

[1962. Review of Karl Barth's *Doctrine of Holy Scripture*, by Klaas Runia. *Christianity Today* 6 Jul.]

BARTH, DOOYEWEERD, RUNIA

Karl Barth's Doctrine of Holy Scripture, by Klass Runia (Eerdmans, 1962, 225 pp., \$4) is reviewed by Gordon H. Clark, Professor of Philosophy, Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana.

This well-documented study with its valuable footnotes handles both exposition and criticism with easy clarity.

After explaining Barth's view that the Bible is a witness to revelation but is not to be identified with revelation, the author goes to some length in showing that Barth accepts New Testament support for half of his view but furnishes no New Testament evidence for the other half. In particular Dr. Runia points out that the biblical term *witness* and the Barthian term *witness* do not mean the same thing.

Again, in analyzing the concept *saga*, Dr. Runia uncovers the inconsistency between Barth's expressed reliance on Scripture and his actual use of preconceived notions of what revelation must be. As before, the author shows that Barth pays no attention to what the Bible says about itself.

With respect to the charge that the Bible teaches ancient and outmoded world views, a charge for which Bultmann is better known than Barth, the author rejects the solution of Aalders and Grosheide that the Old Testament writers merely used everyday language to describe what they saw, and substitutes Dooyeweerd's theory of law-spheres. Inasmuch as Dooyeweerd agrees with Barth in denying the inerrancy of Scripture, the precise intent of this substitution is hard to discern; and the later preference for *plenary* rather than *verbal* inspiration, as well as the apparent approval of John Mackay's distinction between intellectual truth and "persona truth," detract from the otherwise firm defense of biblical authority.

For a conclusion, and in opposition to those who say that Barth has changed his views, the author with adequate documentations shows that Barth has not changed in any important way with reference to revelation and the Scripture. And the recent lectures in Chicago confirm Dr. Runia's conclusion.

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