



Martin Luther, Two Kingdoms



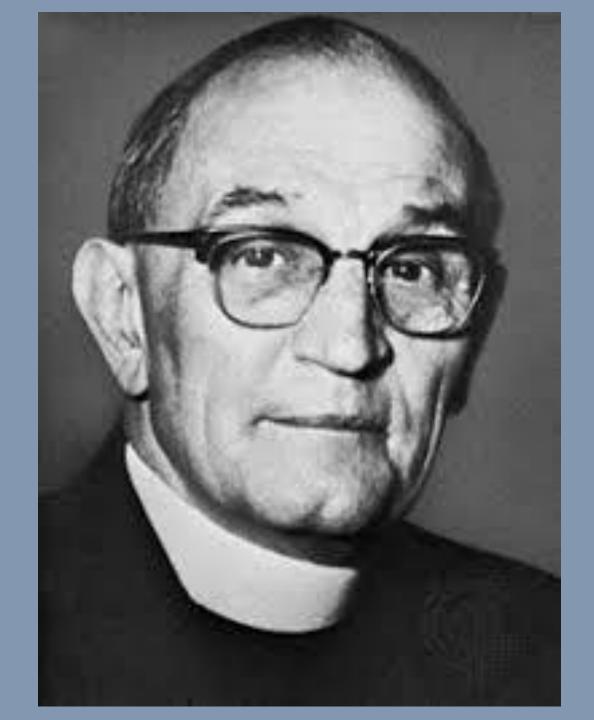
The German Christians (Deutsche Christen)



"We want a vital national church that will express all the spiritual forces of our people. . . . We want the reawakened German sense of vitality respected in our church. . . . We want our church to be at the forefront of the crucial battle for the existence of our people [Volk]... ... We see in race, Volk, and nation, orders of existence granted and entrusted to us by God. . . . Consequently miscegenation is to be opposed. . . . [We call on the German people], 'Keep your race pure.' . . . [The Jews are] a grave danger to our nationhood. It is an entrance gate for alien blood into our body politic." (1932)



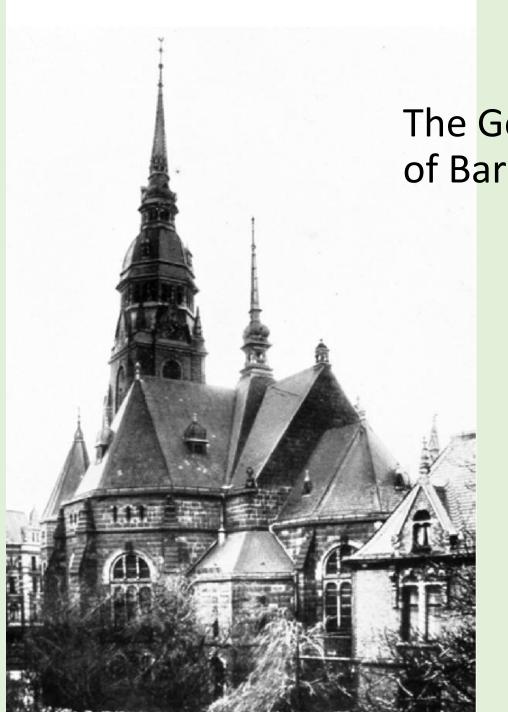




The Confessing Church
Martin Niemoeller



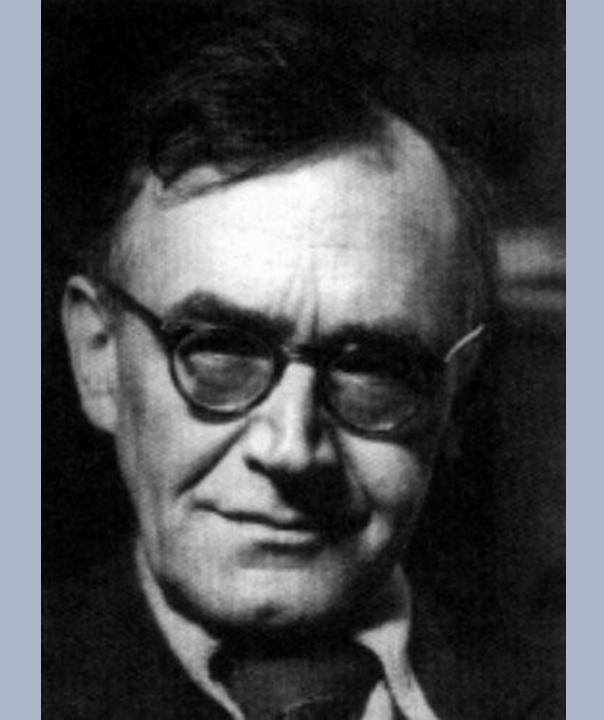
Barmen Declaration



The Gemarke Church in the village of Barmen, Germany



Karl Barth



1. Wally whilst set sope end: We will me Our aneighbor in the Mighest, much dezel autor is arner, be it es dute a little The la de les; a person had not explor, he me sely weeks and and ex and anyther and there frek "The W, 1, 9) Horas Chirles, our a un x da De. Half Cerent st me, st de esse Wal Golds, do in a Rose, de un o Bale i m Steele o vectour . 2 johnele We no sefe de Festen, el l'ante me curre du Krobe una aut rele hen are Offe Corny and and ander Eregunia Wille, Martin Wellerte at that gets that The leave and walnuty.

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We then Clock Gold Valery of me Verplay alle ance frete to cart we prove the Read of a and Gold Replay Replay alle ance frete the way for the transfer to the tente of the transfer to the transfer of the or fold worse teles, of tens or well the soule and these jobins, will the wise soule one made

Wir bekennen uns angesichts der die Kirche verwüstenden und damit auch die Einheit der Deutsche Evangelischen Kirche sprengenden Irrtümer der Deutschen Christen und der gegenwärtigen Reichskirchenregierung zu folgenden evangelischen Wahrheiten:

1) "Ich bin der Weg und die Wahrheit und das Leben; niemand kommt zum Vater denn durch mich." (Joh.14,6)
"Wahrlich, wahrlich ich sage euch: Wer nicht zur Tür hineingeht in den Schefstall, sondern steigt anderswo hinein, der ist ein Dieb und ein Mörder. Ich tin die Tür; so jemand durch mich eingeht, der wird selig werden." (Joh.10,1.9)

Jesus Christus, wie er uns in der heiligen Schrift bezeugt wird, ist das eine Wort Gottes, das wir zu hören, dem wir im Leben und im Sterben zu vertrauen und zu gehorchen heben.

Wir verwerfen die Falsche Lehre, als könne und müsse als

Wir verwerfen die falsche Lehre, als konne und müsse als Quelle ihrer Verkündigung ausser und neben diesem einen Worte Gottes auch noch andere Ereignisse und Mächte, Gestalten und Wahrheiten als Gottes Offenbarung anerkennen.

2) "Jesus Christus ist uns gemacht von Gott zur Weisheit und zur Gerechtigkeit und zur Heiligung und zur Erlösung." (1.Kor.1,30)
Wie Jesus Christus Gottes Zuspruch der Vergebung aller unserer
Sünden ist, so und mit gleichem Ernst ist er auch Gottes kräftiger Anspruch auf unser ganzes Leben; durch ihn widerfährt uns frohe Befreiung aus den gottlosen Bindungen dieser Welt zu freiem, dankbarem Dienst an seinen Geschöpfen.

Wir verwerfen die falsche Lehre, als gibe es Bereiche unseres Lebens, in denen wir nicht Jesus Christus, sondern anderen Herren zu eigen wären, in denen wir nicht der Rechtfertigung und Worden Heiligung durch ihn bedürften.

3) "Lasset uns aber rechtschaffen sein in der Liebe und wachsen in allen Stücken an dem, der das Haupt ist, Christus, von welchem aus der ganze Leib zusammengefügt ist." (Eph.4,15-16)

Die christliche Kirche ist die Gemeinde von Sundern, in der Jesus Christus in Wort und Sakrament durch den Heiligen Geist als der Herr gegenwärtig handelt. Sie hat mit ihrem Glauben wie mit ihrem Gehorsam, mit ihrer Botschaft wie mit ihrer Ordnung mitten in der Welt der Sünde als die Kirche der begnadigten Sünder zu bezeugen.

Cass sie allein sein Eigentum ist, allein von seinem Trost und von seiner Weisung in Erwartung seiner Erscheinung lebt und leben möchte.

Wir verwerfen die falsche Lehre, als dürfe die Kirche die Gestalt ihrer Botschaft und ihrer Ordnung ihrem Belieben oder dem Wechsel der jeweils herrschenden weltanschaulichen und politischen Ueberzeugungen überlassen.

4) "Ihr wisset, dass die weltlichen Fürsten Herrschen und die Oberherren haben Gewalt. So soll es nicht sein unter euch; sondern so jemand will unter euch gewaltig sein, der sei euer Diener." (Matth.20,25-26)

Die verschiedenen Aemter in der Kirche begründen keine Herrschaft der einen über die anderen, sondern die Ausübung des der ganzen Gemeinde anvertrauten und befohlenen Dienstes.

Wir verwerfen die falsche Lehre, als könne und dürfe sich die Kirche abseits von diesem Dienst besondere, mit Herrschaftsbefugnissen ausgestattete Führer geben oder geben lassen.

May 31, 1934

In view of the errors of the "German Christians" of the present Reich church government which are devastating the church and also therefore breaking up the unity of the German Evangelical Church, we confess the following evangelical truths:

1. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me." (Jn 14.6) "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber... I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved." (Jn 10.1, 9) Jesus Christ, as he is attested for us in holy scripture, is the one Word of God which we have to hear and which we have to trust and obey in life and in death.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church could and would have to acknowledge as a source of its proclamation, apart from and besides this one Word of God, still other events and powers, figures and truths, as God's revelation.

2. "Christ Jesus, whom God has made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption." (1 Cor 1.30)

As Jesus Christ is God's assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins, so, in the same way and with the same seriousness he is also God's mighty claim upon our whole life. Through him befalls us a joyful deliverance from the godless fetters of this world for a free, grateful service to his creatures.

We reject the false doctrine, as though there were areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ, but to other lords - areas in which we would not need justification and sanctification through him.

- 3. "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body [is] joined and knit together." (Eph 4.15,16)
- The Christian church is the congregation of the brethren in which Jesus Christ acts presently as the Lord in word and sacrament through the Holy Spirit. As the church of pardoned sinners, it has to testify in the midst of a sinful world, with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that it is solely his property, and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectation of his appearance.
- We reject the false doctrine, as though the church were permitted to abandon the form of its message and order to its own pleasure or to changes in prevailing ideological and political convictions.
- 4. "You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant." (Mt 20.25,26)
- The various offices in the church do not establish a dominion of some over the others; on the contrary, they are for the exercise of the ministry entrusted to and enjoined upon the whole congregation.
- We reject the false doctrine, as though the church, apart from this ministry, could and were permitted to give itself, or allow to be given to it, special leaders vested with ruling powers.

5. "Fear God. Honour the emperor." (1 Pet 2.17)

Scripture tells us that, in the as yet unredeemed world in which the church also exists, the state has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace. [It fulfils this task] by means of the threat and exercise of force, according to the measure of human judgment and human ability. The church acknowledges the benefit of this divine appointment in gratitude and reverence before him. It calls to mind the kingdom of God, God's commandment and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word by which God upholds all things.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the state, over and beyond its special commission, should and could become the single and totalitarian order of human life, thus fulfilling the church's vocation as well.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church, over and beyond its special commission, should and could appropriate the characteristics, the tasks, and the dignity of the state, thus itself becoming an organ of the state.

6. "Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Mt 28.20) "The word of God is not fettered." (2 Tim 2.9)

The church's commission, upon which its freedom is founded, consists in delivering the message of the free grace of God to all people in Christ's stead, and therefore in the ministry of his own Word and work through sermon and sacrament.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church in human arrogance could place the word and work of the Lord in the service of any arbitrarily chosen desires, purposes, and plans.

The Confessional Synod of the German Evangelical Church declares that it sees in the acknowledgement of these truths and in the rejection of these errors the indispensable theological basis of the German Evangelical Church as a federation of confessional churches. It invites all who are able to accept its declaration to be mindful of these theological principles in their decisions in church politics. It entreats all whom it concerns to return to the unity of faith, love, and hope.

Verbum dei manet in aeturnum