

historian, Adolf von Harnack. During his one semester at Berlin, Karl also read Wilhelm Hermann's book on ethics, an experience which confirmed his determination to study in Marburg (where Hermann taught). Nevertheless, he returned to Berne for the spring semester to please his father.

In the fall of 1907, Karl enrolled at the University of Tübingen to sit under the teaching of his father's choice, Adolf Schlatter, a rather conservative New Testament scholar. He did not find Schlatter appealing, however, and wrote letters to his father, saying, "I told you so!" However, he also heard Theodor Haring lecture on systematic theology, and became quite interested in the subject.

At last, in the spring of 1908, his father relented and Karl enrolled at Marburg, where he remained for three semesters. Here he heard lectures of such renowned New Testament scholars as Johannes Weiss, Adolf Julicher, and Wilhelm Heitmüller, as well as those of the leading Neo-Kantian philosophers, Hermann Cohen and Paul Natorp. But the outstanding feature of his studies at Marburg was the lectures of the most renowned systematic theologian of his day, Wilhelm Hermann. Speaking of this experience, Barth later wrote, "I absorbed Hermann through all my pores!"

Having completed his university education, Karl Barth returned to Berne to take his theological examinations, which he completed successfully. He was ordained in the summer of 1909 (at the age of 23), and would have entered the pastoral ministry, but did not feel ready. He returned to Marburg and assisted Martin Rade for a short time in the editing of the liberal periodical, *Die Christliche Welt*.

Late in 1909 he returned to Switzerland, where he was appointed assistant minister of the German-speaking congregation of Geneva, where he remained for almost two years. Here he preached in the same hall in which John Calvin had lectured. He diligently reread Schleiermacher and worked his way through Calvin's Institutes. At this time he considered himself an uneasy disciple of Albrecht Ritschl, uneasy because of Ernst Troeltsch's philosophy of religion, and because he could see no better way before him.

In 1911 Karl Barth was appointed pastor of the Reformed Church of Safenwil in the canton of Aargau (north-central border of Switzerland), where he was to remain for ten years. Safenwil lay in the middle of an agricultural area (cattle, cereals, dairy and general farming), but it boasted three industries: a sawmill, a dye factory, and a weaving mill. Here Barth was faced not only with the problems of sermon preparation, preaching, and pastoral care, but also with social problems involving labor-management relations.

In 1912 Karl's father died. In 1913 Karl married Nelly Hoffman, an attractive young woman who was also a talented violinist. Her interest in music was complemented by Karl's own propensity for classical music, especially that of Mozart.

Also in 1913 Eduard Thurneysen, a fellow Swiss whom Barth had known at Marburg, became pastor at Leutwil, a village on the other side of the mountain from Safenwil. Thurneysen and Barth found that they had much in common, became fast friends, and corresponded regularly or met occasionally to discuss common problems or interests. The influence of Thurneysen on Barth was great. He introduced Barth to Christoph Blumhardt (who connected the kingdom of God with the social and political movements of the time), to Hermann Kutter and Leonhard Ragaz (leaders of the Swiss religious-socialist