

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19, Roman Catholicism, Karl Barth Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19, Roman Catholicism, Karl Barth, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Green's lecture covers **19th and 20th-century Roman Catholicism**, highlighting the contrasting papacies of Pius IX and Leo XIII and the significance of Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The lecture then shifts to **key Catholic doctrines** of the era, specifically the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary, alongside a discussion of papal infallibility as defined at the First Vatican Council. The session concludes with an introduction to **20th-century Protestantism** by beginning a biographical sketch of **Karl Barth**, setting the stage for an examination of his theological impact.

**2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19 – Double
click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Church History → Reformation to the Present).**



**Green_ReftoPres_Se
ssion19.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19, Roman Catholicism, Karl Barth

Briefing Document: 19th and 20th Century Religious Developments and the Theology of Karl Barth

Overview: This lecture provides an overview of significant developments within 19th-century Roman Catholicism, focusing on the contrasting papacies of Pius IX and Leo XIII and three key doctrines. It then transitions to an introduction of the theology of Karl Barth, emphasizing his biography and the context that shaped his theological contributions in the 20th century.

Part 1: 19th Century Roman Catholicism

Main Themes:

- **The Contrasting Papacies of Pius IX and Leo XIII:** The lecture highlights the diametrically opposed approaches of these two 19th-century popes towards the relationship between the Catholic Church and the broader modern world.
- **Pius IX (Closed Curtains):** Characterized by a suspicion of the modern world and a desire to isolate the Church from its influences. This movement is identified as **Ultramontanism**. According to Dr. Green, "Pope Pius IX closed the curtains on the window of the world. He really isolated the church from the broader culture, the broader world. He was so suspicious of that world and of that world's kind of attack upon Christendom that he wanted to create a true Catholic faith apart from that world."
- **Leo XIII (Opened Curtains):** In contrast, Leo XIII sought to engage with the world and its problems, making the Church relevant to contemporary issues. Dr. Green states, "Leo XIII... stood before the same window and took the curtains and opened the curtains and let the church face the world and the problems of the world and be meaningful to the, to the world and so forth."
- **Rerum Novarum and the Church's Stance on Social Issues:** The encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) is presented as a pivotal accomplishment of Leo XIII, signifying a major shift in the Church's social engagement.
- **Support for Laborers:** The encyclical "stands with the laborers" and asserts that they "should receive just a reward."

- **Approval of Social Legislation:** *Rerum Novarum* "supports social legislation" aimed at improving working hours and conditions.
- **Support of Trade Unionism:** The encyclical controversially (at the time) endorsed "support of unionizing the workers so that there can be strength in the numbers and so forth."
- **Shift in Church's Image:** Dr. Green emphasizes the significance of this shift, noting that "the basic thing about *Rerum Novarum* is that *Rerum Novarum* stands, *Rerum Novarum* says, the Roman Catholic Church is going to stand by the side of the working classes." This marked a departure from the perception of the Church as aligned with the wealthy and privileged.
- **Three Major Roman Catholic Doctrines:** The lecture discusses three key doctrines that defined Roman Catholicism during this period, though one extends into the 20th century:
- **The Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854, Pius IX):** This doctrine asserts that "From the very first moment of her conception, the Blessed Virgin Mary was, by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of mankind, kept free from all stain of original sin." Dr. Green clarifies that this is distinct from the Virgin Birth of Jesus. The lecture suggests this doctrine served to reinforce allegiance to the Church and to affirm the divinity of Christ amidst 19th-century theological challenges. While not explicitly biblical, it drew on the tradition of Mary as the "New Eve."
- **The Assumption of Mary (1950):** This doctrine, proclaimed much later, states that "Mary, Immaculate conceived by God and ever virgin, when the course of her earthly life had been finished, had been taken up in body and soul to heavenly glory." Dr. Green acknowledges the chronological jump but justifies it by the thematic connection to Mary. He notes the high esteem for Mary in Catholicism and some other traditions, even questioning instances where she is held in "higher even than that accorded Jesus." Dr. Green expresses his personal Protestant perspective, believing that Catholics have "made too much of Mary" while Protestants have made "too little."
- **The Infallibility of the Pope (1870, First Vatican Council):** This doctrine posits that "When the Pope speaks on matters ex cathedra... on some doctrinal matter, then the Pope is speaking infallibly." Dr. Green clarifies that this does not mean the Pope is infallible in everything he says, but only when speaking "from his chair" on matters of doctrine, expressing the general belief of the Church. He notes that

only one doctrine, the Assumption of Mary, has technically been proclaimed *ex cathedra* since 1870. The theological arguments for this doctrine include the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church and the pastoral concern for preventing eternal punishment. The lecture highlights the differing interpretations between Catholics and Protestants of Matthew 16:13-20 ("You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church"), with Catholics seeing it as a warrant for the papacy and Protestants viewing the "rock" as Peter's confession of faith.

Part 2: Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth

Main Themes:

- **Biographical Sketch and Context:** The lecture provides a detailed biographical sketch of Karl Barth (1886-1968), emphasizing key events that shaped his theology.
- **Swiss Citizenship:** Born in Bern, Switzerland, his Swiss citizenship later proved crucial, potentially saving his life under Nazi rule.
- **German University Education:** Barth studied at various German universities, a common practice at the time to learn from specific professors.
- **Pastoral Ministry in Geneva and Safenwil:** He served as a pastor for ten years (1911-1921), initially believing it would be his lifelong vocation.
- **The Impact of World War I:** The horrors of World War I profoundly challenged Barth's training in classical Protestant liberalism, which seemed inadequate to address the realities of sin and evil. He found he "couldn't reconcile his own theological training with the realities of the world in which he lived."
- **The Commentary on Romans (1919):** This work marked a turning point, emphasizing the "discontinuity between God and us because of our sinfulness and our rebellion against God." It became a major event in the German-speaking theological world, questioning the prevailing liberal theology and resonating with the experience of the war. Dr. Green notes the parallel to significant moments in the lives of Calvin and Wesley, both connected to the Book of Romans.
- **University Teaching:** In 1921, Barth transitioned to university teaching, eventually becoming a professor in Bonn, Germany, in 1930.
- **The Rise of Nazism and the Church Struggle:** The ascent of Hitler in 1933 became a critical juncture for Barth.

- **Neutrality to Opposition:** Initially, Barth held a "two-kingdom theory" of neutrality towards governmental powers, but he later felt compelled to oppose the Nazis as they demonstrated they were not divinely appointed leaders.
- **The Barmen Declaration (1934):** Barth was instrumental in writing this declaration of the Confessing Church, an underground movement of pastors who refused to swear allegiance to Hitler. It served as a clear stance against the Nazified Lutheran Church and a commitment to the "pure gospel."
- **Refusal to Swear Oath to Hitler and Exile:** As a Swiss citizen, when Barth refused to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler, he was expelled from Germany rather than imprisoned, highlighting the significance of his nationality.
- **Professor at Basel University and Public Theologian:** After being expelled from Germany, Barth became a professor at Basel University until his death in 1968. He gained international recognition as a theologian, even appearing on the cover of *Time* magazine.
- **The Church Dogmatics:** Beginning in 1932 and continuing until his death, Barth's magnum opus was the *Church Dogmatics*. He intentionally titled it "Church Dogmatics" rather than "Christian Dogmatics" to emphasize its purpose for the body of Christ. This massive work aimed to "re-understand the Christian faith" for a new generation, contrasting with the Roman Catholic concept of *Depositum Fide*. Dr. Green likens Barth's prolific output and theological significance to that of Augustine, calling him the "Second Augustine."
- **Pushing Back Protestant Liberalism:** Dr. Green concludes this section by asserting that Barth played a crucial role in resisting the dominance of Protestant liberalism in the 20th century, providing a foundation for the development of Protestant theology in subsequent eras.

Key Quotes:

- **Pius IX's approach:** "Pope Pius IX closed the curtains on the window of the world. He really isolated the church from the broader culture, the broader world."
- **Leo XIII's approach:** "Leo XIII... took the curtains and opened the curtains and let the church face the world and the problems of the world..."
- **On Rerum Novarum:** "The basic thing about Rerum Novarum is that Rerum Novarum stands, Rerum Novarum says, the Roman Catholic Church is going to stand by the side of the working classes."

- **Immaculate Conception defined:** "From the very first moment of her conception, the Blessed Virgin Mary was... kept free from all stain of original sin."
- **Assumption of Mary defined:** "Mary... had been taken up in body and soul to heavenly glory."
- **Infallibility of the Pope defined:** "When the Pope speaks on matters ex cathedra... on some doctrinal matter, then the Pope is speaking infallibly."
- **Barth on his theological crisis:** He "couldn't reconcile his own theological training with the realities of the world in which he lived."
- **Significance of Romans commentary:** The commentary "emphasized, emphasized, emphasized, emphasized, that there is a discontinuity between God and us because of our sinfulness and our rebellion against God."
- **Barth's aim with Church Dogmatics:** He wanted this "to be a dogmatics for the body of Christ. I want this to be for the church."
- **Barth's role in 20th-century theology:** He "pushed back the tide of Protestant liberalism."

Points for Further Discussion:

- The long-term impact of Pius IX's isolationist approach versus Leo XIII's engagement on the Catholic Church.
- The continuing relevance and interpretation of *Rerum Novarum* in contemporary social justice discussions.
- The theological implications and ecumenical challenges posed by the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary.
- The ongoing debates surrounding the doctrine of papal infallibility and its exercise.
- The specific ways in which World War I and the rise of Nazism shaped Karl Barth's theological development.
- The key theological themes and arguments presented in Barth's *Church Dogmatics* that challenged Protestant liberalism.
- The legacy and continued influence of Karl Barth on contemporary Protestant theology.

4. Study Guide: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19, Roman Catholicism, Karl Barth

Study Guide: 19th & 20th Century Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, Focusing on Karl Barth

Key Concepts and Themes:

- **The Papacy in the 19th Century:** Contrast the approaches of Pope Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII towards the modern world.
- **Ultramontanism:** Understand the nature and goals of this movement within the Catholic Church during Pius IX's papacy.
- **Rerum Novarum:** Analyze the significance of Leo XIII's encyclical and its stance on labor, social legislation, and trade unions.
- **Major 19th & 20th Century Catholic Doctrines:** Detail the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Assumption of Mary, and Papal Infallibility.
- Distinguish the Immaculate Conception from the Virgin Birth.
- Understand the historical context and theological arguments for each doctrine.
- Grasp the Protestant perspective and critiques of these doctrines.
- **The Infallibility of the Pope:** Define the conditions under which the Pope is considered infallible (*ex cathedra*) and the biblical basis (Matthew 16:13-20) used to support this doctrine. Understand the contrasting Protestant interpretation of this passage.
- **Karl Barth's Biography:** Outline the key events in Barth's life, including his early pastoral ministry, his shift away from liberal theology influenced by World War I, his commentary on Romans, his academic career, and his resistance to Nazism.
- **Barth and Nazi Germany:** Analyze Barth's initial neutrality towards the Nazi regime and his subsequent opposition, his role in the Barmen Declaration, and the significance of his Swiss citizenship.
- **Barth as a Public Theologian:** Understand his post-war role and the significance of his *Church Dogmatics*.
- **Barth's Theological Significance:** Recognize his contribution to 20th-century Protestant theology and his challenge to Protestant liberalism.

- **Depositum Fide vs. Protestant Theology:** Understand the contrasting approaches to theological interpretation in Catholicism and Protestantism.

Quiz:

1. Describe the contrasting approaches of Pope Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII in their response to the broader culture and the world during their 19th-century papacies.
2. What were the three main points made in Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*? Explain the significance of this document in the context of the 19th century.
3. Explain the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. In your answer, clearly distinguish it from the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Jesus.
4. Summarize the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Assumption of Mary. When was this doctrine officially proclaimed?
5. Under what specific conditions is the Pope considered infallible according to the doctrine of Papal Infallibility? When was this doctrine proclaimed?
6. What is the key difference in interpretation between Roman Catholics and Protestants regarding Matthew 16:18 ("You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church")?
7. How did Karl Barth's experience of World War I impact his theological perspective and lead to his commentary on the Book of Romans?
8. What was the Barmen Declaration of 1934, and what role did Karl Barth play in its creation?
9. Explain why Karl Barth was not arrested by the Nazi regime despite his opposition and refusal to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler.
10. What was Karl Barth's major theological work, and what was his rationale for titling it *Church Dogmatics* instead of *Christian Dogmatics*?

Answer Key:

1. Pope Pius IX adopted a stance of isolating the Catholic Church from the broader world, suspicious of its influence and seeking to create a distinct Catholic faith. In contrast, Pope Leo XIII advocated for the Church to engage with the world's

problems and be meaningful within that context, "opening the curtains" to the world.

2. *Rerum Novarum* stood with the laborers and supported their right to a just reward, approved of social legislation aimed at improving working conditions, and controversially supported the formation of trade unions. This encyclical marked a significant shift in the Church's perceived alignment from the upper to the working classes.
3. The Immaculate Conception, proclaimed in 1854, asserts that from the moment of her conception, Mary was preserved from original sin through God's grace and in view of Christ's merits. This is distinct from the Virgin Birth, which refers to Jesus being conceived miraculously by Mary without a human father.
4. The doctrine of the Assumption of Mary, proclaimed in 1950, states that when Mary's earthly life ended, she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory. This doctrine implies that Mary did not undergo bodily decay after death but was directly assumed into heaven.
5. The Pope is considered infallible only when he speaks *ex cathedra*, meaning "from his chair," on matters of doctrine. This occurs when he, as the supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful, definitively proclaims a doctrine to be held by the whole Church. The doctrine was proclaimed in 1870 at the First Vatican Council.
6. Roman Catholics interpret Matthew 16:18 as Jesus establishing Peter as the first Pope and the papacy as the rock upon which the Church is built. Protestants, however, generally understand the "rock" to be Peter's confession of faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, rather than Peter himself or the institution of the papacy.
7. The horrors and widespread devastation of World War I deeply challenged Barth's earlier training in classical Protestant liberalism, which he felt failed to adequately address the realities of sin and evil. This led him to a renewed engagement with Scripture, particularly the Book of Romans, resulting in his influential commentary that critiqued liberal theology.
8. The Barmen Declaration of 1934 was a statement of faith produced by the Confessing Church in Nazi Germany, a group of pastors who resisted the Nazification of the German Protestant Church. Karl Barth was the principal author of this declaration, which affirmed the sole authority of Scripture and rejected the claim of the Nazi state over the Church's teachings.

9. Karl Barth was a Swiss citizen, not a German citizen. This afforded him certain protections and freedoms, including freedom of speech, that German citizens did not possess under the Nazi regime. When he refused to swear an oath of allegiance to Hitler, he was expelled from Germany back to Switzerland rather than being arrested.
10. Karl Barth's major theological work is his multi-volume *Church Dogmatics*. He titled it *Church Dogmatics* because he intended it to be a theological work specifically for the Christian church, aimed at re-understanding and articulating the Christian faith for the contemporary context, rather than a more general or abstract "Christian Dogmatics."

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the contrasting approaches of Pope Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII to the challenges facing the Roman Catholic Church in the 19th century. How did their papacies shape the trajectory of the Church in the subsequent decades?
2. Evaluate the significance of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in its historical context. How did it address the social and economic issues of the late 19th century, and what lasting impact did it have on Catholic social teaching?
3. Discuss the theological and historical context surrounding the proclamation of the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption of Mary. What were the key arguments for and against these doctrines, and how have they been received by Protestants?
4. Examine the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. What are the theological arguments in its favor within the Catholic Church, and what are the main Protestant criticisms? Analyze the significance of Matthew 16:13-20 in this debate.
5. Explore the life and theological development of Karl Barth. How did his experiences, particularly during World War I and the rise of Nazism, shape his theological project, and what is his enduring legacy for Protestant theology in the 20th and 21st centuries?

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Ultramontanism:** A 19th-century movement within the Roman Catholic Church that emphasized the authority and centralization of power in the Pope.
- **Encyclical:** A papal letter sent to all the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church and often dealing with matters of doctrine, morals, or church discipline.

- **Rerum Novarum:** Latin for "New Things," the title of Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical addressing the rights and duties of capital and labor.
- **Immaculate Conception:** The Roman Catholic doctrine proclaimed in 1854 stating that Mary, from the moment of her conception, was preserved free from original sin by a singular grace of God.
- **Virgin Birth:** The Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit, without a human father.
- **Assumption of Mary:** The Roman Catholic doctrine proclaimed in 1950 stating that at the end of her earthly life, Mary was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory.
- **Papal Infallibility:** The Roman Catholic doctrine proclaimed in 1870 stating that the Pope, when speaking ex cathedra (from the chair) on matters of faith and morals with the intention of binding the whole Church, is preserved from error by the Holy Spirit.
- **Ex Cathedra:** Latin for "from the chair," referring to pronouncements made by the Pope in his official capacity as the supreme teacher of the Church, considered infallible.
- **Protestant Liberalism:** A theological movement that emerged in the 19th century, emphasizing reason and experience over traditional doctrines, often viewing Jesus primarily as a moral teacher and downplaying the supernatural aspects of Christianity.
- **Barmen Declaration:** A statement of faith written in 1934 by Karl Barth and adopted by the Confessing Church in Nazi Germany, rejecting the influence of the Nazi state on church doctrine and affirming the sole authority of Scripture.
- **Public Theologian:** A theologian who engages with broader public issues and debates, bringing theological insights to bear on social, political, and cultural concerns.
- **Church Dogmatics:** Karl Barth's massive and influential multi-volume work of systematic theology, aiming to re-examine and restate Christian doctrines for the modern church based on the Word of God.
- **Depositum Fide:** Latin for "deposit of faith," a term used in Roman Catholicism to refer to the body of revealed truth entrusted by Christ to the Apostles and now preserved and interpreted by the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Church.

5. FAQs Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 19, Roman Catholicism, Karl Barth, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: 19th and 20th Century Roman Catholicism and the Theology of Karl Barth

1. How did the papacies of Pius IX and Leo XIII differ in their approach to the modern world? Pope Pius IX adopted a stance of isolation, seeking to shield the Catholic Church from the influences of the broader secular culture, a movement known as Ultramontanism. He viewed the world with suspicion and aimed to cultivate a purely Catholic faith apart from it. In stark contrast, Pope Leo XIII chose to engage with the modern world. He opened the church to the problems and issues of the time, seeking to make the church relevant and meaningful within that context. Their approaches represented a fundamental disagreement on how the Catholic Church should relate to contemporary society.

2. What were the key tenets of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, and why was it significant? *Rerum Novarum* ("New Things" or "New Order of Things") was a landmark encyclical that addressed social issues arising from industrialization. Its key tenets included:

- **Standing with laborers:** It affirmed the rights of workers and advocated for just compensation for their labor.
- **Supporting social legislation:** It endorsed laws aimed at improving working hours and conditions, demonstrating the church's concern for the material well-being of people.
- **Approving trade unionism:** It supported the organization of workers into unions as a means to gain strength and advocate for their rights. The significance of *Rerum Novarum* lies in its shift in the Catholic Church's social stance. Traditionally seen as aligned with the upper classes, the church, through this encyclical, declared its solidarity with the working class, marking a major change in its public image and social engagement.

3. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, and what are common misunderstandings about it? The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, proclaimed in 1854 by Pius IX, states that from the very first moment of her conception, Mary was preserved by God's grace from all stain of original sin, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ. A crucial point to understand is that this doctrine is **not** the

same as the Virgin Birth of Jesus. The Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Mary by her own parents, while the Virgin Birth refers to the miraculous conception of Jesus by Mary. The doctrine also posits that Mary remained sinless throughout her life and was granted innocence, justice, and sanctity from her conception.

4. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Assumption of Mary, and when was it officially proclaimed as dogma? The doctrine of the Assumption of Mary, officially proclaimed as dogma in 1950, states that when Mary's earthly life was finished, she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory. This implies that Mary did not undergo bodily decay after death but was directly assumed into heaven.

5. What is the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility, and under what specific conditions does it apply? The doctrine of papal infallibility, proclaimed at the First Vatican Council in 1870, states that the Pope is infallible only when he speaks *ex cathedra*, which literally means "from his chair." This refers to pronouncements made by the Pope in his official capacity as the supreme pastor and teacher of the Church, on matters of faith and morals that are to be held by the entire Church. It does not mean that everything the Pope says is infallible; it is limited to specific, formal declarations on doctrinal issues. Since 1870, the doctrine of the Assumption of Mary is generally considered the only doctrine proclaimed *ex cathedra*.

6. What was Karl Barth's initial theological background, and what events led to a significant shift in his thinking? Karl Barth was initially trained in classical Protestant liberalism, a theological approach that emphasized human reason and experience. However, the horrors and realities of World War I deeply challenged his liberal theological framework. He found that this training failed to adequately address the profound sin and evil evident in the world. This led him to a critical re-engagement with Scripture, particularly the Book of Romans, which became a catalyst for his theological transformation.

7. How did Karl Barth's commentary on the Book of Romans impact the theological landscape of his time? Barth's 1919 commentary on the Book of Romans was a revolutionary work that created an "explosion" in the German-speaking theological world. It starkly emphasized the radical discontinuity between a holy God and sinful humanity, a message that resonated deeply in the aftermath of the First World War. This emphasis directly challenged the prevailing optimistic views of humanity found in liberal Protestantism. His commentary stressed the sovereignty of God and the necessity of divine revelation, marking a significant departure from anthropocentric theologies and profoundly influencing subsequent Protestant thought.

8. What was Karl Barth's role in the church struggle during Nazi Germany, and what was the significance of the Barmen Declaration? During the rise of Nazi Germany, Karl Barth became a central figure in the church struggle. While initially holding a neutral stance on political powers, he later recognized the anti-Christian nature of the Nazi regime. As a Swiss citizen, he possessed freedoms German citizens lacked, which allowed him to speak out. He was instrumental in the writing of the Barmen Declaration in 1934. This declaration, produced by the Confessing Church (those who refused to align with the Nazified German Lutheran Church), was a firm theological stand against the Nazi ideology and its attempts to control the church. It affirmed the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of Scripture as the sole sources of church teaching, serving as a crucial act of theological resistance against the totalitarian regime.