concrete continued existence in the Church. A believer participates in the spiritual community and thus already is part of that which she asks about: What and where is the revealed God? The answer is You and

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Here. Here the analogy with Heidegger continues. It was to have great ramifications for his theological development. It compelled him to be a Christian who practiced what he preached and he found himself increasingly on the side of those who are oppressed. *Act and Being*, as a study on theological method, had led Bonhoeffer toward opening theological discourse to a Christological ontology that involved hermeneutical praxis. If Christ is the man-for-others then those who participate in Christ are to express that being for others. They are only in Christ if or to the extent that this being of Christ is indeed expressed. If you want to know revelation or wonder who Christ is, says Bonhoeffer, there is only one way of acquiring such understanding: The knowing is in the praxis which is a praxis of self-discovery. With Christ, a very specific and world-transforming ontology has entered the world. This ontology is one of self-giving, being-for-others, and self-effacing. It is not about a form of behavior or the adoption of a posture, but an ontological transformation toward a new kind of being in the world: It is one thing to say that the Church is Christ existing as community [19], but quite another that such being can be a resource for inter-religious dialogue. If the Christological ontology is one of self-giving and being-for-others, what does this mean for Christian engagement with those of other faiths and those of no faith?

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Secondly, and perhaps reflecting the context of religious diversity and theories of religious pluralism in Britain, many essays engage Tillich's approach to non-Christian religions. Thirdly, some essays address the importance of existentialist philosophy for Tillich, notably via an engagement with Sartre.