



Christian Ethics as Witness: Barth's Ethics for a World at Risk

David Haddorff

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Description: Christian ethics is less a system of principles, rules, or even virtues, and more of a free and open-ended responsible witness to God's gracious action to be with and for others and the world.

Postmodernity has left us with the risky uncertainty of knowing and doing the good. It also leaves us with the global risks of political violence and terrorism, economic globalization and financial crisis, and environmental destruction and global climate change. How should Christians respond to these problems?

This book creatively explores how Christian ethics is best understood a witness to God's action, thereby providing the ethical framework for addressing the various problematic social issues that put our world at risk. Haddorff develops the notion of witness through a detailed study of Karl Barth's theological ethics.

Barth, he argues, provides a language enabling us to know what a Christian ethics of witness actually looks like in both theory and in practice. In correspondence to God's gracious action, Christians remain free to think and act in faith, hope, and love in response to their unique circumstances, even in a world at risk. In their witness, Christians remain confident that God has not abandoned the world but loves and cares for its future. Endorsements: ""At a time when one might be tempted more than ever to offer an ethics of self-help, David Haddorff presents us with a truly theological ethics of 'witness' based on the truth of the Gospel that is at once hopeful and realistic because its hope is found in the God who empowers us to do the good and not in our attempts to live any sort of self-chosen good. Relying on the theology of Karl Barth, Haddorff skillfully holds together theology and ethics as well as theory and practice. This is a compelling book that will be of great interest to theologians, ethicists, and to students of the theology of Karl Barth."" -Paul D. Molnar St. John's University, Queens, New York ""That Barth is a moral theologian is now firmly established; this presentation offers its readers sure guidance as they explore the large landscape of Barth's ethics, and is much to be commended."" -John Webster University of Aberdeen, Scotland ""Far more than a summary of Barth's ethics, David Haddorff's book is a first-class effort to think in company with Barth about the source of our knowledge of the good and about the meaning of human freedom and ethical responsibility as faithful correspondence to God's free grace in Jesus Christ. Employing witness as the interpretive key of his work, Haddorff shows that Barth's ethics is radically Christocentric, and just for that reason is highly dialectical, free to recognize its limitations and avoid absolute claims, and free to engage in conversation with and learn from other ethical perspectives without becoming captive to them. In particular, Haddorff underscores the difference between Barth's ethics of witness on the one hand and the ethics of both reductionist secularism and theological isolation on the other. In the final section of the book, the author offers a highly creative deployment of Barth's ethics as it bears on the political, economic, and ecological crises of our time."" -

Daniel Migliore Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey About the Contributor(s): David Haddorff is Associate Professor of Theology and Ethics at St. John's University, New York. His previous works include *Dependence and Freedom: The Moral Thought of Horace Bushnell* and a lengthy introduction on Barth's political theology in the reprint of *State, Community, and Church* (Wipf and Stock).

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