

# 20TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS

Grace

## PROTESTANT DEVELOPMENTS

### KARL BARTH (1886-1968)

- Theology
  - The ways of God are unknown to humanity
  - The Gospel confronts humans with the love of God
  - Dialectical theology
- Predestination
  - God is predestined
  - From all eternity God has decided that humanity will not be lost
  - God is predestined to give his grace, through Christ to all
  - Perhaps all are predestined to glory
- Grace is poured forth upon all
  - Some have accepted this grace
  - Others have not yet accepted it
    - Human freedom remains and may refuse God's grace
- God's Will and human freedom
  - Is God's will thwarted by human freedom?
  - Are all saved?
  - God is the source and sustainer of our freedom

### THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

- Origins and impetus
  - A late 19th-century, early 20th-century American, Protestant evangelical movement in response to the Industrial Revolution
  - Key thinkers: Walter Rauschenbusch, Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong
- Principles
  - Confidence in social sciences
  - The Church's mission is to transform society: Kingdom is coterminous w/ society
  - The true Church is the Kingdom of God: those committed to social justice
  - Jesus is a moral exemplar for building the just society
- Grace
  - Sin and depravation are purely social realities
  - Original sin is a way of describing human ignorance and underdevelopment
  - Grace and human progress are two descriptions of the same reality

### REINHOLD NIEBUHR (1892-1971)

- Works
  - *Leaves from the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic* (1928)
    - Convinced of the evils of capitalism, this work expounds his socialist views
  - *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932)
    - Pride and insecurity are the roots of evil
    - These are rooted in all human social groupings
  - *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941-3)

- *Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (1944)
- *The Self and the Dramas of History* (1955)
- *The Structure of Nations and Empires* (1959)
- Understanding of grace
  - Human nature is capable of depravity and the response to grace
    - (no total depravity)
  - Motives are easily drawn down by evil but can also be open to grace
  - Grace comes with the realization that God is sovereign
  - The cross of Christ reveals that God's love in powerlessness will overcome sin

## CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENTS

### HENRI DE LUBAC (1896-1991)

- Continuity between nature and grace
- Notional existence of pure nature

### KARL RAHNER (1902-1984)

- Anthropology as starting point
- Spirit in the World
  - Transcendence
  - Evolutionary vision
  - Structures of human knowing
  - Questioning
  - Reflexivity
  - *Potentia obedientialis*
- Hearers of the Word
  - *Potentia obedientialis* (Vorgriff)
  - Universal salvific will of God
  - Elevated transcendence
  - Supernatural existential
- Absolute Mystery
  - Knowing God
  - The experience of God
  - Categorical knowing
  - Categorical acting
- Grace
  - Nature & grace
  - Remainder concept
  - Reflection on uncreated grace
  - Action of God on the person
  - Quasi-formal causality
- Beatific vision
  - Unending mystery
  - Transformation in holiness

### HANS URS VON BALTHASAR (1905-1988)

- Nature and grace
  - Nature never exists in this world without grace
  - Grace draws nature to its proper end
  - Grace as an Inner Dynamic of Nature

- Grace brings about the breaking forth of the form of the cross in creation
- Importance of form
  - Role of beauty
  - The encounter with God
- Engaging in the drama
  - Reshaped by grace
  - Human freedom and divine freedom
- Dare we hope?
  - Possibility of hell
  - Is there a necessity of hell?
  - Can we be certain there is anyone there?

## LIBERATION THEOLOGY

- Gustavo Gutierrez
- Leonardo Boff
- Juan Luis Segund
- Jon Sobrino
- Grace and Society
  - Grace and evil are objectively present in society
  - The Church mediates grace insofar as she brings about liberation
  - Oppression = sin
  - Liberation = salvation

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Karl Rahner, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, New York: Crossroad, 1979.
- Stephen J. Duffy, *The Graced Horizon*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992.
- Stephen J. Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993, chapter 7.