

## COURSE SYLLABUS

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# CH512: Karl Barth and Neo-Orthodoxy

Course Lecturer: Lubbertus Oostendorp, Th.D.  
Former Professor of Bible and Theology at Reformed Bible College

### About This Course

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**This course was originally created through the Institute of Theological Studies in association with the Evangelical Seminary Deans' Council. There are nearly 100 evangelical seminaries of various denominations represented within the council and many continue to use the ITS courses to supplement their curriculum. The lecturers were selected primarily by the Deans' Council as highly recognized scholars in their particular fields of study.**

### Course Description

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Through the years, the church has been greatly influenced by theologians. Augustine shaped the church's understanding of orthodoxy. Aquinas brought philosophy and theology together. Luther reclaimed salvation by faith alone; and Calvin reminded believers of God's sovereignty over all things. In a postmodern world, the church continues the process of knowing God in the wake of the teachings of Karl Barth. In this course, Dr. Lubbertus Oostendorp explores the impact of Barth's influence on Neo-Orthodoxy. Developed shortly after the Age of Enlightenment, Neo-Orthodoxy provided the springboard for today's theologians as believers seek to be both biblically true and culturally relevant.

### Course Objectives

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Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to do the following:

- Define and explain Neo-Orthodoxy.
- Understand Karl Barth's teachings in *Church Dogmatics* and other notable works.
- Explain the controversy and objections to Barth and his works.
- Identify the theological, philosophical, and existential aspects of Neo-Orthodoxy.
- Explain the spiritual and intellectual influence of Barth on the church today.
- Obtain an in-depth knowledge of available bibliography including the original sources.

### Accessibility

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If you have particular accessibility needs, please contact the CUGN Registrar at the beginning of the course. This will allow us to work directly with you to make efforts to accommodate your situation and ensure as full as possible accessibility to the course.

## Course Lecturer

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Dr. Lubbertus Oostendorp, who conversed with Albert Einstein, was an intellectual giant himself who combined his amazing wit with a true pastoral heart. Trained in a one-room school house, he quickly climbed the academic ladder, culminating in a full professorship at Reformed Bible College (now Kuyper College). For more than 15 years, he was a Professor of Bible and Theology at Reformed Bible College where he mentored students and trained future Christian apologists.

### Education:

- Calvin College, A.B.
- Calvin Theological Seminary, M.Div.
- Princeton Theological Seminary, Th.M.
- Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands, Th.D.

## Online Professor

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If you are taking this course for credit, CUGN will assign one of its faculty members as the online professor for this course. This professor will contact you upon enrollment in the course and will guide your study. Your online professor will be available to you by email and, at set times, by chat room or other real-time technology. Your online professor will do the following in order to stimulate student involvement and facilitate effective learning:

- Evaluate and assign grades to all coursework.
- Provide assistance with technological problems that may occur.
- Answer questions that may arise.
- Issue your final grades.

## Academic Honesty

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At CUGN, we believe all we do is “as unto the Lord” and we thus hold to a high academic standard of honesty; we do not tolerate plagiarism and cheating. Students found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty face consequences ranging from interaction with the Academic Dean to expulsion from CUGN.

**Quizzes and Exams:** Any student found guilty of cheating on a quiz or exam will automatically receive a score of zero for that quiz or exam. A second offense will result in automatic course failure and possible disciplinary action and/or expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of cheating.

**Plagiarism:** If a student’s work is found to be plagiarized, consequences will vary depending on the nature of the plagiarism.

If an offense is deemed unintentional, the student will have an opportunity to resubmit the work. A second offense will result in an automatic score of zero for that assignment, which may also result in failure of that course.

More serious plagiarism offenses could result in automatic course failure, disciplinary action, or

expulsion from CUGN. Please view the [CUGN Academic Catalog](#) for a full definition and examples of plagiarism. If you have questions about plagiarism, or would like to request resources for learning how to avoid plagiarism, please contact our Registrar's Office at [registrar@cugn.org](mailto:registrar@cugn.org) or toll free at (888) 487-5376 ext. 3.

## Course Requirements

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1. **Time:** The student is required to spend a minimum of 120 hours in this course. All course requirements must be completed within 6 months of enrolling in the course.
2. **Recorded Lectures:** The student must listen carefully to all of the 24 lectures by Dr. Lubbertus Oostendorp. An outline for each lecture is provided in the course Study Guide (found in the Before You Begin section of the course) to assist the student in listening and note-taking. At the end of the course, the student will submit a written statement to the instructor confirming he/she listened to each lecture in its entirety.
3. **Study Guide Questions:** The student must submit well-conceived answers to all of the questions in the course Study Guide (found in the Before You Begin section of the course).
4. **Reading:** The student will read at least 1,000 pages from the books listed in the course Bibliography (found in the Study Guide). At least one book must be read in its entirety. At the end of the course, the student will submit a document reporting which works were read, including author, title, and page numbers.
5. **Spiritual Formation Project**

**RATIONALE:** Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. With this in mind, CUGN includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. Identify your mentor early in the course, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:

**A. Personal Reflection and Evaluation:** Reflect on the course – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.

- i. Follow these steps in your reflection:
  - Step 1: What one theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?
  - Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?
  - Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this

theme/principle/concept?

Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what specific steps should you take to concretely apply what you have learned?

- ii. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: approximately three pages)
- iii. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).

**B. Community Reflection and Interaction:** Interview a mentor – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

- i. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)
  1. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
  2. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
  3. Someone who is not your grader or a family member.
  4. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
  5. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
  6. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

**NOTE:** Identify your mentor early in the course, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

- ii. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:
  - What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?
  - In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?
  - What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

**NOTE:** Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.

**C. Synthesis and Application:** Draw your final conclusions – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:

- i. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from #1 above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
- ii. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:

- What were the mentor's comments regarding your essay?
- What advice did he/she give?
- How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?
- Include the person's name, occupation, and the length of the interview.

iii. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:

- If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your "Personal Reflection and Evaluation", how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor's insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
- In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, specific changes need to occur in your life and what concrete steps will you take to implement them?

**NOTE TO STUDENTS:** Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of the course and realistically sought to apply them to your life. If you have done this and met the minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation.

## Course Grading

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Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Listening to all 24 Lectures	10% of Course Grade
Study Guide Questions	40% of Course Grade
Reading	20% of Course Grade
Spiritual Formation Project	30% of Course Grade
Total	100%

Grades will be issued within two weeks of the end of the course.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Interview Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Guidelines for Mentors

(Students, give this sheet to your mentor for the Spiritual Formation Project.)

Thank you for your involvement in this student's CUGN coursework. We believe the Christian life is more than an academic exercise, so we encourage students to critically reflect on their life in light of what they learn and then apply those insights to the daily life of faith.

Therefore, students taking CUGN courses are required to complete a final assignment called the "Spiritual Formation Project." This assignment involves two parts: an essay and an interview:

**The ESSAY:** After completing their coursework, students reflect on the content of the course, evaluate their lives, and discuss the one theme, principle or concept that is most significant to them and why. Students are to identify specific ways this theme/principle/concept should apply to their lives and what action steps they plan to take in order to make these changes a reality.

**The INTERVIEW:** After writing this reflection, students give a copy to their mentor and meet with him/her to discuss their thoughts and get feedback. The goal of this interview is to facilitate the student's growth through interaction with a mature believer.

### NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW:

- You do not need to be familiar with the course to participate in this interview. You will primarily respond to the thoughts of the student. (However, general knowledge of the subject matter of the course and/or experience applying it to ministry is valuable.)
- Prior to meeting with the student, read his/her "Personal Reflection and Evaluation" and prepare to discuss the following:
  1. What feedback can you give the student in response to his/her essay?
  2. Are the student's conclusions from the course appropriate? Why or why not?
  3. What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications would you suggest from your own life and ministry?
- Meet with the student either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc.).
- Suggested length of the interview: 45 minutes

Thanks again for participating in this project! You have a real opportunity to guide this student in the application process and to help him/her connect academics to life – *a valuable process for all who wish to grow in Christ.*

**NOTE: If the student's school makes any changes to this assignment, their requirements should replace those described here.**