

Theological Seminary that I saw, for the first time while teaching Kant, Barth's real problem and how it had affected his theology, particularly his view of revelation. In later studies I was able to trace back the lines to the origin of his assumption that God is timeless and spaceless in philosophy.

That assumption originated in Eastern Mysticism. Plato and Aristotle wrestled with the concept. Aristotle's struggles with this concept are basic to the problem of neo-orthodoxy. Time and space, he proposed, are measured by numbers. The question Aristotle faced was: did numbers and mathematics exist before time and space, and before the existence of things that can be numbered, or did countables have to exist before numbers and mathematics? Aristotle could have answered either way. Finally he arbitrarily decided that countables, namely, created things, must exist before numbers and mathematics, and that time and space are therefore created categories. If such is the case, then God and heaven are timeless and spaceless, and time and space -- because they are attached to countables -- are created. (Buswell, "Thomas and the Bible," p. 69).

The early Christian Fathers saw no problem with this view. They failed to see that it had come down from paganism -- from Eastern Mysticism and had they seen the logical consequences to which it led, they would, we believe, have rejected the idea. Athanasius used the concept of timelessness and spacelessness to explain the eternal progression of the Son from the Father. Augustine also adopted the concept. However, Calvin refused to discuss the idea in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, stating that its adoption could lead to dangerous speculations. Later Reformed theologians adopted the assumption, failing to see the logical consequences to which it could lead. They even tried to support it by such a phrase as "that there should be time no longer" (Rev 10:6), and "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (2 Pet 3:8). Dr Buswell questioned the idea. He wrote:

If the past is not past for God as well as man, then we are yet in our sins; Christ has not come and never will come, for He is Deity and therefore timeless. But He is said to have come "in the fullness of time" (*chronos*). And "in due time" (*kairos*). If the past is not past for God, we are yet under the wrath and curse of a righteous Judge. Either this, or sins, is merely an illusion, and we might as well be Eddyistic idealists and be done with the Gospel. (*Systematic Theology*, I. 47)

The idea of God being timeless and spaceless appeared in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant said that there appear to be three infinities: God, time and space. But this is impossible, he reasoned, because there cannot be more than one infinity. Since God, to be God, must be infinite, time and space must therefore be finite and created. Such being the case, God must be *totaliter aliter*, that is totally different from creation and man. Søren Kierkegaard, as well as Kant, saw that if such is the case, there can then be no direct communication and no direct revelation from God to man! But Kierkegaard was not willing to accept such a conclusion. In his two-volume "love letter", *Either/Or*, written to his sweetheart Regina, he came to the conclusion that, if he as a finite human being could communicate indirectly with another human being, namely, Regina, then God, as infinite, could and must be able to do the same "directly" with man. It was this idea of communication which Barth adopted as the basis of his view of