

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Spring 2012

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ET/TH 9050  
Election and Ethics in Church Dogmatics II/2  
Tuesday 2:00-4:50 p.m.  
Stuart Hall 14

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In this course, we will consider Karl Barth's attempt to integrate divine election into the doctrine of God and the implications of this move for his understanding of the "command of God" as the solution to the ethical problem. We will conclude by considering aspects of Barth's special ethics as they appear within the context of his doctrine of creation and by looking at his treatment of Christian love.

### Requirements

Students are expected to prepare carefully for each meeting, contribute constructively to our discussions, and lead our inquiries on one occasion. In this instance, leadership entails the preparation of an eight to ten page paper (to be read in seminar) that highlights the significant issues arising in the readings assigned for that day (both required and recommended) and that concludes with questions for discussion.

A final paper of 25-30 pages is due Wednesday May 16, 2012. Any topic is fair game so long as it bears on the concerns of the course, involves a close reading of the relevant primary texts, includes serious engagement with the most important secondary literature, and makes a case, defends a point of view.

The papers must be submitted in WORD, typed, double-spaced, with standard margins. Notes and a bibliography are required. Any standard format of citation is acceptable so long as it is used consistently.

### Required books

Michael Dempsey, *Trinity and Election in Contemporary Theology* (Eerdmans, 2011)

Gerald McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology* (Oxford, 2010)

P. Nimmo, *Being in Action: The Theological Shape of Barth's Ethical Vision* (T&T Clark, 2007)

### Trouble and Woe

If you have special academic needs that require attention, or if you have academic difficulties that you cannot address on your own, please come see one of us. Students with disabilities (in particular) should contact us in the first week of class so that their needs can be specified and their rights facilitated under the Americans with Disabilities Act. So too, if you are having moral and spiritual difficulties associated with this course, again, please come see us. And finally, if you find that (for whatever reason) you cannot speak to either of us about some pressing matter, then please seek out someone else who might intervene on your behalf: a friend, another professor, a pastor, the Dean of Students, the Chaplain, etc.

### Grading and Evaluation

The final course grade will assess overall participation, written and oral, with your strongest contributions receiving relatively more weight than your weaker contributions. Your grade will follow from three areas of significant contribution: the seminar paper (20%), the final paper (65%), and class participation, which includes, but is far from reducible to, your contributions as an a discussion leader (15%).

### The Schedule

#### **January 31 The Relation of Barth's Revised Doctrine of Election to Classical Reformed Versions**

CD, II/2, pp. 2-93

B. McCormack, "God's Gracious Election in the Theology of Karl Barth: Musings on a Possible Way to Move Beyond the Calvinist/Arminian Divide"

#### **February 7 The Being of God in the Act of Electing**

CD II/2, pp. 94-145

Nicholas M. Healy, "Karl Barth, German-Language Theology, and the Catholic Tradition" in Dempsey, pp. 229-43.

Matthew Levering, "Christ, the Trinity, and Predestination: McCormack and Aquinas" in Dempsey, pp. 244-73.

Bruce L. McCormack, "Processions and Missions: A Point of Convergence Between Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth" (e-reserves).

Recommended: George Hunsinger, "Election and the Trinity: Twenty-Five Theses on the Theology of Karl Barth" in Dempsey, pp. 91-114.

Bruce L. McCormack, "Election and the Trinity: Theses in Response to George Hunsinger" in Dempsey, pp. 115-37.

**February 14 The Telos of God's Election of God: the Humiliation of God and the Exaltation of the Human**

CD II/2, pp. 145-94

CD IV/1, pp.179-210.

David Lauber, *Barth on the Descent into Hell* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 1-41, 153-78.

Recommended: The rest of Lauber's book.

**February 21 Barth's Doctrine of Election in Jewish Perspective**

CD II/2, pp.195-305.

Randi Rashkover, *Revelation and Theopolitics: Barth, Rosensweig and the Politics of Praise*, pp. 1-8, 119-99.

**February 28 The Limits of Historicizing**

CD II/2, pp. 410-449

Nate Kerr, *Christ, History and Apocalyptic: The Politics of Christian Mission*, pp 1-22, 63-92, 161-96.

**March 6 Reading Week**

**March 13 The Ethical Problem**

CD II/2, pp. 509-551

G. McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology*, pp. 23-165.

Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy, 1760-1860: The Legacy of Idealism*, pp. 45-65.

**March 20 Election, Relationship, and Requirement**

CD II/2, pp. 552-630

Vicki Hearne, "How to Say 'Fetch'!" in *Adam's Task*, pp. 42-76

G. McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology*, pp. 166-200

Recommended: J. Bowlin, "Barth and Aquinas on Election, Relationship, and Requirement."

**March 27      Responsibility, Moral Absolutes, and the Good**

CD II/2, pp. 631-732

P. Nimmo, *Being in Action*, pp. 1-40

**April 3        Judgment, Forgiveness, and Repentance**

CD II/2, pp. 733-781

P. Nimmo, *Being in Action*, pp. 87-135

**April 10      Spheres of command and agency**

CD III/4, pp. 3-46

G. McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology*, pp. 225-287

P. Nimmo, *Being in Action*, pp. 41-61

Recommended: Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II.90.1-4; 91.1-2; 93.1-2, 6; 94.1-6 (<http://www.op.org/summa/>)

**April 17      The Spirit of Love**

CD IV/2, pp. 727-840

G. McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology*, pp. 201-224

P. Nimmo, *Being in Action*, pp. 136-185

Recommended: Robert Pippin, *Modernism as a Philosophical Problem*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp.45-77