

William Placher (1948-) is a professor of philosophy and religion at Wabash College. He is associated with the "Yale theology" of George Lindbeck (1923-) and Hans Frei (1922-1988). This theology is self-described as post-liberal theology because it attempts to move beyond the commitments of 19th and 20th century liberal theology. It is also a form of narrative theology because of its view that the Bible's narrative, and not experience or reason, is the foundation of theology and the source of our knowledge of God's identity. Part of Placher's agenda, accordingly, is to continue Karl Barth's project of liberating Christian theology from any subservience to philosophy. Placher, therefore, rejects theology's apologetic task, for apologetics has usually meant using philosophy to find common ground between the beliefs and values of the church and of the larger human community. For the same reason, his post-foundationalist approach means the rejection of any attempt to secure theology's claims on the basis of a rational and universally acceptable basis. However, Placher's writings show concern about some of the implications of post-liberal theology, especially its tendency to locate theological authority in the church instead of in the Biblical text itself. He has also written about the need to recover the idea of truth in light of the specter of relativism raised by post-foundationalist theology.

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