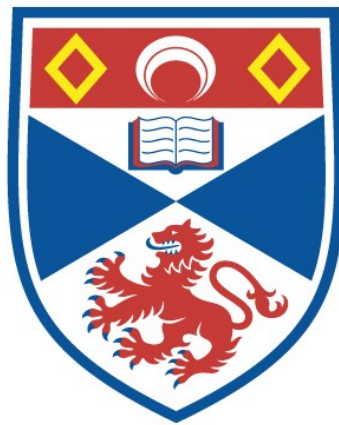


**THE 'LEBEN-JESU-FORSCHUNG' IN RECENT
RESEARCH AND DEBATE WITH SPECIAL
REFERENCE TO CONTINENTAL THEOLOGIANS**

Wayne B. Robinson

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



1965

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THE "LEBEN-JESU-FORSCHUNG"
IN RECENT RESEARCH AND DEBATE
with
Special Reference to Continental Theologians

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being a thesis presented by
Wayne B. Robinson

to
The University of St. Andrews,
Scotland,
in application for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by me, that the thesis is my own composition, and that it has not previously been presented for a Higher Degree.

The research was carried out in St. Mary's College, in the University of St. Andrews, under the direction of the Very Reverend Principal Matthew Black, D.D., F.B.A.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that

Wayne B. Robinson

has spent nine terms in research work at St. Mary's College in the University of St. Andrews, that he has fulfilled the conditions of Ordinance No. 16, and that he is qualified to submit the following thesis in application for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

STATEMENT

Following primary education and secondary education through the first half of the twelfth school year in Binghamton, New York, U.S.A., I finished high school in St. Augustine, Florida. From there I proceeded to Duke University, Durham, North Carolina where, in June, 1958, I received my A.B. degree. (The third year of my arts course was spent at St. Salvator's College in the University of St. Andrews.) From September 1958 to June 1961 I attended Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, from which University I gained the degree of Bachelor of Divinity (S.T.B.) in June, 1961.

From September 1961 to July 1962, I was Associate Chaplain to students at the Technische Hochschule in Aachen, West Germany.

In October 1962 I came to St. Mary's College, St. Andrews, and was admitted then as a Research student. Since that date I have been in residence in St. Andrews during the three terms of each of the intervening academic years. Thus I have completed nine terms in full-time research within the University to which this thesis is submitted in application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

THE S. ZED-AR. DRID

To

Hannelore

BEDEW GLOWE



CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
ABBREVIATIONS	11
CHAPTER I: 1730-1918	1
CHAPTER II : 1918-1950	51
CHAPTER III : Ernst Käsemann	106
CHAPTER IV : Günther Bornkamm	150
CHAPTER V : Hans Conzelmann	194
CHAPTER VI : Ernst Fuchs	227
CHAPTER VII : Conclusions: Abschluß und Anschluß	272
<u>Bibliography</u>	308

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Das Verhältnis - Das Verhältnis der urechristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus.
- E.T. - English Translation.
- Ges. Auf. - Gesammelte Aufsätze.
- G.u.V. - Glauben und Verstehen.
- JBL - Journal of Biblical Literature.
- JvN - Jesus von Nazareth.
- NTS - New Testament Studies.
- NT - Novum Testamentum.
- RGG - Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.
- SJTh - Scottish Journal of Theology.
- ThLZ - Theologische Literaturzeitung.
- TWNT - Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, Stuttgart, 1933 ff.
- ZNW - Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft.
- ZThK - Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.

CHAPTER I

1730 - 1918

Eden Grove

Bond

TUB SEED - AIR DRIED

The English title of Albert Schweitzer's book, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, is certainly one of the most felicitous examples of "translation" we have in the realm of theology. It indicated, more than the modest title he gave to the German edition, the nature of the undertaking. At the same time, it has taken on a decisive overtone, associated with his own belief that he was witnessing the end of the Quest.

In the past fifteen years in Germany, as J.M. Robinson's book, The New Quest of the Historical Jesus, indicates, the problem has found its way once again into the centre of discussion among New Testament scholars; it has also moved into the discussions of historians and even into the popular journals, such as Der Spiegel. The basic validity, however, of the cessation of the original Quest in Germany, which was brought about not so much by Schweitzer's work alone, as by a combination of factors of which his theses formed but a part, has not been questioned by most of those who have begun to rethink the problem. Rather, they take for granted the insights which found their most impressive presentation in the works of Rudolf Bultmann and the other form-critics.

It is the task of this introductory section to present a summary of the relevant background of the present discussion among New Testament scholars of what is loosely called the "Bultmann School" in Germany, especially with regard to what they consider to be the central problem of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung*. This problem was already indicated by the title of Martin Kähler's book, Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus.¹ It is namely the theological problem of the relevance of the Jesus of history for the Christ of the kerygma, and the historical-critical problem of the continuity or discontinuity between the two. That these two aspects of the problem are the central ones in the eyes of German scholarship can be seen just from the German title of J.M. Robinson's book, Kerygma und historischer Jesus.

Although it is impossible in the space of an introductory section to present a full description of the background of the present debate, it will be helpful,

1. 1st edition, Leipzig, 1892; 2nd ed., 1896; 1st ed. reprinted, 1953; 2nd expanded ed. of reprint, 1956.

it seems to me, to have at least a kind of outline of the major steps leading to the position which the majority of the German scholars writing today take as their point of departure. Two things must be admitted in doing this. First, the presentation of the material is very selective, taking as its vantage point the last decade and a half in Germany. And secondly, such a summary view necessarily involves some oversimplifications and omissions of some material of real significance.² However, because much of the misunderstanding of the aims and accomplishments of the former pupils of Bultmann has been the result of a failure to understand Bultmann's work, and that of the other form-critics as well, and because in turn Bultmann has been misunderstood, to a large extent, because of an inadequate understanding of the background to his work, it has been necessary to trace at least the major steps leading up to Bultmann, and in the second chapter to deal primarily

2. For a full presentation of the history of the research into the New Testament as an historical document, see W.G. Kümmel, Das Neue Testament: Geschichte der Erforschung seiner Probleme, München, 1958. This scholarly and thorough work (~~recommended~~) is ~~been~~ very helpful in sorting out the course of N.T. research.

with Bultmann himself.

Before going back to the beginning of the Quest, it seems advisable to give a definition of the two main terms involved in the discussion. The term "historical Jesus" is used primarily to signify Jesus as he can be made the object of historical-critical research and the picture that can be reconstructed as a result of this research.³ That this picture can and does vary according to the historical method employed in the research and according to the person employing it is taken for granted. This Jesus is also, strictly speaking, delimited by birth and death as is any other historical figure. He is, in other words, subject to contingency. The other term, the "Christ of Faith", indicates Jesus as proclaimed as the Messiah in the kerygma of the early church—Messiah here not referring to the one specific Hebrew-Jewish concept of the Davidic Messiah, but to the whole range of Christological titles and reflection. For the nineteenth century especially, this latter term must be taken to include the Christ of the traditional dogmas and creeds of the Church.

3. N.A. Dahl, "Der historische Jesus", Kerygma und Dogma I, 1955, p. 104.

The problem of the relationship between the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith presupposes the rise of critical reflection which poses the question of what can be known about Jesus by the application of historical method or reason. As such it is the product, indirectly, of the Reformation, whose emphasis on the Scriptures as the criterion for faith and practice drew concentrated attention to the New Testament. More directly, it is a product or child of the Enlightenment, and the first attempts to discover Jesus "as he really was" and his message as it really was, were dominated by the desire either to attack or to revise the traditional dogma of the Church. This was, however, parallel to the Reformation approach to Scripture in so far as the Reformers rejected the role of tradition as the primary guide to the interpretation of Scripture, a position which continued to be maintained by the Roman Catholic Church. From this position of the Reformers, then, it was but one natural step further, once "dogmatic" interpretation was found within the New Testament, to push on and measure all tradition, including that in the New Testament, by the person being interpreted, that is, by Jesus himself.

Albert Schweitzer begins his history of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* in Germany with the publication of Reimarus's Fragments by Lessing, but one could perhaps more truly begin in England with a trio of English Deists, who in turn decisively influenced Reimarus---John Locke, Matthew Tindal, and Thomas Chubb. It was John Locke who, in the search for a "reasonable" Christianity as an antidote to the rapidly multiplying churches, sharply contrasted the simple and understandable gospel of Jesus with the complicated and difficult theologizing of Paul.⁴

Matthew Tindal, in his attempt to prove that Christianity is just the expression of Natural Religion, and that reason must decide between truth and error in the Scripture, discovered the basic eschatological atmosphere of the gospels and especially of the early church. He found that Jesus, Paul, and the early church shared the belief that the Kingdom of God would come in their lifetime, and that they based their ethical demands upon its nearness. In this, he says, they were wrong. If they were wrong here, they

4. John Locke, The Reasonableness of Duty, as Delivered in the Scriptures, 1695, pp. 290-295.

could be wrong elsewhere. Therefore reason must decide between truth and error.⁵ Thomas Chubb also had the same intention as Matthew Tindal and discovered the eschatological character of the preaching of Jesus. He, however, contrasted it with the kerygmatic theology of Paul and John.⁶

One could draw a line directly from these English Deists to Reimarus, but three other German theologians should perhaps be mentioned, who contributed to the laying of the foundations on which the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* was to build. Also influenced by the English Deists, they are: J.S. Semler, J.D. Michaelis, and J.J. Griesbach.

-
5. Matthew Tindal, Christianity as Old as the Creation of the Gospel, a Republication of the Religion of Nature, London, 1730, pp. 258-262. Tindal's discovery of the eschatological expectation in the New Testament thus pre-dated Reimarus and certainly qualifies A. Schweitzer's claim that Reimarus "...was the first to grasp the fact that the world of thought in which Jesus moved was essentially eschatological" (A. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, New York, 1959, p. 23.
6. Thomas Chubb, The True Gospel of Jesus Christ, Asserted, London, 1738, pp. 43 ff., 46 ff. 142.

J.S. Semler in his Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Canons (1771-75) called for a strictly historical approach to the biblical books. From his careful observation of the texts, he could be called the father of literary criticism and the founder of historical research into the New Testament. The Bible was, for him, no longer inspired as a book. He could, therefore, apply his methods of historical research to the investigation of the Bible, without endangering the Word of God, which he wished to preserve at all costs. As Wilhelm Dilthey says of him:

Semler...zerschlug die Einheit des neutestamentlichen Kanons, stellte die richtige Aufgabe, jede einzelne Schrift in ihrem Lokalcharakter zu begreifen, verband dann diese Schriften zu einer neuen Einheit, welche in der lebendigen geschichtlichen Auffassung der urchristlichen Kämpfe zwischen dem Judenchristentum und den Christen freierer Ordnung enthalten ist, und führte in seiner Vorbereitung zur theologischen Hermeneutik mit derber Entschiedenheit auf zwei Stücke zurück: Interpretation aus dem Sprachgebrauch und aus den historischen Umständen. Damit war die Befreiung der Auslegung vom Dogma vollzogen, die grammatische-historische Schule war begründet.⁷

7. W. Dilthey, Ges. Schriften, Band V, Berlin, 1924, p. 326.

J.D. Michaelis is not so much to be remembered for any single discovery, as for his approach to the New Testament as a whole. In his two-volume major work he presented an extensive discussion of the historical problems of the New Testament and of the individual writings within it. And it is to J.J. Griesbach that we owe the expression "synoptic gospels", for it was he who first separated the Fourth Gospel from the first three and printed the first three in parallel columns in his Synopse der Evangelien des Matthäus, Markus und Lukas (1776).⁸

It may be that Schweitzer overestimated the uniqueness and importance of Hermann Samuel Reimarus, but it is clear that Reimarus made the problem of the relationship between the Jesus of history and the Christ of Faith an unavoidable one for the succeeding generations. As Schweitzer says, "Reimarus takes as his starting-point the question regarding the content of the preaching of Jesus. 'We are justified', he says, 'in drawing an absolute distinction between the teaching of the Apostles

8. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 88.

in their writings and what Jesus Himself in His own lifetime proclaimed and taught."⁹ According to Reimarus, Jesus was a thoroughgoing Jew. Jesus proclaimed no new articles of faith, rather he preached the nearness of the Kingdom of God in the worldly, Jewish meaning of that term. When this failed and Jesus was crucified, the disciples stole the body of Jesus and proclaimed the resurrection of Jesus.

When the first system, as Reimarus calls it, was annihilated by the death of Jesus, the disciples brought forward the second (Daniel-Apocalyptic Messianic expectation), and gathered followers who shared their expectation of a second coming of Jesus the Messiah. In order to get rid of the difficulty of the death of Jesus, they gave it the significance of a spiritual redemption--which had not previously entered their field of vision or that of Jesus Himself.¹⁰

Although the two main supports for his theory--the political character of the Kingdom and the trickery of the disciples because they did not want to go back to work--are patently read into the story, it should not obscure Reimarus' basic service, other than his emphasis on the

9. A. Schweitzer, op.cit., p. 16.

10. Ibid., p. 21.

central importance of eschatology, namely that "die geschichtliche Aufgabe der Scheidung zwischen der Verkündigung des geschichtlichen Jesus und der Predigt der Urgemeinde nun für weite Kreise unausweichlich gemacht wurde, und daß sich damit zugleich das Problem stellte, welche Rolle Jesus bei der Loslösung des Christentums vom Judentum zukomme."¹¹

One of the central weaknesses of Reimarus was his misuse of the Synoptic Gospels, a weakness which Schweitzer himself showed over a century later. It was this criticism, among many less fortunate ones, which J.S. Semler levelled at Reimarus. And it was just in the area of source-criticism that two major steps forward were to be seen in the next two decades.

In 1786, Gottlob Christian Storr "begründete in rein geschichtlicher Argumentation die Abhängigkeit des Matthäus und Lukas von Markus zum erstenmal mit dem überzeugenden Argument, das bei der umgekehrten Annahme unerklärbar sei, warum Markus so große Teile des Matthäus und Lukas ausgelassen haben sollte."¹² With Storr then, a major step was taken towards laying that main founda-

11. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 106.

12. Ibid., p. 89.

tion-stone of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung, the priority of the Gospel of Mark.

In 1796 and 1797 Johann Gottfried Herder published his two books on Jesus, the first on Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels, the second on Jesus according to the Gospel of John. He, too, recognized the priority of the Gospel of Mark—"Markus Evangelium ist nicht verkürzt, sondern ein eigenes Evangelium. Was andere mehr und anders haben, ist in ihnen dazugekommen; nicht aber in Markus ausgelassen worden." And Mark is "das uns einzige Richtmaas von dem, was in anderen Compositionen zu ihren Zwecken hinzugefügt worden (ist)".¹³ But he went much further in these truly remarkable works and recognized for the first time many of the things which are now associated with form-criticism. According to Herder, oral tradition stands behind our written gospels. The oldest gospel was the preaching of Jesus as the Messiah, but this preaching was not interested in producing a biography. Even the gospel-writers themselves had no interest in writing actual biographies. In his book on John, Herder says:

Überhaupt beweiset das Evangelium Johannes die Idee am besten,...das sie (the gospels) nämlich

13. Herders Sämtliche Werke, published by B. Suphan, Berlin, 1880, Vol. XIX, pp. 391, 420.

auf keine Weise B i o g r a p h i e n, sondern historische Beurkundungen des christlichen Glaubensbekenntnisses seyn sollten, daß Jesus der Christ sei, und wie er es gewesen. Johannes Evangelium, als das spätesteste, verfolgt diesen Zweck i m b e s t i m m t e s t e n U m r i s; eine eigentliche Biographie verliert man dabei ganz aus den Augen, an welche man auch, als Haupt-idee derselben betrachtet, bei den älteren Evangelien nicht denken sollte. Sie sind, was ihr Name saget (namely gospels, not biographies).¹⁴

Further, the gospel before the gospels "bestand aus einzelnen Stücken, Erzählungen, Parabeln, Sprüchen, Perikopen."¹⁵
And Herder lays down a guideline for the rules governing the transmission of oral tradition:

B e i e i n e r f r e i e n m ü n d l i c h e n E r z ä h l u n g i s t n i c h t a l l e s g l e i c h f r e i. Sentenzen, große Aussprüche, Parabeln erhalten sich eher in demselben Ausdruck als kleine Umstände der Geschichte; Übergänge und Bindungsformeln wählet der Erzählende selbst. In unseren Evangelien ist dieser Unterschied klar. Gewisse, insonderheit starke, dunkle, parabolische Ausdrücke sind allenthalben, selbst mit verschiedener Deutung, d i e s e l b e n; in Umständen,

14. Herders Sämtliche Werke, Vol. XIX, p. 273.

15. Ibid., p. 418.

in Übergängen, in Ordnung der Begebenheiten gehen die Erzählungen am freiesten auseinander.¹⁶

Finally, Herder, though so far ahead of his time in so many ways, still had the ultimate purpose of establishing what was the "simple" and "understandable" teaching of Jesus over against all later accretions. "Die Lehre Jesu war einfach und faßlich für alle Menschen: Gott ist Euer Vater; ihr alle seyd gegeneinander Brüder . . . Je reiner diese Perle erhalten wird, desto heller glänzt sie; sie darf nicht als Edelstein brillantiert werden."¹⁷

At the turn of the nineteenth century, a problem was debated which was to arise in much the same form again at the turn of the next century. It was the problem of whether one can found theological value judgments on the basis of the results of historical research. G.L. Bauer claimed that one should study the writings of the New Testament...

...ganz unparteyisch, ohne Vorliebe für sie, ohne Haß gegen sie, und mit den Vorkenntnissen, die zum richtigen Verstehen derselben erfordert werden,

16. Herders Sämt. Werke, Vol. XIX, p. 417. (Characteristically, it is this aspect of Herder's work which Schweitzer omits.)

17. Ibid., pp. 239, 250.

darzuthun suchen, was denn eigentlich die christliche Religionstheorie sey; wofür Jesu wolle gehalten werden, und aus welchen Gründen, er verlange, daß man ihm glaube. Denn nur erst dann, wenn dieses redlich erforscht ist, kann der, welcher nichts ohne vorhergegangene Prüfung annimmt, aber der Stimme der Wahrheit auch gerne sein Ohr öffnet, zur Annehmung oder Verwerfung des Christentums sich entschließen.¹⁸

Here one sees both the aim of the rationalist research and its difficulty. The aim is to provide a foundation for a rational decision for or against Christianity. The difficulty is whether rational decisions and faith are compatible, complementary, or exclusive.

In any case, C.F. Stäudlin, in 1807, raised a voice of protest against the right of the so-called historical-grammatical interpretation of the New Testament:

Weil es sich aber bei der Lehre Jesu um unveränderliche göttliche Wahrheiten handelt, die nicht bloß zeitgeschichtliche Bedeutung haben können, und weil die Aussprüche der Apostel tiefe religiöse Empfindungen wiedergeben, kann

18. W.G. Kümmel, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

nur der das Neue Testament verstehen, der einen solchen Eindruck von Jesus und eine gleichartige religiöse Empfindung hat...ohne eine gewisse Anerkennung der Inspiration dieser Schriften kommt man nicht zu ihrem richtigen Verständnis.¹⁹

Just how one is to feel as the apostles did and what the relationship between the historical-grammatical research and the theological interpretation of the New Testament is to be, are two problems he does not face, but he did pose an important question which was to become acute again. To some extent parallel to Stäudlin was Schleiermacher's assertion that a l l interpretation of the recorded thoughts of others is possibly only on the basis of an understanding of one's own capability for thought and feeling.²⁰

The next major step towards the establishment of the typical liberal picture of the historical Jesus as developed by the Leben-Jesu-Forschung was taken by Karl Hase in his book on Jesus in 1829. He proposed the thesis that there was an inner development in the life

19. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 125.

20. W. Dilthey, op. cit., pp. 326-331.

of Jesus in the period of his public ministry. As Kummel says of him,

...er hat mit dieser Hypothese zum erstenmal die seither in der verschiedensten Weise ausgesprochene Vermutung eines Wandels in der Vorstellungswelt Jesu geäußert und damit gezeigt, daß man auch Jesus als eine geschichtliche Person der psychologisch-genetischen Betrachtung unterwerfen müsse wie jede andere geschichtliche Größe.²¹

Up to this point in the course of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung, the majority of those who were engaged in the search for the historical Jesus were attempting to establish a basis from which to criticize or revise the traditional church dogmas or the assertions of the tradition about Jesus. N.A. Dahl summarizes it in this way:

Die Leben-Jesu-Forschung, wie sie im 19. Jahrhundert ihre klassische Zeit erlebte, war im großen und ganzen ein gigantischer Versuch, sich vom kirchlichen Christudogma freizumachen, aber gleichzeitig an der einzigartigen religiösen Bedeutung festzuhalten. In der Durchführung gab es dann die Möglichkeit sehr großer Variationen, und eine gleitende Skala zwischen recht konser-

21. W.G. Kummel, op. cit., p. 111.

vativen und sehr radikalen Auffassungen. Die Hinsicht, in der man an der einzigartigen Stellung Jesu festhalten wollte, konnte wechseln. Im Rationalismus war vor allem die Lehre Jesu und sein moralisches Vorbild betont worden. Später rückten das Gottesbewusstsein Jesu und sein Charakterbild ins Zentrum des Blickfeldes. Für die unter dem Einfluß Hegels stehende Forschung Ferd. Chr. Bauers war das Entscheidende dies, daß in Jesus das Bewusstsein von der Einheit Gottes und des Menschen erstmalig zum Durchbruch gekommen war. Von dieser Voraussetzung aus, konnte nun freilich der historische Jesus ein Problem werden.²²

And this problem soon showed itself in the work of David Friedrich Straus. Straus was able to criticize both the rationalists and the conservatives or supernaturalists because the truth of Christianity was given to him apart from the specific historical data of the New Testament, something which both the conservatives and the rationalists took equally seriously. In Straus's own words:

Den inneren Kern des christlichen Glaubens weiß der Verfasser von seinen kritischen Untersuchungen völlig unabhängig. Christi übernatür-

22. N.A. Dahl, "Der historische Jesus als geschichtswissenschaftliches und theologisches Problem", Kerygma und Dogma, 1955, p. 105.

liche Geburt, seine Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt, bleiben ewige Wahrheiten, so sehr ihre Wirklichkeit als historischer Fakta angezweifelt werden mag. Nur die Gewisheit davon kann unserer Kritik Ruhe und Würde geben.²³

This presupposition gave Strauß the freedom and impetus for his research. He couples this with his method which he called the "mythical", which he proposed as a replacement for the natural and supernatural methods of interpretation. He was not the first to use the concept of myth; he had predecessors in Eichhorn, Gabler, Bauer, and de Wette. But he was the first to extend this as an analytical method to the whole of the gospel account of the life of Jesus. By myth he understood... "nichts anderes als geschichtsartige Einkleidungen urchristlicher Ideen, gebildet in der absichtslos dichtenden Sage."²⁴

Just what this meant can be seen from the following excerpt...

Das einfache historische Gerüste des Lebens Jesu, daß er zu Nazareth aufgewachsen sei, von Johannes sich habe taufen lassen, Jünger gesammelt

23. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 149.

24. Ibid., p. 150.

habe, im jüdischen Lande lehrend umhergezogen sei, überall dem Pharisäismus sich entgegengestellt und zum Messiasreiche eingeladen habe, das er aber am Ende dem Haß und Neid der Pharisäischen Partei erliegen, und am Kreuze gestorben sei, --dieses Gerüste wurde mit den mannigfaltigsten und sinnvollsten Gewinden frommer Reflexionen und Phantasien umgeben, indem alle Ideen, welche die erste Christenheit über ihren entrissenen Meister hatte, in Thatsachen verwandelt, seinem Lebenslaufe eingewoben wurden. Den reichsten Stoff zu dieser mythischen Verzierung lieferte das alte Testament, in welchem die erste, vornehmlich aus dem Judentum gesammelte Christengemeinde lebte und webte...²⁵

From this excerpt one can see both that Strauß was ready to accept more as historical than many would allow and, on the other hand, that his radical criticism was such as to arouse an exceedingly vehement response. In the words of Schweitzer, "Scarcely has a book let loose such a storm of controversy; and scarcely ever has a controversy been so barren of immediate result. The fertilising rain brought up a crop of toadstools."²⁶ Negatively, there was much to criticize in Strauß's work. He

25. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 150.

26. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 96.

overemphasized the presence of myth and failed to see the actual literary relationship between the gospels. On the other hand, he forced the task upon the conservatives and liberals alike of taking much more seriously the role of the primitive Christian community in the transmission and expansion of tradition. He also pointed clearly to the role the Old Testament played in the formation of that tradition. And, even though he misconstrued the relationship between the synoptic gospels, he did show that the Gospel of John represents a large step further in the move from actual history to its interpretation. In speaking of the description by John of Jesus' foreknowledge of the Passion, for example, he says, "Diese Darstellung des Johannes Evangelium ist die dritte und höchste Stufe andächtiger, aber ungeschichtlicher, Verschönerung."²⁷

Strauß's book and the response to it mark a major turning-point in the history of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung*. He drew even the conservatives out, who saw their faith in Christ in danger of losing its historical footing altogether. The phase that set in with and following

27. W.G. Kümmel, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

Straus was, as a result, characterized in the main not so much by an attack on dogma as by a defence of it against the theories of Strauss. It was motivated by a desire, in an age of empiricism, to find a basis for the faith of the Church in the 'facts'. In this period, a few names and dates stand out from the rest.

In 1835, Karl Lachman contributed towards the firmer grounding of the priority of the Gospel of Mark. C.G. Wilkie in 1838 also opted for the priority of Mark, but went one step further and anticipated that with which Wrede was later to astound the world of scholarship.

Dieses Werk ist nicht die Kopie eines mündlichen Urevangeliums, sondern ist künstliche Komposition. Daß seine Zusammenstellungen weniger durch geschichtlichen Zusammenhang als durch vorausgedachte allgemeine Sätze bedingt sind, ungeachtet sie den Schein eines geschichtlichen Zusammenhangs angenommen haben, dies erklärt sich aber daraus, daß sein Urheber keiner der unmittelbaren Begleiter Jesu gewesen ist.²⁸

28. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 182.

Wilke succeeded in showing that the oldest material for the life of Jesus is to be found in Mark and maintained that its composition was due not to historical chronology but to conceptual principles. He did not, however, work out the relationship of the gospels to one another satisfactorily, a task that was left to C.H. Weisse and J. Holtzmann.

C.H. Weisse in 1838 worked out the basic pre-suppositions for the two-source theory, and in 1863 J. Holtzmann appropriated his ideas and proceeded to show the necessity of assuming a second source, mainly consisting in sayings which were used by both Matthew and Luke. "Dadurch das dieser Nachweis ganz besonders auch die sprachliche Eigenart der Quellen und den Zusammenhang der Berichte ins Auge faeste, wurde die Zweiquellentheorie durch Holtzmann so sorgfältig begründet, das die Jesusforschung von da an diesen festen Boden nicht mehr aufgeben konnte."²⁹ In addition to this basic service, Holtzmann presented a picture of Jesus which was destined to almost mesmerize nearly four decades of research. He assumed that there were

29. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 185.

two stages in the ministry of Jesus with Peter's confession as the turning point. He denied the importance of eschatology, and where he admitted its presence at all, he interpreted the Kingdom as an internal rule of the Spirit ("ein innerliches Reich der Sinnesänderung").³⁰

The kind of consensus which was reached in the period which followed Holtzmann has been appositely characterized by Hans Conzelmann:

Um die Jahrhundertwende war hinsichtlich der Betrachtungsweise ein gewisser Konsensus erreicht: man fragt nach der P e r s ö n l i c h k e i t Jesu, nach dem bleibenden religiösen und ethischen Gehalt seiner Lehre; man ist der Überzeugung, das die historische Rekonstruktion Grundlage heutiger Weltanschauung sein könne. Dabei wird die eigene Vorstellung vom 'Wesen des Christentums' in die Lehre Jesu projiziert; Jesus ist Lehrer und Vorbild der Humanität. Die eschatologische Ankündigung wird--als zeitbedingt--zurückgedrängt, soweit man nicht den Begriff des Reich Gottes im Sinne eines zeitlosen Ideals deuten kann. Die Lücken in den erhaltenen Berichten werden durch psychologische Kombination aufgefüllt. Die Geschichte von der Taufe Jesu wird im Sinne eines

30. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 185; cf. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

Berufungserlebnisses gedeutet, diejenige von der Versuchung als Prozeß der inneren Klärung. Man unterscheidet Etappen der inneren und äußeren Entwicklung: die ersten Erfolge in Galiläa, Zulauf der Massen, dann deren Abwendung, die Krisis, welche Jesus zum Entschluß führt, nach Jerusalem zu ziehen, nachdem bei seinen Jüngern der Glaube durchgebrochen ist, er sei der Messias, endlich die Katastrophe.³¹

There was in the Leben-Jesu-Forschung at this time also a kind of consensus of presuppositions, which can be deduced in part from the passage from the article by Conzelmann. Some of them are: the sources provide the foundation from which a biography of Jesus can be written in which chronology, psychological development, and the causal chain of events can be shown; the gospel-writers were basically 'modern' historians, motivated by the desire to portray the life of Jesus as objectively as possible; the simple religion of Jesus provides the necessary corrective for the complicated theologizing of Paul as well as a useful ally in the fight for a purer religion based on the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, or, as Harnack put it,

31. RGG², Vol. III, Col. 620.

based on the fatherhood of God and the infinite worth of the human soul. The link between the Jesus of history and the Christ of Faith or the faith of the church was worked out mainly by means of the unique Sonship of Jesus, in whose discipleship the believer is enabled to achieve a purer Father-son relationship with God. As we have seen, many of these presuppositions had been challenged during the course of the previous hundred years, and they were soon to come under fire again.

One of the men who belong in spirit to the twentieth century was Carl Weizsäcker, who already in 1864 had begun, like Herder before him, to formulate some of the leading ideas of form-criticism. He recognized, among other things, the central significance of the Easter event and its influence upon the formation of the tradition. The belief in Jesus became a different belief from the belief in him before Easter. The experience of the risen Christ coloured and re-formed the memories that were retained of the earthly Jesus. In addition to recognizing the central importance of the Easter event, Weizsäcker also turned his attention to the pre-literary stages of the gospel-tradition.

Characteristically, it is this aspect of his work which Schweitzer feels to be an unfortunate flaw.³² Weizsäcker claimed, with Herder, that the various stories and teachings of Jesus originally circulated as individual units and that they served different interests as the needs and interests of the early Christian community changed. Further he says that the sayings were more likely to be preserved in their original form than the "Erzählungen".

Als Regel muß man annehmen, daß die Erzählungen zu allererst für sich gehen, dann aber zu...Gruppen verbunden wurden. Und dies kann zu nichts anderem als zu Lehrzwecken geschehen sein. Irgendeine Thätigkeit Jesus, ein Zweig seines Verkehrs mit anderen, eine Beweisung seines Berufs und seiner Sendung sollte damit aufgezeigt werden. Auf die Chronologie kam es im allgemeinen gar nicht an. So viel wir sehen, haben erst die Geschichtsschreiber eine solche herzustellen versucht.³³

In 1894, in his Einleitung in das Neue Testament, Adolf Jülicher carried the work of Weizsäcker one step

32. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 209.

33. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., pp. 210-211.

further, but without losing sight of the historical value of the gospels. He says of the gospel-writers:

Die Erbaulichkeit war für sie der Maßstab der Glaubwürdigkeit; nicht Jesum geschichtlich verstehen und würdigen, sondern an ihn glauben, ihn über alles lieben, auf ihn hoffen zu lehren war ihre Aufgabe, und nicht den Jesus wie er wirklich war, sondern den Christus, wie er dem Herzen seiner Gemeinde erschien, haben sie—natürlich ohne von der Möglichkeit solch eines Gegensatzes etwas zu ahnen—beschrieben.

Gleichwohl sind die synoptischen Evangelien nicht bloß als religiöse Erbauungsbücher, sondern auch als Quellen für die Geschichte Jesu von unschätzbarem Wert. So vieles an ihren Angaben im Einzelnen unsicher sein mag, das Bild von dem Träger des Evangeliums, das sie im Leser zurücklassen, ist im Ganzen ein treues...³⁴

One of the voices of protest which were raised at this time against the presuppositions of the liberal scholars' quest of the historical Jesus belonged to Martin Kähler. Kähler, whom Schweitzer failed to include in his book, proved, in the long run, to be one of the decisive influences in bringing about the end of the original quest in Germany. As the title of his

34. A. Jülicher, Einleitung in das N.T., Freiburg und Leipzig, 1894, p.230.

book shows (Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus), he made a definite distinction between Jesus and Christ on the one hand, and between 'historisch' and 'geschichtlich' on the other. By Jesus he meant the abstraction which was the end-product of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung, and by Christ he meant the Saviour who has been proclaimed by the apostles and the church. By 'historisch' he meant the pure (and dead) facts of the past, and by 'geschichtlich' that which has lasting significance and continues to speak not just to our minds but to our hearts. One can say just "I know" to the former, but one must say "I confess" or "I reject" to the latter. The act of believing follows not upon reading the results of historical research, but upon the preaching of the risen Lord. "Denn geschichtliche Tatsachen, welche die Wissenschaft erst klar zu stellen hat, können als solche nicht Glaubenserlebnisse werden."³⁵ It is the preached Christ that comes to us with the "Entweder-Oder, Eckstein

35. M. Kähler, op. cit. (Munich, 1961³), p. 51. It should perhaps be noted that Kähler gave the two terms for history different meanings, something which has never gained universal recognition.

oder Fels des Ärgernisses".³⁶ "Der wirkliche Christus ist der gepredigte Christus."³⁷

Not only is the real Christ the preached Christ, but, according to Kähler, it is impossible to reconstruct the biography of Jesus even if one wished to.

Wir besitzen keine Quellen für ein Leben Jesu, welche ein Geschichtsforscher als zuverlässige und ausreichende gelten lassen kann. Ich betone: für eine Biographie Jesu von Nazareth von dem Maßstab heutiger geschichtlicher Wissenschaft... die neuere Biographie sucht ihre Stärke in der psychologischen Analyse, in dem Aufweisen der Fülle und Kette von Ursachen, aus welchen die Erscheinung und Leistung des geschilderten Menschen entsprungen ist; so fordert dann die echte Menschheit dieses Jesus jedenfalls, daß man sein Werden versteht, die langsame Entwicklung seiner religiösen Genialität, das Durchbrechen seiner sittlichen Selbstständigkeit, das Aufdämmern und Aufleuchten seines messianischen Bewußtseins. Die Quellen aber enthalten von dem allem nichts, auch gar nichts.³⁸

Moreover, the gospel-writers did not intend to compose biographies of the life of Jesus. "...von Jesu öffent-

36. Martin Kähler, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

37. Ibid., p. 44.

38. Ibid., pp. 21, 23.

lichem Leben, besitzen wir keine Urkunden, sondern lediglich Erinnerungen, welche immer zugleich die Art von Bekenntnissen an sich tragen, indem sie immer etwas voraussetzen und auf etwas abzielen, was jenseits bloß geschichtlicher Tatsächlichkeit liegt, und was wir Offenbarung oder Heil nennen."³⁹ The gospel-writers' own purpose in writing is clear: it was "...Glauben an Jesum durch anschauliche Verkündigung seiner Heilands-thätigkeit zu wecken."⁴⁰ The gospels are basically "Predigten von der Messianität des Gekreuzigten" or "Passionsgeschichten mit ausführlicher Einleitung." But this is true not just of John, which had been generally admitted by the liberal Leben-Jesu-Forschung, but of the synoptic writers as well: "Wenn der vierte Erzähler offen bekennt, ein Prediger zu sein (Joh. 20,31), so sind die anderen es im Grunde nicht minder."⁴¹

But for all his rejection of the gospels as in any way biographical, he does not say that we c a n n o t learn anything about the earthly life of Jesus. For if we do not get a biography from the gospel-writers, we do get something like a character sketch. As he says:

39. Martin Kähler, op. cit., p. 103.

40. Ibid., p. 104.

41. Ibid., p. 60.

...was sind die Erzählungen an sich und was sind sie uns, als Beispiele, wie er zu handeln pflegte, wie er war, wie er i s t. In jedem Tropfen der betauten Wiese spiegelt sich widerstrahlend der Sonne Licht; so tritt uns in jeder kleinen Geschichte die volle Person unseres Herrn entgegen.⁴²

He does not then deny something, and indeed something valuable for the life of the Christian, can be known about the pre-crucifixion Jesus. But he does question the attempt by the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* to replace the Christ of Faith by the historical Jesus. He agrees, for example, that one could perhaps sum up the gospel message in the phrase "God is love", but he asks where one learns this. It is not, at least in full, in the message of the earthly Jesus as reconstructed by historical critical research, but in his Passion as witnessed to by believers.

Darum preiset Gott seine Liebe gegen uns, daß Christus für uns gestorben ist (Röm. 5,8; vgl. 8, 32-39) erinnert Paulus. Und woher Johannes jene Erkenntnis gewonnen, sagt er sehr deutlich: 'Darinnen steht die Liebe: nicht daß wir Gott geliebet haben, sondern daß er uns geliebet hat und gesandt seinen Sohn zur Sühne für unsere

42. M. Kähler, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

Sünden. Daran haben wir erkannt die Liebe, daß er sein Leben für uns gelassen hat. (I Joh. 4,10; 3,16)

In dem geschichtlichen Gehalt des Paulinischen Symbolum I Kor. 15,3-4, in dem Lebensausgange Jesu hat Gott in einer Tatensprache geredet, die unverwischlich geblieben ist. Diese Tatsachen bedürfen keiner Urkunden, um unvergessen zu bleiben, denn das dankbare Bekenntnis trägt sie durch die Jahrtausende. Ja, für diese Tatsachen, nämlich für ihren eigentlichen Gehalt, für ihren bleibenden Wert k a n n es gar keine geschichtlichen Urkunden geben, sondern nur Zeugnis und Glauben.

Und darum: unseren Glauben an den Heiland w e c k t und t r ä g t die kurze und bündige apostolische Verkündigung von dem erhöhten Ge-
kreuzigten. Z u m g l ä u b i g e n V e r-
k e h r aber mit u n s e r e m Heilande hilft uns die Erinnerung seiner Jünger, die sich im Glauben ihnen einprägte, die sie als den höchsten Schatz ihres Lebens vererbten. Und im Verkehre mit ihm durch sein biblisches Bild werden wir zur Freiheit der Kinder Gottes erzogen.⁴³

From this statement it can be seen that Kähler was not just criticizing the Leben-Jesu-Forschung, but was trying to move towards a restatement of the relationship

43. M. Kähler, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

between the Jesus of history and the Christ of Faith. The liberals had been attempting to play off the Jesus of history against the Christ of Faith; Kähler was trying to redress the balance both in the name of what he understood to be the nature of the sources and the nature of faith.

Kähler's work had little decisive influence on the course of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung* until Rudolf Bultmann appropriated and utilized it after the first World War. Schweitzer omitted Kähler from his history of the "Quest". Kähler did, however, receive some immediate critical attention from Otto Ritschl and from Wilhelm Herrmann. Both of these men agreed with Kähler's criticism of the biographical efforts of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, but both of them raised questions about his theological and critical judgements. Wilhelm Herrmann, in his excellent article (which is not mentioned by Kümmel although it deals with the central theme of his book), raises the question, which Kähler touched on, of what awakes faith and what sustains faith. He agrees with Kähler that it is the preaching of the kerygma by believers which arouses faith in others; that is why the keys of the Kingdom are given to them. But Herrmann

maintains, it is of the essence of faith that we should attain to an independent relationship with the person in whom we are called to believe. If this does not happen, we revert to what he calls the Catholic authoritarian type of faith. As he says:

Richtig ist...Köhlers Bemerkung, daß die neutestamentlichen Berichte von Christus durchaus den Charakter bekennender Verkündigung tragen, und daß wir dieses gerade bedürfen, um von den besitzenden Brüdern auf die rechte Bahn gewiesen zu werden, nicht aber zu dem Zweck, daß wir mit einem Opfer unseres Urtheils uns ihren Versicherungen unterwerfen und für diese Leistungen erwarten, nun auch zu erleben, was sie aussagen... Es ist...eben nicht so, daß wir den Inhalt einer persönlichen Überzeugung, die belebend auf uns gewirkt hat, nun auch uns selbst ganz und gar anzueignen vermöchten.

Die Förderung, die uns dabei zu Theil wird, findet ganz anders statt. Wir müssen von dem anderen, der durch die undefinierbare Macht des Geistes uns zu sich emporzieht, zugleich die Richtung auf das empfangen, was seiner eigenen persönlichen Überzeugung den sicheren Halt und die Selbstständigkeit gibt.⁴⁴

44. W. Herrmann, "Der geschichtliche Christus: der Grund unseres Glaubens", ZThK II, 1892, pp. 232-273, here pp. 248-250.

Although Hermann agrees with Kähler that the faith of the Christian can not be based on the uncertain and changing results of the historian, he does feel that Kähler has underestimated the value that it can have.

Es bleibt ihr e r s t e n s der Werth, daß sie, richtig gebraucht, dem Glauben falsche Stützen hinwegnimmt. Sie thut dies, indem sie, wie Kähler ausführt, evident macht, daß die neutestamentlichen Überlieferungen das Leben Jesu ebenso verschleiern wie offenbart und die Mittel zu einer wissenschaftlich gesicherten Biographie Jesu nicht herzieht. Wer also zur Sicherung seines Glaubens einer solchen zu bedürfen meint oder auch auf die historischen Beweise für einzelnes, wie die Thatsache der Auferweckung Jesu, sich verläßt, den kann die historische Arbeit davon überführen, daß er seinen Glauben dem erschlaffenden Einfluß von Gründen überlassen hat, die nur bei der nachsichtigsten Schonung Bestand behalten können. Das ist aber keine geringe Hilfe. Denn daran kann sich alsdann die Erkenntnis anknüpfen, daß solche Gründe in das innere Leben des Glaubens überhaupt nicht passen. Z w e i t e n s kann die historische Arbeit doch auch zu Resultaten führen, die der Glaube, der sich an der Überlie-

ferung nährt, nicht unbeobachtet lassen kann. Es kann mir nicht gleichgiltig sein, wenn eine verständige Kritik der Quellen mir nachweist, wo ein Wort Jesu durch das Mißverstehen des Berichterstatters verdunkelt wird, oder in welchem der parallelen Berichte die ursprünglichere Form der Überlieferung zu erkennen ist. Es ist auch die Möglichkeit nicht ausgeschlossen, daß solche Ergebnisse mit der Zeit zu der Evidenz gelangen, die sie für die Gemeinde nutzbar macht. Aber abgesehen davon, ist es allerdings richtig, daß die historische Arbeit das Leben des Glaubens nicht berührt. Sie kann auf jeden Fall das, was ihn erweckt und begründet, weder herstellen noch hinwegnehmen.⁴⁵

Otto Ritschl added little to this criticism from Herrmann other than taking exception to Kähler's use of the word "geschichtlich", which he felt was an arbitrary misuse of it.⁴⁶ As has already been noted (cf. footnote 35 above), Kähler's definition of the term was in fact very much his own. However, he himself does use the terms "Geschichte" and "geschichtlich" in the more usual and all-inclusive sense still widely ascribed to them.

45. W. Herrmann, op. cit., p. 252.

46. Otto Ritschl, "Der historische Christus, der christliche Glaube und die theologische Wissenschaft", ZThK III, 1893, pp. 371-426.

This can be seen from his use of the compound "Geschichtsforscher", which carries the meaning, where it is used, simply of one who is engaged in historical research. The terminological inconsistency should not, however, detract from the importance of the problem involved. As we shall see, W. Dilthey was raising quite parallel questions regarding the difference between the method of interpretation appropriate to natural sciences and that appropriate to the "Geisteswissenschaften" in general. In spite of this, Kähler's work had little immediate influence. To be sure, the book can be criticized at many points, but it did raise significant questions and point out problems which had to be grappled with in the course of time. To quote Käsemann, it is a book, "das nach sechzig Jahren an Aktualität noch kaum eingebüßt hat und trotz aller Angriffe und vieler möglicher Bedenken auch nicht wirklich widerlegt ist. Im Grunde hat Bultmann die Thesen dieses Buches nur auf seine Weise untermauert und präzisiert."⁴⁷

To some extent, the protest that Martin Kähler was making was part of an emerging protest against the subjection of the "Geisteswissenschaften" to the methodology of the natural sciences. More and more the claim

⁴⁷. Ernst Käsemann, "Das Problem des historischen Jesus", ZThK LI, No. 2 (1954), p. 126.

had been made, in the course of the nineteenth century, that the investigation and interpretation of not only the Bible but of literature and history in general should be subject to the procedures which had been evolved within the natural sciences. One of the chief spokesmen for a method of interpretation appropriate specifically to the "Geisteswissenschaften" was Wilhelm Dilthey, who was to have an influence upon a wide variety of people including Karl Jaspers, Ernst Troeltsch, Martin Heidegger, and Rudolf Bultmann. O.F. Bollnow says of his analysis:

Im Unterschied zum naturwissenschaftlichen Erklären bezeichnet er das Verfahren der Geisteswissenschaften als Verstehen. Während jene ihren Gegenstand aus hypothetisch erschlossenen letzten Elementen (Atomen) aufzubauen versuchen, finden die Geisteswissenschaften niemals solche einfachen Elementarbestandteile; die kleinsten selbstständigen Einheiten, von D. als 'Erlebnisse' bezeichnet, sind vielmehr schon gegliederte Strukturen. Dafür ist die geistige Welt dem Menschen von innen her durchsichtig, weil es ^{sich} in ihr um Erzeugnisse eines menschlichen Geistes handelt, der dem verstehenden Geist dem Wesen nach gleichartig ist. So ergibt sich der innere Zusammenhang von Erleben, Ausdruck und Verstehen, in dem die

Geisteswissenschaften fortschreiten. Das Erleben gestaltet sich im Ausdruck. Dieser ist aber schöpferisch, indem er aus unbewussten Tiefen Neues hervorbringt, das dadurch dann dem darauf zurückgewandten Verstehen zugänglich wird. Das gilt vom einzelnen Menschen wie von den Völkern und Kulturen im ganzen. Daß der Mensch ein geschichtliches Wesen ist, bedeutet: es gibt kein festes Wesen des Menschen, das sich in reiner Selbstbetrachtung erfassen ließe, sondern dieses entfaltet sich erst in der geschichtlichen Entwicklung durch die Jt.e hin.⁴⁸

Neither Dilthey, nor Kähler, nor Herrmann wished to dispute the service that the historical-critical investigation of the records of the life of the past could perform; they did, however, all protest against the misuse of it. They all felt its inappropriateness for recovering that which was specifically human or "geschichtlich" in the events of human history. History can speak to man, because he himself is an historical being. This "speaking" of history is qualitatively different from what happens in the process of investigation and appropriation of knowledge which characterizes the natural sciences.

⁴⁸. O.F. Bollnow, "Wilhelm Dilthey", RGG² II, Col. 197.

While Kähler and Herrmann were raising questions about the value and possibility of the search for the historical Jesus, the history of religions school of thought was challenging one of the basic presuppositions of the liberal Quest--the "spiritual" interpretation of the Kingdom of God. Johannes Weis in 1892, in his book on this concept maintained that the Kingdom of God as Jesus himself understood it and as it was understood by Albrecht Ritschl and others were two completely different things. He claimed that

...das Gottesreich in der Verkündigung Jesu nahe, aber noch nicht da ist; und wo Jesus von einer Gegenwart des Gottesreiches redet handelt es sich um Augenblicke prophetischer Begeisterung. Von dieser Erwartung des nahen Gottesreiches ist auch die sittliche Forderung Jesu bestimmt, und der Menschensohnanspruch Jesu ist ebenso nur auf die Zukunft gerichtet.⁴⁹

In 1901, Albert Schweitzer was to develop these ideas of Johannes Weis and give them new impetus. It is perhaps characteristic for the position which Schweitzer has in the estimation of German scholarship that Conzelmann, in his article on "Jesus Christus" in the RGG, simply lists

49. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 286.

him along with Johannes Weis as a member of the history of religions school and as a co-defender of thoroughgoing eschatology. Conzelmann says of this school that it protested against all tendencies to modernize the ideas of Jesus.

Sie stellt diese gerade in ihrer Zeitbedingtheit dar und betont die zentrale Bedeutung der Eschatologie in seinem Denken. Es ist nicht möglich, das Reich Gottes als 'inneres Reich der Sinnesveränderung' zu verstehen. Es wird nach Jesu Meinung als kosmische Katastrophe einbrechen, und zwar in Bälde. Damit ist sowohl die Frage nach Jesu Selbstbewusstsein neu gestellt als auch die nach der möglichen Gegenwartsbedeutung seiner Aussagen.⁵⁰

Indeed, it was Schweitzer's lasting service to German scholarship that, with Weis, he raised again, in a way that could not be ignored, the question of eschatology and showed its central and key position in the life of Jesus and in the early church. He also performed a real service and raised a needed warning when he showed so clearly and unmistakably that the many different portraits of the historical Jesus had turned out to look more like the portrayer than the real Jesus. As he said,

50. H. Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus", RGG², Vol. III, Col. 620.

"...each successive epoch of theology found its own thoughts in Jesus."⁵¹ But all the same, it is striking to notice, when one reads through the German theological periodicals of the period, that Schweitzer's book received comparatively little attention and that it was Wilhelm Wrede's work which was being heatedly discussed and attacked. Even so, Schweitzer radically raised the question anew of the continuity between the historical Jesus and the Christ of Faith by claiming to deny it.⁵²

51. A. Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 4.

52. An example of the scholarly replies that Schweitzer did receive may be seen in Paul Wernle's excellent review in the ThLZ of 1906, pp. 502-506. He first reviews the contents and shows Schweitzer's dependence on Johannes Weiss. He then makes six clear criticisms: 1. Schweitzer leaves out some important works, among them Wellhausen's Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien; 2. He criticizes each work only from the standpoint of 'konsequente Eschatologie', asking each author in turn "Bejahst du oder verneinst du?"; 3. he commits the very error he accuses others of, of reading his theory into the text; 4. he misunderstands Bousset and himself; 5. He ignores the analysis of the sources "in Wahrheit mit grauenhafter Verwüstung und Vergewaltigung der Quellen"; 6. he contradicts himself in saying that the historical Jesus cannot help us any more, but that the spirit that goes out from him can, for if "a" yields "b", then "b" stands in relation to "a".

It may not be unfair to say that the criticisms of the Quest of the Historical Jesus have just rung the changes on these six points.

As Wernle points out, Schweitzer's omission of Wellhausen's Einleitung was a serious one, for Wellhausen occupies an important place among those who were beginning to rethink the problem of the sources. The problems which had been raised by men like Herder and Strauß were beginning to be taken with new seriousness. Hermann Gunkel's work Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit (1895) drew renewed attention to the mythological background and to the oral tradition behind the Biblical accounts. In 1898, A. Eichhorn drew attention to the necessity of recovering the oldest layer of tradition, in his book Das Abendmahl im Neuen Testament. As he says,

Es ist für uns sehr wichtig, die älteste Schicht der Überlieferung zu erkennen, die uns nur bruchstückweise gegeben ist. Größtenteils ist sie überdeckt von jüngeren Schichten, und nur durch ein kritisches Verfahren können die älteren Schichten bloßgelegt werden... Es entsteht die Frage: Weshalb ist denn eigentlich die ältere Tradition umgebildet, die ja zugleich die historische richtigere war? Die Antwort ist: Weil sie dem Bedürfnis der Gemeinde nicht genügte.⁵³

53. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., p. 320.

In 1901, Wilhelm Wrede published his book Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien and, understandably, he provoked a storm of controversy, for he attacked the foundation stone of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung, the historical reliability of the gospel of Mark.

Die heutige Evangelienforschung geht durchweg davon aus, daß Markus bei seiner Geschichtserzählung die wirklichen Verhältnisse des Lebens Jesu annähernd deutlich, wenn auch nicht lückenlos, vor Augen habe. Sie setzt voraus, daß er aus dem Leben Jesu heraus denke, die einzelnen Züge seiner Geschichte nach den realen Umständen dieses Lebens, nach den realen Gedanken und Empfindungen Jesu motiviere und die Ereignisse, die er schildert, im geschichtlich-psychologischen Sinne verkette.

Hiernach interpretiert und hiernach kritisiert sie das Evangelium im Einzelnen...

Diese Ansicht und dieses Verfahren muß prinzipiell als falsch erkannt werden. Es muß offen gesagt werden: Markus hat keine wirkliche Anschauung mehr vom geschichtlichen Leben Jesu.⁵⁴

⁵⁴. W. Wrede, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien, 1901, p. 129.

Wrede not only attacked the historical reliability of Mark, he also attacked another main feature of the *Leben-Jesu-Forschung*--the messianic consciousness of Jesus and its development. Wrede maintained and attempted to prove by a detailed examination of the gospel that Jesus himself did not claim to be the Messiah nor does Mark have any concept of an actual development in Jesus' messianic consciousness. For the gospel-writers themselves, Jesus is the Messiah and is aware of it from beginning to end. Moreover, Mark, in the writing of his gospel, is governed by a specific theological concept--the messianic secret. Wrede sums up the concept thus: "Während seines Erdenlebens ist Jesu Messianität überhaupt Geheimnis und soll es sein; niemand--außer den Vertrauten Jesu--soll von ihr erfahren; mit der Auferstehung aber erfolgt die Entschleierung... Dies ist in der Tat der entscheidende Gedanke, die Pointe der ganzen Auffassung des Markus."⁵⁵ If the gospel of Mark was governed by a dogmatic concept and Mark had no basic picture of the actual course of events in the life of Jesus, then there was no basic difference between Mark and Paul or between Mark and John as Kähler had said. Whereas Schweitzer had left Jesus with

55. W. Wrede, *op. cit.*, pp. 66, 67.

a messianic consciousness and taken the gospels as basically reliable sources for an historical reconstruction, Wrede denied the former and attacked the latter. If then the messianic consciousness and the messianic secret are shown to be unhistorical, then the whole attempt to relate the Jesus of history to the faith of the early church by this means collapses.

In 1905, Julius Wellhausen in his Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien tried to show as had others before him that the gospels cannot serve as sources for a biography of Jesus, but only as sources for the messianic faith of primitive Christianity. For Wellhausen, Jesus became the Son of God first through his death and resurrection. The source which stands behind the gospels is oral tradition and in the gospels themselves there is no real historical context, no reliable chronology, and no actual geographical concern. And Jesus

...war kein Christ sondern Jude... Der Schnitt erfolgte erst durch die Kreuzigung, und praktisch erst durch Paulus. Er lag aber in Consequenz von Jesu eigener Lehre und seinem eigenen Verhalten... Ohne das Evangelium und ohne Paulus bleibt doch auch das Judentum an Jesus haften, an dem er festhielt, obwohl er ihm entwachsen war.⁵⁶

56. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., pp. 359-361.

In this emphasis on the impossibility of writing a biography and upon the importance of the kerygma while maintaining that the kerygma was somehow the consequence of Jesus' teaching and "Verhalten", Wellhausen anticipated by about half a century what was to become characteristic of the so-called "New Quest".

In 1911, Martin Dibelius began moving towards the later position of form-criticism. He referred to the necessity of distinguishing between the layers of tradition in the sources and to the different "Gattungen" of the oral tradition--Herrensprüche, Sammelberichte, Paradigmen, Novellen--which were formed by the needs of missionary preaching. As far as the gospel-writers were concerned, they

...prüften die Traditionen weder mit den kritischen Augen des Historikers noch mit dem kritiklosen, aber auch teilnahmslosen Blick des Referenten--sie wählten sie aus und reproduzierten sie unter evangelisch-apologetischem Gesichtspunkt: Heilsbotschaft sollten sie sein, die den Freunden Stärkung ihres Glaubens brächte und die Angriffe der Gegner zurückweisen.⁵⁷

In 1913, Johannes Weiß reformulated his concept of the place of eschatology in the New Testament. The person

57. W.G. Kümmel, op. cit., pp. 333-336, 337.

of Jesus came to play a greater role in his thinking than it had in some others from whom we have heard. In his words,

So müssen wir schließen, daß das eigentlich Bindende für den Jüngerkreis nicht die Botschaft des Reiches überhaupt, auch nicht bloß die besondere Glut und Intensität der Erwartung Jesu war; was sie an ihn gefesselt hat, war im eigentlichen Sinne *s e i n e P e r s o n*; auf ihn haben sie ihre Hoffnung gesetzt, von *i h m* die entscheidende Wendung erwartet. Die Stimmung der Jünger muß schon zu Lebzeiten Jesu mehr als Hoffnung auf das Reich Gottes, sie muß in irgend einem Sinne schon ein *G l a u b e a n J e s u s* gewesen sein.⁵⁸

Weiß finds the consciousness of living in the last days of the world the thing that Jesus and Paul share, only that Jesus "...dies entscheidende weltverändernde Tun erst von der Zukunft erwartet, während Paulus die Entdeckung gemacht hat, daß es schon geschehen ist." But though the Kingdom was future for Jesus, he was convinced "...daß von Gott aus doch schon der entscheidende Schritt zur Begründung seiner Herrschaft geschehen ist; indem er durch seinen Geist und durch Jesus das Reich der Dämonen zurückdrängt, ragt die Basilischa schon gewaltig in diese Welt hinein--sichtbar freilich nur für das Auge des Glaubens."⁵⁸

58. W.G. Kümmel, *op. cit.*, pp. 352, 355.

With Johannes Weiß, we come to the eve of the first World War which marked a decisive break in the history of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung. As N.A. Dahl points out, Adolf von Harnack's Wesen des Christentums proved to be the funeral oration of an era swiftly drawing to a close rather than the inaugural address of a new one. The seeds had been sown both for the virtual destruction of the traditional Leben-Jesu-Theologie and for the flourishing of form-criticism coupled with dialectical theology.

CHAPTER II

1918-1950

The First World War marked a turning point not only in theology in general, but specifically in New Testament research and theology. The breakdown of cultural optimism and the trust in the power of reason reinforced, especially in Germany, the movement towards a specifically theological understanding of the New Testament. Inherent in the *Leben-Jesu-Theologie* had been the desire to apply scientific-historical methods to find an historical Jesus who would provide the foundation-stone for a faith in tune with a scientific age. The validity and possibility of the fulfilment of this desire had indeed been questioned, as we have seen, by men like Martin Kähler. But now the time seemed to favour the protest being heard and beginnings of a new approach being taken seriously.

The names which come immediately to mind when one thinks of the era of research that began in the years after the war are those of Karl Ludwig Schmidt, Martin Dibelius, and Rudolf Bultmann. Although these three men took up a sharply critical position over against the liberal *Leben-Jesu-Theologie*, it should not be forgotten

that they also built on what went before. Hans von Soden, a former colleague of Bultmann, expressed this well when he said that his generation only saw what it did because it stood on the shoulders of the previous generation.¹ Indeed, it has been the purpose of the first chapter to show how the way was prepared, both negatively and positively, for the form critics in general, and for R. Bultmann in particular.

Karl Ludwig Schmidt published his Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu in 1919. Through a careful examination of the chronological and geographical framework of Mark and then the other two synoptic gospels, he came to the conclusion that one must extend the classical two-source theory to include an examination of the oral tradition behind them. As Herder and others before him, Schmidt concluded that the evangelists received the individual units of tradition and put them together according to topical or pragmatic considerations, without any exact knowledge of the actual historical course of events. With this was bound up the insight that the individual units of tradition had their "Sitz im Leben" in the

1. Hans von Soden, "Akademische Gedächtnisvorlesung für Adolf Jülicher", Theologische Blätter XVIII, No. 1, Jan. 1939, cols. 11-12.

worship of the primitive Christian community, and that they therefore owed their preservation and form to the interests of faith, not the interests of history. Negatively, this challenged anew the possibility of writing a life of Jesus in which chronology and development play a leading role, but positively it drew attention to the religious forces which were responsible for the formation and transmission of the tradition.

It was from Martin Dibelius that the new movement received its name, taken from his book which appeared at almost the same time as Schmidt's - Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums. Dibelius developed, in his book, the ideas which he had earlier put forth into an overall picture of the formation of the gospel tradition. It was the rules and forms of the pre-literary stage of the gospel tradition that he sought to establish.

Was vorher liegt, ist Gestaltung und Wachstum der kleinen Einheiten, aus denen die Evangelien zusammengesetzt sind. Auch diese kleinen Gebilde gehorchen formbildenden Gesetzen; sie tun es um so mehr, als bei ihrer Formwerdung schriftstellerische Individualitäten erst recht keine Rolle spielen (as is, according to Dibelius, to some extent true of the synoptic-gospel writers as well). Jenen Gesetzen nachspüren, die Entstehung dieser kleinen Gattungen begreiflich

machen - das heißt Formgeschichte des Evangeliums treiben.²

In doing this, to find out both the "laws" of the transmission of the tradition and the motive, one must establish the "Sitz im Leben" of them.³ "...gewisse Erzählungen und Sprachgruppen lassen noch heute das Interesse erkennen, dem ihre Formung und Sammlung dienen sollte, und offenbaren damit das gesuchte Motiv der Tradition: die Mission bot den Anlaß, die Predigt das Mittel zur Verbreitung dessen, was die Schüler Jesu als Erinnerung bewahrten."⁴

Other than the passion-story, which Dibelius held to have been told as a whole very early, he found there to be two basic forms, the "Paradigma" and the "Novellen". The former were the earliest and were used as examples in preaching; they therefore were not told in a connected form.

Das Paradigma erweist sich in der Tat als die Erzählungsform, deren Gebrauch wir bei den Predigern des Evangeliums voraussetzen können.

2. Martin Dibelius, Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums, Tübingen, 1919, p. 3.

3. Ibid., p. 4.

4. Ibid., p. 6.

Es ist die einzige Form, in der die Überlieferung von Jesus erhalten werden konnte, zu einer Zeit, da Sehnsucht nach dem Ende und Bewusstsein der Weltfremdheit die Pflege geschichtlicher Überlieferung oder die Ausbildung einer Literatur (im technischen Sinne des Wortes) noch gar nicht aufkommen ließ. Das was an "Geschichte", was an "Literatur" in den Gemeinden vorhanden ist, hat sein Leben nur innerhalb der Predigt und durch die Predigt. Der Prediger ist es, der zugleich überliefert und erzählt; darum fehlt den Paradigmen die Objektivität des Protokolls und der Farbenreichtum der Novelle.⁵

As examples of these Dibelius cites: Mk. 2,1 ff., Mk. 2,18 ff., Mk. 3,1 ff., Mk. 10,13 ff., Mk. 12,13 ff.⁶

The "Novellen" arose, according to Dibelius, at a time when the Christian community no longer awaited the Parousia so intensely and had begun to be more "at home in the world". In these, the interest is directed towards telling the story as such and they no longer have their setting in preaching with its specific interests. "Nicht Jesus der Herold des Gottesreiches -

5. M. Dibelius, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

6. Ibid., p. 21.

mit seinen Zeichen, Forderungen, Drohungen und Verheißungen - steht im Mittelpunkt dieser Geschichten, sondern der Wundertäter. - Die Novellen handeln von Jesus dem Thaumaturgen."⁷ As examples of this form, Dibelius names: Mk. 4,35-41; Mk. 5,1-20; Mk. 5,21-43; Mk. 6,35-44; Mk. 6,45-52; Mk. 7,32-37; Mk. 8,22-26; Mk. 9,14-29.⁸ In the "Novellen" one finds relatively less historical trustworthiness, whereas the "Paradigma" for the most part are reliable and go back to eye-witnesses.

Dibelius concluded then that there was no connected account of Jesus's ministry, except for the passion story, before Mark undertook to put one together. "Wer eine solche der Gemeinde darbioten wollte, musste eine Sammlung vornehmen und Verbindungen herstellen."⁹ The first to do this was Mark who produced the "Buch der geheimen Epiphanien".¹⁰

The work of both Dibelius and Schmidt led them to question the possibility of a reconstruction of the life of the historical Jesus in which such features of the

7. M. Dibelius, op. cit., p. 43.

8. Ibid., p. 37.

9. Ibid., p. 57.

10. Ibid., p. 64.

liberals' reconstruction as chronology, development, and psychological motivation played a major part. Bultmann agreed with this but differed from Schmidt and Dibelius not only in his more detailed criticism of the sources, but also in his conscious polemic against the theological implications of the liberal's quest of the historical Jesus. But, it must be emphasized again, this did not mean a wholesale rejection of the historical work of the 19th and early 20th centuries. He has a paragraph about what he sees as his relationship to the "liberal tradition", in view of his acceptance of the main emphases of "dialectical theology":

It seemed to me that in this new theological movement it was rightly recognized, as over against the "liberal" theology out of which I had come, that the Christian faith is not a phenomenon of the history of religion, that it does not rest on a "religious a priori" (Troeltsch), and that therefore theology does not have to look upon it as a phenomenon of religious or cultural history. It seemed to me that, as over against such a view, the new theology had correctly seen that Christian faith is the answer to the word of the transcendent God that encounters man and that theology has to deal with this word and the man who has been encountered by it. This judgement, however, has never led me to a simple condemnation

of "liberal" theology; on the contrary, I have endeavoured throughout my entire work to carry further the tradition of historical-critical research as was practised by the "liberal" theology and to make our more recent theological knowledge fruitful for it.¹¹

We shall come back to Bultmann's theological objections to the liberal position after first examining his view of the nature of the synoptic tradition and his historical-critical methodology. One could make it clear what is characteristic of his approach either by comparing it with that of his teachers, such as Johannes Weiss, Wilhelm Herrmann, Hermann Gunkel, and Adolf Jülicher, or one could do this by looking first to his expressed difference of emphasis from Schmidt and Dibelius. It is with the latter that we shall begin.

In his article on the Synoptic Problem, Bultmann expresses agreement with Schmidt's main conclusions and that the separation of the redactorial work from tradition is the first step to be taken in analyzing the synoptic tradition. Each gospel writer has his own framework into which he fits the individual scenes which he received

11. R. Bultmann, "Autobiographical Reflections", Existence and Faith, New York, 1960, pp. 287-88.

from the tradition.

They mention such items as the house, the road, the mountain, the seashore, situations such as Jesus in a ship, on a journey, as a guest at a meal, in the synagogue at a religious service. As conventional accompaniments appear the popular crowd, the foes of Jesus, and the ever-present disciples. In my own book, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition (1921), I presented in full these conclusions of K.L. Schmidt and carried the study somewhat further.

As a result of this investigation it appears that the outline of the life of Jesus, as it is given by Mark and taken over by Matthew and Luke, is an editorial creation, and that as a consequence our actual knowledge of the course of Jesus' life is restricted to what little can be discovered in the individual scenes constituting the older traditions. This conclusion, however, is not simply a negative one. It has also its positive significance, since critical analysis has brought out portions that can be regarded as original traditions.¹²

In the first edition of his Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition, which was finished in the main by the time Dibelius's Formgeschichte appeared, Bultmann

12. R. Bultmann, "The New Approach to the Synoptic Problem", The Journal of Religion, Vol. VI, 1926, pp. 342-343.

emphasised the difference between his work and that of Dibelius. In the second edition, from the vantage point of ten years of further research and criticism, he brought out more clearly both the points of agreement and disagreement with Dibelius. He was in full agreement with Dibelius's application of the form-critical method, which Gunkel and his pupils had used in analysing the Old Testament tradition, to the individual units of the Synoptic tradition. The task was not simply to describe the various forms according to aesthetic criteria. It was rather to reconstruct a picture of the origin and history of the individual units, presupposing that the different types of units of tradition bear the imprint and grew out of specific interests, needs, and activities of the primitive Christian community. Every form has its "Sitz im Leben", whether it be worship, missionary activity, work, hunting, or war. These activities are not isolated but typical occurrences, and so the form or "Gattung" is primarily a "sociological" concept. It is, therefore, both possible and necessary to establish the motives at work in the formation and tradition of the various forms.¹³

13. R. Bultmann, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition, 5th edition, Göttingen, 1961, pp. 4, 5.

Apparently in answer to the criticism of the circular nature of the form-critical method, Bultmann replied that this is characteristic of all historical work. From the forms the researcher draws conclusions about the character of the life of the community, and from the basis of nature of community life the forms are made understandable. Dibelius primarily employs the latter and Bultmann the former procedure, but the two should be seen as complementary. Concerning the basic difference, Bultmann said,

Im Unterschied von M. Dibelius bin ich nun freilich der Meinung, daß die formgeschichtliche Arbeit gerade wegen der Bezogenheit der literarischen Formen auf das Leben und die Geschichte der urchristlichen Gemeinde nicht nur mit ihren literarkritischen Voraussetzungen auch sachkritische Urteile voraussetzt, sondern auch zu sachkritischen Urteilen (über Echtheit eines Wortes, Geschichtlichkeit eines Berichtes und dergleichen) führen muß. Deshalb spielt auch in meinen Untersuchungen die Rücksicht auf das eine Hauptproblem des Urchristentums, das Verhältnis des palästinischen und des hellenistischen Urchristentums, eine wesentliche Rolle.¹⁴

14. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 6.

Although the result of Bultmann's approach is that the synoptic tradition becomes primarily a source for the life of the primitive Christian community, and only secondarily a source for ministry and message of Jesus, it is still his goal to attain at the least "a definite conception of the preaching of Jesus".¹⁵ In formulating his rule of thumb for establishing the original content of a unit of tradition, he makes an observation about the laws governing the transmission of tradition observed elsewhere in other literature. This rule is, "Whenever narratives pass from mouth to mouth the central point of the narrative and general structure are well preserved, but in the incidental details changes take place, for imagination paints such details with increasing distinctness."¹⁶

To describe how Bultmann applies his method to the whole of the Synoptic tradition is a task much too extensive for the scope of this chapter, but we can see how it works in practice by looking at how he deals with the type he calls the controversial utterances.

One of the oldest types of the synoptic tradition consists of controversial utterances. This type is common to both the rabbinical and

15. R. Bultmann, "The New Approach", Journal of Religion, VI, p. 342.

16. Ibid., p. 345.

the synoptic tradition, and precisely the same characteristics of style may be observed in both. An act or attitude of someone (in the case of the Christian tradition, Jesus or a disciple of his) gives the occasion for an attack by an opponent. Familiar instances are the violation of the Sabbath requirements or a failure to observe some ritual of purification. The attack is answered by a defense, which appears in a specific form, very frequently an ad hominem query, or an illustration, or perhaps both together. To the charge that Jesus was healing on the Sabbath day came the answer in the form of the question: "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath day or to do evil?" (Mark 3,4). In answer to the inquiry why his disciples did not fast, Jesus replied: "Can the children of the bridegroom fast when the bridegroom is with them?" Another way of replying is to give a Scripture citation.

It is characteristic of the style of these controversial discourses, as may be observed in similar rabbinical material, that the dialogue proceeds in crisp and trenchant form. The question asked or the illustration given in rejoinder contains the complete refutation of the opponents. We therefore conclude that, in the Synoptic Gospels, where the answer receives further elaboration, the elaborating words are a secondary contribution. This is undoubtedly the case in Mark 2, 19,20, where the question cited above is elaborated as follows: "So long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast; but the days will come when the

bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then will they fast in that day." The content of these words reinforces this conclusion, for they contain an allegorical prophecy of the death of Jesus and a justification of the later custom of fasting in the Christian community. Careful investigation shows that similar elaborations of an original tradition are found in other places.

The form of these controversial dialogues shows that this part of the tradition originated in the primitive Palestinian community, and the general content, along with many incidental observations, confirms this hypothesis. Accordingly, we must picture the life of this community moving within the limits of Judaism, engaged in disputes with the Jewish schools, and seeking to justify the correctness of its point of view by appeal to the words of Jesus and by citations from Scripture. These controversial passages, then, precisely as in the case of rabbinical utterances, were transmitted not as historical narratives, but as polemic and apologetic material. It is therefore incorrect to regard these controversial utterances as accounts of actual historical scenes in the life of Jesus. It is true that the spirit of Jesus breathes in them; for his activity called the community into life and from him the community received the peculiar views which the controversies are concerned with. There is no reason to doubt that many genuine utterances attributed to Jesus in these discourses rest back upon accurate historical recollection; but it must also be admitted that the scenes

depicted in them are not to be taken as narratives of actual events.

In confirmation of this conclusion, a further observation may be made. In many of the controversial discourses we find that it is not an objectionable attitude of Jesus, but rather the behaviour of his disciples, that furnishes the occasion for opposition. Thus we read that the disciples did not fast, that they plucked the heads of wheat on the Sabbath, that they did not practice ritual purification before eating. Why now were the disciples rebuked? Clearly Jesus could not have maintained a correct attitude in all these matters. The disciples must have learned their independent attitude only from him. When, now, we trace the origin of such a narrative to the apologetic necessities of the Christian community, the whole matter becomes clear. The "disciples" are nothing other than the community. This community, under the influence of Jesus, had broken with old customs, and was defending its position against its opponents by appealing to an utterance of Jesus. This appeal, following the method of rabbinical literature, expresses itself in terms of a controversial discourse.¹⁷

We shall have occasion to come back to this rather extended quotation, especially the last paragraph, in

17. R. Bultmann, op. cit., pp. 349-351.

connection with E. Fuchs's emphasis upon the conduct of Jesus as the real context or frame of Jesus' preaching, but for the moment it serves to indicate how Bultmann's method works in practice. It also shows that Bultmann does not deny the continuity between Jesus and the primitive Christian community as many have maintained, and that Bultmann is ready to make some judgements about the kind of person Jesus was. One need only think of such statements as that of Alan Barr in his criticism of "Bultmann's Estimate of Jesus" (where he says, "one begins to wonder whether John the Baptist might not equally well have taken the part (of Jesus)")¹⁸ to realize the importance of emphasising that Bultmann is ready to make some judgements about the kind of person Jesus was and about his continuing influence upon the early church. But does not Bultmann deny that we can know anything about the personality of the historical Jesus and does he not deny not only the possibility, but the validity of the Quest of the historical Jesus? Yes, he does, but one must be clear about just when he denies and what he affirms.

As we have seen in the first chapter, a constantly

18. SJTh VII, p. 344.

appearing motive for the research into the life of Jesus was the desire to find a rational basis for the faith. G.L. Bauer, for instance, called for an impartial and neutral observation of the gospels. On the basis of the results of this observation one could then resolve whether to accept or reject Christianity.¹⁹

C.F. Ständlin objected soon afterwards and maintained that one could not come to a right understanding of the gospel message in this way. The message of the New Testament is something which cannot be observed as one would observe, for instance, objects in nature. Martin Kähler and Otto Ritschl also voiced similar objections. It is in this line of protest that Bultmann belongs in general, although he differs from Martin Kähler and the others on several points. According to Bultmann, the procedure of investigation and understanding which is characteristic of the natural sciences is not appropriate to the understanding of the New Testament, for, to use M. Kähler's vocabulary, the New Testament is basically "Geschichte", not "Historie". To look at it a different way, the liberal Leben-Jesu-Theologie had turned Anselm's sentence into "I understand in order to

19. Cf. above, pp. 14-15.

be able to believe". Bultmann would say believing and understanding happen at the same time as the result of a real encounter with history. As he says,

Man kann nicht jemandem sagen, was Tod und Leben, was Sünde und Gnade ist, wie man ihm mitteilen kann, daß es fleischfressende Pflanzen gibt oder Fischarten, die lebendige Junge zur Welt bringen. Vielmehr: reden wir zu jemandem über Tod und Leben, Sünde und Gnade, so reden wir zu ihm von seinem eigenen Leben, zu dem dies alles gehört, so gut wie Licht und Dunkel, Liebe und Freundschaft zu ihm gehören. Nur unter dieser Voraussetzung kann er verstehen; nur unter dieser Voraussetzung können wir die Rede eines Textes verstehen. Im Text werden mir dann nicht merkwürdige vorfindliche und bisdaher unbekannte Vorgänge vermittelt, sondern es werden mir Möglichkeiten meiner selbst erschlossen, die ich nur verstehen kann, soweit ich für meine Möglichkeiten erschlossen bin und mich erschließen lassen will. Ich kann das Gesagte nicht einfach als Mitteilung akzeptieren, sondern ich verstehe nur bejahend oder verneinend. Nicht etwa, daß ich zuerst verstehe und dann Stellung nehme, sondern das Verstehen vollzieht sich nur im Bejahen oder Verneinen. Denn es handelt sich ja um die Erschließung meiner eigenen Möglichkeit, die ich als die meine nur ergreifend verstehe oder ablehnend als eine Verführung meiner selbst. Verstehen ist also immer zugleich Entschluß, Entscheidung.²⁰

20. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen, I², Tübingen, 1954, pp. 126-127.

Is there then a special method of research into the New Testament which will lead to a proper understanding-believing? To this, Bultmann's answer is a clear no. There is no other method than the historical method. It is neither the method nor the spiritual gift of the researcher which makes his work into a theological one. "Die arbeitende Erforschung des Neuen Testaments ist genau so profan wie die Erforschung irgendeiner historischen Quelle überhaupt. Die Verantwortung für den theologischen Charakter seiner Arbeit trägt das Neue Testament selbst, dem er nur dient. Sein Hören als Forscher ist profan, heilig ist nur das Wort, das geschrieben steht."²¹

Bultmann does not want to criticise the use of historical criticism of the New Testament, for he sees the "Erziehung zur Kritik, d.h. zur Freiheit und Wahrheit" as the great service of the liberal theologians.²² He does, however, criticise any attempt to prove the truths of faith by historical research. Any attempt to prove the faith by historical means is not only not possible, it fails to see what faith means. It is as if a friend who had offered us his forgiveness

21. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 133.

22. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, p. 2.

first had to be sent off to a psychiatrist to make sure his motives were right before we could accept his offer. "Es wird versucht, dem Glauben eine Begründung zu geben, die sein Wesen zunichte macht, weil überhaupt eine Begründung versucht wird."²³ It is from this standpoint that Bultmann challenges the validity of the original Quest.

It is, then, not only almost impossible to reconstruct a picture of Jesus' "life" and "personality" because the tradition and the gospel writers were not seeking to present one, but it may well be another attempt of man to avoid the σκάνδαλον of the Christian faith. But even more, if we are really seeking to allow Jesus to speak to us out of history into our history, we will not look either first or primarily at his "personality".

Denn mag es auch gute Gründe geben, aus denen man sich für die Persönlichkeit bedeutsamer geschichtlicher Gestalten interessiert, sei es Platon oder Jesus, Dante oder Luther, Napoleon oder Goethe, so trifft dieses Interesse jedenfalls nicht das, woran all diesen Personen gelegen war, denn i h r Interesse war nicht ihre Persönlichkeit, sondern ihr W e r k. Und zwar ihr Werk

23. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 13.

nicht, sofern es als Ausdruck ihrer Persönlichkeit "verständlich" ist, oder sofern im Werke die Persönlichkeit "Gestalt" gewonnen hat, sondern sofern ihr Werk eine Sache ist, für die sie sich einsetzen. Das "Werk" ist also auch nicht gemeint als das, was dabei herausgekommen ist, als die Summe der geschichtlichen Wirkungen; denn auf dies konnte sich der Blick jener Personen ja gar nicht richten! Vielmehr ist das "Werk" von ihrem Blickpunkt aus gemeint als das, was sie eigentlich gewollt haben.²⁴

It is clear from this passage that Bultmann makes a distinction between "person" and "personality". "Personality" is what the 19th century tried to obtain a picture of - a kind of "Seelenbild". A. Schweitzer has shown us how radically different the various pictures of Jesus' "personality" turned out. Basically, each generation found themselves in Jesus. This is a misuse of the historical tools of the researcher, for the object of the investigation - Jesus - is fitted into the pattern of knowledge, which one commands, about the possibilities of "personality". On the other hand, if you do get to the point where you hear Jesus' own

24. R. Bultmann, Jesus, Tübingen, 1958, p. 12.

message, or see his "person", you are placed before the same basic decision which confronts you in the kerygma. Jesus' proclamation calls us with our pattern of knowledge and all that we are into question. Basically, Jesus addresses us, according to Bultmann, not primarily in our reason or our imagination, but in our will. "He who is not for me, is against me" (Mk. 12,30); there is no point of neutral observation or fascination. Although Bultmann does not express it in quite this way, it would be true to say that he sees the "Image of God" in man as his ability to be addressed by God in his will. Man is able to be confronted by God with the choice or decision, either to give up his will to God in obedience and love or not. It seems to the present writer that Bultmann is in accord with the Old Testament at this point. When we look to Jesus, we find that he addresses us primarily through proclamation (Verkündigung) and teaching, both of which are again addressed to our wills.

Begegnen uns also in der Geschichte Jesu Worte, so sollen sie nicht von einem philosophischen System aus in Bezug auf ihre rationale Gültigkeit beurteilt werden, sondern sie begegnen uns als Fragen, wie wir selbst unsere Existenz auffassen wollen. Das wir selbst von der Frage unserer

Existenz bewegt werden, ist freilich die Voraussetzung. Dann aber wird die Befragung der Geschichte nicht zur Bereicherung eines zeitlosen Wissens führen, sondern zu einer Begegnung mit der Geschichte, die selbst ein zeitlicher Vorgang ist; das wäre ein Dialog mit der Geschichte.

Im übrigen ist über die folgende Darstellung nur wenig zu sagen. Ihr Gegenstand ist also nicht das Leben oder die Persönlichkeit Jesu, sondern nur seine "Lehre", seine Verkündigung. So wenig wir vom Leben und der Persönlichkeit wissen, - von seiner Verkündigung wissen wir so viel, daß wir uns ein zusammenhängendes Bild machen können.²⁵

We turn now to Bultmann's presentation of the preaching of Jesus which falls under three headings: (1) the coming of the Reign of God or Jesus as messianic prophet; (2) the will of God or Jesus as rabbi; (3) Jesus' idea of God as the remote and the near. As a general description of Jesus' teaching Bultmann says that it is not new "durch ihren Inhalt an Gedanken; denn in ihrem Gehalt ist sie nichts anderes als reines Judentum, reiner Prophetismus. Aber daß er es j e t z t sagt, in letzter entscheidender Stunde, das ist das Unerhörte."²⁶

25. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 14.

26. R. Bultmann, G.u.V. I², p. 265.

Two things should be said for the right understanding of what Bultmann means by this statement. First, the accent falls as much on the word "rein" as on "Judentum" and "Prophetismus", and second, the category of "newness", which played such an unfortunate role in the 19th century's research, cannot be used to establish a basis for theological truth.

... oft (tritt) die Sucht hervor, nachzuweisen, daß irgendein Gedanke oder Impuls mit dem Christentum zum erstenmal in die Geschichte eingetreten sei. Aber - abgesehen von der Fragwürdigkeit des Nachweises im Einzelnen - N e u h e i t ist keine Kategorie, die für das Göttliche bezeichnend ist, sondern Ewigkeit. Neuheit läßt sich ebenso für diesen oder jenen Unsinn behaupten; Neuheit bedeutet in keinem Fall etwas für die Geltung dessen, was als neu auftritt.²⁷

This does not mean that Bultmann makes no judgements about the new emphases in Jesus' preaching over against contemporary Judaism and the Old Testament, but it does mean that Bultmann is not looking primarily for what is new. And above all, he bases no claim for the special significance of Jesus on the ideas which occur in his preaching for the first time.

27. R. Bultmann, G.u.V. I², p. 8.

In many respects Bultmann's presentation of Jesus' eschatological preaching follows that of his teacher Johannes Weis, which we have looked at in the first chapter. Jesus' preaching, according to Bultmann, is dominated by the imminent expectation of the Reign of God. In this Jesus stands in the tradition of Jewish eschatology, especially that of the apocalyptic literature. He looks as they did for God to bring in the eschaton, but he does so with a considerable reduction of detail. The various details of the picture of the End are swallowed up, in Jesus' preaching, by the single all-embracing thought that God will then reign.

Es ist deutlich, das Jesus meint, die gegenwärtige Weltzeit sei abgelaufen; die Zusammenfassung seiner Predigt in dem Satz: "Erfüllt ist die Zeit und die Gottesherrschaft ist genaht" (Mark 1,15) entspricht den zahlreichen seiner Worte, die auf die nahe Zukunft hinweisen und die Gegenwart als die Zeit der Entscheidung charakterisieren....

Übernimmt Jesus das apokalyptische Zukunftsbild mit starker Reduktion, so ist doch das Eigenartige die Sicherheit, mit der er verkündigt: Jetzt ist die Zeit gekommen! die G o t t e s h e r r s c h a f t b r i c h t h e r e i n ! die Zeit des Endes ist da!

"Heil den Augen, die sehen, was ihr seht!
Denn ich sage euch:

Viele Propheten und Könige wollten sehen,
was ihr seht, und haben es nicht
gesehen,

Wollten hören, was ihr hört,
und haben es nicht gehört!" (Luk. 10,23 f.;
Matth. 13, 16 f.).²⁸

The "Now" is the time for joy and not for mourning or
fasting for the bridegroom is here.

Deshalb ruft er den Wartenden zu:

"Heil euch Armen; denn euer ist die Gottes-
herrschaft!

Heil euch, die ihr jetzt hungert; denn ihr
sollt satt werden!

Heil euch, die ihr jetzt weint; denn ihr
sollt lachen!" (Luk. 6,20 f.).²⁹

The signs of the presence of God's Reign are there, but
not to those who demand them as legitimation. Nor are
they the kind expected by apocalyptic fantasy. For those
open to Jesus' words and his *d e e d s* - these are the
signs of the times.

"Die Blinden sehen, und die Lahmen gehen,
die Aussätzigen werden rein, und die
Tauben hören, die Toten stehen auf, und

28. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum im Rahmen der antiken Religionen, Zürich, 1949, pp. 96, 97 (hereafter cited as Das Urchristentum).

29. Ibid., p. 97.

für die Armen erklingt die Botschaft vom Heil" (Matth. 11,5; Luk. 7,22).

Die Weissagungen der Propheten - denn auf solche nimmt dieses Wort Bezug - gehen in Erfüllung; Jesus beginnt ja in der Kraft des ihn erfüllenden Geistes die Kranken zu heilen, indem er die Dämonen vertreibt, die ihm, wie seiner Zeit, als die Plagegeister der Menschen gelten.³⁰

And Jesus' whole proclamation is borne up by the certainty that the Reign of God is coming and is coming Now.

Seine Wirksamkeit in Wort und Tat ist für ihn und die Seinen das Zeichen: die Gottesherrschaft bricht an. Lächerlich und vermessen ist es, von ihm ein Wunderzeichen als Legitimation zu fordern (Mark 8,11,12); seine Botschaft begläubigt ihn. In dieser letzten Stunde, der Entscheidungsstunde, ist er gesandt mit dem letzten, entscheidenden Wort. Heil dem, der es versteht, der an ihm nicht Anstoß nimmt (Matt. 11,6). Denn es gilt, sich zu entscheiden: für ihn oder wider ihn (Matt. 12,30).³¹

In this last moment, man cannot speed up the course of events by strict keeping of the law as the Pharisees had thought nor by force of arms as the zealots imagined. (Nor did Jesus himself attempt to force God's hand, as Schweitzer maintained.) No, all that man can do is to

30. R. Bultmann, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

31. R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 29.

repent, to decide. And Jesus places man in the situation of decision in all its immediacy.

Im Grunde ist also er selbst in seiner Person das "Zeichen der Zeit". Indessen ruft der geschichtliche Jesus der Synoptiker nicht wie der johanneische Jesus zur Anerkennung, zum "Glauben" an seine Person auf. Er proklamiert sich nicht etwa als den "Messias", d.h. den König der Heilszeit, sondern er weist auf den "Menschensohn", der kommen wird, voraus als auf einen anderen. Er in seiner Person bedeutet die Forderung der Entscheidung, insofern sein Ruf Gottes letztes Wort vor dem Ende ist und als solches in die Entscheidung ruft. Jetzt ist es letzte Stunde; jetzt gilt es: entweder - oder! Jetzt fragt es sich, ob einer wirklich Gott und seine Herrschaft will oder die Welt und ihre Güter; und die Entscheidung muß radikal getroffen werden. "Keiner, der die Hand an den Pflug legt und rückwärts schaut, taugt für die Gottesherrschaft!" (Lk. 9,62).³²

Jesus demands a radical renunciation of the ties to the world and its goods but this does not mean escapism or asceticism. It means rather being ready for God's command. "Positiv entspricht ihr die Forderung der Liebe, in der sich der Mensch von sich selbst abwendet,

32. R. Bultmann, Theologie des Neuen Testaments I, Tübingen, 1953, p. 8. Bultmann treats the designation "Son of Man" in more detail in this same volume, pp. 25-32.

um für die Begegnung des Nächsten offen zu sein. Indem er für den Nächsten da ist, hat er sich für Gott entschieden.³³

Jesus renews the message of the prophets in emphasizing that the Kingdom of God comes to men not because of any claim they may raise, but simply because of God's election. Jesus' message surpasses that of the prophets in its individualisation of man's relation to God, because not the People as a whole but already the individual person is placed directly before God. It is also no longer the future of the chosen People which is proclaimed but the rule of God as eschatological salvation.³⁴ But this is not a humanistic individualism. Jesus did not "discover the individual". For the individual is called as part of the Congregation, to it is the promise given.³⁵

Finally, there remains the question, if Jesus's expectation of the imminent End plays such a major role in his preaching, does it stand or fall with its coming or not? Bultmann answers that Jesus, like the prophets, was so convinced of the absolute character of God's will

33. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum, p. 102.

34. R. Bultmann, Theologie des Neuen Testaments, p. 35.

35. R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 43.

that he foreshortened the divine act of judgement.

Das Bewußtsein, um Gottes entscheidenden Willen zu wissen und ihn verkündigen zu müssen, gibt ihm das Bewußtsein, am Ende der Zeit zu stehen. Nicht aus Sehnsucht oder aus Spekulation ist seine eschatologische Predigt entsprungen, sondern aus dem Wissen um die Nichtigkeit der Welt, um den Willen Gottes und um die Verantwortung des Menschen vor Gott. Das damit gegebene Verständnis der menschlichen Existenz ist offenbar nicht an die Erwartung des nahen Endes der Welt gebunden, aber es enthält ein bestimmtes Urteil über die Welt, das heißt, es sieht sie schlechthin *sub specie Dei*.³⁶

From Jesus' role as messianic prophet we turn now to his role as Rabbi and his proclamation of the will of God. As was pointed out before, in Bultmann's characterisation of the content of Jesus' message as nothing other than "reines Judentum" and "reiner Prophetismus", the emphasis falls as much on the word "rein" as on the words it modifies. This is especially true of each of the main points in Jesus' teaching of the will of God and of his role as Rabbi.

Bultmann finds it to be one of the most certain

36. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum, pp. 102-103.

things that can be said of the historical Jesus that he in fact functioned as Rabbi. He appears as one in teaching in the synagogue. He gathers a group of pupils about himself. He disputes in the rabbinic manner, using the same forms and the same method of argumentation. Like the rabbis, he coins proverbs and teaches in parables. Likewise the content of Jesus' teaching has many parallels in rabbinic teaching. The question about the first commandment, for example, was often put and answered in the same way as Jesus answered it. On the other hand, Jesus probably acted with greater freedom than the normal rabbi. Women appear with him, which one normally does not find true of the rabbis. His association with sinners, prostitutes, and tax-collectors scarcely fits the normal picture of a rabbi. The same can be said of his affection for children. All this complicates, or better enriches the picture of Jesus' ministry, but it is not to be doubted that the characteristics of a rabbi come out clearly in Jesus' activity and his teaching.³⁷

When we turn to Jesus' teaching, as Bultmann presents it, we find in it a great protest against the

37. R. Bultmann, Jesus, pp. 52-56.

prevalent Jewish legalism. Although Jesus' teaching shows parallels with the rabbis in his interpretation of the will of God, he goes beyond them. In his protest, Jesus renews the message of the prophets under changed conditions.

Two basic things characterised the form of piety which Jesus attacked. This piety felt it owed obedience to the whole body of laws and regulations which covered not only worship and ethics but the statutes of everyday life.

Was Religion und Sittlichkeit verlangen, wird vom Gesetz vorgeschrieben, und andererseits gelten bürgerliches Recht und Strafrecht als göttliches Gesetz. Die Folge ist nicht nur, daß eine Menge von gesetzlichen Bestimmungen, die den Sinn, den sie unter früheren Lebensbedingungen hatten, verloren haben, in Kraft bleiben und durch künstliche Interpretation für die Gegenwart zurechtgebogen werden müssen... Die Folge ist vor allem, daß das Motiv zur sittlichen Tat verdorben wird. Nicht nur, insofern weithin der Vergeltungsgedanke zum Motiv wird, sondern auch dadurch - und das ist das für das Judentum Charakteristische -, daß der Gehorsam, den der Mensch Gott und der Forderung des Guten schuldet, als ein rein formaler verstanden wird, d.h. als ein Gehorsam, der die Forderung des Buchstabens erfüllt, der dem Gebot gehorcht, weil es geboten ist, ohne nach dem Warum, dem Sinn der

Forderung, zu fragen.³⁸

Echoing Herrmann, Bultmann goes on to say that the obedience which God demands is only possible where man understands the demand and affirms it from within himself. This leads us to the second principal error of Jewish legalism. In it man owes obedience to specific statutes of the law which inevitably results in there being areas of ethical behaviour which are not covered by them. This not only gives rise to a split within man, but it makes it possible for there to be works of supererogation. According to the rabbis it is possible to do more than the law demands.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus rejects the possibility of merely formal obedience. It is not just the external behaviour which God requires; God directs his demand to the whole man including his inner motive. The prohibitions of the Law are radicalised by Jesus to an extent unknown before. Not only is the validity of merely external obedience challenged by Jesus, there is for Jesus no area of life where God's demand for obedience does not reach. There is, for instance, no situation where doing nothing were a possibility, as can be seen

38. R. Bultmann, Theologie des N.T. I, pp. 10-11.

from Jesus' reply to the criticism that he broke the sabbath to help a man.

"Darf man am Sabbat Gutes tun oder Böses? ein Leben retten oder töten?"
(Mark 3,4).

Die Voraussetzung ist, daß es kein Drittes gibt neben Gutes tun und Böses tun, ein Nichttun wäre in diesem Falle gleichbedeutend mit Böses tun. Es gibt also keinen neutralen Ort; der Gehorsam ist radikal gedacht und umspannt den Menschen mit seinem Sein. Das bedeutet aber, daß der ganze Mensch in der Entscheidung steht; gibt es für ihn keine Neutralität, so hat er sich zu entscheiden zwischen den beiden einzigen Möglichkeiten, die es für sein Sein gibt, zwischen dem Guten und dem Bösen.³⁹

The next question that arises is, what is Jesus' position concerning the authority of the Old Testament? For Jesus as for the rabbis the authority of the Old Testament is taken for granted. The rich young man who asks Jesus what he is to do, receives the answer "you know the commandments" (Mark 10,19). Time and again Jesus answers questions simply by quoting sections from the Old Testament. That he did not polemically contest the authority of the Old Testament is shown also by the conduct of the earliest church. It could not have

39. R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 69.

remained faithful to the Law, thereby coming into conflict with Paul, if Jesus had attacked the Law's authority.

Jesus hat nicht das Gesetz bekämpft, sondern er hat es, dessen Autorität für ihn selbstverständlich war, e r k l ä r t. Daß diese Erklärung den ursprünglichen Sinn des Gesetzes oft sprengte, daß Jesu eigenes Verhalten dem Gesetz gelegentlich widersprach, ist eine andere Sache und steht nicht im Widerspruch damit, daß er meint, im Gesetz den Willen Gottes zu finden.⁴⁰

However, without contesting the authority of the Old Testament, Jesus does discriminate among its various demands. Moses did, for instance, permit divorce, but only "for your hardness of heart". What God really intends is the permanence of marriage (Mark 10,2-9). And, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these things you ought to have done, without neglecting the other. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!" (Matt. 23,23-24, R.S.V.).

Sind die Worte "Dieses sollte man tun und jenes nicht lassen" wirklich ein ursprünglicher

40. R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 56.

Bestandteil des Weherufes (sie fehlen in der Lk-Par. 11,⁴² im Cod. D), so zeigen sie, daß Jesus eine reformerische Polemik gegen die alttestamentliche Gesetzgebung fern liegt. Auf jeden Fall aber zeigen die Verse eine selbstverständlich-souveräne Haltung gegenüber dem AT, eine Haltung, die kritisch zwischen Wichtigem und Unwichtigem, dem Wesentlichen und dem Gleichgültigen unterscheidet. Das entspricht den übrigen Worten Jesu, die das AT betreffen.⁴¹

In actual fact, Jesus' teaching and action result in the abrogation of the Old Testament in so far as it consists of ceremonial and ritual ordinances. This is clear not only from Jesus' attitude towards the sabbath but in his polemic against the scribes whose external correctness can go hand in hand with an impure will.

What then is the positive correlate of Jesus' polemic? Love. The second commandment is inseparable from the first. There is no true obedience to God which does not express itself in the concrete situation of meeting one's neighbour. The commandment of love supersedes every legal obligation and knows no boundaries. And in the face of the neighbour's need, love knows what it must do, as the parable of the Good Samaritan shows.

⁴¹. R. Bultmann, Theologie des N.T. I, p. 15.

The words "as yourself" in the commandment of love show both the limitlessness and the direction of love as the guide to conduct.

Der Entwurf einer Rechtsordnung des Volkes ist in der Forderung der Liebe ... sowenig vorgezeichnet wie ein Programm der Weltgestaltung überhaupt. So große Bedeutung das Leben unter der Forderung der Liebe faktisch für die Gestaltung des Volks- und überhaupt des Gemeinschaftslebens haben wird, - direkt richtet sich die Liebesforderung an den Einzelnen, ihn in die Begegnung mit dem Nächsten verweisend. Indem sie ihn so in das Jetzt der Begegnung verweist, macht sie ihm die Zukunft unverfügbar; und in diesem Sinne ist Jesu "Ethik" eine Ethik der Jenseitigkeit, eine "e s c h a t o l o g i s c h e" E t h i k. ⁴²

Is Jesus' ethic then an "interim ethic" as Schweitzer claimed? Is it only valid in view of the impending End, and does it then lose its validity when it is seen that the End did not in fact come? Bultmann emphatically rejects both Schweitzer's claim and any attempt to "interpret away" either the eschatological message or the ethical teaching. The task is to understand the unity and import of eschatological and ethical messages of Jesus. Concerning the imperatives of Jesus' ethical

42. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum, p. 83.

message, it is clear, "daß diese Imperative in radikalem Sinn als absolute Forderung gemeint sind, die eine von der zeitlichen Lage unabhängige Geltung haben. Weder die Forderungen der 'Bergpredigt' noch die Kampfworte gegen die gesetzliche Moral werden durch den Hinweis auf das drohende Weltende motiviert."⁴³ It is, further, the same consciousness of the absolute validity of the divine demand which motivates both his eschatological and ethical messages.

Dann aber ist klar: die Erfüllung des Willens Gottes ist in dem Sinne die Bedingung für die Teilnahme am Heil der Gottesherrschaft, daß sie nichts anderes bedeutet als die echte Bereitschaft, den echten und ernstesten Willen dafür. Das kommende Heil ist die Gottesherrschaft, die die Entscheidung des Menschen für Gott gegen alle weltlichen Bindungen fordert. Deshalb ist nur der bereit für dieses Heil, der sich im konkreten Augenblick für Gottes Forderung entscheidet, die ihm im Nächsten begegnet. ...Beide, die eschatologische Verkündigung wie die sittliche Forderung, weisen den Menschen auf sein Gestelltsein vor Gott, auf Gottes Bevorstehen; sie weisen ihn in sein Jetzt als in die Stunde der Entscheidung für Gott.⁴⁴

43. R. Bultmann, Theologie des N.T. I, p. 20.

44. Ibid., p. 20.

When we turn to Jesus' idea of God, we find that it is that to be found in the Old Testament and in Judaism. For Jesus, God is the Creator and Sustainer of the world. God governs the world, and nature as well as man is under the watchful eye of his providential care. Man's response to God's providence should be one of dependence and of trust. New in Jesus' message is the nearness of God. For Judaism, God had retreated into a false transcendence. God is indeed transcendent for Jesus, but in the sense that he is the "always coming God" and as such places demands upon our present. One needs only to compare the over-loaded address of God in contemporary Jewish prayers with the simple and direct address of the "Lord's Prayer" to see the difference. God is near for Jesus; he hears and understands the prayers of his faithful as a father does the requests of his children (Matt. 7,7-11).

God has also come near as judge. The distance which had been imposed by the Law between man and God is closed up. One needs no scribe to find out God's will, it can be discerned by every man in the concrete situation in which he finds himself. "So gewinnt auch der Gedanke, daß Gott der Richter ist, der als solcher dem Judentum geläufig, ja, besonders aktuell ist, eine neue Dringlich-

keit: 'Fürchtet euch nicht vor denen, die den Leib töten, die Seele aber nicht töten können! Fürchtet vielmehr den, der Leib und Seele verderben kann in der Hölle!' (Matth. 10,28; Luk. 12,4 f.)."⁴⁵

But the God who comes near in judgement also comes near in forgiveness to those who repent. The scribes shut men out of the Kingdom of God with their legalism (Matt. 23,13), but Jesus' call to repentance opens it. It is the publican who is declared righteous with his simple "God, be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18,9-14), not scribes who pile up long penitential prayers. And in the moment when the prodigal son comes to himself and confesses, the love of God is already going out to him.

Finally, Jesus is one with Judaism in his view that God no longer reveals himself in ^{the} history of nations. The coming judgement and salvation comes not upon the nation but to the individual. But there is an important difference. The barriers which the Law and tradition had erected between God and man and between man and his neighbour whoever he be are replaced by openness and radical responsibility. "Für Jesus ist Gott entweltlicht

45. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum, p. 86.

als der Jenseitige im Sinn des Kommenden, und zwar des ständig Kommenden, der dem Menschen nicht erst im künftigen Gericht begegnen wird, sondern der ihm schon immer begegnet im Alltag, in dessen Forderung und Gabe."⁴⁶

This description of Jesus or of his preaching which Bultmann presented in his Jesus, and has since repeated in other writings, has found a highly critical reception. In 1927, Ernst Lohmeyer levelled a criticism at it which has been echoed again and again over the years. According to Lohmeyer,

Es ist eines der charakteristischen Merkmale des Bultmannschen Buches von Jesus, daß es nicht nur auf alles Biographische, sondern auch auf alle Fragen nach der "Person" verzichtet und mit entschlossener Einseitigkeit das Werk zum einzigen Gegenstand der Betrachtung macht. Es ist im gewissen Sinne ein Buch von Jesus ohne Jesus.⁴⁷

Apart from the fact that Bultmann states that he means to present a picture of Jesus' proclamation (Verkündigung), so that it is not entirely fair when he is criticised for having done just that, even so, the criticism misses the mark as a judgement on the book as it

⁴⁶. R. Bultmann, Das Urchristentum, p. 87.

⁴⁷. Ernst Lohmeyer, Theologische Literaturzeitung, Vol. 52, No. 19, 1927, col. 433.

stands. As we have seen, Bultmann is ready to, and does make statements about the "person" of Jesus and about his behaviour. Such statements as "seine Wirksamkeit in Wort und Tat ist für ihn und die Seinen das Zeichen : die Gottes[herrschaft bricht an"⁴⁸ are not scattered here and there, but appear again and again through the whole book. And towards the end of the book he says that there is a

... Würdigung seiner Person, die seiner Absicht entspricht, aber nicht sofern er "Persönlichkeit" ist, sondern sofern er gesandt ist von Gott, sofern er T r ä g e r d e s W o r t e s ist. In diesem Sinne sagt er:

"Heil dem, der nicht Anstoß nimmt an mir!" (Matt. 11,6)

"Wer mich bekennt vor den Menschen, Den wird auch der Menschensohn bekennen vor den Engeln Gottes.

Wer mich verleugnet vor den Menschen, Der wird verleugnet werden vor den Engeln Gottes" (Luke 12,8-9).⁴⁹

Although Lohmeyer's broad criticism that the "person" of Jesus does not appear in Bultmann's Jesus is not a fair one, it does point to the possibility of another,

48. R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 29.

49. Ibid., p. 181.

more valid criticism. It may be said of Bultmann's work in general that there is an over-emphasis on the word. There are in fact other ways of looking at the person of Jesus and his conduct (Verhalten) other than that of the scientist looking for legitimation of the message which Jesus proclaims. Bultmann himself implies, in his Jesus, that Jesus' conduct placed man in the same situation of decision as his word. It is at this point that Bultmann's reply to a review of this book by Emanuel Hirsch (which unfortunately has not been available to me) provides an important clue. Bultmann admits that there is a "doppelte Wortverkündigung" in the church, namely "die Predigt und den Wandel". Concerning the latter he says,

Diese Verkündigung ist ja keine direkte, sondern eine indirekte, d.h. sie vollzieht sich nur in unserem Tun im strengen geschichtlichen Sinn. Wir bieten nicht unsere Persönlichkeiten aus und kramen nicht unsere Erlebnisse aus, sondern wir handeln in Glauben und Liebe. Wir schaffen keine Basis für das Wort Gottes und weisen nicht auf ein Etwas hin, auf Grund dessen geglaubt werden könnte. All unser Tun kann ja den andern auch nur fragen, und der Erfolg kann auch seine Verstockung sein. Aber wir sind uns der Verantwortung bewusst, die darin liegt,

daß Glaube nicht eine a l l g e m e i n e
Möglichkeit, sondern eine g e s c h i c h t-
l i c h e Möglichkeit ist, daß Glauben also auch
leichter und schwerer sein kann, und daß es in
unserer Hand liegt, ändern den Glauben zu er-
leichtern.⁵⁰

Although Bultmann is here talking about the proclamation of the Christian within the Church, it seems to me to be possible to apply this to our way of looking at Jesus himself. His person, his preaching, and his conduct all "proclaim" the same message and as such form a unity. Bultmann would probably accept this, but, in any case, it provides an important link between him and those like E. Fuchs, who are involved in the so-called "New Quest of the Historical Jesus".

We will have occasion to return to the specific problem raised by Hirsch's review when we look at the work of Ernst Fuchs. But there remains one more aspect of Bultmann's contribution to the over-all problem of this paper, namely the actual relationship of his reconstructed picture of Jesus and the Christ of the early Church's proclamation. Many a critic of Bultmann has claimed that he denies any relationship or continuity between the historical Jesus and the kerygma of the early

50. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, pp. 110, 111.

CHAPTER I

church. But here, just as in his relationship to the liberals' "quest", one must look very carefully at what he affirms and what he denies.

It was the liberal "quest" which led to the supposed alternative "Jesus or Paul". As we saw in the first chapter the search was for the supposedly "simple" message of Jesus in contrast to Pauline theology and the dogma of the church. This view was expressed most clearly by Wilhelm Wrede in his book on Paul where he came to the conclusion that Paul was the second founder of the Christian religion. And "'dieser zweite Stifter der christlichen Religion hat ohne Zweifel gegenüber dem ersten im ganzen sogar den stärkeren - nicht den besseren - Einfluß geübt.'"⁵¹

It is clear from this that the problem of the continuity between the historical Jesus and Christ of the kerygma reached its sharpest focus in the problem of the relationship between Jesus and Paul. We will, therefore, devote our main attention to Bultmann's presentation of this relationship. But it is perhaps useful to go back to something I did not deal with as such - the problem of

51. Quoted by W.G. Kümmel, Das Neue Testament, p. 382.

Jesus' "messianic consciousness". Bultmann does not believe that Jesus did in fact use any of the messianic titles to describe himself or his work, but that his message implies a Christology.

Hat er sich als Messias gewußt oder nicht, das bleibt sich gleich. Es würde ja nur bedeuten, daß er den Entscheidungscharakter seines Wirkens durch eine zeitgeschichtliche jüdische Vorstellung zum Bewußtsein gebracht hat. Aber freilich impliziert sein Entscheidungsruf eine Christologie, freilich weder als metaphysische Spekulation über ein Himmelwesen, noch als ein Charakterbild seiner Persönlichkeit mit einem etwaigen Messiasbewußtsein, sondern eine Christologie, welche Verkündigung, Anrede ist.

Nennt ihn die Urgemeinde den Messias, so bringt sie in ihrer Weise zum Ausdruck, daß sie ihn verstanden hat. Das große "Rätsel" der neutestamentlichen Theologie, wie aus dem Verkündiger der Verkündigte wurde, warum die Gemeinde nicht nur die Gedanken seiner Predigt, sondern dazu und in erster Linie ihn selbst verkündigte, warum vollende Paulus und Johannes den Inhalt seiner Verkündigung so gut wie ganz ignorieren, löst sich eben in der Einsicht, daß das Daß seiner Verkündigung das Entscheidende ist.⁵²

What Bultmann means by "das Daß" becomes first of all clear when one sees what he considers central in the

52. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, pp. 265-266.

concept "Messiah". Who is the Messiah? He is the one who in the last hour brings God's eschatological salvation to man. For some this means judgement, for others salvation. But when we name Jesus "Messiah", the basic thing we are doing is confessing him to be the one through whom God is addressing us. We are not primarily saying something about Jesus' essence or personal qualities. The Messianic titles, like the words for God like "Lord", are not descriptive but relational. When we say "Lord" we are confessing ourselves to be God's servants. The same is true of "Messiah".

What this means practically for Paul's theology, we see when we turn to Bultmann's two articles on the subject of the relationship between Jesus and Paul. According to Bultmann, the question can be put in three ways:

(1) Ist Paulus in seiner Gedankenbildung durch den historischen Jesus bestimmt, sei es direkt, sei es durch Vermittlung der Urgemeinde? bzw. wie weit ist er es? (2) Wie verhält sich sachlich die Theologie des Paulus zur Verkündigung Jesu, ganz abgesehen von der etwaigen kausalen Bedeutung der Verkündigung Jesu für Paulus? (3) Welche Bedeutung hat für die Theologie des Paulus das Faktum des geschichtlichen Jesus?⁵³

53. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, p. 188. For an excellent discussion of this way of putting the question/.....

In answer to the first question, Bultmann is of the opinion that Paul was in no way directly influenced by the historical Jesus. Paul was neither a disciple, nor was he an opponent of Jesus during Jesus' lifetime. Nor can we talk about an indirect dependence via the early church. Paul himself denies this in Galatians. Naturally Paul knew something about Christianity before his conversion. The basic content of his knowledge about the Christians must have been that they awaited the crucified Jesus as the Messiah. In any case, it was Christianity in its Hellenistic form that Paul came to know, which can be seen from its being taken for granted that there is a clear either-or, the Law or Jesus Christ. Naturally hellenistic Christianity took over Palestine tradition, but very little of it is clearly utilised by Paul. Paul cites words which he "received from the Lord" and especially in matters of discipline, he lays importance upon having a "word of the Lord". But, "vor allem ist deutlich, daß er sich für seine eigentlich theologischen, anthropologischen und

(53 contd.) question and the issues involved, see W.G. Kümmel, "Jesus und Paulus" New Testament Studies, Vol. 10, No. 2, January, 1964, pp. 163-181. Our concern here is with the first two of Bultmann's rubrics.

soteriologischen Anschauungen nicht auf Herrenworte beruft."⁵⁴ It is possible that Paul was influenced by Jesus' sayings in his ethical teaching, but it is possible here that the relationship could be traced to the Jewish tradition which both drew on. "Fast man die wesentlich paulinischen Gedanken ins Auge, so ist klar, daß Paulus in ihnen nicht von Jesus abhängig ist."⁵⁵

This being the case, are we not better advised to leave Paul and return to Jesus as Wrede recommended? This can only be answered, according to Bultmann, after one has examined the relationship between the subject-matter of Jesus' proclamation and Paul's theology. This we will do according to the same three-fold pattern which we have already seen in Bultmann's presentation of Jesus' message.

The first basic error of the presentations of men like Wrede is that they did not do justice to

Jesus' eschatological message, i.e. the proclamation in which Jesus and Paul are in complete accord and which says that the old aeon has reached its end, that it is now the last hour,

54. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, p. 190.

55. Ibid., p. 191.

that the Reign of God is at hand, indeed is already breaking in, and that the Son of Man will come as judge to bring destruction to sinners and salvation to the righteous.⁵⁶

In announcing the imminent Reign of God, Jesus called for decision, for repentance. And whereas he did not demand faith in his own person, he did demand faith in his word.

That is, he made his appearance in the consciousness that God had sent him in the last hour of the world. But this means that the decision to which he summons men by his proclamation is the definitive decision; that precisely the fact that he now summons men is the final proof of God's grace; that his coming is God's grace in the last hour; that insofar as anyone hears his word, God's salvation is now freely offered to him. Indeed Jesus demands decision with regard to his ministry... If Paul, like the earliest community, saw in Jesus the Messiah, he did nothing other than affirm Jesus' own claim that man's destiny is decided with reference to his person. But this meant for

56. R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 186. Bultmann adds this footnote: "We need not consider here whether Jesus thought he himself would be this coming son of Man. Nor need we be concerned that Paul does not use the term 'Son of Man'; it is sufficient that he knows the figure."

Paul that by sending Jesus God has made an end to the old age of the world.

The turn of the aeon to which the pious looked forward, the liberation and redemption from the old and corrupt course of the world, has become reality to Jesus Christ....

And in saying this, we have pointed to the real difference between Paul and Jesus. Jesus looks to the future and points his hearers to the coming Reign of God, which, to be sure, is coming even now, is already breaking in. Paul, on the other hand, looks back and points to what has already occurred. For him, the turn of the age has already taken place, the day of salvation is already present!

To be sure, Paul is of the opinion that the consummation is yet to occur, that Jesus Christ will still return as judge and consummate the Reign of God. But the decisive thing God has already done, and the faithful even now have the possibility of being new creatures and belonging to the new age.⁵⁷

In their concept of the Reign of God then, Paul and Jesus are one, only that the "Glaubenszeit" has shifted, as Gerhard Ebeling would express it. In their concept of the will of God, Bultmann finds Jesus and Paul to be basically one as well. In Jesus' message we found a

57. R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, pp. 195-197.

polemic against merely formal obedience to the Law and against a legalism which allowed areas of life to be free from God's demand. Positively Jesus extended the reach of God's demand to include the whole man, in the Sermon on the Mount, and to include the whole of life, in his summary of the law as the commandment of love. An illustration of the extension to include the whole man is seen in Jesus' contrasting of the self-satisfied Pharisee and the repentant publican. The real sinner here is the one who does not see the radicalness of God's demand and does not see that God demands the whole man. This is, however, understood by the man who beats his breast and says, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18,13).

But exactly this is also the view of Paul - namely, that all that the man who is correct and self-satisfied looks upon as his gain is really his loss (Phil. 3,4 ff.); that the basic sin of man is to want to boast before God, to take pride in his accomplishments. The only difference is that Paul explicates theoretically in the form of a "philosophy of history" what Jesus presents without such theoretical reflection. This Paul does by showing that in God's intention it is precisely the law's true meaning to lead man to the knowledge of his nothingness before God, "so that every mouth may be stopped and

the whole world be made accountable to God" (Rom. 3,19).

But it is precisely this being struck silent in God's presence that Jesus also points to as man's only appropriate attitude: "And when you have done all that is commanded you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what is our duty.'" (Luke 17,10).⁵⁸

Concerning Jesus' extension of God's demand to include not only the whole man but the whole of life, we find agreement again with Paul. God's real demand for Paul too is the demand of love which knows no boundaries and no limits. In this respect too then, "Paul is in complete accord with Jesus: the real demand of the law is love, in which all the other commandments are summed up (Gal. 5,14; Rom.13,8-10); the whole law is fulfilled in one word, you should love your neighbour as yourself!"⁵⁹ From this we see not only the agreement of Paul and Jesus about the real content of God's demand, but their basically same attitude about the Law and what it requires.

We come finally to Jesus' idea of God and again there is a fundamental unity. For Jesus, we saw that God was the Creator and Sustainer of the world and that man owes Him his trust in return. We saw that God was Judge, who

58. R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 190.

59. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 189.

calls men to account before Him, and that man's only possible response is repentance or rebellion. Finally, we saw that God was Father who comes near in forgiveness to the repentant sinner. In all this Jesus and Paul are one.

One cannot flee from Paul and return to Jesus. For what one encounters in Jesus is the same God who is encountered in Paul - the God who is Creator and Judge, who claims man completely for himself, and who freely gives his grace to him who becomes nothing before him. All that one can do is to go to Jesus t h r o u g h Paul; i.e. one is asked by Paul whether he is willing to understand God's act in Christ as the event that has decided and now decides with respect both to the world and to us.⁶⁰

And so Bultmann erected an edifice of interpretation of the New Testament which was to hold a commanding position in Germany in the years up to and immediately following the second World War. To change the metaphor, he set up a beacon of light which illuminated the Biblical scene and revealed to his pupils a picture of immense vitality and dynamism. And yet his was not a stultifying influence, for he managed to pass on not only his vision

60. R. Bultmann, Existence and Faith, p. 201.

of the New Testament and, in particular, his concept of the historical Jesus and his relation to the Christ of faith, but he fostered also a freedom of inquiry which he himself had received from his teachers. In almost Hegelian fashion, the thesis of the liberal school had called forth its justified antithesis - the Bultmannian position. It has been the formidable task of his pupils - Ernst Käsemann, Günther Bornkamm, Hans Conzelmann, and Ernst Fuchs - to work out a satisfactory synthesis without losing what is valuable and right, particularly in the work of Bultmann whom they all honour.

CHAPTER III

ERNST KÄSEMANN

Eden Grove
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Just as the First World War marked a turning point in New Testament research and theology, so did the Second World War, especially in Germany. The new generation of New Testament scholars who filled the chairs vacated by the death and retirement of the great men of the second and third decades of our century all went through the time of testing which National-Socialism imposed upon the church. And, as Ernst Käsemann points out in the Preface to his volume of essays, this experience led them to a reappraisal of the meaning of history and to a new search for the unity and centre of the New Testament.¹

This reappraisal has come to find its focus in the rethinking of the problem of the historical Jesus, but the so-called "New Quest" should not be viewed as a sudden new direction marked by Ernst Käsemann's paper given at the meeting of Old Marburgers. It is this neither in the work of Ernst Käsemann himself nor in that of his colleagues - Ernst Fuchs, Hans Conzelmann, or Günther Bornkamm.

1. Ernst Käsemann, Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen, Bd. I, Göttingen, 1960, pp. 7-8.

We receive an important clue about how Käsemann himself views his work and that of his contemporaries with regard to their teachers from the Preface mentioned above. It is not unlike the critical but grateful attitude to which Hans von Soden gave expression, when speaking in commemoration of the work of Adolf Jülicher. Käsemann acknowledges his indebtedness to his teachers, and indeed, his similarity to Bultmann especially is greater than is often supposed.² But he states that he has found it necessary in his criticism, especially in view of the imposing theological systems built up by his teachers, to move backwards, as it were, in order to move forwards. That is, his critical position with regard to Bultmann and others of his era has found its expression not in large-scale theologies but in "historischerⁿ Versuche und Besinnungen" and in doing so, "manchmal unseren Großvätern ähnlicher als den Vätern, wie das in der Erbfolge

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2. Schubert M. Ogden refers to the astonishingly widespread misunderstanding of Bultmann's position with regard to the continuity between the historical Jesus and the Christ of the kerygma. He points out that Bultmann has "consistently affirmed an essential continuity" between the two, and that in view of this "it must inevitably be asked just how 'new' the so-called 'new quest of the historical Jesus' really is. That there may indeed be such 'new' tendencies in the 'post-Bultmannian' developments both on the continent and elsewhere/...

ja vorkommt".³ From this statement, it may become even clearer why one must understand both the "fathers" and the "grandfathers" in order to fully appreciate and evaluate the work of the "sons" or "grandsons".

For Käsemann himself there are three main points where he has felt it necessary to concentrate his reappraisal. There is first the problem of the meaning of history and its relevance for preaching. For:

Die Problematik der Geschichte und ihrer Bedeutung für die Verkündigung ist mit der Entdeckung unserer Geschichtlichkeit allein noch nicht grundsätzlich geklärt oder gar abgetan. Was einmal geschah, ist keineswegs stets nachvollziehbar, und es mag eine Würde besitzen, welche wie ein Verhängnis uns ein ja abverlangt, obgleich es die Möglichkeiten unseres Verstehens überschreitet. Wenn irgendwo, mußte dieser Sachverhalt an dem noch keineswegs hinreichend aufgehellten Problem des irdischen Jesus erneut

(note 2, contd.) seems evident enough. But it still remains a fair question whether the extent of the alleged 'newness' may not depend entirely too much upon seeing it against the background of a highly oversimplified and even false impression of Bultmann's own position" (Existence and Faith, New York, 1960, pp. 11-12).

3. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 7.

akut werden.⁴

Secondly, there is the problem of eschatology which, as a consequence of experience of the thirties and early forties, has become more than a question of the distant past as it was for Schweitzer, or a question of the individual as it is primarily for Bultmann, but a question which had relevance for the whole community and world then and which to-day still has a relevance for our "confused world" in its entirety. And thirdly, there is the question, prompted by the struggles of the "Kirchenkampf", of the nature, office, and confession of the church, which has led to a new interest in the liturgical material of the New Testament and to a new interest in the Lukan problem.⁵ All three of these points have an important

4. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 7. The charge that Bultmann's interpretation of the eschatology of Jesus and the early church is excessively individualistic has often been made, most recently again by Hugh Anderson in Jesus and Christian Origins, New York, 1964. While this criticism is a fair one, it must be qualified to some extent, for Bultmann is not unaware of the corporate aspect of Jesus' eschatological message. As he says, "Nicht der einzelne, sondern die Gemeinde ist berufen, i h r gilt die Verheißung" (R. Bultmann, Jesus, p. 43).

5. The Lukan problem can be briefly characterised by the fact that Luke, of the three synoptic-gospel writers, proceeds according to the most conscious historical-theological concept, according to which the tradition is/...

bearing upon the central concern of this paper, although the relevance of the third is perhaps less obvious at first.

Before going on to an exposition of Käsemann's position in general, using in the main the same general outline as for Bultmann, it will perhaps be useful to have a concrete example of Käsemann's approach to one specific text - Matthew 15,1-14. From a synoptic comparison he comes to the conclusion that Luke left out this pericope because the problem of ritual cleanness was no longer a live issue for him and his readers, but that for Matthew in contrast to Mark, the problem was not only a real one, but his readers were informed about the practices which occasioned the controversy. Furthermore, the changes which Matthew makes, over against the Markan original, clearly show Matthew's special concern.

This is especially clear from the changes Matthew makes in Mark 7,15, which Käsemann regards as the heart of the text. Matthew has not only simplified it, he has narrowed its content as well. This is especially important because this verse is one of the central sayings in

(note 5, contd.) is edited, revised and ordered. It is he also who, alone among the synoptic writers, sets out to write an "orderly account" for, and including the history of, the young church.

the gospels altogether and, in contrast to the preceding verses, certainly genuine.

Die Feststellung, daß Unreinheit nicht von außen an den Menschen herangetragen werde, hebt die Voraussetzung der gesamten Reinheitsgesetzgebung auf und trifft damit die Mosestora überhaupt. Hier spricht der, welcher wie in den Antithesen der Bergpredigt sich neben, gegen und über Moses stellt, vielleicht darf man sagen: der die messianische Tora bringt. Unrein wird der Mensch nicht durch das, was ihm widerfährt, sondern durch das, was er tut. Das Böse steckt in ihm. Gereinigt werden muß er deshalb nicht von äußerer Befleckung, sondern in sich selbst, in seinem Herzen und seiner Existenz. Dort kann er jedoch nicht mehr durch rituelle Entsühnung sondern einzig durch Vergebung gereinigt werden. Jesu eigene Jünger sind vor der Radikalität dieses Spruches erschrocken zurückgewichen. Das zeigen die Kommentare, mit denen sie das Logion in Markus 7,17ff Par. versahen, und zeigt noch schärfer die von Matthäus vorgenommene andere Ausrichtung. Denn jetzt lautet die Antithese ja nicht mehr: rituelle Unreinheit und solche, die im Herzen steckt und im gesamten Tun sich äußert. Vielmehr werden die ohne Handspülung zum Munde geführte und als solche nicht verunreinigende Mahlzeit und die profanierende Rede des Mundes einander gegenübergestellt... Jesu Bußruf ist nun gegen den Gegner gewandt und in konkreter Polemik aufgenommen worden.⁶

6. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 238.

Here we see Käsemann using all the historical-critical tools at his disposal in order to discern and separate out the various stages or layers of tradition. He uses, in effect, his own rule, that that can be considered genuine which could neither be derived from Judaism nor from the early church, in order to establish that part of the text which can be attributed to Jesus with certainty. He does this not in order to prove anything, but in order to allow the full message of the gospel to speak with its original power to us. As he says elsewhere:

Wir werden zur Prüfung der Geister auch in der Schrift selbst gezwungen. Wir können nicht einfach ein Dogma oder Lehrsystem übernehmen, sondern werden in jene Haltung der Schrift gegenüber gestellt, die Verantwortung und Freiheit zugleich und eins unablässig von dem anderen ist. Nur solcher Haltung kann sich in der Schrift Gottes Wort offenbaren, das es, wie die Bibelkritik verdeutlicht, im Raum der Objektivität, also jenseits der Entscheidung gar nicht gibt.⁷

In this passage Käsemann is wrestling with the central problem of this paper, which could be phrased in this way: How does one question the gospel which in fact

7. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 232.

questions us? His answer is that it is part of our faith response to the gospel to "test the spirits".

(One of the "tests" would be for Käsemann: does one's response to the gospel issue not just in a new understanding of one's personal existence but in a new understanding of one's place in and service to the community and world - a welcome corrective to Bultmann's predominantly individualistic interpretation.)

To return to the Matthew pericope, Käsemann does not leave it at the discovery of the original core of the text, but seeks to understand it and the Matthean version of it in their relatedness. Käsemann finds that the antithesis set up by Matthew between divine law and rabbinical tradition is a meaningful application of Jesus' "Handeln". "Hier wird zwischen Offenbarung und Theologie, zwischen Gottes sich bezeugendem Willen und einem bloßem Gottesbegriff unterschieden und darum aus dem blinden in den sehenden Gehorsam gerufen, aus frommer Fiktion in die Beugung vor dem Schöpfer."⁹ Matthew has not simply misunderstood Jesus' word, rather he has

8. Ibid., cf. esp. pp. 109-134.

9. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 240. One can see the change in emphasis here from that of Bultmann. Bultmann says "in diesem Punkt (ist) das Verhalten der Gemeinde das beste Zeugnis für die Lehre Jesu" (Jesus), whereas Käsemann finds Jesus' "Handeln" echoed in this passage.

changed it in such a way that it speaks to the situation of his readers. From this, one is led to the question "ob zu echter Verkündigung nicht gerade dies gehört, daß sie sich nicht mit der Wiedergabe des historischen Schriftsinns begnügt, sondern das überkommene Wort in veränderte Situation in neuer Weise hineinspricht."¹⁰ But one must draw a line here, and where this line is to be drawn can be indicated by the discrepancy between Jesus' word and Matthew's interpretation.

Die gegen den Gegner gerichtete Polemik hat ein Recht nur insofern, als sie den heimlichen Gegner in uns selbst mittrifft und Bußruf an uns selber bleibt. Sieht die Kirche den Pharisäismus und die Menschensatzung nur draußen vor ihren Toren, will sie sich nicht mehr selbst durch das Wort reinigen lassen und vom Evangelium her als ecclesia semper reformanda verstehen, hört ihre Predigt auf, Evangelium zu sein.¹¹

We shall return to this saying of Jesus which is so important in Käsemann's assessment of the historical Jesus, but first we shall look at Käsemann's view of the sources for the reconstruction of a picture of the historical Jesus and the meaning of and theological justification

10. Ibid., p. 241.

11. Ibid.

for attempting such a reconstruction.

First of all, it should be emphasized that Käsemann is in basic agreement with Bultmann's critique of the liberal search for the historical Jesus. Käsemann agrees that this "Quest" of the nineteenth century was doomed to failure because of the nature of the sources for the life of Jesus, and that it was a theologically unjustifiable undertaking. In fact, both of these points of criticism are bound together when one looks at the New Testament writings themselves. The New Testament writers seemed to have realized, as we have seen in the Matthew text, that historical continuity and communication are not guaranteed simply by passing on the tradition one has received. The mere fact, for instance, that Jesus is found to have worked miracles, does not in itself place one genuinely before the alternative of belief or unbelief. Or if the empty tomb were to be proved historically reliable, this still would not guarantee that the resurrection would then of necessity become meaningful to me. Facts, one can overlook, but not sensibly deny; but the claim of the gospel, when rightly understood, demands just this - affirmation or denial.

Die Urchristenheit hat darum offensichtlich gewußt. Nur so erklärt es sich, daß sie die

Evangelien nicht primär als Berichte verfaßte und ihr eigenes Kerygma das Bild des historischen Jesus geradezu überlagert und verdeckt, uns als Historiker damit vor unermeßliche Schwierigkeiten und weithin vor die Unmöglichkeit einer Rekonstruktion stellend. Die Gemeinde hat nicht bloß unaufmerksam und töricht ihre Botschaft mit derjenigen ihres Herrn verquickt oder sie gar an deren Stelle gesetzt. Sie konnte nicht anders verfahren, wenn es ihr nicht um Reproduktion eines merkwürdigen Geschehens, sondern um die von ihr geforderte Entscheidung zwischen Glaube und Unglaube zu tun war. Mit ihrem Verfahren zeigt sie, daß dieses Anliegen nicht historisch, also durch Aufzählung von Fakten innerhalb eines Kausalzusammenhanges, gewahrt und vertreten werden kann. Indem sie so handelt, wie sie es tut, bezeugt sie vergangene Geschichte als lebendig und gegenwärtig. Sie interpretiert, was schon für sie zur Historie geworden ist, aus ihrer eigenen Erfahrung heraus und bedient sich dazu des Mediums ihrer Predigt.¹²

From the two key words "Geschichte" and "Historie", it can be seen that Käsemann accepts the distinction made by Martin Kähler, which we have examined in the first chapter, along with its implied criticism of the liberal quest. But Käsemann qualifies both Kähler's and Bultmann's critique in an important way. We have already seen that he accepts the necessity of "testing the spirits". Kähler

12. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 191.

actually opted for a simple acceptance of the New Testament witness to Jesus Christ as it stands.

Already Hermann raised the objection that this would mean a return to a Roman Catholic conception of tradition, that is, blind obedience to the tradition as authority. Käsemann goes back to Luther's distinction between the gospel and the Scriptures, which issued, for instance, in his rejection of James. From this standpoint within the Reformation tradition, one can approve of the basic aim of liberal search for the historical Jesus. Their aim was to recover the gospel in the scriptures in opposition to an inflexible and dead concept of revelation and tradition. That the goal was missed, does not discredit the service and right of historical criticism.

Das Evangelium, das die Aufklärung in der Erfassung des historischen Jesus zu ergreifen suchte, hat sich als Fata Morgana erwiesen. Auf dem, was wir den historischen Jesus zu nennen gewohnt sind, können wir unseren Glauben nicht gründen. Das bedeutet nicht, daß wir von dem Versuch, größere Klarheit und stärkeren Konsensus zu gewinnen, hier abstecken könnten oder wollten. Das können wir weder als Historiker noch als Theologen. Zur resignierenden Skepsis ist auch kein Anlaß, da wir wenigstens einiges mit größter Bestimmtheit erkennen, was uns erlaubt, den Glauben der Gemeinde nicht als

willkürlich und sinnlos zu bezeichnen.¹³

We have seen that Käsemann clearly states the difficulty which the sources place upon the historian who would wish to recover a picture of the historical Jesus, but that he feels that it is possible, even necessary, to know something. But this much Bultmann himself is ready to concede. The question Bultmann would put, though, is whether it is legitimate to go in back of the kerygma. He asks:

Aber wie viel auch durch die historisch-kritische Forschung über die "Gestalt" Jesu zu gewinnen sein mag...was ist damit erreicht? Wirklich eine Legitimation des Kerygmas, das den historischen Jesus als den Christus verkündigt, der für uns gestorben ist? In Wahrheit hat hier eine eigentümliche Pervertierung stattgefunden. Die Kombination von historischem Bericht und kerygmatischer Christologie in den Synoptikern hat ja nicht den Sinn, das Christus-Kerygma durch die Historie zu legitimieren, sondern umgekehrt, die Geschichte Jesu als messianische sozusagen zu legitimieren, indem sie sie in das Licht der kerygmatischen Christologie stellt. Die kritisch-historische Forschung entfernt gerade diese Beleuchtung, um im objektivierenden Sehen, die objektive Geschichtlichkeit der Person und des Wirkens Jesu aufzuzeigen.¹⁴

14. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis der urchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus, Heidelberg, 1960, pp. 12-13 (hereafter cited as Das Verhältnis...).

13. Ges. Auf. I, p. 235

One must question whether this criticism, which is meant to apply to any attempt to discern what kind of person Jesus was, in fact applies to Käsemann, who is not trying to give faith in the risen Christ a foundation in empirical fact, but is simply trying to do justice to what he considers to be the claim of the New Testament itself.

Vor allem gibt uns jedoch das NT selber ein Recht zu dieser Frage (nach dem irdischen Jesus), sofern die Evangelien ihr Kerygma, woher immer es stamme, nun doch eben dem irdischen Jesus zuschreiben und ihm deshalb unverkennbar ausgezeichnete Autorität beimessen... Offensichtlich ist sie (die Urchristenheit) der Meinung, daß man den irdischen Jesus nicht anders als von Ostern her und also in seiner Würde als Herr der Gemeinde verstehen kann und daß man umgekehrt Ostern nicht adäquat zu begreifen vermag, wenn man vom irdischen Jesus absieht. Das Evangelium steht also immer in einem Zweifrontenkrieg.¹⁵

This "two-front war" Käsemann finds to be characteristic of the whole New Testament, with its continuing emphasis on the incarnation, but also with its experience of the risen Lord all but swallowing up the historical individuality of Jesus. But Käsemann asks further what meaning the "Historie" of Jesus had for the gospel writers,

15. E. Käsemann, op. cit., 195-96.

especially for Matthew and Mark. (Käsemann puts brackets around Luke, as it were, for he presents a special problem.) The meaning of Jesus' "Historie" is to be found in the eschatological slogan ἐφ' ἅπαξ in which both the sense of "once" and "once-and-for-all" are peculiarly intermingled. The gospel writers indeed laid an unmistakable importance upon the contingent eschatological event which was Jesus. As Käsemann says,

Weil die Urchristenheit Jesu irdische Geschichte derartig als *K a i r o s* erfuhr, schieb sie Evangelien, gab sie auch nach Ostern die Historie Jesu nicht einfach preis. Ostern hat diese Erfahrung ja nicht überholt, sondern im Gegenteil bestätigt. Sofern man von einer Modifikation des Glaubens vor und nach Ostern sprechen will und darf, kann man nur sagen, daß aus den "einmal" das "ein für alle Male", aus der isolierten und vom Tode begrenzten Begegnung mit Jesus jene Gegenwart des erhöhten Herrn wurde, wie das vierte Evangelium sie beschreibt.¹⁶

Finally, the synoptic writers could not allow the historical Jesus to be completely absorbed into their present experience and they let his "Historie" speak so much for itself, because they wanted to point to the

16. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 201. In contrast to his criticism of other aspects of Käsemann's work, Bultmann judges this characterisation of the effect of the Easter-event to be "ausgezeichnet" (R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 25).

kairos which had begun with Jesus, which was determined by him, and which predestined every subsequent situation and decision. "Sie wollen, möchte ich formulieren, das extra nos des Heiles als Vorgegebenheit des Glaubens herausstellen... Der Osterglaube hat das c h r i s t- l i c h e Kerygma begründet, aber er hat ihm seinen Inhalt nicht erst und ausschließlich gegeben."¹⁷

However, in so far as the gospel writers came to no consensus about the specific meaning of this "Historie", it may be seen that the search for the historical Jesus has a vital theological problem as its object and that this problem is indeed one given to us by the New Testament itself. And for the sake of the church's proclamation the anonymity of Jesus must, as far as it is possible, be cleared away.¹⁸

But once one has decided that the attempt to establish what was characteristic of the earthly Jesus' message and mission is both necessary and legitimate, the problems that must be confronted are still formidable. The position in New Testament research is now such that the burden of proof falls upon those who would defend this or that part of the tradition about Jesus as authentic.

17. E. Käsemann, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

18. Ibid., p. 203.

Käsemann feels that one can be reasonably certain about the authenticity of a given piece of tradition only in one case:

...wenn nämlich Tradition aus irgendwelchen Gründen weder aus dem Judentum abgeleitet noch der Urchristenheit zugeschrieben werden kann, speziell dann, wenn die Judenchristenheit ihr überkommenes Gut als zu kühn gemildert oder ungebogen hat... Allerdings müssen wir uns dabei von vornherein dessen bewusst sein, daß man keine Klarheit über das erhält, was Jesus mit seiner palästinischen Umwelt und seiner späteren Gemeinde verbunden hat.¹⁹

In applying this rule to determine what was characteristic for Jesus, Käsemann points principally: to the first, second, and fourth antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, which, as he says, are recognised to be peculiar to Jesus by even the most radical critics; to Jesus'

19. E. Käsemann, *op. cit.*, p. 205. W.G. Kümmel (in the *Festschrift for Johannes Bauer, Ein Leben für die Kirche*, Karlsruhe 1960, pp. 53-59) replied to this rule... "Dem neuerdings mehrfach genannten Maßstab, daß als echt nur das anerkannt werden könne, was sich weder aus der jüdischen Umwelt Jesu noch aus den Anschauungen der ältesten Gemeinde ableiten lasse, muß man entgegenhalten, daß Übereinstimmungen mit der Umwelt noch durchaus keinen grundsätzlichen Anlaß zur Anfechtung geben und daß die Erweiterung unserer Kenntnisse der Umwelt durch neue Funde die Anwendbarkeit dieses Maßstabes erst recht fraglich macht." Kümmel weakens, however, this legitimate criticism by taking his examples not from Käsemann but from E. Stauffer who uses it in a different way from Käsemann.

position with regard to the observance of the Sabbath and to the prescriptions for ritual purity; to his healing of those possessed by demons; to the words about not-caring; to Jesus' being filled with the Spirit; and finally, to the pericope, Matthew 11,12ff.

He begins with the Sermon on the Mount and establishes that Jesus laid claim to an authority, echoed in the ἐγὼ δεῖξω, which is on a par with, indeed over against that of Moses. For this authority, there is no parallel in Judaism, for a Jew who did what Jesus does here, either placed himself outside the pale of Judaism, or he was the bringer of the messianic Tora and was the Messiah. This being the case, the category of a prophet is not appropriate to characterise Jesus, for there was never a prophet except under the authority of Moses.

Die Unerhörtheit des Wortes bezeugt seine Echtheit. Sie beweist zweitens, daß Jesus wohl wie ein Rabbi oder Prophet aufgetreten sein mag, sein Anspruch jedoch den jedes Rabbi und Propheten überschreitet, und drittens, daß man ihn nicht in der Darstellung spätjüdischer Frömmigkeit einordnen darf. Er ist wohl Jude gewesen und setzt spätjüdische Frömmigkeit voraus, aber er zerbricht gleichzeitig mit seinem Anspruch diese Sphäre. Die einzige Kategorie, die seinem Anspruch gerecht wird,

ist völlig unabhängig davon, ob er sie selber benutzt und gefordert hat oder nicht, diejenige, welche seine Jünger ihm denn auch beigemessen haben, nämlich die des Messias.²⁰

Bultmann's reaction to this criticism of his position is that it seems simply a "Wortstreit" to him, whether one calls Jesus a Jew or not. He seems to have misread Käsemann on this particular point as can be seen from the above quotation. But Bultmann goes further in his reply.

Als historische Gestalt steht er innerhalb des Judentums; und wenn er innerhalb des Judentums eine einzigartige Gestalt ist als dessen Überwinder, so ist doch nicht nur seine Sprache und

20. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 206. The concept of a Messianic Tora has been criticised by Ernst Fuchs in Gesammelte Aufsätze II, Tübingen, 1960, p. 156, where he says "Aber diese Vorstellungen und Lehren, z.B. die von der neuerdings etwas strapazierten 'messianischen' Tora, für die es kaum zwei rabbinische Belege gibt und die außerdem nicht strengere sondern mildere Vorschriften im Blick hat (Gal. 6,2 steht auf einem anderen Blatt), all das gehört eher ins Gefälle der Überlieferung als zum eigentlichen Inhalt der Worte Jesu." The word "Gefälle", used here by Fuchs, plays a significant role in Käsemann's recent essay "Sackgassen im Streit um den historischen Jesus" and is dealt with more thoroughly below. It is admittedly a difficult word to translate but it has been given a very misleading translation in the English version of Fuchs' second volume of essays. It is translated there as "inessential elements (of the tradition)", whereas one would have expected something like "tendency" or even, paraphrastically, "realm" for "Gefälle" in this sentence (Studies of the Historical Jesus, London, 1964, p. 22).

Begrifflichkeit die jüdische, sondern sowohl seine eschatologische Verkündigung wie seine ethische Predigt sind in der Sache auf die jüdische Eschatologie und Gesetzlichkeit bezogen, nehmen deren Problematik auf und sind ohne sie gar nicht denkbar... Die Kontinuität scheint nun aber fragwürdig, oder wenigstens eigentümlich eingeschränkt zu werden, wenn der historische Jesus wirklich ins Judentum gehört.²¹

But this last statement which Bultmann makes, makes the issue at stake unmistakably clear. A view of the earthly Jesus, which sees in him decisively more than just a rabbi or prophet, helps to establish a greater degree of continuity between the earthly Jesus and the preaching of the early Christians and, as H.W. Bartsch points out: "...die urchristliche Predigt (erfährt) durch die Feststellung der Kontinuität mit der Geschichte Jesu den Schutz gegenüber dem Verdacht einer selbstständigen Konzeption."²²

Käsemann does not rest his case with the Sermon on the Mount or on the claim to authority which is reflected in the $\epsilon\gamma\omega\ \delta\epsilon\ \lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omega$, which some critics would regard as a bit of special Matthean tradition and as not genuine.

21. R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 9.

22. H.W. Bartsch, Das historische Problem des Lebens Jesu, 1960, p. 29.

The position of sovereign authority over against the Law which has already been observed, is in harmony with Jesus' attitude toward the sabbath and the prescriptions of ritual purity. Jesus does more than just radicalise the Torah, as Bultmann maintains, for he who challenges,

daß die Unreinheit von außen auf den Menschen eindringt, trifft den Wortlaut der Tora und die Autorität des Moses selbst. Er trifft darüber hinaus die Voraussetzungen des gesamten antiken Kultwesens mit seiner Opfer- und Sühnepraxis. Anders gesprochen: Er hebt die für die gesamte Antike grundlegende Unterscheidung zwischen dem Temenos, dem heiligen Bezirk, und der Profanität auf und kann sich deshalb den Sündern zugesellen ...Jesus hat mit einer unerhörten Souveränität am Wortlaut der Tora und der Autorität des Moses vorübergehen können. Diese Souveränität erschüttert nicht nur die Grundlagen des Spätjudentums und verursacht darum entscheidend seinen Tod, sondern hebt darüber hinaus die Weltanschauungen der Antike mit ihrer Dämonologie aus den Angeln.²³

This authority is further echoed in the words about not-caring (Matt. 6,25). It is also reflected in the role of Jesus as "Weisheitslehrer", which expresses in turn an immediacy over against the role of the Rabbi

23. E. Käsemann, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

which is characterised by reflection about and being bound by the Law. It should be noticed that Käsemann attempts in the above quotation to make Jesus' death historically understandable, but without any recourse to any specific messianic claim having been made by Jesus himself.

The sovereign authority and immediateness which Käsemann finds characteristic for Jesus is supported by a second observation, that, whether Jesus used the phraseology or not, he was filled with and understood himself to be inspired by the Spirit of God.²⁴ This

24. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 209. J. Jeremias points to the same phenomenon when he says that wherever we look in the gospels we come upon the same "Hoheitsanspruch", that is, "wir stoßen auf denselben Glaubensanspruch, den das Kerygma an uns stellt...es gibt keine Parallele für die Vollmacht, die es wagen darf, Gott mit Abba anzureden. Wer allein die Tatsache anerkennt - und ich wüßte nicht wie man es bestreiten sollte - daß das Wort 'Abba' ipsissima vox Jesu ist, der steht, wenn er dieses Wort richtig versteht und nicht verharmlost, vor dem Hoheitsanspruch Jesu" (in "Der gegenwärtige Stand der Debatte um das Problem des historischen Jesus", Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Ernst Moritz Arndt Universität Greifswald, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe, Nr. 3, VI, 1956-57, p. 169).

is affirmed above all by the peculiar use of Amen by Jesus at the beginning of important passages, which has been so faithfully preserved by the gospel writers. It expresses an assurance which comes to the same thing as an oath, and indicates the highest and most immediate certainty, which is given by inspiration. It is this sovereign certainty which is expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, in the revisions or rejections of the commands of ritual purity. It is this certainty which calls men to distinguish between the letter of the Law and God's present will, and which raises the claim, that one should go beyond the blind obedience of the Rabbis to the obedience of "seeing love" ("der sehenden Liebe").

In dieser unmittelbaren Gewisheit, Gottes Willen zu kennen und zu verkündigen, die sich mit der unmittelbaren und unbefangenen Anschauung des Weisheitslehrers vereint und die letzte vielleicht erst ermöglicht, unterscheidet sich Jesus vom Rabbinat. Gleichgültig, ob er die Vokabel verwandt hat oder nicht, er muß sich als Werkzeug des lebendigen Gottesgeistes verstanden haben, den das Judentum von der Endzeit erwartete.²⁵

25. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 210.

It should be added that Bultmann is not unsympathetic with this aspect of Käsemann's presentation. He says that, in any case, one may say of Jesus that he

sich selbst sozusagen als eschatologisches Phänomen verstanden hat, als welches das Kerygma ihn ja auch versteht. So ist es wohl verständlich, daß die Jünger, die ihm nach der Kreuzigung die Treue hielten, nachdem sie zum Glauben an seine Auferstehung gekommen waren, diesen seinen eschatologischen Charakter dadurch zum Ausdruck brachten, daß sie in ihm den Messias selbst sahen... Insofern Jesus sich selbst als "eschatologisches" Phänomen verstand, kann man sagen, daß seine Verkündigung eine Christologie implizierte. Und man kann das dadurch noch deutlicher machen, daß man auf den in seinem Auftreten erhaltenen Anspruch hinweist, den man, wie es gerne geschieht, "Vollmachtsanspruch" nennen mag...²⁶

In view of the immediacy and authority which Käsemann has found to be characteristic of Jesus, he goes on to ask whether the category of prophet would not, as Bultmann claims, be sufficient to explain this phenomenon. He denies this, and in support of his denial, he

26. R. Bultmann, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

points to the fact that there was never a prophet who could remove himself from the authority of Moses without becoming a false prophet. Furthermore there was never a prophet who ascribed to his activity the eschatological significance that Jesus did. He cites the pericope, Matthew 11,12 ff., as evidence for Jesus' own view of his place in God's eschatological plan. That it is a genuine saying is shown by the fact that neither Luke nor Matthew know quite what to do with it, and in the content of the saying itself one can hear the ring of genuineness. In this saying Jesus looks back to John as marking the end of the old Aeon and the beginning of the new. Even so John stands in the shadow of the one who speaks his "up till to-day". Who, other than Jesus, can look back at the completed time of the Old Covenant? Who else can ascribe to the Baptist this key position and yet claim a mission for himself which John did not have? Apparently only he who brings the rule of God with his gospel, which rule can be hindered just because it appears in the naked form of the gospel. With this exegesis, the distinction that Bultmann inherited from his teachers - what for Jesus is future, is for Paul present - is decisively qualified. This revision

of the eschatological timetable also excludes, according to Käsemann, the view that Jesus expected a Son of Man different from himself as Bultmann has claimed. If this were the case, the unavoidable question that must be raised is: where would there be any place for such a Son of Man, when John had already ushered in the period of the new Aeon and yet in turn stands in the shadow of Jesus? The title "Son of Man" can be attributed most likely to the first Christians, whose Christology and eschatology it reflects.

Wenn es sich jedoch so verhält und Jesus nie ausdrücklich Anspruch auf Messianität erhoben hat, so wäre das außerordentlich charakteristisch. Er unterschiede sich damit ebenso von der spätjüdischen Erwartung wie von der Verkündigung seiner eigenen Gemeinde. Er hätte nicht ein Zukunftsbild entworfen, sondern das in der Gegenwart nötige getan und nicht seine Person, sondern seinen Auftrag in den Mittelpunkt seiner Predigt gestellt. Seine Gemeinde hätte aber gerade damit die Eigenart seiner Sendung als verstanden bezeugt, das sie seiner Verkündigung mit ihrem Bekenntnis zum Messias und Gottessohn antwortete.²⁷

The one question remains: if Jesus saw the beginning of the new Aeon in John and yet understood the rule of God as coming in with his word and deed, how does one describe his eschatology? Käsemann finds Dodd's earlier suggestion to have gone too far, for Jesus did speak of the rule of God

27. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 211.

as yet to come. The question is in what sense it was future for him. Käsemann concludes that Jesus did not preach a realised eschatology but, with E. Haenchen, "die sich von jetzt ab verwirklichende Gottesherrschaft". This is confirmed above all in the parables, whose clarity and conciseness distinguish them both from the rabbinic parallels and from the later Christian community. "Jesus kam...um zu sagen, wie es sich mit der angebrochenen Basileia verhält, daß nämlich Gott dem Menschen in Gnade und Forderung nahe gekommen sei. Er brachte und lebte die Freiheit der Kinder Gottes, die Kinder und frei bleiben, solange sie im Vater ihren Herrn finden."²⁸

When one moves on to ask the question of how Käsemann relates his characterisation of the "Eigenart" of Jesus to the Christ of the proclamation of the early Church, the difficulties of Käsemann having chosen to express himself in "Exegetische Versuche und Besinnungen" become clear. One must of necessity look in various essays to obtain a clue about just how he would view the "Kontinuität des Evangeliums in der Diskontinuität der Zeiten und in der Variationen des Kerygmas".²⁹ We have

28. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 212.

29. Ibid., p. 213.

already seen how he analysed the pericope, Matt. 15,1 ff., and how the message of Jesus was applied in a new way to a new, but in some ways similar situation by the gospel-writer. We have also seen that the claim, the action, and the message of Jesus were such that the only "proper" response to him was to confess him as the Messiah. Thus the basic transition from the earthly Jesus to the Christ of the kerygma is made more understandable, although the kerygma is neither proved nor legitimised by this observation. Up till now, we have been concerned primarily with the gospel-writers and especially with Matthew and Mark, but what of Paul, whose thought Bultmann compared with Jesus' own?

First of all, Käsemann's reassessment of the "eschatological timetable" brings the thought of Jesus and Paul closer together on this important point. But equally important is Käsemann's stress on the role of the Spirit. One of the things that was characteristic for Jesus was that he felt himself to be the instrument of the Spirit of God. And for Paul the Spirit has become the very mode of being of the risen Lord. The gift of the Spirit which the believer receives through the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is, in contrast to the hellenistic world of thought, which thought of $\piνεύμα$ as

an impersonal divine power, the gift which brings with it the Giver himself. The gift of the Spirit "...gibt ihren Geber, sie ist Erscheinungsweise des erhöhten Herrn, der in ihr epiphan wird. Man wird durch sie in seine praesentia gestellt und steht fortan 'in seinem Angesicht'. Im Pneuma kommt der Kyrios zu uns und ergreift von uns Besitz, beschlagnahmt uns für sich."³⁰

The Spirit, which empowered Jesus, has, since the resurrection, become the gift to the believer which places him in the presence of the Lord. Through the Spirit, one is placed in the same situation of belief or unbelief, of obedience or rebellion, in which the Spirit-filled Jesus placed his hearers. "Wo der Kyrios im Pneuma präsent wird, da beschlagnahmt er Menschen für seinen Herrschaftsbereich. Das aber ist weder ein Naturvorgang noch ein mystischer Prozeß. Der Kyrios greift nach mir, in dem er meinen Willen für sich beschlagnahmt und mich seinem Willen dienstbar, darin zum Gliede seiner Herrschaft macht. Gehorsam ist die neue Seinsweise des Christen..."³¹

30. E. Käsemann, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

This obedience which comes as the consequence of the gift of the Spirit and which is the sign of the presence of the Kingdom is parallel to the obedience which the earthly Jesus demanded of his followers. This obedience is characterised by both freedom and responsibility. As Käsemann said of Jesus, he brought and lived the freedom of the children of God, who remain children and free only so long as they find their father in the Lord. As we saw from the text of Matthew 15, Jesus freed his followers from the dead obedience to the letter of the Law and freed them f o r the more radical obedience of "seeing love". This kind of obedience is in fact the eschatological gift.

This is confirmed even more fully in Paul's concept of the Πνευματικὰ. What was true for the followers of Jesus has become the central reality for Paul. "Wer es mit Jesus zu tun bekommt, bekommt es nach seinem eigenen Anspruch mit der praesentia dei auf Erden und bis in die Leiblichkeit hinein zu tun."³² And for Paul it is the Spirit which is the sign of the presence of the risen Lord, and which in turn leads the believer into "leiblichen Gehorsam"; this is the sign that one lives from

32. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 244.

the power of the resurrected One and that one looks forward to one's own resurrection. It is the Spirit of Christ,

der uns gerade und stets mit unserer Leiblichkeit für den Herrn beschlagnahmt, zu leiblichem Dienst willig und fähig macht und so als Glieder in den Leib Christi hineinzieht. In unseren Leibern bemächtigt sich der Kosmokrator jener Welt, die seine Herrschaft vordem nicht anerkannte, und der Christusleib ist die Realität konkreter Weltherrschaft Christi vor der Parousie. So können in Eph. 4,7 ff. die Charismen als die Gaben des sieghaften Christus bezeichnet werden.³³

More than this, Käsemann finds that Paul in fact bases "nicht nur die Haustafeln, sondern seine gesamte Paränese vom Charisma her..."³⁴ Every sphere of life comes under the power of the risen Christ and can become the place of charismatic service for each Christian. There is no longer something in the world or some activity of the individual "in itself" which is holy or profane; as we learn from Romans 14,14, "Alles ist Gabe, was wir nicht entweihen. Alles steht unter

33. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 113.

34. Ibid., p. 116.

charismatischer Möglichkeit und ist insofern heilig, als es die Heiligen Gottes gebrauchen."³⁵ This is in fact the development of what was observed in Jesus' attack on the prescriptions of ritual purity; in this attack Jesus himself broke down the supposed distinction between the "Temenos, dem heiligen Bezirk, und der Profanität".³⁶ Furthermore, the Charisma is no longer the

Auszeichnung einzelner Auserwählter, sondern das, was allen zuteil geworden ist, welche den Namen des Herrn anrufen, oder, um es mit der urchristlichen Tradition von Apg. 2,17 ff. zu sagen, Erweis dessen, daß Gottes Geist über alles Fleisch ausgegossen wurde...wo alle Christen als Charismatiker betrachtet werden, kann es nicht mehr den heiligen Raum, die heilige Zeit, die heilige Handlung kultischer Stellvertretung, die heiligen Personen im Sinne des Judentums und Heidentums, nämlich das vom Temenos her Privilegierte und die Privilegierten geben... Die abgesonderten Bereiche des Religiösen werden gesprengt, wo der Angriff der Gnade auf die Welt und darum eben auf den Alltag stattfindet.³⁷

35. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 117.

36. Ibid., p. 207.

37. Ibid., pp. 118, 121-122.

In the Preface to his first volume of essays, Käsemann states that his generation's reappraisal has issued in a new interest in and examination of the liturgical material of the New Testament. One of the most discussed pieces of this material has been the pericope Philippians 2,5-11. And it is in his essay on this passage that Käsemann shows the distinctiveness of his position over against both Bultmann and the liberal tradition. In order to appreciate Käsemann's new approach, it will be useful first to look at a statement of Bultmann's view. He says:

Daß man über das Daß nicht hinauszukommen
b r a u c h t, zeigen je in ihrer Weise Paulus
und Johannes. Paulus verkündigt den Inkarnier-
ten, Gekreuzigten und Auferstandenen; d.h. vom
Leben Jesu bedarf sein Kerygma nur das Daß und
die Tatsache der Kreuzigung Jesu. Ein Bild der
menschlichen Person Jesu hält er seinen Hörern
nicht vor Augen abgesehen vom Kreuz (Gal. 3,1),
wobei das Kreuz aber nicht vom biographischen
Standpunkt gesehen ist, sondern als Heilsereignis
gilt. Der Gehorsam, die Selbstlosigkeit Christi,
von denen er redet (Phil. 2,6-9; Römer. 15,3;
2Kor. 8,9) sind das Verhalten des Präexistenten,
nicht des historischen Jesus.³⁸

38. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 9.

The opposite pole to Bultmann's interpretation of this has been the liberal view that Paul was referring to the ethical example of Jesus. This Käsemann, with Bultmann, rejects, but he is not ready to ascribe the "Gehorsam" and "Selbstlosigkeit" to the pre-existent Christ. It is just the voluntary obedience and acceptance of the form of the servant which is the "pre-condition" for the earthly Jesus being elevated to Lord. By his obedience, Jesus conquered the powers that hold man in bondage, so that in him who now reigns as Lord over these powers, we can ourselves be free from bondage and for obedience.

Hier wird nicht ein ethisches Vorbild aufgerichtet. Damit wäre der Raum der alten Welt noch nicht verlassen. Hier wird bezeugt, daß die Welt dem Gehorsamen gehört und er Herr ist, damit wir gehorsam würden. Gehorsam werden wir jedoch nicht durch ein Vorbild, sondern durch das Wort, das uns als ihm gehörig bezeugt.³⁹

This interpretation, which dynamically connects the life of Jesus and the life of the Christian community in Christ, seems to be echoed (coincidentally?) by the New English Bible's translation of verse 5. The translators

39. E. Käsemann, op. cit., p. 95.

have changed the King James' translation ("Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus") to, "Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in Christ Jesus." There could not be a better summary of Käsemann's interpretation of this text.

In the second volume of his collected essays, Käsemann has included a hitherto unpublished article, already referred to, entitled "Sackgassen im Streit um den historischen Jesus".⁴⁰ The second part of the essay - the part with which we are concerned here - is a detailed reply to Bultmann's monograph on the present discussion. One of the primary features of Bultmann's presentation was his uncompromising distinction between historical continuity ("historische Kontinuität") and the relationship in terms of content ("sachliches Verhältnis") between Jesus and his message on the one hand and the primitive Christian Kerygma on the other.⁴¹ This distinction was already the unexpressed background for his previous acceptance of several areas of agreement between

40. Ernst Käsemann, Exegetische Versuche und Besinrungen, Vol. II, Göttingen, 1964, pp. 31-68.

41. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 6.

the preaching of Jesus and the message of Paul, and yet in spite of this his continued reduction of Paul's interest in the historical Jesus to the mere "Daß" of his having existed and the fact of his crucifixion.⁴² According to Bultmann, it has been one of the principal faults of the present discussion regarding the historical Jesus that the question of historical continuity and that of the relationship in terms of content have not been sufficiently distinguished. Käsemann, however, finds Bultmann's distinction highly artificial. As he says, "Gar nicht begreife ich aber, daß man im Raum des Geschichtlichen sachliche Kontinuität behaupten könnte, ohne sofort - vielleicht streckenweise verschüttete und gleichsam unterirdisch verlaufende, jedoch als solche relevante - historische Kontinuität mitzudenken."⁴³ The historical process as such includes changes of direction, reversals, and new beginnings so that one can only speak dialectically of continuity in the midst of discontinuity. "'Sachliche' Kontinuität muß ich demgemäß dort konstatieren, wo historische Kontinuität das anfängliche Gefälle behält."⁴⁴ The term Gefälle attempts

42. See above, pp. 96-105.

43. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 43.

44. Ibid.

and since the Easter-event stands as a kind of baffling and hardly comprehensible miracle.⁴⁶

As we have seen several times already, Bultmann withdraws to his statement that the Kerygma needs only the "Daß des Gekommenseins Jesu" when confronted with any statement which points to the historical Jesus as having some decisive significance for faith, maintaining that any attempt to search behind the Kerygma is an attempt to seek a legitimisation alien to true faith. In the view of Käsemann, he and his colleagues owe it to Bultmann, in so far as they gained so many of their basic insights from him, to make it clear why they feel that they must go beyond the "Daß".

Bereitwillig kann zugestanden werden [by Bultmann], daß das Kerygma einige Wesenszüge des irdischen Jesus bewahrt habe. Doch wird das sofort der Frage nach dem Person- oder Charakterbild Jesu zugeordnet und im Horizont einer dadurch etwa ermöglichten Legitimation des Kerygmas beurteilt. Schon die Ausdrucksweise verrät, daß Bultmann sich hier nicht eigentlich seinen Schülern, sondern den Vertretern der traditionellen Jesusforschung zuwendet... Nicht daß das Kerygma sich historisch verifizieren läßt, ist mir wichtig. Im Gegenteil, ich würde

46. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 49.

das angesichts des Inhalts des Kerygmas absurd nennen und sogar als blasphemisch empfinden. Doch liegt das Kerygma, von dem Bultmann zu sprechen nicht müde wird, seinerseits ja auch nicht "objektiv" vor, sondern in der Gestalt sehr verschiedener Kerygmata, wie sich zur Eschatologie aufs schärfste zeigt. Die "Unterscheidung der Geister" nimmt mir aber wohl nicht eine Philosophie alter oder neuer Prägung ab. Ich bedarf also der Kriterien, wie die Christenheit ihrer stets bedurft hat, und insofern meldet sich tatsächlich die Frage der Legitimität, nämlich nicht einer historisch garantierten, sondern einer theologisch nicht unkritisch behaupteten Legitimität. Der Kern unserer Problemstellung läßt sich nun schlicht dahin zusammenfassen: Rechnet das Kerygma des Neuen Testaments den irdischen Jesus zu den Kriterien seiner selbst? Diese Frage ist ebenso schlicht und rund zu bejahen.⁴⁷

That Paul and John do not seem to confirm this statement can be attributed to the fact that, in their historical situation, the "Spirit" was the main criterion. But this was not sufficient in itself. Paul refers to the cross of the historical Jesus as a further criterion.

47. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 52-53.

This may be a salvation-event for him, as Bultmann has pointed out, but it was by no means the "Lichtkreuz der Gnostiker, sondern jene Torheit und Schande in welcher der historische Jesus gelitten hat".⁴⁸ Paul's Kerygma is bound up with the one and irreplaceable Jesus. In John, the problem is more complicated, but it can be said that ^{it is the} word of Jesus which is placed over against all other possible tradition within the church. Furthermore, this procedure of John also sheds some light on the work of the synoptic writers. They stood, just as much as Paul and John, within the hellenistic Christian community, and for them as much as for John and Paul, Jesus was already the risen and glorified Lord. Bultmann has emphasised the problem of how the Proclaimer became the One-Proclaimed, but has too little appreciated the significance of the One-Proclaimed once again becoming the Proclaimer. This latter process took place, according to Käsemann, as a reaction against the "enthusiastic" proclamation of the hellenistic church. In this context, the tradition from the first disciples about Jesus took on an exceptional theological significance. The main point about the renewed utilisation of the tradition about Jesus was not any

48. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 53.

attempt to establish historical proof for the faith.

Es geht darum, kritisch rechte von falscher Botschaft zu trennen, und das geschieht eben mit Hilfe dessen, der damals der historische Jesus war und sein mußte. Der Maßstab dürfte denn auch nicht schlecht gewählt sein. Er ist für die Christenheit verbindlich geworden und, wie ich denke, weiterhin unentbehrlich. Denn er ermöglicht zwar nicht die von Braun gesuchte Konstanz, wohl aber jene Kontinuität des Gefalles und jene Solidarität des Glaubens, um die ich mich mühen zu müssen meine.⁴⁹

In the fourth section of his monograph, Bultmann places the topic for discussion in the form of the question, whether one can demonstrate continuity between Jesus and the Kerygma by showing "Daß in Jesu Tat und Wort das Kerygma schon in nuce enthalten ist, daß Jesu Verkündigung bereits 'kerygmatischen' Charakter hat."⁵⁰ Käsemann's reply to this question is that it must be so "...wenn der neutestamentliche Oberbegriff 'Evangelium' als Summarium der Geschichte Jesu und der christlichen Verkündigung nicht irreführt."⁵¹

49. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 55.

50. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 45.

51. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 55.

Käsemann sums this all up as follows:

Läßt sich, um all diese Fragen zusammenzufassen, nicht einfach sagen, daß der historische Jesus zwar keineswegs bereits das spätere Kerygma und auch nicht das ganze Evangelium bringt, umgekehrt aber seine Worte, Taten und sein Geschick auf Schwerpunkte des späteren Evangeliums hinweisen und insofern von einer Gemeinde im antienthusiastischen Kampf auch als Kriterien dieses Evangeliums benützt werden können? Mit seinem spezifischen Selbstverständnis verträgt sich der Nomismus nicht, mit seiner Anschauung vom gnädigen Gott weder die Spekulation noch die Verweigerung der Nächstenliebe, mit seinem Kreuz keine theologia gloriae. Mit seinem Wort und seiner Tat ist die Gegenwart des Heils angezeigt. Ostern bindet die, welche ihm nachgefolgt waren, erneut an ihn als den Weg, die Wahrheit und das Leben, wie die Jünger des Irdischen es bei ihm suchten. Weil ich es so sehen und verstehen muß, halte ich streng an dem "in nuce" fest, kann ich die Unterschiede zwischen Jesus und der nachösterlichen Gemeinde aufs deutlichste hervorheben, wehre ich mich aber zugleich gegen die Diastase von historischer und sachlicher Kontinuität wie gegen die Rede vom bloßen "Daß des Gekommenseins", muß ich Kontinuität und Diskontinuität dialektisch, jedoch genau der Wirklichkeit entsprechend, verbinden.⁵²

52. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 57.

In concluding our examination of Käsemann's work as it affects the central concern of this paper, two general characteristics of his work seem to me to be particularly valuable. First, he has had the openness continually to re-examine not only Bultmann's presuppositions but his own as well. As he says, "...Verheißung gibt es nur für die, welche ihre Aporie sehen. Und nicht die theologischen Probleme, sondern die untheologischen Schlagworte sind unsere Gefahr."⁵³ Second, there is his determination to avoid dissolving the dialectic which he sees the New Testament itself struggling with, namely the dual emphasis on the historical Jesus and, at the same time, on the present Christ, or to put it another way, on tradition and Spirit. An exclusive emphasis on one or the other would lead to the destruction of the gospel.

Wird die kirchliche Tradition mit der Wahrheit identifiziert, so wird von dem Geist abstrahiert, der nach Joh. 16,13 immer neu und gegenwärtig in alle Wahrheit führt, wird vom anredenden und sich gegenwärtig manifestierenden Gott abstrahiert. Das heißt nun freilich nicht,

53. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 157.

daß man um des Geistes willen von der Tradition
absehen könnte oder dürfte. Dann würde ja
geleugnet, daß Gott schon stets vor uns auf dem
Plan stand und sich offenbart hat, der Geist
nach dem gleichen Johanneswort eben nicht von
sich selbst reden wird, sondern, an Jesu Wort
erinnernd, das, was er gehört hat. Der Glaube
steht nach Hebr. 11 immer in der Kontinuität
göttlichen Handelns, aus welcher Geschichte sich
nur Schwärmertum zu lösen versucht.⁵⁴

54. Ernst Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 157.

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CHAPTER IV

GÜNTER BORNKALM

Among the more prominent German scholars who have been devoting their attention to the so-called "New Quest", the one that stands closest to Ernst Käsemann is Günther Bornkamm. It is he who has produced the first major book on Jesus and this book, Jesus von Nazareth, was quite soon translated into English.¹ It is perhaps natural then that he should have attracted both more attention and aroused more controversy, in England and America especially, than some of his colleagues. It is, therefore, just this very fact which should lead anyone who is seriously interested in his work to read what he has written with extra care and attention. One should hesitate either to make him into the "representative" of the so-called "Bultmann school" and to assume that he is saying the same thing as even Ernst Käsemann, with whom he does in fact agree on many points, or to place the increasingly nebulous title of "existentialist" upon him as

1. Günther Bornkamm, Jesus von Nazareth, Stuttgart, 1960⁴⁻⁵ (hereafter abbreviated as JvN). E.T. Jesus of Nazareth, New York, 1960.

some have done.

While it is obvious that Bornkamm does have something in common with those who expressly use the categories of existence philosophy, in fact that "something" is primarily the use of the form-critical method with its understanding of the nature of the gospel tradition. Bornkamm shares the opinion of the form-critics that the nineteenth-century search for the historical Jesus was doomed to failure because the gospels simply do not yield the material necessary for the longed-for biography of Jesus' earthly life. The nineteenth-century quest, and even Albert Schweitzer, searched in vain to produce - truly founded on the sources - an "in sich geschlossene Darstellung des Lebens Jesu, ...mit allem, was dazu gehört: sinnvolle Verknüpfung der Vorgänge im einzelnen, möglichst mit genauer Datierung und Lokalisierung aller einzelnen Szenen, einer psychologisch verständlichen Entwicklung der Gestalt Jesu und dergleichen mehr".² This is not to say that there are not many facets of the gospel account of the life of Jesus whose "genuineness" cannot

2. Günther Bornkamm, "Die Bedeutung des historischen Jesus für den Glauben", in Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus, Göttingen, 1962, p. 61.

be disputed even by the most radical criticism. Indeed, Bornkamm gathers together, in the third chapter of his Jesus von Nazareth, the "facts" which undeniably belong to the earthly life of Jesus. But the gospels are not, at least primarily, interested in such a biography.

Ihre Erzähler, so sehr sie Namen, Orte und Zeiten nennen, konkrete Situationen schildern und sicher nicht dichten und dichten wollen, berichten eben doch nicht eigentlich als Historiker. Mit erstaunlicher Freiheit verfahren sie unter Umständen mit dem überlieferten Material, schwanken in ihren Angaben und versagen sich oft gerade dort, wo die Leben-Jesu-Darstellungen so seltsam beredt werden... [positively this means that] die Evangelien nach Art und Charakter alles andere eher sind als Geschichtsdarstellungen, Biographien und Chroniken, sondern in einzigartiger Verbindung, die nur in alttestamentlichen Geschichtsdarstellungen, eine überaus lehrreiche Analogie besitzt, Bericht und Bekenntnis, Erzählung von Jesus und Zeugnis der an ihn glaubenden späteren Gemeinde, beides so eng verbunden, daß wir gerade von einem Ineinander sprechen müssen: Bericht als Bekenntnis, Glaubenszeugnis als Jesuserzählung.³

But this way of witnessing to the life and mission of

3. Ibid., p. 62.

Jesus is not only appropriate to the situation of the early church in and out of which the gospel-writers produced their gospels; it is much more the way suited to that life and mission of Jesus itself. "Ich könnte auch sagen: Jesus selbst, seine Geschichte und Gestalt haben den Trägern der ersten Überlieferung und den Evangelisten, die sie später...sammelten und verarbeiteten, die Weise ihrer Darstellung aufgenötigt und aufgezwungen."⁴

The question still remains, however, why the gospel-writers, in contrast to Paul for instance, presented so much of the earthly life of Jesus. That their interest in his earthly life was an interest of faith has already been pointed out, and indeed, in the first instance, their way of relating the story of Jesus expresses none other than the primitive Christian confession Ἰησοῦς - Χριστός. Throughout the gospels and especially in the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus we meet the firm assertion of the "Identität des Irdischen und Erhöhten und also der in ihm selbst gegebenen Kontinuität von

4. Ibid., p. 63.

E i n s t u n d J e t z t, ... (und es) ist...
offenbar in den Evangelien überhaupt das im urchrist-
lichen Credo grundsätzlich (und für alle Zeiten)
gesetzte Nein zu jeglicher Anonymisierung und Mythi-
sierung des Christusglaubens unmißverständlich ver-
nehmbar."⁵

But this first point does not carry one much
farther than Bultmann's well-known thesis, that "der
Glaube habe an dem 'Daß' der Identität zwischen dem
historischen Jesus und dem Christus des Glaubens ein
legitimes Interesse (in Abwehr von jeglichem Dokerismus),
aber nur daran".⁶ And, as we have seen, Bultmann claims
that anything beyond this, especially on the part of
the modern historian, is the desire, alien to faith,
for proof. But Bornkamm specifically rejects this
restriction on the interest in the historical Jesus.
It is this prejudice, as it were, which has prevented
Bultmann's work on the gospels from bearing fruit in
his theology. As Bornkamm says, "Doch geht es genau

5. G. Bornkamm, "Glaube und Geschichte in den Evange-
lien", in Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische
Christus, Berlin, 1964, pp. 284-285.

6. G. Bornkamm, "Geschichte und Glaube in den Evange-
lien", in Evangelische Theologie, XXII (1962), p. 13.

um das, was er selbst 'die Möglichkeit der Wiederholung' genannt, aber eben kaum nur angedeutet hat. Sie impliziert auf alle Fälle Kontinuität. Diese kann und darf dem Glauben nicht gleichgültig sein, wenn auch niemals im Sinne eines sichernden Beweises."⁷ In any case it is abundantly clear, according to Bornkamm, that the gospel's interest in the earthly Jesus goes beyond the mere "Daß", that is, beyond the simple confessional affirmation of the identity of the earthly and risen Lord.

Bornkamm finds that Ernst Käsemann has rightly characterised one of the principal facets of the gospel's interest in the earthly Jesus in his concept of the contingency of revelation, that is, the inextricable bond of revelation to a definite, concrete history.⁸ He quotes, in carrying this further, Käsemann's statement: "Diese Historie ist für sie nur Schnittpunkt der eschatologischen Ereignisse, sie findet nur insoweit Beachtung

7. Ibid. Bornkamm is replying here to Bultmann's monograph to which we have referred (Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, 1960, 3).

8. G. Bornkamm, Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, p. 285.

als sie das ist, und empfängt ihr eigentliches Leben aus ihnen, nicht aus sich selbst."⁹ Bornkamm agrees with this statement, but holds that it is more applicable to the tradition which the gospel-writers used - a tradition consisting of individual words, deeds, and stories of Jesus not yet necessarily related specifically to cross and resurrection - than to the gospels themselves. This tradition was important to the first Christians because they saw "in jedem Stück dieser Geschichte Jesu die l e t z t e, den Himmel aufschließende Geschichte Gottes. In diesem Sinne gilt also in der Tat: Die Historie ist 'Schnittpunkt der eschatologischen Ereignisse'. Doch entstehen d i e E v a n g e l i e n ja erst dadurch, daß dieses Einzelne zu einem Ganzen wird, und das heißt: eine Ausrichtung bekommt."¹⁰ In the gospels the individual stories and logien are joined to a unity in which all point toward, and are to be understood in the light of, the passion and resurrection, and it is this which characterises the form "gospel".

9. Ibid. (quoted from "Das Problem des historischen Jesus", ZThK, LI (1954), pp. 138 ff.).

10. Ibid., pp. 285-286.

Bornkamm then asks the question: "Was aber besagt diese Einheit der Geschichte Jesu, die jetzt das Einzelne zusammenhält, im Sinne der Evangelien für den Glauben?"¹¹ In answering this question he returns again to Ernst Käsemann's concepts of the "'K o n d e s- z e n d e n z' Gottes in der Geschichte Jesu und damit zugleich der V o r g e g e b e n h e i t d e s H e i l e s', von dem der Glaube lebt'".¹² This is seen in that this history that stands so in the shadow of the cross and resurrection is still and only the history of J e s u s. The disciples, for instance, belong to the story from the very beginning.

Aber nicht sie kämpfen mit Pharisäern und Schriftgelehrten, nicht sie vermögen zu heilen und zu helfen, nicht sie lehren in "Vollmacht". Nirgends sind sie Jesu Bundesgenossen, wie denn auch sie nicht leiden und sterben. Im Verhältnis zu ihm sind sie die Nichtverstehenden, die Kleingläubigen, die Fliehenden... So also wird das extra nos in den Evangelien sichtbar gemacht, daß auch die Jünger in seiner Geschichte nicht "dabei" sind. Das ist gewiß nicht in dem Sinne gemeint, daß Jesus hier in seiner heroischen Einsamkeit glorifiziert

11. G. Bornkamm, Der hist. Jesus u. der keryg. Christus, p. 286.

12. Ibid.

werden sollte, sondern zielt auf das, was Mark. 10,45 ausgesagt wird - auch wenn dieser Spruch ein zusammenfassender Predigtspruch der Gemeinde ist - E r gibt sein Leben zu einem Lösegeld für viele.¹³

This emphasis which one finds here is carried over into Paul as well. When he speaks of the Christ in us, whose body is the church, and whose grace is effective in the gifts of grace of its members, this still presupposes the uniqueness and irreplaceability of Christ expressed in Romans 5,6 ff. "Da wir noch Sünder waren, ist Christus für uns gestorben. Die Gottestat von Ostern aber bedeutet, daß ausdem Ἰησοῦς o h n e uns, v o r uns, der χριστός geworden ist, von dem es jetzt heißen soll: Wir in ihm, er in uns."¹⁴

To the facets of the gospels' interest in the earthly Jesus already mentioned comes another which Bornkamm feels has received too little attention. This is the recognition on the part of the gospel-writers that the disciples after Easter, in spite of the fact that they have, so to speak, the cross behind them, have the living Christ present in the Word and sacrament, and

13. Ibid., p. 287.

14. Ibid.

look forward to the coming One, still remain "in der Solidarität derer...die von dem irdischen Jesus zum Glauben und zum Eingang in die Gottesherrschaft erst gerufen sind. Die an den gegenwärtigen und zukünftigen Herrn Glaubenden werden darum erneut an die Geschichte und das Wort des vorösterlichen Jesus verwiesen".¹⁵

This is especially true of Matthew's gospel but it is not lacking in any of the gospels, even in John, for it is John above all who understands the situation of the believers as that of the disciples before the death and resurrection of Jesus and, moreover, the Spirit, which will lead the believers into all truth after Jesus' return to the Father, will remind the hearer of none other than the words of J e s u s.¹⁶

When we turn from Bornkamm's characterisation of the gospel's interest in the historical Jesus to his presentation of Jesus himself, we meet some rather sharp and to some extent unjust criticism of this presentation. It is, therefore, worth while to have a brief look at this criticism in order to clear the ground for what Bornkamm is really saying. The criticism comes, among

15. G. Bornkamm, Der hist. Jesus u. der keryg. Christus, p. 287.

16. Ibid., p. 288.

others, from Hugh Anderson and Otto Piper. According to Anderson,

Bornkamm's portrait of Jesus is the portrait of a remarkable prophet teacher. This is exactly what we might expect in a book which is a lineal descendant of Bultmann's Jesus and the Word. For Bornkamm, Jesus is, first of all and most of all and indeed almost only, the "speaker", and the "preacher"... Why always and everywhere the words of Jesus?¹⁷

Similarly Piper says, "...In the ecclesiastical tradition the foundation function of Jesus consists in his life work culminating in his passion, (but) Bornkamm describes it primarily as teaching."¹⁸ In reply to these criticisms, one cannot, and indeed, would not wish to dispute that Bornkamm lays great emphasis upon Jesus' teaching and words, but that this is his almost exclusive emphasis is surely exaggerated. He speaks over and over again about Jesus' word and action, about his word and deed, and about his way ending in the cross; "...sein Wort u n d die helfende Tat sind die Mittel seines Wirkens."¹⁹

17. Hugh Anderson, op. cit., pp. 176-177.

18. Otto Piper, op. cit., p. 479.

19. G. Bornkamm, JvM, p. 49. This is apart from the fact that Bornkamm expressly states his agreement with Käsemann, that the category of prophet is one which Jesus burst, as it were, by his action and by his challenging/...

In Bornkamm's view, Jesus' word and deed and way form an indissoluble unity - "Alles - jedes Wort, jede Tat, seine ganze Geschichte, Verkündigung und Verwirklichung der Nähe Gottes."²⁰

In this last statement about Jesus' whole history being the proclamation and realisation of the nearness of God, we are already at the heart of Bornkamm's presentation of Jesus. According to Bornkamm, it is Jesus' proclamation of the nearness of the rule of God, reflected in the immediateness ("Unmittelbarkeit") of his encounter with people, which forms the core of that which unmistakably belongs to the historical Jesus. It

(note 19, contd.)

challenging the authority of Moses in the question of ritual purity and divorce. As he says, "...kein Prophet hätte sich der Autorität des Mose widersetzen dürfen, ohne zum Lügenpropheten zu werden" (JvN, p. 91).

20. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus, p. 66. Fuchs criticises the whole division of Jesus' activity into word and deed. He says: "Die ihrem Gebrauch nach schon ethisch befangene, eigentlich zu profane Formel von 'Wort und Tat' in der Geschichte Jesu reicht nicht aus. Jesu Tat ist in Wahrheit der Oberbegriff, wie denn auch Jesu Verhalten als der wahre 'Rahmen' seiner Verkündigung aufgefaßt werden kann. Dieser Oberbegriff gliedert sich in den Evangelien so, daß einmal und vor allem das Wunder, dann das Leiden und endlich auch das Wort als Jesu Tat verstanden wird" (Gesammelte Aufsätze II, Tübingen, 1960, p. 207). The essay from which this quotation was taken - a detailed "Auseinandersetzung" with Bornkamm's Jesus von Nazareth - has been inexplicably left out of the English translation.

is this emphasis on the immediateness of Jesus which has been almost universally praised by the reviewers, including Hugh Anderson and Otto Piper. It is this emphasis too, along with the whole disposition of the book Jesus von Nazareth, which brings out his difference from Bultmann. The chapters he adds as opposed to Bultmann's Jesus serve to emphasise further the change in his approach. His third chapter on the outline of Jesus' life, his sixth chapter on the disciples, and his seventh chapter on Jesus' way to Jerusalem, all show his reassessment of the importance of the earthly Jesus, to say nothing of his new concept of the character of Jesus' words and actions.

Bornkamm's departure from Bultmann, in his presentation of Jesus' eschatological message and the consequences this had for the way Jesus acted, may seem to some to be only a slight one, but, as J.M. Robinson points out, it is decisive in the long run.²¹ This becomes apparent, according to Robinson, in such exegetical details as Bornkamm's interpretation of Luke 17,20 ff., whose "exegesis (makes it) symptomatic of one's whole view;

21. J.M. Robinson, op. cit., p. 312.

(it) is not understood with Bultmann of the future, but, following Kümmel, of the present."²² Actually, Bornkamm, though still understanding this as applying to the present, would now no longer translate the key words of this saying with Kümmel as "das Reich Gottes ist in eurer Mitte" but with Alexander Rüstow as "Denn siehe die Herrschaft Gottes ist in eure Hände gegeben."²³ Be that as it may, Bornkamm's emphasis on the present is a necessary and welcome corrective to Bultmann's all too exclusive futuristic view.

This becomes even clearer when we see Bornkamm with Ernst Käsemann placing the shift of the aeons with John the Baptist. And as with Käsemann, it is Matthew 11,12 which provides the key.

Seit den Tagen des Täufers also ist Gottes Reich auf dem Weg, wenn auch noch aufgehalten und vergewaltigt. Aber seine Stunde hat schon begonnen, bedrängt und verborgen. Johannes wird damit aus allen Propheten vor ihm herausgehoben ... Er ist nicht mehr nur Verkünder auf die Zukunft hin, sondern gehört schon in die Zeit der erfüllten Verheißung hinein. Das macht seine Größe aus und stellt ihn doch zugleich in den Schatten Jesu selbst, in dessen Wort und

22. J.M. Robinson, op. cit., p. 314.

23. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, p. 65.

Wirken verborgen die Herrschaft Gottes anbricht.²⁴
The difference between John and Jesus is as between the
eleventh and twelfth hours.²⁵

This is not to say that Bornkamm has moved to a position of fully realised eschatology. He retains the tension between present and future. His emphasis is upon the present which cannot and does not become past. It is a present which also cannot become distant (and meaningless) future, but remains the immediate future, that is, present. As Bornkamm puts it, Jesus was living in a time which had lost the present, caught, as it were, between a holy but distant past and an equally distant future. But in Jesus' word...

hat die Botschaft vom kommenden Reich also nicht mehr den Klang einer Vertröstung auf eine ferne Zukunft und einer geheimnisvoll ausgemalten Jenseitsvision wie bei den Apokalyptikern seiner Zeit. Er selbst tritt in das Kampffeld zwischen Gott und den satanischen Mächten und bricht als der Stärkere in das Haus des Starken, des Satans ein, heilverkündend und heilbringend für die Armen, Hungernden und Weinenden...aber Gericht verkündend und Gericht bringend über die Satten und Selbstgerechten.²⁶

24. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 46.

25. Ibid., p. 61.

26. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, pp. 64-65.

It is the "now" which is all-important in Jesus' words and actions. Now, in response to him the "last" decisions are made, where the first become the last, the blind receive sight, and the seeing ones become blind. The nearness of God becomes so real in Jesus, that "to-day" truly becomes the present in which the hearers are called with power to repentance but also - to joy. "Zum Entsetzen der Pharisäer und Schriftgelehrten setzt Jesus sich darum mit Zöllnern und Dirnen an einen Tisch, denn die Stunde der Freude ist da, wo das Verlorene gefunden ist und der Sohn aus Freude und Verderben heimkehrt und von der Liebe des Vaters aufgenommen wird."²⁷

How near God is also with his demand is seen in the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10,30 ff.). It is clear from this story that the priest and the Levite who go by on the other side, "in diesem Zerschlagenen nichts Geringeres als das Himmelreich selbst, das ewige Leben, im Straßengraben liegen ließen. Denn so nahe ist Gott, so verborgen und doch zum Greifen nahe." All this is not just teaching in Jesus' proclamation,

27. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, p. 65.

...sondern Geschehen in Vollmacht, Ereignis in seiner ganzen Geschichte, deutlich in der Souveränität seiner Worte, im Kämpfen mit seinen Widersachern, in der Kraft, mit der er Dämonen austreibt, und in der Unbeirrbarkeit seines Weges bis hin zum Kreuz, das Juden und Römer am Ende für diesen Rebellen aufrichten, die einen um die Ordnung Gottes, die anderen um die des Staates besorgt.²⁸

This impressive statement of Jesus' "Unmittelbarkeit" and "Vollmacht" which Bornkamm holds to be the central characteristic of Jesus' person, message, and ministry leads us on to the question of whether Jesus used any of the messianic titles to express the nature of his mission. Bornkamm's answer is first of all that the question is neither historically nor theologically as important as it is often held to be. It is clear from the gospels, he feels, that Jesus at least did not attribute decisive importance to the question of his messianic dignity. Bornkamm in fact holds that Jesus used none of the messianic titles in application to himself, but that it is not this or that title which is important, but the fact that Jesus "...das was wir sein

28. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, p. 66.

Christusamt nennen, ausgerichtet, Ereignis werden läßt, und jedes seiner Worte und Taten unlöslich auf ihn selbst bezogen und mit ihm verbunden ist. Dies gilt und steht in Kraft, ganz unabhängig von der Frage, ob er auch nur einen einzigen jüdischen Messias-titel für sich in Anspruch genommen hat."²⁹ The messianic character of his being is bound up with his word and deed and with the immediacy of his historical appearance. No conventional title serves to legitimise his mission and none exhausts the mystery of his being. It becomes clear from this that the disciples could fully understand this mystery only in the light of the cross and resurrection.³⁰

A good example of this general principle is Bornkamm's rejection of the title "Son of God" as a self-designation of Jesus. He finds its place to be in the "Credo der Gemeinde".³¹ On the other hand he maintains that Jesus' use of the name Father for God, while it

29. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, pp. 66-67.

30. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 163. This seems to be the force of the early Christian hymn used by Paul in Phil. 2,6-11, the sense of which Bornkamm paraphrases: "Gott aber begegnet dem Menschen, der nichts sein will wie Gott, in dem, der nichts sein will als ein Mensch" (Ges. Aufsätze II, p. 187).

31. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 163.

introduces no new idea or concept of God, does show "Besonderheiten, die im engsten Zusammenhang stehen mit Jesu ganzer Botschaft".³² With Bultmann he understands the Fatherhood of God in Jesus' usage to be, not a general truth or theory about God, but something, as the parable of the prodigal son shows, which happens, and then only as miracle and event. Sonship is not something which the natural man has by virtue of his humanity, but something which he receives in grace. Up to this point, Bornkamm does not differ essentially from Bultmann; where Bornkamm's departure becomes clear is in his linking of Jesus' teaching about the Fatherhood of God and Jesus' own mission. As he says,

Wohl finden sich zahlreiche Stellen, wo Jesus "mein Vater (im Himmel)" und "dein Vater" oder "euer Vater" sagt, aber nirgends eine Stelle, wo er sich mit seinen Jüngern zu einem "unser Vater" zusammenschließt. Wir haben keinen Grund daran zu zweifeln, daß dieser Sprachgebrauch schon für Jesus selbst charakteristisch war, sicher als ein Ausdruck seiner Sendung.³³

Jesus' mission as we have seen is to make God immediately present; in the terms of our present discussion, this

32. G. Bornkamm, *JvN*, p. 116.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

means that Jesus brings God so near to the people he encounters, that they are enabled to say "Abba-Father". This is not to say, as the liberal quest did, that one is called to imitate the example of Jesus, but that through him one can receive the miraculous gift of sonship. This is quite parallel to the way Käsemann interprets Philippians 2, an interpretation with which Bornkamm is in full agreement. Here too it is not an obedience simply in imitation of Jesus, but an obedience made possible by Jesus' own. Through Jesus we receive "Befreiung zum Gehorsam gegenüber dem, der selbst gehorsam war und so zum Herrn und Sieger geworden ist".³⁴ So is it also with sonship. Paul preserves this too in his letters - both the unique character of Jesus' mission and the miraculous nature of the gift of sonship to the believer.

Darum redet Paulus von den "Söhnen Gottes" nie anders als so, daß er zugleich von der Sendung "des Sohnes" spricht (vgl. Gal. 4,1 ff.), und (darum) nennt die Gemeinde Gott "den Vater unseres Herrn Jesu Christi" (2Kor. 1,3; Eph. 1,3 u.ö.). Nicht kraft ihres natürlichen Seins, sondern in der Kraft des "Geistes", der in ihren Herzen

34. G. Bornkamm, Ges. Aufsätze II, pp. 177-187, esp. 187.

schreit, rufen die Glaubenden: "Abba-Vater"
(Röm. 8,15; Gal. 4,6).³⁵

The titles then that are given to Jesus are a response to the whole event, as it were, of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus; the titles speak of the authority which God gave to Jesus, of the salvation that God effected in him for time and eternity, and yet always in such a way that his earthly existence and his end and consummation are seen together. This is not to say that the titles do not reflect and echo what the earthly Jesus said and did.

Verkündigung und Anspruch Jesu, daß in ihm selbst und seinem Wirken die Herrschaft Gottes anbricht und hier die Entscheidung fällt für Heil und Gericht, und damit zugleich das Besondere und Einmalige seines Verhältnisses zum Vater, das viele seiner Worte aussprechen - alles das ist in die messianischen Namen, die die Gemeinde ihm gibt, mit eingegangen.³⁶

Before we leave this central part of Bornkamm's work, the second half of the basic question of this paper remains to be asked, namely, what relationship does the emphasis on the presence and nearness of the rule of God

35. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 118.

36. G. Bornkamm, JvN, pp. 159-160.

in Jesus have with the kerygma of the early church? Bornkamm's answer is that although many elements of the tradition about Jesus did not find their way into the kerygma, this did. "Nun, eines hat diese scheinbar so ganz andere nachösterliche Heilsbotschaft doch wohl verstanden: nämlich eben jenes Heute und Jetzt, das unveräußerlich zu Jesu Botschaft vom Gottesreich gehört und in ihm Ereignis wurde."³⁷ The first Christians showed that they understood the "Heute und Jetzt" of Jesus in that Jesus did not become past for them, a possibility echoed in the words of the disciples on the road to Emmaus - "But we had hoped he was the one to redeem Israel" (Luke 24,21). The answer to this was given to the disciples by Easter; the resurrected Christ himself gave them the answer, indeed - he was the answer. Now for the first time the history of God with his people under the Old Covenant opened itself to the disciples, consummated and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Now He is preached as the decisive, final, redemptive act of God and as God's Word for the world. All the titles which faith now gives to him express just this - "Die Wende

37. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, p. 67.

der Äonen ist da, die Eröffnung des Heils, die Nähe und Gegenwart Gottes in Ihm."³⁸

Die österlich-nachösterliche Botschaft der Gemeinde mußte sich darum gegenüber der Verkündigung und Lehre Jesu wandeln, gerade weil es galt, ihm treu zu bleiben, nämlich dem Wort, der Tat, der Geschichte Gottes in Ihm. So hätten die Jünger ihn verleugnet, wenn sie nichts anderes getan hätten, als nur wie Rabbinern- und Philosophen-Schüler sonst das Erbe und Vermächtnis seiner Lehre zu pflegen und seine Worte zu wiederholen.³⁹

Although it is not possible in the scope of this chapter to go into all the details of Bornkamm's further presentation, there are two other aspects of it which should be brought out. Each of these is integrally related to the central point which we have been discussing. The first is Bornkamm's emphasis on the role of the disciples and the other people called and challenged by the word and deed of Jesus. As J.M. Robinson has pointed out, Bornkamm describes "the human impression that Jesus made upon people in a way clearly suggestive of the meaning Jesus has for faith, as if an encounter

38. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem hist. Jesus, p. 68.

39. Ibid.

with Jesus were at least potentially an encounter with the gospel."⁴⁰

In order to appreciate this part of Bornkamm's presentation, it is useful to compare it with the corresponding section in Bultmann's Jesus.⁴¹ The starting point for both is the characterisation of Jesus himself as "Rabbi". Both bring out the fact that Jesus taught as a rabbi, used the rabbinic form of argumentation, and gathered disciples or pupils as the rabbis did. Both point out, however, that Jesus' teaching goes beyond that of the normal rabbi and that the people who appear in Jesus' company - women, children, tax-collectors, etc. - are such as would clearly not have been in the company of the normal rabbi. Where their paths begin to diverge is in their characterisation of Jesus' teaching. Bultmann found the distinctive thing in Jesus' teaching to lie in the radicality with which Jesus interpreted the will of God. Characteristically, Bornkamm regards the basic difference from the rabbi's teaching as being the immediate authority with which Jesus teaches and acts as opposed to the derivative authority of the rabbis.

⁴⁰. J.M. Robinson, op. cit., p. 312.

⁴¹. R. Bultmann, Jesus, Tübingen, 1958, pp. 52 ff.;
G. Bornkamm, JvN, pp. 20-21, 51-57, 88-92, 133-140.

Immer ist die Wirklichkeit Gottes und die Autorität seines Willens unmittelbar da und wird in ihm Ereignis. Diese Unmittelbarkeit, mit der er lehrt, hat im zeitgenössischen Judentum keine Entsprechung. Sie gilt in solchem Maße, daß er an dem unmittelbar gegenwärtigen Willen Gottes sogar den Wortlaut des Gesetzes zu messen wagt.⁴²

The statement here already goes beyond anything in Bultmann; Bultmann would simply avoid stating, for example, that the reality of God has become event in Jesus. But Bornkamm finds just this "Vollmacht" or "Souveränität" or "Unmittelbarkeit" in every facet of Jesus' activity and person. It is not just in his teaching - which indeed appeals with a forceful immediacy to the hearer in his life as he knows it - that this is made manifest, but it is in Jesus' whole encounter with all kinds of people in so many and diverse situations. The scenes which report Jesus' encounter with people, Bultmann would relegate for the most part simply to the tradition, but Bornkamm, while well aware of the influence of legend, etc., feels that "die Überlieferung hier einen überaus wesentlichen Zug im Bilde des geschichtlichen Jesus

42. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 52.

festgehalten hat, der genau mit dem, was wir über die Art seines Lehrens sagten, zusammenstimmt".⁴³ Bornkamm, further, does not shy away from speaking in a very "human way" about the way Jesus encounters people, for he feels that the gospels give us a right to do just that. He speaks of Jesus' healing power, of his power to "see through" people, and of his ability to cut through the tangles of argumentation and self-justification. Not only is Jesus, in the various encounters with people, there in "unmittelbarer, unableitbarer 'Vollmacht'", but also the people...

...zu denen er redet und an denen er handelt, sind da in unverstellter Wirklichkeit. Sie alle bringen in die Begegnung mit ihm etwas mit: Die Gerechten ihre Gerechtigkeit, die Schriftgelehrten das Gewicht ihrer Lehre und Argumente, die Zöllner und Sünder ihre Schuld, die Hilfesuchenden ihre Krankheit, die Dämonischen die Fesseln ihrer Besessenheit und die Armen die Last ihrer Armut. Alles das ist nicht ausgelöscht und gleichgültig, aber es gilt nicht mehr in dieser Begegnung. Denn jeder wird in ihr genötigt, aus seinem Herkommen herauszutreten. Dieses Zutagekommen der Menschen in dem, was sie wirklich sind, begibt sich in allen Jesusgeschichten.⁴⁴

43. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 53.

44. Ibid., p. 55.

From this passage, one can see just how much Bultmann's reduction of Jesus' activity to a rather austere "demand for decision" has been filled out by Bornkamm, and given life.

When we turn to the disciples, we meet an even greater difference between Bultmann and Bornkamm. Bultmann simply mentions that the term disciple is a "technischer Ausdruck und bezeichnet eben die Schüler eines Rabbi und nicht die Glieder einer religiösen Gemeinschaft", and that Jesus gathered about himself the circle of disciples in the usual manner of a rabbi. He also holds that the circle of the twelve is an exclusively post-Easter limitation of an originally much larger circle.⁴⁵ In contrast to this Bornkamm is emphatic in his delineation of the distinction and difference between the pupils of a normal rabbi and Jesus' disciples - Jesus' disciples mirror the uniqueness of their master. And the establishment of the twelve "geht...wohl sicher auf den irdischen Jesus zurück".⁴⁶

Bornkamm admits that the concepts "rabbi",

45. R. Bultmann, Jesus, pp. 55, 53.

46. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 138.

"disciple", and "discipleship", clearly come from contemporary Jewish usage, but "den Besonderheiten d i e s e s Rabbi entspricht die Eigenart des Verhältnisses, in dem Jesu Jünger zu ihm stehen".⁴⁷ The disciples of Jesus do not simply make a free decision to come to him; rather they are the recipients of his sovereign call. Further, there is no place in the gospels where they are spoken of as receiving special instruction in the law or where Jesus is seen preparing them to perpetuate his interpretation of the law, as was the case with the normal Jewish rabbis. Above all, their discipleship is not something temporary which will cease with their becoming independent teachers themselves. This is clearly reflected in the saying in Matthew, 23,8, "But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren." A somewhat closer parallel would be the disciples of John the Baptist, but here only in the sense that they too are no longer pupils, but members of the movement which John set in motion. In actual fact, there is nothing which corresponds to the disciples of Jesus - they reflect the singularity of their "teacher". Their task too reflects the mission of

47. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 133.

Jesus. "Die Nähe der Gottesherrschaft zu verkünden und ihre heilenden, schon gegenwärtigen Kräfte zu erweisen, das ist der Dienst, der von ihnen auch die Bereitschaft zu Armut und Leiden fordert."⁴⁸ The disciples are in fact actively given a part in their master's mission, and, although the spirit-inspired activity of the early church has in all likelihood woven its way into the account of the disciples' activity, it does not exclude the probability that the earthly Jesus already gave his disciples "Anteil an seiner Vollmacht. Von hier aus läßt sich wohl begreifen, daß unter ihnen die Frage nach einem besonderen Lohn aufkommen konnte, freilich eine sehr menschliche Frage, die ihnen von Jesus...kräftig verwehrt wird."⁴⁹ Symbolic of the dignity and task of the disciples is their number. As we said, Bornkamm attributes the institution of the twelve to the earthly Jesus. This is attested by the fact that the membership of Judas Iscariot to this circle was extremely offensive to the early church. Also, according to the oldest tradition of the resurrection appearances quoted by Paul in ICor. 15,3 ff., Jesus appeared to the

48. G. Bornkamm, *JvN*, p. 137.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

twelve. Their circle must therefore be held to have existed before Easter.

Die Zwölfzahl symbolisiert die zwölf Stämme Israels (Mt. 19,28; Lk. 22,30). Damit ist die Jüngerschaft Jesu als das neue Gottesvolk der Endzeit verstanden. Das heißt jedoch nicht als der "heilige Rest" der Gemeinde und gilt nicht im Sinne der Absonderung von Israel, sondern als Versinnbildlichung des Rufes Jesu, der an die verlorenen Schafe vom Hause Israel ergeht (Mt. 10,6; 15,24).⁵⁰

As we have already seen,⁵¹ the early church as reflected in the gospels came to see themselves in the disciples who followed Jesus on his earthly way. They felt themselves to be the people of God of the eschaton, but saw their own present existence as parallel to the situation of the disciples who were called then to sacrifice and to the proving of their faith. In doing so they confessed that even their faith can be nothing other than the "...Nachfolge des irdischen Meisters, der Kreuz und Auferstehung erst entgegengeht. Die Evangelien sind darum zugleich die Absage an eine eschatologische Schwärmerei, die unter

50.G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 138.

51.Cf. above, p. 14.

Preisgabe der Zeitlichkeit die Herrlichkeit der Welt Gottes schon als ihre eigene Gegenwart proklamiert".⁵²

The third basic aspect of Bornkamm's presentation, to which we now turn our attention, is one that has been almost overlooked by his reviewers. Much attention has been drawn, as we have seen, to his emphasis on Jesus' message, but what should be decisive is not just the space it takes up in his book on Jesus, but his concept of the character of that message. And it is this that concerns us here. As a welcome development and corrective of Bultmann, Bornkamm emphasises with notable frequency that Jesus' teaching is aimed directly to the reason or understanding of his hearers in the world as they know it. It is of a piece with the "Unmittelbarkeit" of Jesus' word and action that he can and does appeal with great directness to the understanding of those to whom he speaks. This is something which Bultmann has not entirely overlooked, but it has not really borne fruit either in his portrayal of Jesus' message or in his theology. Bultmann has understood, as Her^Fmann before him, that radical obedience, upon which he lays so much stress, is only possible when the one called to obey affirms from

52. G. Bornkamm, JvN, pp. 139, 21.

within that which he is called to do. This presupposes that in fact he understands what is demanded of him. But this insight on the part of Bultmann himself has remained without any positive theological significance for him. This is most likely because of his determined opposition to the nineteenth century's use of reason to try to "prove" the truth of their faith. This Bornkamm also opposes, but it does not prevent him from seeing and drawing attention to Jesus' appeal in his teaching to "das natürliche Verstehen" of his hearers. According to Bultmann, Jesus' appeal was to the will of man; according to Bornkamm, Jesus' appeal is indeed to the will of man, but in such a way that he understands the demand, even if that demand be difficult or even paradoxical.

This emphasis on understanding becomes clear first of all in Jesus' use of the parable as a means of communicating his message of the Kingdom of God. The parable was used also by the rabbis in explaining the meaning of a passage of the Law,

...immer aber als Hilfsmittel der Lehre und Instrument der Exegese eines autoritativ vorgegeben^{en} Schriftwortes. Gerade das aber sind sie in Jesu Mund nicht, so eng sie sich oft in ihrem Inhalt mit denen der jüdischen Lehrer

berühren und so freimütig Jesus von Überliefer-
tem und Vertrautem Gebrauch macht. Hier sind
die Gleichnisse die Verkündigung selbst und
nicht nur im Dienst einer von ihnen selbststän-
digen Lehre. Jesu Gleichnisse - und nicht nur
die im engeren Sinne die vom Reich Gottes -
zielen wie alle Gleichnisse a u f d a s
V e r s t e h e n ab.⁵³

The parables utilise events and features of the
world and of the life of ordinary people as they know it.
Even when Jesus relates events which are by no means
daily occurrences such as thieves breaking in in the
night, still they are events which everyone understands
and are at least possible. "Ja so ist es! ist die erste
Antwort, die jedes Gleichnis verlangt... Nicht wenige
Bildworte und Gleichnisse Jesu beginnen darum mit der
stürmischen, ohne alle Präliminarien sofort zupackenden
Frage: 'Wer unter Euch?' - eine Gleichnisform, für die
es bezeichnenderweise in rabbinischer Überlieferung nicht
eine einzige Parallele gibt."⁵⁴ Every time the question
is aimed directly at the hearer, presupposing no special
knowledge or piety, presupposing only the hearer, the
person, "und zwar der Mensch in der ganzen unverstellten

53. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 63.

54. Ibid.

und unbeschönigten Wirklichkeit seiner Welt, die weder nach frommen Maßstäben zurechtgerückt noch auch mit moralischer Entrüstung beklagt wird. So wird der Hörende dort behaftet, wo er wirklich ist, und im höchsten Maße an sein V e r s t e h e n appelliert".⁵⁵

And it is into this form of the reality familiar to every man, that Jesus puts the not at all so familiar reality of the presence of the Kingdom of God. Thus it holds true for his teaching what is true for his whole life, which was an event "i n dieser Zeit und Welt und doch zugleich ein Geschehen, das dieser Zeit und Welt Ende und Grenze setzt".⁵⁶ If then Jesus' message was not "understood", that is accepted and lived out, it was because it was in fact understood all too well and rejected, as in the case of the rich young man who went away.

When we come to Paul, we find, as Bornkamm ably demonstrates, that Paul proclaims, in his kerygma, the message of God's act in Jesus Christ in a way parallel to Jesus' own proclamation of the Kingdom of God.⁵⁷ We

55. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 63.

56. Ibid., p. 168.

57. G. Bornkamm, "Glaube und Vernunft bei Paulus", Gesammelte Aufsätze II, pp. 119-137. This essay has also appeared in condensed form and without notes in New Testament Studies, Vol. 4 (1957-58), pp. 93-100.

have already seen that the early Christian kerygma understood and proclaimed the "Heute und Jetzt, das unveräußerlich zu Jesu Botschaft vom Gottesreich gehört und in ihm Ereignis wurde".⁵⁸ We have also seen that the proclamation itself had to change in order to express this and the fact that the "Einmal" had become the "Ein-für-alle-Mal".⁵⁹ But one of the things that remained constant, especially in Paul who otherwise retains so little from the historical Jesus, was the way in which the message was proclaimed. Just as Jesus did not choose the vivid and dazzling language and imagery of the apocalyptic literature to convey his eschatological message, but chose the immediately understandable vehicle of the parable, so too did Paul employ a language and imagery aimed at the understanding of his readers or hearers. Even "das Wunderbare, Unbegreifliche der Heilsbotschaft, die Paulus verkündigt, soll in seiner Unbegreiflichkeit verstanden werden".⁶⁰

The role of reason has widely been observed to play a part in Paul's theology primarily with regard to the

58. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus, p. 67.

59. Ibid., p. 70.

60. G. Bornkamm, Ges. Aufsätze II, p. 130.

unredeemed man. But Bornkamm brings out clearly the positive role reason plays in Paul's proclamation of the "Hoeil s b o t s c h a f t selbst und bei der Entfaltung des c h r i s t l i c h e n Daseins... (es) ist ganz deutlich, daß Paulus der Vernunft und der Vernünftigkeit des Menschen eine überaus wichtige Rolle zuweist für das Selbstverständnis auch des Christen und für alle Bereiche des Lebens".⁶¹

It is clear that Paul does not derive his gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ from that which man already knows by the power of reason. Here there is nothing other than the word of the herald who proclaims what God in his grace has done, something which for man's normal understanding remains a miracle. But the way Paul proclaims his message is highly characteristic. Paul chooses not the "Offenbarungsrede" of so many "prophets" and "miracle-workers" of his time, but the diatribe as his means of communication. It is a style which places a premium on understanding. Further it is a style which is aimed directly at the hearer as he is and treats him as a partner in a dialogue. In the service of the goal of understanding Paul uses in his proclamation ever new

61. G. Bornkamm, Ges. Aufsätze II, p. 128.

thought forms, analogies and images, which, even if they do not always succeed, demonstrate his aim. And just as for Jesus, the sole presupposition the hearer had to have in order to understand Jesus' message was his own life-situation, so with Paul. The "all things to all men" of ICor. 9,22 shows just how radically he adapts himself to the situation of his hearers and "daß er sie in jedem Fall dort aufsucht, wo sie wirklich sind, damit so das Evangelium an ihnen seine befreiende Wirkung tun kann".⁶²

This is brought out in the passage ICor. 7,17-24. The concept κλησῖς used here characterises the concrete life situation in which God's call comes.

Der Lebensstand, in dem sich Sklaven und Herrn befinden wird damit eigentümlich relativiert - der Sklave wird zum Freigelassenen Christi, der Herr zum Sklaven Christi -, aber damit zugleich doch auch höchst bedeutungsvoll: eben dort, wo einer sich konkret befindet, soll sich durch Christus die Wendung an ihm vollziehen. Es bedarf also nicht einer vorgängigen Änderung der "Verhältnisse"...(es) ist deutlich, daß die reale, natürliche Lebenssituation, in der die Hörer der Botschaft sind, für Paulus

62. G. Bornkamm, Ges. Aufsätze II, p. 128.

alles Gewicht hat. Sie soll von dem Glaubenden
in Christus neu verstanden werden.⁶³

So just as Jesus proclaimed the miraculous presence of God in a way which would be understood by his hearers in their concrete life-situation, so too did Paul proclaim his message of God's act of salvation in Jesus Christ. This, therefore, not only establishes a high degree of continuity between the two, it demonstrates that an appeal to man's reason or understanding, far from being something alien to the kerygma's and Jesus' call to radical obedience, as Bultmann has claimed, is an integral part of that call. "Die Paradoxie des göttlichen Handelns soll also verstanden werden!"⁶⁴

If there is a single word of appreciation one could offer to Bornkamm's Jesus von Nazareth and to his essays on the question of the historical Jesus, it is this, that his chosen vehicle of communication - his scholarship - has been put in the service of his subject in such a way as to have become unobtrusive. The reader of his book on Jesus, like Jesus' listeners and Paul's readers, need bring only himself in order to "understand". The hope he

63. G. Bornkamm, Ges. Aufsätze II, p. 132.

64. Ibid., p. 121.

expresses in the "Vorwort" is certainly justified, "daß es an seinem Teil auch dem kirchlicher Überlieferung entfremdeten Leser zu einer ursprünglichen Begegnung mit Jesu Gestalt und Botschaft verhelfen möchte".⁶⁵

Indeed, Bornkamm's book is both critically and sensitively written, so that it is eminently readable by the layman as well as the student of theology, and as such has performed a great service in the promotion of the new quest. In him "Sachlichkeit" means not indifference but responsibility and service to the "Sache".

However, as has been indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, Bornkamm's book Jesus von Nazareth has received widespread and not entirely favourable critical attention from American and British New Testament scholars. Among the ones who have critically reviewed his book are: Hugh Anderson, who discusses Bornkamm in his Jesus and Christian Origins, New York, 1964, pp. 149-184; Otto Piper, who reviews Bornkamm's book in Interpretation, Vol. XV, pp. 473-484; and J.M. Robinson who reviews the German edition in the J.B.L., Vol. LXXVI, pp. 310-313. Anderson, in his chapter devoted

65. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 6.

to "Features of the 'New Quest'", repeatedly makes the assumption that Bornkamm is "walking in the shadow of existentialist philosophy" in his work as an historian and that it is the existentialist approach which has found its embodiment in Jesus von Nazareth.⁶⁶ He states further,

Bornkamm's Jesus of Nazareth seems to hover between two worlds. Now as historical critic, he appears to be interested in the historical facts about Jesus - his third chapter is an attempt to sum up what can be known historically regarding Jesus, which is not much, to be sure. So at the end of his historical tether, the historian turns theologian. The standpoint adopted by him then is so "kerygmatic", so "existentialist", so overwhelmingly concerned with existentialist interpretation of the message of Jesus, that we begin to wonder how far he has pushed beyond Bultmann and to what extent the title of his book is not a misnomer.⁶⁷

Otto Piper on the other hand is less sure about Bornkamm's indebtedness to existentialist philosophy and would like to place him in the Kantian tradition. Piper says,

66. Hugh Anderson, op. cit., p. 180.

67. Ibid., p. 182.

...Bornkamm looks in good Kantian fashion for an autonomous religion: certain formal ideas which are constitutive of all true religion. Historical research will then help to illumine that truth. (This is presumed by Piper to be taken from p. 9 of the English Edition.) This new position, however, does not differ in principle from Bultmann's. Though faith is not necessarily to be understood in existentialist terms, nonetheless the theologian has already arrived at the knowledge of the religious truth before he opened his New Testament, and consequently everything that is not fit to illustrate this truth is a priori doomed to be rejected.⁶⁸

Finally we have J.M. Robinson's criticism of Bornkamm for not having made it sufficiently clear why there should be a revival of interest in the historical Jesus to-day. Robinson himself finds the renewal of the quest necessary because

...modern (existentialist) historiography (has) made the historical Jesus accessible apart from the kerygma, as he had not been since the first disciples, so that one must either listen in his message for an encounter with the reality of the kerygma (although not necessarily with its conceptual formulations), or by neglecting his

68. Otto Piper, *op. cit.*, pp. 473-74.

message tacitly reject the kerygma's insistence that the Lord is Jesus.⁶⁹

Robinson criticises Bornkamm, in effect, for lacking that by which Anderson found him to be dominated.

These three comments on Bornkamm's work, with their rather drastic differences, should serve as a warning. Anderson's assertion that Bornkamm is decisively dependent upon existentialist philosophy is not borne out by Bornkamm's own statement of his approach. It is true that J.M. Robinson, Herbert Braun, and others do see existentialist historiography as offering a major new key to the understanding of the New Testament, but this cannot be asserted in the same way about Bornkamm. It is clear that Bornkamm stands in a tradition which reaches especially back to Hermann and Martin Kähler, but to label his approach to the New Testament existentialist is misleading. As for Piper's criticism, it is based primarily upon this sentence in Bornkamm's Preface: "But no one should despise the help of historical research to illumine the truth with which each of us should be concerned."⁷⁰ To press this statement to yield the result that Bornkamm

69. J.M. Robinson, op. cit., p. 312.

70. G. Bornkamm, JvN, E.T., p. 9.

is looking in good Kantian fashion for "certain formal ideas which are constitutive of all religion" is simply unwarranted. Moreover, Bornkamm states very clearly elsewhere that, in his view, the New Testament and Kant are, for example, in their concept of reward, and in the relationship between man in his ethical behaviour and God, in sharp opposition.⁷¹ J.M. Robinson's criticism, however, comes much closer to doing justice to Bornkamm's actual position. Bornkamm himself attributes his interest in the historical Jesus to what he regards as the character of the New Testament documents themselves, and more specifically to the character of the gospels. Indeed, the first chapter of Jesus von Nazareth deals with "Glaube und Geschichte in den Evangelien". On the first page of this chapter he writes, "Niemand ist mehr in der Lage, ein Leben Jesu zu schreiben... Dieses Urteil gründet sich auf die besondere Art und den Charakter der Quellen, denen wir fast ausschließlich unser geschichtliches Wissen über

71. G. Bornkamm, Studien zu Antike und Urchristentum, Gesammelte Aufsätze, Band II, München, 1959, pp. 69 ff.

Jesus verdanken."⁷² In other words, he considers the failure of the original quest to be simply the result of the recognition by New Testament scholarship of the nature of the gospels themselves; on the other hand, it is the gospels again which do not allow us simply to give up the historical Jesus and concentrate on the Christ of the kerygma. Bornkamm is not then doing homage to existentialism, but simply trying to be true to the New Testament witness, more especially to the gospel witness, when and in the way he focuses his interest on the historical Jesus.

72. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 11.

CHAPTER V

HANS CONZELMANN

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Hans Conzelmann's article in the third volume of Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart on "Jesus Christus" is cited by Günther Bornkamm, along with his own Jesus von Nazareth, as showing that the question of the historical Jesus, in spite of the many difficulties, is by no means simply to be dismissed as hopeless. Bornkamm goes on to say: "Zugleich aber wartet noch immer die theologische Frage nach der Bedeutung der irdischen Geschichte Jesu und seiner Verkündigung für den Glauben auf eine zureichende Antwort."¹ It is just these two questions which have occupied a central place in Conzelmann's many articles touching on the question of the historical Jesus. His work on the historical side is marked by a conscious and determined effort to remain within the framework of historical-critical investigation. In his theological judgement of the significance of the historical figure of Jesus and his message for faith, he reveals his indebtedness to Bultmann,

1. G. Bornkamm, Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, p. 282.

but at the same time, reflects the openness to seek new solutions to old problems which we have found to be characteristic of both Ernst Käsemann and Günther Bornkamm. What was true for Bornkamm, that he can not be adequately characterised by being made into the example of an "-ism" - be it existentialism or whatever - is just as true of Hans Conzelmann. Of all the scholars of the "Bultmann-school", it is he who seems to be most aware of the work of English and American New Testament scholarship, something which is just one of the many indications of his feeling: "Die Zeit der beherrschenden 'Ismen'...ist vorbei."²

J.M. Robinson introduces his brief section on Conzelmann by stating that he has pulled together the different lines of development that one sees in the work of Bornkamm, Käsemann, and others, into a unified view of the person and message of Jesus.³ To some extent this is certainly true. Conzelmann accepts many of the conclusions of Bornkamm and Käsemann, as for instance Bornkamm's emphasis on the "Unmittelbarkeit" of Jesus'

2. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI (1959), Beiheft 1, p. 2.

3. J.M. Robinson, Kerygma und historischer Jesus, Zürich, 1960, p 23.

word and deed. And yet he has retained, in spite of this, a rather cautious attitude towards the new quest. This is partly because he feels there is the danger of a return to the errors of the historicism of the nineteenth century. It is also to a lesser extent because his main interest has been centred in what has come to be known as "Redaktionsgeschichte". The somewhat ambiguous nature of his work is reflected in Bultmann's monograph which critically reviews the new quest. Bultmann mentions Conzelmann's work as representing one of the major contributions in the renewed concern to establish the continuity between the historical Jesus and the Christ of the kerygma, and yet, of the thirteen times he cites Conzelmann's articles, in not one single instance is it in criticism. Rather, the majority of the citations are in support of his criticism of the others such as Bornkamm and Käsemann. This is not to say that Conzelmann does not, as we shall see, depart from the views held by Bultmann, but simply to point out a characteristic in Conzelmann's work which might be overlooked if J.M. Robinson's lead were to be followed without reservation.

Actually, Conzelmann's position bears more than a superficial resemblance to that of Bultmann. It is from

Bultmann that he has his basic understanding of the nature of the synoptic tradition and his judgement concerning the function and place of the messianic titles apart from the title "Son of Man". He also derives his central concept of "indirect Christology" from Bultmann as well as his judgement concerning the value and place of the historical reconstruction of the words and deeds of the earthly Jesus. Just as Bultmann maintained that his book on Jesus was not kerygma, so Conzelmann judges every such attempt. He says, "Jedes Ergebnis der Rekonstruktion ist theologisch beurteilt Gesetz, nicht Evangelium, womit nicht nur deren Grenze, sondern auch deren Recht festgestellt ist."⁴ He too, like Bultmann, maintains that the relationship of faith to the historical Jesus is a "jeweilig-punktuellem...der einzige historische Fixpunkt ist in der Tat das nackte Daß des Dagewesenseins Jesu...nur dann kann gezeigt werden, wie ein historisches Ereignis...v e r k ü n d i g t werden kann."⁵ One could perhaps draw the conclusion from this statement, that Conzelmann would not be interested in

4. Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus", Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart III³, Col. 649.

5. Ibid., Col. 651.

the historical Jesus, beyond the bare observation that the risen Christ was for the kerygma Jesus of Nazareth, crucified and risen. That this is not the case is discernible from any of his articles, especially from his article "Jesus Christus" in the RGG. What these statements reveal in fact is the concern, parallel to Bultmann's own, that the attempt should not be made to prove the claim of faith that Jesus is the Christ by historical research, that "...man doch wieder aus dem psychologischen Selbstbewusstsein Jesu sein heutiger Anspruch direkt abgeleitet würde."⁶

According to Conzelmann, one can avoid the danger of seeking historical proof for the faith only by thinking through theologically how Jesus Christ is made present to-day. This happens, he says, only in and through the "Verkündigung", and in this the question is not simply

...Wie gelange ich zum historischen Jesus? Auf diese Frage ist einfach durch den Hinweis auf die wissenschaftliche Forschung zu antworten. Angesichts der Verkündigung ist aber die Frage so zu formulieren: Wie gelangt Gott - in Christus

6. Ibid.

= zu mir? Dabei ist der Historie das Ihre nicht - im vermeintlichen Interesse des Glaubens - zu bestreiten... Die Historie hat ihre Relevanz darin, daß sie getan wird und dadurch die Geschichtlichkeit der Person Jesu nicht nur als allgemeine These feststellt, sondern in concreto verifiziert. Dadurch wird die geschichtliche D i s t a n z festgehalten und verhindert, daß man ^{sich} den e i n s t i g e n Jesus mir nichts dir nichts 'aneignet' d.h. für die eigenen Zwecke ausbeutet.⁷

Several points should be noted in this statement, The first half echoes the judgement that Martin Kähler expressed, that it is the preached Christ who is the centre of the faith for the present. To put Conzelmann's position into perspective further, one could best place it over against the hope expressed by Bornkamm in the Preface to his book, where he says: "Das Buch (Jesus von Nazareth) hätte nicht ohne die bestimmte Hoffnung geschrieben werden können, daß es an seinem Teil auch dem kirchlicher Überlieferung entfremdeten Leser zu einer neuen ursprünglichen Begegnung mit Jesu Gestalt und Botschaft verhelfen möchte."⁸ This brings out the

7. Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus von Nazareth und der Glaube an den Auferstandenen", in Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, Berlin, 1964, pp. 188-189.

8. G. Bornkamm, Jesus von Nazareth, p. 6.

fact that Conzelmann has a more limited expectation for the results of his own work on the historical Jesus. And yet, in spite of this, his own contribution to the whole problem of the historical Jesus and the continuity between him and the Christ of the kerygma has been considerable. In fact, he makes two points in the second half of the statement which are parallel to two of Bornkamm's own - that faith's interest in the historical Jesus is firstly an expression of the extra nos of salvation and secondly an expression of the need to prevent faith from becoming docetic.

He carefully distinguishes his own approach to the New Testament from that of some others who he feels have wrongly mixed up theological assertions and assertions about the nature of the sources.

Selbst wenn das Letztere [i.e. that the sources do not furnish the material for a biography] richtig wäre, so muß die Art und Weise zurückgewiesen werden, in welcher hier auf dem Acker der historischen Skepsis eine systematische Christrose zu züchten versucht wird. Daß die Quellen lückenhaft sind, ist durchaus nicht eo ipso ein Argument für eine systematische These; dieser Quellenbefund könnte ja auch zum Zweifel führen, ob das Christentum überhaupt noch eine tragfähige geschichtliche Grundlage besitze.⁹

9. Hans Conzelmann, "Zur Methode der Leben-Jesu-Forschung", ZThK LVI (1959), Beiheft 1, p. 4.

Concerning the sources, it is still argued that the gospels were not written as historical reports and therefore (!) can not be used as such. Again, from a valid insight of form-criticism, an impossible conclusion is drawn. For one thing, this overlooks the fact that form-criticism itself arose out of the search for the historical Jesus and for the source-value of the gospels. Moreover, what the gospels i n t e n d to be does not necessarily determine how one can use them to-day. Whether they can be used as historical sources is something which must be tested on the sources themselves - whether it was their intention to be used as such or not.

Die Unklarheit hinsichtlich der Grundlagen rächt sich in der Form einer latenten Historisierung der 'kerygmatischen' Theologie: Das dogmatische Jesusbild verwandelt sich unter der Hand doch wieder in ein historisches, nämlich pseudohistorisches [as in Karl Barth's KD IV,2] und geht dann wieder in die Gemeindevorstellung ein. Der Preis, den man für diesen Tausch zahlt: daß nun echte Historie von der Frömmigkeit wieder als Bedrohung empfunden wird. Es entsteht die Verkrampfung, von der man heute die kirchliche Öffentlichkeit ergriffen sieht.¹⁰

10. Ibid. The "Verkrampfung" to which he refers is the public reaction to an article in Spiegel, Dec. 1958.

A particularly instructive example of these general statements is found in his assessment of the geographical data found in the gospels, especially, in this case, in the gospel of Mark. Conzelmann shares, with other representatives of form-criticism, the opinion that the geographical and chronological framework of the gospel of Mark is secondary literary editorial work. This has been a prevalent view ever since K.L. Schmidt. The result of this is that it is no longer possible "...die Reihenfolge der Ereignisse im Leben Jesu festzustellen, eine Biographie Jesu zu schreiben und ein Bild seiner Gestalt zu entwerfen."¹¹ But this is not the last word. The geographical framework, specifically, is indeed an editorial construction according to the scheme - action in Galilee and passion in Jerusalem, with the trip in Chapter Ten as transition. But "Selbstverständlich stehen dahinter geschichtliche Nachrichten; Markus hat das Schema anhand von Überlieferungstoff entworfen, der in Galiläa spielte (Marxsen)."¹² What one does learn from Mark is the knowledge of the places like Capernaum where Jesus was active but not the sequence in which he visited

11. Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus", RGG³ III, Col. 620.

12. Ibid., Col. 627.

but to his own people. He developed no programme of world mission, but called Israel to repentance. As for the non-Jews, he expected them to be miraculously gathered together through the direct intervention of God himself. (J. Jeremias, cf. Mt. 8,11/Luke 13,28 ff.). Jesus did not have a concept of theoretical universalism; the election of Israel was simply presupposed. But:

Sachlich freilich drängt die Radikalität seines Bußrufes auch zum b e w u ß t e n Universalismus. In dieser Richtung wird sie nach Ostern wirksam. Hier liegt ein bedeutsames Moment der Kontinuität zwischen Jesus selbst und der späteren Gemeinde. Zunächst aber bei Jesus selbst, wirkt sich die Universalität indirekt aus: seine Erwählung ersetzt nicht die Buße. Diese ist die einzige Bedingung des Heils.¹⁴

This reaffirmation of the importance or significance of the geographical data is a particularly instructive example of Conzelmann's approach. For the form-critical school in general, the geographical framework has been simply written off, to a great extent, as meaningless for the attempt to reconstruct a picture of the person of Jesus. But Conzelmann's unwillingness to take any con-

14. Ibid., Cols. 627-28.

clusion simply for granted has led him to take a new look at the material itself and its possible significance in the life of the earthly Jesus. What is more, the discovery of its significance for the earthly Jesus leads him on to the uncovering of an important "...Moment der Kontinuität zwischen Jesus und der späteren Gemeinde."¹⁵

In his exposition in general Conzelmann looks primarily to the point where he feels there can be no doubt about the authenticity of the material - the parables. The central part of these, in his opinion, stands up best under even the most radical criticism. His criterion is taken over from Käsemann, that that is to be regarded as undoubtedly authentic which can be fitted neither into the thinking of Judaism nor into the views of the early Christian community. This plus considerations of form show that the parables are clearly distinguishable in style and thought from Jewish parallels and that they reflect "...ein scharf profiliertes Selbstbewußtsein, in welchem Lehren und Handeln als unlösbare Einheit aufgefaßt sind."¹⁶ (This emphasis on the self-consciousness of Jesus is characteristic for Conzelmann, and is something to which we shall return.)

15. Cf. footnote 14.

16. H. Conzelmann, RGG³ III, Col. 623.

The parables offer us a criterion for the "Logien" as well,

...zumal ^{sich} in ihnen eine sehr klar umrissene Konzeption zeigt, und zwar ein gedanklicher Entwurf, der unwiederholbar ist, der mit dem Da-Sein der Person Jesu - vor Ostern! - so fest verknüpft ist, daß er gar nicht unverändert in die Situation nach Ostern übertragen werden kann. Das heißt: Es kann sich nicht um eine Bildung der glaubenden Gemeinde handeln. Damit ist eine genügend tragfähige Basis gewonnen.¹⁷

In this material, Conzelmann finds, among other things, a view of the nearness of the Kingdom of God and the relationship of Jesus' own activity to its coming which is different in content from that of the early church. This is not to maintain that eschatology as such is the thing of primary importance in Jesus' message and ministry; it is simply methodologically expedient to use it as a criterion for the rest of Jesus' message. The background to Conzelmann's presentation is to be found in an essay by Philipp Vielhauer and in Erich Grässner's work on the problem of the delay of the eschaton.¹⁸ With

17. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 9.

18. Philipp Vielhauer, "Gottesreich und Menschensohn in Verkündigung Jesu", Festschrift für Günther Dehn, 1957, pp. 51 ff. Erich Grässner, Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte, Berlin, 1957.

Vielhauer and Käsemann and versus Bultmann and Bornkamm, Conzelmann excludes the possibility that Jesus expected the coming of a "Son of Man", for the relationship of Jesus to the Kingdom of God is so close that there is no room for any further event between Jesus and the Kingdom; after Jesus comes nothing but God himself.¹⁹

The decisively new thing in Jesus' eschatology is not a new concept of the eschaton as such nor is it in the radical reduction of the extent of time between the moment and the coming of the Kingdom. Rather the whole question of the extent of a period of time until the coming of the Kingdom is superseded as a question. This is not to say that the question is simply ignored (the conclusion Bultmann draws from Conzelmann's presentation), but it is relegated to a position of minor importance by the primary factor of the presence of him who proclaims the nearness of the Kingdom. The present proclamation

19. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 9. For the detailed foundation of this assertion, see Conzelmann's article, "Gegenwart und Zukunft in der synoptischen Tradition", ZThK LIV, pp. 277-283. The main point at issue here is, according to him (p. 281), "...ob Jesu Reichgotteserwartung zutreffend interpretiert ist, wenn sie überhaupt mit der Erwartung eines persönlichen eschatologischen Vollenders kombiniert erscheint, ob die Struktur seines Denkens die Synthese von Reich Gottes und Menschensohn verträgt. Der Textbefund scheint mir zur Verneinung dieser Frage zu führen."

belongs to the very structure of this eschatology. Once this is seen, then the question of Jesus' self-consciousness moves into the foreground for the whole reconstruction of his teaching, for his eschatology and every other aspect of his teaching cannot then be interpreted apart from this self-consciousness. His awareness of being the *A n n o u n c e r*, however, does not mean that he thought he *r e p r e s e n t e d* the Kingdom in his person. He does not teach an *αυτοβασιλεία*, but the presence of the *s i g n s* which guarantee the *n e a r n e s s* of the Kingdom.

Durch diese Zeichen ist die Gegenwart als Heilszeit qualifiziert; aber im Sinne der Seligpreisungen: daß die Armen nicht nur auf die schönere Zukunft verwiesen werden, sondern - durch das zugesprochene Wort - jetzt in Selige verwandelt werden. Das ist noch nicht das Dasein des Gottesreiches selbst. Vielmehr ist gerade seine Künftigkeit vorausgesetzt. 'Selig sind...' ist ja unter der Voraussetzung gesagt, daß es noch Arme, Hungernde gibt, daß sie nicht einfach sichtbar selig sind, sondern ihre Seligkeit im Zuspruch empfangen.²⁰

The same eschatological self-understanding can be seen

20. Hans Conzelmann, *ZThK* LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 10.

in the miracles. These also do not mean the full presence of the Kingdom, but its proleptical effect, and their purpose is to bring about an "engagement" with regard to the near future. Demons still have to be driven out, but the time has come when they can be driven out. The way in which the future Kingdom and the present proclamation are brought together means a rejection of any possibility of detached observing. One can only prepare oneself in the present moment for that which is to come or one is excluded from the Kingdom. "Auch wenn Jesus auffordert, die Zeichen der Zeit zu erkennen, ist das keine Aufforderung zur παρατηρησις, sondern das Gegenteil: Die Zeichen, auf die man verwiesen wird, sind ja keine anderen als die hier durch Jesus bewirkten."²¹

The whole purpose then of Jesus' eschatological message is the qualification of human existence. The future is not understood formally in the sense of time which simply has not yet come; no, it is time of salvation or of lostness. The good news of the nearness of God and the call to repentance form a unity aimed at the transformation of the lives of the hearers. "Angesichts dieser Konzentration auf den Existenzsinn schwindet das

21. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 10.

Interesse an einer Ausmalung des jenseitigen Daseins wie der Vorgänge, welche die Weltverwandlung herbeiführen. Man erkennt den Umfang der Kritischen Reduktion wenn man Jesu Aussagen mit den Gemälden der jüdischen und der späteren christlichen Apokalyptik vergleicht."²²

In all this it becomes obvious that the eschatological sayings of Jesus and his own self-consciousness cannot be separated. The same thing is true of the other areas of his teaching; indeed, their unity in his thought becomes visible only in the light of his self-consciousness. Conzelmann notes that the striking thing about Jesus' teaching is the lack of all but a few "horizontal" connections between the different areas in it - between the doctrine of God, ethics, and eschatology. This unconnectedness of the three areas seems to Conzelmann to be one of the most important and too-little-appreciated problems in the assessment of the earthly Jesus. On the one hand, the reign of God is spoken of as if the world were to go on indefinitely, on the other hand, there is the proclamation of the impending end of the world. A similar phenomenon is found in the relationship between

22. Hans Conzelmann, RGG II³, Col. 667.

eschatology and ethics. Certainly the synoptic writers brought the proclamation of the Kingdom and the ethical demand together in the formula - the Kingdom of God is near; repent ye (therefore)! (Mark 1,5; compare Matt. 4,17). But it cannot be overlooked that the individual demands of Jesus are not based upon the nearness of the Kingdom, but, at the most, upon the judgement of God as such, or upon the threat of rejection. In other words, they are based simply upon the will and power of God, the assumption being that God at all times wills the same thing. Jesus can also base his demand upon the insight which is open to every person, into God's providential rule, into the order of the world, in other words, upon the appeal to reason: "If you love those who love you, what reward will you have?" (Matt. 5,46)."²³

Conzelmann finds, therefore, that it is questionable whether one can accurately characterise Jesus' ethic as eschatological as Bultmann does. The tenor of Jesus' ethics is just that God always wills the same thing and that man is expected to be able to understand God's will at all times. From the perspective of the ethical demand,

23. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 11.

the world appears to be boundless.

Es gilt in der Ethik Entsprechendes wie in der Eschatologie. Das Neue besteht nicht nur darin, daß die Forderung radikalisiert wird - natürlich wird sie das; aber das eigentlich Spezifische ist, daß das jetzige Ausgelegtwerden der Forderung durch Jesus in die Forderung hineingekommen ist; und zwar herrscht eine eigentümliche Dialektik. Jesus legt Gottes Gebot ja so aus, daß er feststellt, dieses Gebot sei in sich selbst klar und bedürfe gar keiner Auslegung; er treibt also radikale Nicht-Auslegung; er s a g t die Selbstausslegung des Gebotes.²⁴

What one in fact comes upon in Jesus' concept of the rule of God, of the will of God, and of the coming of God - i.e. his cosmology, ethics, and eschatology - is the phenomenon of an *i n d i r e c t C h r i s t o l o g y*. What this means is that the hearer is confronted directly by God through Jesus. Or Conzelmann feels that one could formulate it, that Jesus understands himself as the realisation of this confrontation. There is then an underlying unity in the apparently unconnected areas of Jesus' teaching. "Die Einheit der Sachgebiete ist in der

24. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 12.

Person Jesu gegeben, der hier und dort der Erschließende ist."²⁵

By placing the person of Jesus in the centre of his presentation, Conzelmann has made a much more radical shift from Bultmann than Bultmann himself seems to have realised. The eschatology of Jesus is, like the other main areas of his teaching, interpreted Christologically, albeit by an indirect Christology. But equally significant is the fact that eschatology is displaced from the position of primary importance it has widely maintained ever since Weiß and Schweitzer. This is indicated by the order in which Conzelmann presents Jesus' teaching in his article "Jesus Christus" in the RGG, something to which Robinson has drawn attention in the German edition of his book.²⁶ Bultmann had the order, for example, in his Theologie des Neuen Testaments: (1) "Die eschatologische Verkündigung"; (2) "Die Auslegung der Forderung Gottes"; (3) "Der Gottesgedanke Jesu". This order is completely reversed by Conzelmann. Moreover, in each of these areas, the primary thing is no longer, as it was for Bultmann, the

25. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 12. Cf. also RGG III³, Col. 632.

26. J.M. Robinson, Kerygma und historischer Jesus, Zürich, 1960, p. 26.

rather formal and austere "demand for decision" but the offer of the gift of salvation. As he says:

Das primäre Element ist die Absolutheit der Heilszusage. Sie kommt zur Geltung in der Darstellung Gottes als des Vaters, dh in der Herstellung der Unmittelbarkeit zu ihm durch die Verkündigung der Vergebung. Gerade aus dieser folgt das radikale Verständnis der F o r d e r u n g Gottes, das - in seiner Unbedingtheit - die Erfüllung mit sich führt, und das Verständnis der jetzigen Zeit als der letzten Stunde, das den Zugang zum Gottesreich freigibt - Das Heil ist in seiner Bedingungslosigkeit die Krisis aller securitas. Die Botschaft löst den einzelnen aus dem sichernden Kollektiv (Israel), und sie öffnet ihn zum Mitmenschen hin durch die Ermöglichung der Liebe... Die Bindung des Heils an die P e r s o n J e s u liegt einfach darin, daß er dieses Heil als jetzige, letzte Möglichkeit darbietet, da er jetzt die Armen tröstet, die Sünder zu sich ruft. Indirekte Christologie und Theo-logie sind zur Deckung gebracht.²⁷

This difference between Bultmann and Conzelmann can be illustrated best by placing their respective statements in parallel columns for comparison as follows:

<u>Bultmann</u>	:	<u>Conzelmann</u>
1. Eschatology: Das Neue	:	3. Eschatology: "Daß es
und Eigene...ist die Sicher-	:	(das Reich) n a h e sei,
	:	

27. Hans Conzelmann, RGG III³, Cols. 633-634.

heit mit der er sagt:
'Jetzt ist die Zeit gekommen! Die Gottesherrschaft bricht herein! Das Ende ist da! Der beherrschende Begriff der Verkündigung Jesu ist der Begriff der Gottesherrschaft. Ihr unmittelbar bevorstehendes Hereinbrechen, das sich schon kund tut, verkündigt er." Theologie des N.T., pp. 4-5, and p. 2.

2. Ethics: "Es läßt sich ...mit einem Worte sagen, daß Jesu Ethik genau wie die jüdische, eine Ethik des Gehorsams ist, und daß der einzige, freilich fundamentale Unterschied der ist, daß er den Gedanken radikal

: ist an sich keine neue
: Lehre: das sagte schon
: der Täufer...die Modifikation gegenüber dem Täufer
: liegt darin, daß nicht der
: Gerichts-, sondern der Heils-
: aspekt den Ausgangspunkt
: bildet... Die Art und Weise,
: wie Jesus seine Person in
: das Geschehen einbezieht ist
: dieselbe wie in der Gottes-
: lehre und Ethik. Auch in
: der Eschatologie stoßen wir
: auf die 'indirekte Christologie'" RCG III³, Col. 641.

: 2. Ethics: "Durchweg ist
: der Gottesgedanke vorausgesetzt... Und der Gottesgedanke ist ja nicht nur die (formale) Annahme, daß Gott ist und fordert, sondern ist die konkrete Annahme des Heils
: Die Ethik Jesu zeigt also, wie

gedacht hat... Gott verlangt radikalen Gehorsam, er beansprucht den Menschen ganz." Jesus, p. 64; Theol. des N.T., p. 12.

: Gottes begegnende Güte in
: heutige Verwirklichung umzu-
: setzen ist. Sie steht unter
: dem Zeichen des Evangeliums,
: das in Jesu Predigt zu uns
: gelangt. Seine Person ist in
: die Auslegung des Gebotes
: einbezogen... Wenn ich Gott
: verstehe - und das kann ich -,
: dann verstehe ich auch die
: A b s o l u t h e i t seines
: Gebotes: daß er nicht nur
: etwas von mir will, sondern
: m i c h will." RGG III (3),
: Col. 638.

3. Concept of God: "Für Jesus ist Gott wieder ein Gott der Nähe geworden. Er ist die gegenwärtige Macht, als Herr und Vater jeden umfangend, begrenzend und fordernd... gerade Jesu

: 1. Concept of God: "Jesus...
: bringt (Gottes) Herrsein in
: dessen Absolutheit zur Geltung
: und diese Absolutheit ist das
: Heil...das Wunder ist eine
: Weise Gottes sich verständ-
: lich zu machen, und das ge-
: schieht hier und munc. Damit

Bußruf öffnet den Zugang
(zum Gottesreich)."

Theol. des N.T., pp. 23,
24.

: ist das Da-Sein Jesu in die
: Verkündigung von Gott einbe-
: zogen...das Gottesverhältnis
: (ist) als einseitig von Gott
: hergestellt (und durch Jesus
: vermittelt) verstanden...Jesus
: versteht seine Predigt als
: Einladung in Gottes eigenen
: Namen." RGG III³, Cols. 635-
: 636.

From this comparison one can see both the rearrange-
ment of the sequence of topics in the presentation as well
as the sometimes subtle, sometimes strong contrast between
the assessments of the individual points by Bultmann and
by Conzelmann. The real significance of Conzelmann's
presentation becomes even more apparent when one sees it
in relation to the question of the link between the his-
torical Jesus and the proclamation of the early church.
As J.M. Robinson has pointed out, in the final analysis,
Bultmann's emphasis on eschatology as the centre of Jesus'
message and as the primary link between him and the early
church led to a "...letztlich gesetzlichen Verständnis
Jesu... So konnte das Verhältnis zwischen Jesus und dem

urgemeindlichen Kerygma nur in der Spannung zwischen Gesetz und Evangelium verstanden werden."²⁸ For Bultmann, the content of Jesus' teaching was nothing other than "echter alttestamentlich-jüdischer Gottesglaube, radikalisiert im Sinne der Verkündigung der großen Propheten."²⁹ For Bultmann, it was not w h a t Jesus said that was significant, but t h a t he said it in the last decisive hour. Further, "Jesu Entscheidungsruf impliziert eine Christologie, freilich weder als eine Spekulation über ein Himmelwesen noch als Konstruktion eines Messiasbewußtseins, sondern als Explication der Antwort auf die Entscheidungsfrage, des Gehorsams, der in ihm Gottes Offenbarung anerkennt."³⁰ For Conzelmann, every aspect of Jesus' preaching stands under the sign of the gospel, and the concept of indirect Christology, which he derives from Bultmann, is not just based on Jesus' demand for decision but rather primarily on the gift of salvation, which is mediated through Jesus. The outer limit of Judaism is reached, not in Jesus as for Bultmann, but in John the Baptist, as for Käsemann. A Christology^{is} not now implied

28. J.M. Robinson, Kerygma und historischer Jesus, p. 26.

29. R. Bultmann, Theologie des N.T., p. 35.

30. Ibid., p. 44.

just by Jesus' eschatological message, "indirect Christology" is seen as the centre of Jesus' whole mission and message.

When one considers what Conzelmann feels, more specifically, to be the elements of continuity between the earthly Jesus and the belief and proclamation of the early church, one is struck by the same seemingly paradoxical conclusion reached by Käsemann, that continuity could only be preserved in discontinuity. Theoretically, there was the possibility that Jesus' followers, after his death, could have simply preserved his teaching. If this had happened, a new version of late Jewish radical legalism would have been the result. But what actually happened was the other possibility -- "daß auf Grund der Ostererscheinungen die neue Weise seines Dabeiseins begriffen wurde, Damit war die indirekte Christologie in die direkte umzusetzen, und in dieser Umsetzung ist gegeben, daß die direkte Christologie jene indirekte als ihre Voraussetzung festzuhalten hat; das Kerygma selbst zwingt zur historischen Darstellung des Auftretens Jesu und seiner Predigt."³¹

According to Conzelmann, the problem of continuity

31. H. Conzelmann, ZThK LVI, Beiheft 1, p. 13.

between the eschatological message of Jesus and that of the early church is a particularly difficult one. A particular eschatological viewpoint cannot be passed on in the tradition in the same way as a particular Christology. That Jesus is Lord is something which can be taught and passed on; that the Kingdom of God is near is, on the other hand, something which can not be maintained over a longer period of time in the same way. The problem is not so much the way the future is pictured, but the use of a given picture to express one's relationship to that future. One can not repeat, over a period of fifty years, that the Kingdom is at hand, without the meaning of that phrase undergoing a change. This is amply demonstrated in II Peter, who can no longer proclaim the nearness of the Kingdom as "good news", but must defend it apologetically.³²

It will be remembered that Conzelmann found the new thing in Jesus' eschatology to lie in the overcoming of the question "When?". Jesus "...stellt sich zwar die Nähe zeitlich vor; aber der Sinn liegt in der Qualifizierung der menschlichen Situation angesichts des Kommens des Reiches."³³ The first Christians, however, could not

32. Hans Conzelmann, ZThK LIV, p. 278.

33. Hans Conzelmann, RGG II³, Col. 667.

simply take over Jesus' eschatology as such. They began to understand themselves as living in the time between two sets of "salvation-events", the ones already past and the ones yet to come.

Die Gemeinde...muß - nach Ostern - (Jesu) Tod und seine Auferstehung als Momente des Endgeschehens mit bedenken. Die Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen führen zur Umwandlung der indirekten Christologie in direkte Aussagen über Jesu Person und Werk, in einem damit zur Sammlung der Gemeinde. Damit ist auch diese, und zwar schon ihr Dasein als solches, eschatologischer Faktor, was sich etwa Mt. 16,17-19 einen frühen Ausdruck schafft. Die Erwartung wird jetzt wesentlich Erwartung der Parusie Jesu als des Menschensohnes... Die konkrete Interpretation des Heils- (bzw. Unheils-) sinnes des erwarteten 'Tages' ergibt sich nunmehr aus dem Verstehen von Jesu Person. Ist also die Situation eine völlig neue geworden, so ist doch die Kontinuität zwischen Gemeinde und historischer Person Jesu gewahrt; das ist dadurch ermöglicht, daß schon Jesus das künftige Heil mit seiner Person verknüpfte, daß sein Entscheidungsruf eine Christologie implizierte.³⁴

Conzelmann also establishes a line of continuity between Jesus and Paul, in spite of the obvious elements

34. Hans Conzelmann, RGG II³, Col. 668.

of discontinuity, in the relationship of the believer to God and in eschatology. To begin with the former, he says first of all that the concept of God is fundamentally the same in Jesus' and in Paul's teaching. The difference in their formulations is attributable to the fact that the theological problems to be solved by Paul were such as would not have arisen in the same form for the earthly Jesus, but which ultimately arose nevertheless out of his ministry, his death, and his resurrection.

Er war gestorben - geblieben war die Überlieferung von seinen Worten und Taten, von seinem Tod und seiner Auferstehung - in der Kirche ständig gegenwärtig gehalten durch die Predigt und die Feier des Abendmahles. Was hatten alle diese Dinge heute zu bedeuten - für die Kirche, für den Einzelnen, sein Verhältnis zu Gott, also sein Heil in Zeit und Ewigkeit? Eine Antwort auf diese Frage war unabdingbar notwendig, und sie war dann wahr, wenn sie den Menschen in dasselbe Gottesverhältnis leitete wie Jesus selbst, wenn sie die Botschaft als befreiende, heilsschaffende, als Evangelium verständlich machte. Das ist aber der Sinn der paulinischen Lehre von der Rechtfertigung allein aus Glauben.³⁵

35. Hans Conzelmann, "Das Urchristentum", Reformatio VI (1957), p. 571.

From this statement it is clear that Conzelmann finds a continuity between Jesus and Paul, not as between law and gospel, but as between the gospel in two different situations. The same thing is true of Paul's eschatology. He is, to be sure, convinced of the nearness of the Parousia, but a delay of the arrival of the Parousia is not something which could cause a major crisis taking his thought as a whole as a basis, because his hope rests not upon the arrival of the end, but upon the factors in the existence of the believer, upon the Spirit and the new life in Christ. The present is not determined by what is still lacking, but by what is already given. On the other hand, the retention of the futuristic element had the effect of checking the gnostic's de-historicising understanding of the world and of redemption.³⁶ The line of continuity is given in the retention of the present as the time of salvation; the indirect Christology which was at the centre of Jesus' eschatology and message as a whole has become the direct Christology which is the centre of Paul's.

In the light of what Conzelmann has to say in his

36. Hans Conzelmann, RGG II³, Col. 670.

presentation of Jesus and his message, and in the light of his contribution to the problem of the continuity between the earthly Jesus and the proclamation of the early church, one is led to ask the question of how this fits in with the statements of his to which we have referred in the opening pages of this chapter. On the one hand, he establishes that Jesus' whole message stands under the sign of the gospel, and on the other, he asserts that every attempt to reconstruct that message is, judged theologically, law not gospel. What seems to be a straight contradiction, however, is not when one sees that Conzelmann is simply more than usually aware of the difference between the procedure of historical research and the ways of faith. By the means of historical research, Conzelmann has established that Jesus' preaching stood under the sign of the gospel for his hearers during his lifetime. After his death and resurrection, his followers grasped the new mode of Jesus' presence with them, and their kerygmatic proclamation communicated the gospel to their hearers. But all this, which has been ascertained by historical procedure, is, judged theologically, for us to-day, law. To put it in another way, the indirect Christology of Jesus remained the presupposition for the direct Christology of

the early church and it remains so for to-day's. But to give the indirect Christology of Jesus the status of law is just another way of expressing theologically that Jesus is made present to us to-day as the Christ only through the proclamation of the Word. To say that Jesus is the Christ is to make a statement of faith which can be illuminated but not verified or proved by historical research. This echoes in terms of our situation to-day what Jesus is reported as saying in reply to Peter's confession ("You are the Christ") - "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16, 16-17). When one sees that this is basically what Conzelmann wants to say, it shows that the claim that has been made - that his "theology consistently veers away from the relevance of the historical Jesus"³⁷ - misses the point. Conzelmann sums up in this way:

Es kommt ja darauf an, ob unser geschichtliches Verhältnis zu Jesus im Sinn des Eindrucks seiner Person verbindlich gemacht werden soll

37. Carl F.H. Henry, "The Theological Crisis in Europe: Decline of the Bultmann Era?", Christianity Today VIII, No. 25 (Sept. 25, 1964), p. 12.

oder im Sinn der Kontinuität des Bezuges auf den auszulegenden Text ist (Ebeling). Dann kann man in der Tat legitim feststellen, daß Jesus selbst die Voraussetzung der Christologie ist, und diese wird dann ihrerseits zu einer 'den historischen Jesus nicht aus dem Auge verlassenden Lehre vom Worte Gottes' (Fuchs).³⁸

38. Hans Conzelmann, RGG III³, Col. 651.

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CHAPTER VI

ERNST FUCHS



When we turn to the last of the four New Testament scholars involved in the reconsideration of the problem of the historical Jesus and his relationship to the Christ of faith - Ernst Fuchs - we find that his writings fall into two basic phases, which, however, do overlap both chronologically and in terms of content. The first phase was reported upon briefly in J.M. Robinson's A New Quest of the Historical Jesus and has been sharply criticised by Rudolf Bultmann in his monograph.¹ The second phase involves the wider discussion of the problem of the interpretation of Scripture which has come to be known as "The New Hermeneutic".² A full discussion of this second phase would be well beyond the scope of this chapter, but we will return to those aspects of it which have a direct and fruitful bearing upon the subject of this paper after first considering Fuchs's original contribution to the discussion, Bultmann's criticism of it, and Fuchs's reply to that criticism.

1. Rudolf Bultmann, "Das Verhältnis der urchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus", esp. pp. 11-12, 18-19.

2. J.M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr. (editors), The New Hermeneutic, New York, 1964.

In his essay, "Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus", Fuchs begins not with Jesus himself but with the faith in Jesus as we find it expressed by the apostle Paul. The mark of a Christian was his belief in and confession of Jesus as Lord of Lords or as Lord over the cosmic powers. This belief is not in contrast to doubt, but the consequence of a new beginning; it is not the acceptance of the fact that God has raised Jesus from the dead and that he has become Lord, but the expression of a relationship in which Jesus has already for me become Lord, the consequence of which is obedience. But what happens in actual fact when one has learned to accept Jesus as Lord? This Fuchs answers on the basis of Romans 10,9 ff.: "Es heisst da, wenn du bekennst und herzlich glaubst, $\sigma\omega\epsilon\lambda\theta\eta\sigma\eta$, so sollst du errettet werden (Jussiv)! Diese Errettung meint die Errettung aus Gottes Gericht."³ This judgement of God is for Paul something personal, but at the same time refers to the Judaic-Apocalyptic concept of the Last Judgement, where it will be decided whether one inherits

3. Ernst Fuchs, Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus, Gesammelte Aufsätze II (hereafter abbreviated as Ges. Auf. II), Tübingen, 1960, p. 150.

eternal Life or Death (Romans 2,7-11). But Paul relates the concept of Jesus' possession of the throne of God (II Cor. 5,10) with our daily life, as Romans 14,7-9 shows: "Leben bedeutet für ihn eigentlich die Freude, die einen Menschen mit Gott verbinden kann (vgl. auch Röm. 14,17), und unter dem Tod versteht er die Angst, die den Menschen von Gott trennen muß (vgl. Röm. 7,24; 8,15 usw.). Wer an Jesus als Herrn glaubt, der ist frei zu solcher Freude und frei von dieser Angst."⁴ This presupposes that without Christ one would have every reason to fear God and to flee from him. The conversion of Paul, however, does not mean that one has to search for the gracious God elsewhere than in the angry God. "Der gnädige Gott selber will gerade beim zornigen gefunden werden, das Leben an der Stätte des Todes, die Freude in der Wüste der Angst."⁵ In this sense Paul called upon the crucified Jesus as the resurrected Lord. He preached in the name of this Lord that the t i m e⁶ for such faith - the faith in the gracious Judge - had come for

4. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 150.

5. Ibid., pp. 151-152.

6. For a fuller exposition of Fuchs's analysis of the concept of "time" in the New Testament, see below, pp. 258 ff.

every man and was urgent (Gal. 4,4 ff.; II Cor. 6,2).
"Wer verstanden hat, der weiß, daß mit dem Gehorsam
gegenüber dieser Botschaft nicht gefackelt werden darf.
Der Herr könnte in der Tat auch vorübergehen."⁷

From this description of Paul's thought, Fuchs goes to the synoptic gospels, taking with him the outline of the faith in Jesus as it was found in Paul's writings and replacing the Marcan framework by it.

He begins his presentation with an exposition of the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15,11-32).⁸ Fuchs finds basically the same attitude here which he found in Paul.

7. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 152.

8. In this exposition of Fuchs's, one is reminded of T.W. Manson's comment about the parable and his remarks about Jesus' eating and drinking with sinners, etc., when he writes: "On this there are two things to be said. First, we may note that the attitude of Jesus to these outcasts is in all essentials that which he ascribes to the Father in the parable of the Prodigal Son. That love of God which is so beautifully portrayed in the parable is actualised in the events described in the Marcan narrative. It is impossible to exaggerate the closeness of the tie between the teaching of Jesus and his acts. Secondly, there is the principle that a single story may contain the whole Gospel in miniature. What confronts us in these sayings and stories is not only the promulgation of the 'Law of Love', but also the demonstration of the Love of God in action" (Servant Messiah, Cambridge, 1961, pp. 66-67).

Ist aber Paulus, wie wir jetzt sehen, immerhin durch Jesus gedeckt, so handelt es sich, un-dogmatisch gesprochen, bei Jesus selbst doch um ein wahrhaft kühnes Unternehmen. Jesus wagt es, Gottes Willen so geltend zu machen, als stünde er selber an Gottes Stelle! ... Jesu Tat bleibt ...so kühn, daß man ihn vor den Toren der durchaus nicht gottlosen Stadt Jerusalem hingerichtet hat, weil man ihm bestritt, daß er das Recht habe, sich als Mensch ohne Amt an Gottes Stelle zu setzen, nämlich Gottes Willen kurzerhand als einen gnädigen Willen im eigenen Verhalten geltend zu machen....

Das bedeutet aber doch, daß J e s u V e r-
h a l t e n selber der eigentliche Rahmen seiner Verkündigung war! Wir brauchen uns dafür nun nicht mehr auf die Wundergeschichten zu berufen, obwohl diese Geschichten bei den Evangelisten in der Regel den gleichen Anspruch zum Ausdruck bringen. Des-gleichen ist jetzt nicht mehr nötig, die in den Evangelien dogmatisch vorverlegte Herrenaussage oder etwa den Titel des Sohnes Gottes und des kommenden bzw. gekommenen Menschensohnes als des Inhabers der göttlichen Gewalt heranzuziehen. Das alles sagt für sich genommen nicht mehr, sondern eher weniger als Jesu eigenes Verhalten. Denn wenn wir recht sehen, dann ist ja zu erwarten, daß zwar nicht die Titel, wohl aber Jesu Worte auch sonst sein Verhalten historisch wiedergeben. Dabei sind wir keineswegs auf paradox formulierte Worte angewiesen. Es genügt, wenn wir in Wort und Tat Jesu dieselbe Richtung finden.⁹

9. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 154-155.

From this point of view, Fuchs criticises those who place an over-emphasis upon the message of Jesus, for we do not have what one could really call a preaching of Jesus but parables and scattered sayings. It is furthermore difficult to move from the form of sayings to assertions about the type of person behind them. Fuchs finds that the parables and sayings fit best into the conduct (Verhalten) of Jesus, which is neither that of a prophet nor that of a sage, but the conduct of a man who dares to act in God's stead, by (as must always be added) taking sinners into his company, who apart from him would have to flee from God. This conduct has a better chance of being reported faithfully than does the oral material, for conduct encourages imitation more than a word.¹⁰

Fuchs criticises those who place an over-emphasis upon Jesus' "eschatologisches Kraftgefühl", either in the sense of a realised eschatology or a "sich realisierende

10. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 156. This emphasis is a significant further development of something Bultmann just touched upon: see above, pp. 59-60. Fuchs carries this emphasis right through to the contemporary proclamation of the "Word" - "Die Tat ist ein der Predigt nicht nachstehender Übersetzer des Neuen Testaments" (Ges. Auf. II, p. 59).

Eschatologie". He finds a surer point of departure to lie in Jesus' demand for decision. His interpretation of the Law, his parables, etc., stand in the service of this call to decision. This decision which he demands, however, is to be understood as an echo of the decision which he himself made to live and proclaim the time of God's acceptance of those who would seem to have to flee from him. Jesus' conduct was the consequence of this decision. The faith which he demands and which he himself possessed was the answer to the question:

W i l l G o t t, d a ß w i r i h m
g e g e n ü b e r d i e F r e i h e i t
a u f b r i n g e n, g e g e n u n s e r e b e g r ü n d e t e
A n g s t v o r s e i n e m U r t e i l, d a ß w i r a l l e h e i m l i c h
l ä n g s t k e n n e n, a n i h n s e l b s t z u
a p p e l l i e r e n? G e n a u d a s b e j a h t d i e
E n t s c h e i d u n g d e s h i s t o r i s c h e n J e s u s. D e s h a l b
s a g t e e r z u m S ü n d e r: f o l g e m i r n a c h! (M a r k
2,17) u n d g e b d e n S ü n d e r n d e n V o r z u g v o r d e m
G e r e c h t e n. W e r h ö r t u n d f o l g t, f ü r d e n i s t
d a n n J e s u s f r e i l i c h s c h o n d e r H e r r.¹¹

This decision of Jesus cannot be seen from the standpoint of a moral piety, for there is no cause to

11. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 165. He goes on to say: "Die urchristliche Verkündigung unterscheidet sich von Jesu Verkündigung dadurch, daß sie um dieses Schon bei Jesus weiß und die Erfahrungen des Glaubens in ihr Wissen um Jesus einzuordnen versuchte."

see it as a turning away from evil to the good. It is rather a question not dissimilar from that which his own disciples had to face after his death. "Jesus hat ja den gewaltsamen Tod des Täufers miterlebt. Hatte sich Jesus aber einst mit seiner eigenen Taufe ohne Zweifel zu dem eschatologischen Gerichtsernst des Täufers bekannt, so mußte er nach des Täufers Tod entscheiden, was dieser Tod für ihn bedeutete."¹² As the tradition behind Matt. 11 shows, he did not just continue John's activity, but made it more radical. However, he could not make the judgement more radical; he could only seek to make the time of the reign of God his. That he did this can be seen from his loose organisation of an eschatological congregation (Matt. 4,12), and from his holding of

12. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 157-58. Bultmann's objection to this supposition - "Daß Jesus, nachdem er das Ende des Täufers erlebt hatte, mit seinem ebenso gewaltsamen Ende habe rechnen müssen, ist eine psychologische Konstruktion, die nicht gerade wahrscheinlich ist, schon weil sich Jesus von seinem Auftreten offenbar ein anderes Bild gemacht hat als von dem des Täufers, von dem er sich unterscheidet (Matt. 11,16-19)" (R. Bultmann, op. cit., p. 12) - does not really refute Fuchs's point. Fuchs's argument here is just one part of a larger point which is that the mission of Jesus involved the probability of suffering from the beginning and that Jesus will have had to decide what the death of John the Baptist meant for his own mission. Beyond this there is a subtle but important difference between Fuchs's statement and Bultmann's formulation of it.

eschatological "Freudemahlzeiten" with them. Jesus knows that his conduct is dangerous - He who would save his life will lose it (Mark 8,35 par.). The kernel of Jesus' decision, however, is to be seen in his relationship with God. This relationship presupposes suffering from the very beginning.

Die geheime Kehre der Wahrheit ist trotz der eschatologischen Mahlzeiten eigentlich immer noch der Tod (vgl. Mark 8,35)... Wann also Jesus den Sünder durch den Tod hindurch an den gnädigen Gott verweist, so weiß er, daß er leiden muß. Gerade indem er sich selbst schon auf den Standpunkt der Gnade Gottes stellt, stellt er sich auch für sich selbst auf den Standpunkt des Leidens. Seine Drohungen und Wehrufe sowie die Härte der Forderung stammen insgesamt aus dem strengen Willen zum Leiden. Denn Jesus setzt sich ja mit alledem seinen Gegnern aus, obwohl er den gewaltsamen Tod des Täufers vor Augen hat.¹³

But in the place of judgement comes grace, in the place of death comes life. The gospels are not then, as Kähler has said, passion stories extended backwards, for nothing needed to be extended. The gospels are actually not just passion stories, but proclamations of the resurrection, and that from the very beginning. Fuchs "...ist damit zu seinem Ausgangspunkt zurückgekehrt. Jesus hat die

13. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 160-161.

Anfechtung der Seinen vorausgesehen und sie durch sein Verhalten auf ihren Kampf vorbereitet. Sie konnten es angesichts des Kreuzes wagen, zu glauben, daß Gott Jesus recht gegeben habe, daß seine Gnade sein wahrer Wille ist, ja, sie konnten Jesus als Inhalt ihres Glaubens verkündigen.¹⁴ The question of faith, which came through Jesus, was repeated in the proclamation of the resurrection.

Sie wiederholt sie aber nicht so, daß wir von der Antwort des Glaubens abgelenkt werden, sondern dadurch, daß in dieser Verkündigung das ganze in Jesus eröffnete Gottesverhältnis unsere Entscheidung erst recht verlangt. Dann weiß der Glaube, daß in der Verkündigung der Auferstehung gerade der historische Jesus auf uns zugekommen ist. Der sogenannte Christus des Glaubens ist in der Tat kein anderer als der historische Jesus. Aber viel wichtiger ist die Aussage, daß uns im historischen Jesus Gott selbst begegnet sein will. Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus verwandelt sich nun sachgemäß in die Frage nach der Wirklichkeit der Begegnung mit Gott in der Predigt.

So zeigt sich, die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus führt nicht aus der Theologie heraus, sondern in die Theologie hinein. Die dogmatische Fortsetzung

14. Peter Biehl, "Zur Frage nach dem historischen Jesus", Theologische Rundschau, XXIV-XXV, 1957-58, p. 75.

der exegetischen Analyse müßte wohl eine den historischen Jesus nicht aus dem Auge lassende Lehre vom Worte Gottes sein.¹⁵

In the introductory paragraph of his monograph, Bultmann characterised in broad terms the difference between the historical Jesus and the Christ of the Kerygma. This second main point was:

Während die Predigt Jesu die eschatologische Botschaft von der kommenden, ja, der heranzubrechenden Gottesherrschaft ist, wird im Kerygma Jesus Christus verkündigt als der stellvertretend für die Sünden der Menschen am Kreuz Gestorbene und von Gott wunderbar zu unserem Heil Erweckte. Für die theologischen Gedanken des Paulus und Johannes ist damit das entscheidende eschatologische Ereignis schon geschehen.¹⁶

As we have already seen in the third chapter, Ernst Käsemann objected to this kind of formulation by Bultmann because it isolates the crucifixion and the resurrection as the sole turning point in the history of Christianity. Fuchs voices a very similar objection in the Preface to the English edition of his essays. His two principal objections are to the "opinion that the context of earthly events has been interrupted by

15. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 166-67.

16. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 6.

the resurrection of Jesus, and by this alone" - (according to the New Testament both faith and the Holy Spirit break in upon earthly events and cause radical changes) - and to the opinion "that the disciples were reduced to despair by the crucifixion of Jesus".¹⁷

In the statement above by Bultmann, the concept of Jesus as "Stellvertreter" is the - apparently miraculous - post-Easter response to the death of Jesus by the first Christians. But, according to Fuchs, already the historical Jesus acted on behalf of or for his followers in so far as he b e l i e v e d for them and p r a y e d for them. Jesus both prayed for his disciples and allowed them to take part in his prayers.

Das Jesus die Jünger an seinem G e b e t teilnehmen ließ, zeigt das Vaterunser deutlich genug, gleichviel, wie weit es in der Gemeinde ergänzt worden sein mag. Die Tatsache, daß Jesus f ü r die Seinen betete, bedarf nicht des besonderen Belegs durch die Abschiedssituation in der Passion, sondern geht schon aus einer ganzen Reihe seiner Gleichnisse und Parabeln hervor... Jesus unterscheidet sich zwar von seinen Jüngern, weil er den Kampf des Glaubens

17. E. Fuchs, Studies of the Historical Jesus, London, 1964, p. 7.

für sie leidet. In diesem persönlichsten Bezug bleibt er auch von ihnen geschieden. Er kennt ihre Anfechtung. Aber gerade so wird deutlich, daß er den Glauben an Gottes Kommen für sie gewagt hat. Insofern drücken auch die später formulierten kirchlichen Abendmahlsworte genau wie die ebenfalls später formulierten Leidensweissagungen Jesu Selbstverständnis aus.¹⁸

The early Christian assertion that Jesus intercedes for us before God (Romans 8,34; Hebrews 7,25; I John 2,1) characterises precisely the kernel of the life of the historical Jesus. The believer is called to have a faith like Jesus' that God hears. Jesus calls God Father - our Father - and the Father is clearly the one who hears and answers. "Aber unser Glaube unterscheidet sich vom Glauben Jesu, weil uns in Jesu Namen seit Ostern gesagt ist, daß Gott erhört hat. Dieses Wort können wir weitergeben, wenn wir es mit unserer eigenen Fürbitte fortsetzen, so daß sich einer nach dem andern der Liebe Jesu erfreut."¹⁹

In his main section of criticism devoted to Fuchs's work, Bultmann begins by giving a number of short quotations from Fuchs's essays, which are apparently intended

18. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 255.

19. Ibid., p. 257.

to indicate those aspects of Fuchs's work of which he approves, but they are put together in such a way as to be easily misleading. One example will suffice. He quotes the sentence "Es gilt, die historische Individualität Jesu auszuschalten"²⁰ as if this were a summary of Fuchs's position. Apart from the fact that it is meant as a paraphrase of II Cor. 5,16, and that it is lifted from an early essay (1944) which Fuchs has seen fit to leave out of the English edition of his second volume of essays, it is only a part of the argument leading up to his main point. Bultmann has repeatedly used just this text from Paul to support his insistence on the "Daß". But Fuchs's point is different, even in this early essay. As he says:

Eine historische Individualität lebt vom Zusammenhang der in ihr ausgetragenen geschichtlichen Mächte. Wie sie gehasst oder geliebt hat, ist hier z.B. die Frage. Aber die Evangelien berichten uns von Jesus nur, daß er die Seinen liebt, und daß es gelte, auf Grund dieser Liebe als Jünger die Liebe nicht zu erwidern, sondern zu wiederholen, also fortzusetzen,

20. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 18 (cf. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 47).

Joh. 13,34 f. Direkte Erwiderung als Liebe zu Jesus wird damit abgewiesen, 1 Joh. 4,11 f.²¹

In the rest of his treatment of Fuchs's work, Bultmann charges Fuchs with having left the confines of the existentialist (existentiale) interpretation and with having slipped back into the historical-psychological method of interpretation. This stricture applies to Fuchs's insistence upon Jesus' conduct as the framework of his proclamation, his reflection about Jesus' decision (to proclaim and live the time of God's gracious acceptance), and most of all to his presentation of the faith and prayer-life of Jesus.

Statt etwa zu sagen, daß die existentielle Interpretation des Wirkens Jesu in Wort und (soweit erkennbar) in Tat dem Menschen zumutet, sich als zum Glauben geforderten zu verstehen, reflektiert Fuchs auf Jesu eigenen Glauben, dazu noch auf Jesu Gebet, an dem er seine Jünger teilnehmen läßt, sie, für die er "den Kampf des Glaubens leidet"...bedeutet der Rekurs auf Jesu eigenen Glauben nicht den Rückfall in die historisch-psychologische Interpretation?²²

21. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 48.

22. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 19. That one can disagree with Fuchs's interpretation of Jesus' prayer-life without recourse to the indictment of his having left the realm of existentialist interpretation is shown by T.W. Manson, who feels that Jesus did not pray/.....

To the objection that he slipped back into a psychological interpretation, Fuchs answers that historical-critical exegesis cannot do without psychological observations. If one, for instance, has to judge whether Jesus was an eschatological "Schwärmer" who was surprised by the actual course of events, then one must decide whether he was so blind to the possible course of events that, for example, the execution of John the Baptist could not cause him to pause. Such questions are not to be avoided as long as one continues to hold that Jesus expected the imminent coming of the Kingdom of God.²³

Bultmann warnt mich vor Rückfällen in die Psychologie. Es geht aber immer noch wie bei ihm um die Überwindung der Psychologie bzw. um die Basis, auf welcher sie überhaupt überwindbar wird! Gerade die Begriffe "Naherwartung" und "Geltungsbedürfnis" bezeichnen psychologische Motive. Daß sich hinter ihnen anderes, Bedeutsameres versteckt, ist gewiß schon deshalb

pray regularly with his disciples. As he says, Jesus "...was accustomed to pray in solitude, and elsewhere he recommended the same practice to his followers. The Lord's Prayer is, from the point of view of the Lord's regular practice and teaching, an exception. But what a glorious exception!" (Servant Messiah, Cambridge, 1961, p. 48).

23. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 294.

anzunehmen, weil das Phänomen des Glaubens nach Jesu Hinrichtung erst rein an den Tag kam und so begrifflich fassbar wurde.²⁴

Bultmann's criticism that Fuchs has abandoned the "existential Interpretation" can be attributed to two basic things in Fuchs's work. First of all, Fuchs does indeed intend to apply the method of the "existential Interpretation" in his essays concerning the basic question of the historical Jesus and his significance for theology, but his application of this method clearly differs from Bultmann's own. In Bultmann's New Testament interpretation, there was a rather tenuous positive connection between his work as an historical-critical scholar and his work as a New Testament theologian. His position in this is parallel to that of Martin Kähler, that faith cannot be made dependent upon the changing and uncertain results of New Testament research. This opinion was reflected even in Bornkamm's Jesus von Nazareth, where he says, "Gewiss kann und soll sich der Glaube nicht von Wandel und Unsicherheit historischer Forschung abhängig machen."²⁵ But Fuchs feels that one

24. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 298-99.

25. G. Bornkamm, Jesus von Nazareth, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 5.

cannot simply state that faith is independent from the results of research into the New Testament. As he says,

Die historische Bindung des Glaubens an Jesus, nämlich durch Jesus, hält sich im historisch gegebenen Text durch! Der Exeget darf deshalb nicht behaupten, der Glaube sei von seiner Arbeit unabhängig. So billig kommen wir nicht davon. Verderben wir den Text, so gefährden wir den Glauben aufs höchste. Sind wir aber um des Textes willen Gehilfen der Predigt, so ist klar, daß um Jesu willen auch der Ausleger des Textes dazu da ist, Gott in derjenigen Gegenwart festzuhalten, in welcher Gott von uns festgehalten werden will. Das gälte freilich auch von einem sich auf die Philologie beschränkenden Exegeten. Aber wer beschränkt sich denn so. Der Text will eben mehr!²⁶

It can be seen from this statement alone, that the method of "existential Interpretation" which both Bultmann and Fuchs claim to use can be employed in different ways and can yield different results as indeed can any other method of interpretation. And it is both the difference

26. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 301. One can also see Fuchs's more positive evaluation of the role of the research into the New Testament in the following statement: "Gerade auch eine kritisch verfahrenende, Jesu Geschichte respektierende neutestamentliche Wissenschaft wird also ihrerseits zur Reinigung des Glaubens beizutragen haben (Ges. Auf. II, pp. 172-173). The "existential Interpretation" and the historical-critical analysis of the texts which speak to us of God/.....

in the results and in the application of the method which led Dultmann to criticism Fuchs for having abandoned the "existential Interpretation".

But what then is "existential Interpretation"? In The New Hermeneutic (cf. above, footnote 2) the German word "existential" is translated as "existentialist" while "existentiell" is translated as "existential". To the uninitiated reader this could tend to be misleading because the word existentialist has come to be applied to so many different thinkers. Indeed, the figure who is often thought of as the leading existentialist philosopher - Martin Heidegger - has himself protested that it should not be applied to his thought.²⁷ In view of this widespread confusion, it is perhaps best to give Fuchs's own statement about the difference between the "existential" and the "existentielle Interpretation" as it applies to the New Testament. He says:

God call for each other "damit aus der Mitteilung, der jene Texte gelten, nicht unsere Erfindung wird. Der sachliche Grund dafür ist die unbedingte Klarheit der Liebe von welcher die Texte sprechen, der eindeutigen Liebe, zu welcher uns Jesus helfen will..." (Ges. Auf. I, p. 105).

27. F.H. Heinemann, Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, New York, 1958, pp. 84-91.

Die existentielle Interpretation setzt im Unterschied von der existentialen die den Ausleger bestimmende Wahrheit als selbstverständlich voraus, ohne sie ausdrücklich zu diskutieren. Das kann natürlich auf sehr verschiedene Weise geschehen. Wer sich in einer bestimmten Not Antwort aus der Bibel holt, treibt existentielle Interpretation. Dasselbe tut, wer die Bibel nur dogmatisch liest. Aber auch die Predigt legt nicht anders aus. Existentielle Interpretation ist so nötig, daß sie sogar die Hauptsache ist. Aber wenn die existentielle Interpretation ihrer selbst sicher bleiben soll, so muß sie durch eine Prüfung hindurchgegangen sein. Diese Prüfung nennen wir die existentielle Interpretation. Sie analysiert gerade das für eine existentielle Interpretation Selbstverständliche.²⁸

The method by which the "existentielle Interpretation" proceeds is to look for those aspects of human existence in which man is disclosed in his essential humanity; following Heidegger, these modes of human existence are called "Existentialien".²⁹ According to Fuchs, when one is guided by the New Testament, one finds that man discloses himself as having fulfilled or betrayed his true

28. E. Fuchs, Hermeneutik, Bad Cannstatt, 1963³, p. 141. Cf. also E. Fuchs in The New Hermeneutic, p. 242: "The cliché about a theology of 'existentialism' as some critics use it is not identical with what we say."

29. Cf. F.H. Heinemann, op. cit., p. 91.

humanity by his use of language, in his having or lacking the "Freiheit zum Wort" which is the central "Existential".³⁰

With Fuchs's consideration of the use of language in the New Testament, we have arrived at what could legitimately be characterised as the centre of his interpretation of the New Testament in what we have called - in the introductory paragraph of this chapter - "the second phase" of his work. No-one among the four New Testament scholars we have been considering has placed more emphasis upon the words of Jesus or analysed the nature and function of language in the New Testament as thoroughly as has Fuchs. It is certainly not by chance that the article on "Logos" in the encyclopedia Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart has been contributed by Fuchs. The rather too simple alternative, therefore, that Bornkamm emphasises Jesus' words and Fuchs Jesus' deeds, which we find in Hugh Anderson,³¹ overlooks a very central part of Fuchs's work.

30. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 296.

31. Hugh Anderson, Jesus and Christian Origins, New York, 1964, p. 10. From Chapter IV it must, moreover, be clear that Bornkamm emphasises the words and the deeds of Jesus.

It would go beyond the scope of this chapter to go into all of Fuchs's considerations with regard to language - he regards the whole of his Hermeneutik as a contribution to the "Sprachlehre des Glaubens"³² - but some of them have very direct application to the problem of the historical Jesus. As he himself says, "Ich möchte die Frage nach der Sprache für einige den Exegeten beschäftigende, der Theologie heute im Wege liegende Probleme fruchtbar machen. Diese Probleme gelten sämtlich dem historischen Jesus und seiner Bedeutung für die Theologie."³³

For his analysis of the role of language in the New Testament, Fuchs has coined a number of words and phrases. A key word among these is the compound "Sprachereignis". Where history ("Geschichte") occurs, language is no longer just an instrument "für alle mögliche Sinndeutungen, sondern da wird die Sprache selbst weltbildend und Weltzerstörend zum Ereignis".³⁴ "Sprachereignisse" are:

32. E. Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 271.

33. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 284.

34. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 275.

...solche Ereignisse, die Erlaubnis erteilen, Freiheit gewähren, das Sein rechtfertigen. Dagegen die Verweigerungen, aber auch das Aufzählen dessen, was sein muß, die Gebote, sie sind keine Sprachereignisse, sondern setzen die Sprache voraus. Sie sind leicht zu spät kommende Zeugnisse für die so rasch verwirkte und doch nicht unterzukriegende, in jedem Kinde wirksame göttliche Herrlichkeit der Sprache.³⁵

Jesus' words, particularly his parables, are such "Sprachereignisse". Jesus grants freedom, singles out his hearers as the recipients of the time of the Kingdom of God by his words. Jesus makes God present by his words which now lie "wie Weihnachtsgaben auf dem Tische... Was wir sozusagen anziehen sollen, womit wir uns kleiden sollen, das sind gerade Jesu Worte selber. In ihrem Gewand sollen wir nunmehr u n s e r t ä g l i c h e s L e b e n weiterführen. Es wird ein völlig neues Leben geworden sein."³⁶ It is often assumed that Jesus employs the images and analogies from the daily life of the people in his parables in order to make comprehensible what would otherwise be incomprehensible or in order to help his unlearned hearers, but that is not the case. No, he uses such images because he dares

35. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 283.

36. E. Fuchs, ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, pp. 213-214.

...das der Gottesherrschaft j e t z t u n d
h i e r E n t s p r e c h e n d e ... zu sagen,
Gottes Kraft und Willen also im eigenen Wort
vorzubilden (nicht etwa nachzubilden!)... Die
Bilder sind nicht nur naheliegende Anwendungen
aus dem Erfahrungsbereich des Hörers oder gar
des Sprechers, sondern diese vertrauten Dinge
werden absichtsvoll zum Wort, zu einem dem Hörer
gehörenden, weil in ihm mittels des ihm Eigenen
erweckten Wort, so daß er sich das Wort nicht
nur aneignen, sondern zugeeignet wissen muß. So
ist gerade die "Bildhälfte" der wesentliche Teil
eines Zuspruchs, wie Jesu Kreuz für den Christen-
verfolger Paulus zum wesentlichen Teil des Gottes-
worts an ihn geworden war. Jesu Wort geht in
mein Eigenes hinein und bedient sich des mir
Eigenen als eines Wortes an mich. Es auf diese
Kehre ankommen zu lassen, ist Jesu sprachliches
Wagnis gewesen, während Paulus einfach das, was
er sich gesagt sein lassen mußte, auf alle anderen
anwandte.³⁷

But what was true of Jesus, that he chose the lang-
uage and imagery from the life familiar to every man to
convey his message that the time of God's gracious
acceptance had come, is true of the New Testament as a
whole. Even Paul's message, his word of faith, is bound
up inextricably with a concrete historical event - the

37. E. Fuchs, "Logos", RGG³, Vol. IV, Cols. 438-39.

cross of the historical Jesus. His "word" is the word of the crucified Jesus Christ; he does not testify to God in "lofty words or wisdom (I Cor. 2,2)". It is word of the cross which carries the saving power of God (I Cor. 1,18).

Primitive Christianity can be seen in its totality as a unique "Sprachphänomen". Fuchs refers to Erich Auerbach's observation that "...das christliche Mysterium, die Passion Christi, die Volkssprache des Alltags auf neue Weise zur Literatur erhoben hat".³⁸ Up till the New Testament the language of the everyday world had been limited to comedy. Christianity, therefore, brought an "Umwertung aller Werte" when it presented the message of the holy in the language of the people. It is true that traditional liturgical style was drawn upon, but the gospels in particular were something entirely new over against the old literary categories. "Der Geist des Glaubens verband sich mit dem Volke, mit jenen, die 'nichts sind', wie Paulus geschrieben hatte (I. Kor. 1, 28). Das ist nicht nur ein soziologischer Vorgang, sondern ein genuines Ereignis des Seins in der Sprache

38. E. Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 181. Compare Erich Auerbach, Mimesis, E.T., Garden City, New York, 1957.

selbst."³⁹

As we have already seen in the previous chapters, Pultmann presented Jesus as a prophet and saw the relation between Jesus and Paul after the analogy of law and gospel. Fuchs, however, rejects the category of prophet as sufficient for Jesus and, with his concept of "Sprachersignis", proceeds to show that the result of both Jesus' proclamation and Paul's kerygma was the transformation of the law.

Many interpreters, according to Fuchs, regard the law as equivalent with the judgement of God, but the law as such is neither judgement nor salvation but can serve both. One can either fear or love the law as the Old Testament showed already. From this alone it would be a fair assumption that Jesus would not have proclaimed the law itself solely as God's wrath or judgement upon man. In fact, Jesus' preaching brought the law totally into the service of the children of God's entry into the kingdom of God. It is because Jesus' goal is that his hearers should come under the already present time of the rule of God that the law must become again what it

39. E. Fuchs, Hermeneutik, p. 181.

actually is - "eine Hilfe zur Gerechtigkeit,
die Erlaubnis zur Gerechtigkeit".⁴⁰

Dieses so gepredigte, so verwandelte, weil zu sich selbst gekommene Gesetz des väterlichen Willens Gottes ist das großartige Sprachereignis in der Verkündigung Jesu. Das Gesetz sagt jetzt: mit Verlaub, siehe ich stehe auf der Seite der Liebe! Ich erlaube euch ihre Gerechtigkeit. Das ist der Sinn z.B. des Doppelgebots der Gottes- und der Nächsten-liebe (Mark 12,28-34 Par.).⁴¹

This is brought out by the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5,27 ff., for example, Jesus addresses his criticism not against the law but against the Jewish application of the law. What is on the one hand an unheard-of intensification of the law - adultery begins already within a man's thoughts - is on the other hand "ein hohes Lied der Liebe, weil Jesus unserm Herzen oder Begehren zusetzt, sich ganz auf die Liebe zu verpflichten, d.h. sich darauf zu verlassen, daß Gott auch in uns der Herr bleibt."⁴² The purpose of Jesus throughout the Sermon on the Mount is not to abolish the law but to fulfil it. Throughout, the proper

40. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 287.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

use of the law is set over against its abuse, but in such a way,

...daß dabei alles was das Gesetz sonst sagen oder gesagt haben mag, auf das dem Menschen vor Gott Angemessene, auf das deshalb den Menschen, ihm selbst, nicht bloß Treffende, sondern sein Leben Erlaubende zurückgeführt wird, ob es sich nun ums Geben, ums Beten und Fasten, ums Begehren und Sorgen, oder ums Richten und Nichtrichten und gar ums Zweifeln handelt.

Immer widersteht Jesus der Angst, die den Menschen statt zu Gott in eine nichtige Welt treibt, und jedesmal zeigt er ihm, daß er am Gesetz, an Gottes Willen, eine Hilfe hat, der die Erfahrung entspricht, ja, entsprechen wird. Jene königliche Regel, daß man den Leuten erweise, was sie von uns erwarten (Matt. 7,12), sie besagt ja nicht, daß wir jedermanns Wünschen nachgeben, sondern sie will, daß wir unser Tun mit den Augen des Nächsten an der Angst des Nächsten prüfen.⁴³

Jesus' proclamation so transforms the law for his hearers that they are granted real freedom for the word which God would speak to them. The "Sprachereignis" of Jesus' proclamation reveals that even with the law the way is opened up in which God comes to us and in which we move towards God. "Jesus erlaubt uns, Gottes Weg zu betreten,

43. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 289.

Gottes Willen zu erfüllen."⁴⁴

When we come to Paul, it seems at first as if his handling of the law were fundamentally different from Jesus' use of it. It is the gospel of faith which his proclamation serves (Romans 1,14-17). "Das Evangelium steht der Rede vom Gesetz so voran, wie das Wort vom Kreuz dem Kreuz selbst voransteht. Aber im Römerbrief kehrt sich das Verhältnis alsbald um, so daß der erste große, zusammenhängende Abschnitt, Röm. 1,18-3,20, vom Gesetz handelt, während das Evangelium darnach in Röm. 3,21-4,25 entfaltet wird."⁴⁵

Paul's treatment of the law is different in so far as he says that the law reveals the wrath of God (Romans 4,15). But he has the cross of Christ before his eyes. It is only at the end of Romans in chapters 12-14 that Paul treats the law as the "hilfreiche Regel Jesu (vgl. Gal. 6,2)."⁴⁶ The difference between Jesus' and Paul's treatment of the law is most easily explained by the analogy which Paul makes between the law and conscience (Romans 2,12-15).

44. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 291.

45. Ibid., p. 294.

46. Ibid.

Gott sagt dem Menschen in Christus nichts anderes, als was ihm sein eigenes Gewissen auch sagt, sobald man dieses Was, den Inhalt, nur recht menschlich betrachtet. Die Botschaft sagt: Du sollst deinen Gott an mir haben! Und was sagt das Gewissen? Das Gewissen sagt: an mir habe ich nichts! Paulus variiert diesen Gedanken oft, so z.B. in 2.Kor. 5,10 f.: wer den Herrn fürchtet, der weiß, das er mit *a l l e m*, was er hat, dem Gericht unterworfen ist, weil er nichts hat, was er diesem Gericht entziehen und für sich vorbehalten könnte.⁴⁷

This insight is strange and difficult for the natural man to accept. One normally expects that one has at least one's faith to show before God, but one must come to the point of acknowledging that one has nothing. This is the purpose of the analogy between the law and conscience in Paul. In the light of the knowledge of God, man learns to know himself as the one who wishes to assert himself, indeed must assert himself apart from God. But in the word of God comes his election to live to God. God's election comes to us in nothing other than the word which is spoken to us in his name. For those who have become the ones elected by God, the law

47. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, pp. 294-95.

is now transformed into that rule for both Jews and Gentiles, which was already the rule of Jesus - the "law of Christ" of Galatians 6,2.

Gottes Gesetz lernt der Jude gerade bei seinen Brüdern, den Heiden, richtig kennen, sobald er sich nicht mehr gegen Jesus sperrt. Denn Gottes Gesetz gebietet uns allen, und gewis schon dem Juden, nichts mehr um unser selbst willen zu tun, sondern alles im Namen Gottes zu tun, des Gottes, der in Wahrheit immer schon und überall am Werk war, wo Menschen sind. Das Gesetz gebietet dem Menschen auch so, endlich sich selbst zu erkennen, genau wie das Gewissen das gebietet. Aber das Gesetz erlaubt ihm jetzt darüber hinaus, nichts anderes zu haben als Gottes Wort. Deshalb verwandelt sich das Gesetz für Paulus nunmehr in die Erlaubnis zum Glauben (Röm. 8,2).⁴⁸

It is true that only God and not the law can bring life, but the law becomes an aid to life because it places a claim upon all. The word of the cross allows Paul, the Jew, to hold fast to Jesus as the revelation of God for all men. The cross of Jesus revealed the addressees of the gospel and the true content of the gospel at the same time. "So verwandelte sich der

⁴⁸. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, pp. 295-96.

Gekreuzigte selbst in das Wort vom Kreuz, in die Erlaubnis zum Glauben für alle. Das ist das Sprachereignis in der Theologie des Paulus, dem sich sein Brauch des Gesetzes einfügt. Deshalb konnte Paulus mit dem Gesetz unter dem Vorzeichen des Glaubens doch auch so verfahren wie Jesus.⁴⁹

One of the primary concepts of the New Testament which has drawn the attention of scholars interested in the question of the historical Jesus has been the concept of time. The considerations regarding time in the New Testament have in general revolved about the question of the expectation or arrival of the Kingdom of God, and the distinction between the New Testament concept of time and that found within the realm of Greek thought. The answers to the first question have varied from the strong futuristic emphasis of A. Schweitzer and R. Bultmann to the early position of C.H. Dodd - that of realised eschatology. Concerning the difference between biblical and Greek thought, there has been a kind of general

49. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 296.

consensus of opinion that the basic distinction is that time in the Bible is conceived of as linear and in Greek thought as circular.⁵⁰ If one were to ask Fuchs about the first question in the way it is usually put, his answer would come closest to that of the "sich von jetzt ab realisierende Eschatologie", and he would place the "Aeonenwende" between John the Baptist and Jesus - "...im Unterschied zu dem Täufer sagt Jesus die neue Zeit an, nicht weil sie kommt, sondern weil sie da ist."⁵¹ But Fuchs's reflections about the concept of time do not really fit into the customary way of putting the question of time in the New Testament. Once again it is from the vantage point of the phenomenon of language that he approaches also the problem of time (as he did the problem of the law) and from which he criticises what one could characterise as the chronological or quantitative approach to time. He agrees, for instance, with Käsemann's sentence: "Jesus hat gemeint, daß mit seinem Worte die Basileia zu seinen Hörern komme."⁵² But

50. Cf. Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Vom Sinn der Geschichte in der Bibel", in Der Sinn der Geschichte, ed. Leonhard Reinisch, München, 1961, p. 118; also O. Cullmann, Christus und die Zeit, Zürich, 1946, p. 46.

51. E. Fuchs, ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 213.

52. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 211.

he adds: "Der Satz bedarf jedoch der hermeneutischen Besinnung auf das 'Wort' als Sprachereignis, d.h. er muß aus dem Ereignis der Sprache gedacht werden, und das so, wie es Jesus selbst verstand."⁵³ In his approach to the question of time, Fuchs has developed certain aspects of Heidegger's and Bultmann's work, but in a way which is definitely his own.

He approaches the problem initially (in his article "Das Neue Testament und das hermeneutische Problem") from a consideration of the role of language within the family, where, he says, the members of the family speak with one another "...weil man einander versteht, und nicht, damit man sich versteht".⁵⁴ In the family the essence of language as such is revealed, which is, namely, time. The mother of the family, for instance, announces by her words what it is time for, whether it be eating, working, playing or sleeping. The presupposition for her announcements is the mutual understanding (Einverständnis) which exists in the family. Language here discloses its essence not so much by the content of the individual

53. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 307.

54. E. Fuchs, ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 209.

words as by its concentration on time, on the distinction between different times. Time in the family is not a quantitative measurement, not a boundless unit; it is, rather, pluralistic, always time for one thing or another, so that different times go on at the same time. "Für das eine Kind ist es Zeit zum Schlafen gehen, für das andere zum Theaterbesuch, für das dritte zu einer besonderen Arbeit, und alles gleichzeitig abends um 6 Uhr. Dieser Zeitgebrauch ist kein übertragener Zeitgebrauch, sondern der ursprüngliche, echte."⁵⁵ This function of language presupposes the familiar surroundings associated with life among one's own people; if this sphere of life disappears, language degenerates into simply convention or the means of passing on information as, for instance, in science. But, without question, Jesus spoke

...in diesem Bereich des Volks- und Familienlebens, wie es sich in friedlichen oder eben normalen Zeiten abspielt. Aus diesem Leben nimmt er die Beispiele für seine Gleichnisse. Man sieht die Leute über die Straße gehen und ans Fenster klopfen, man hört den lauten Ton ihrer Feste; der Bauer geht aufs Feld, sät und erntet; die Frau

55. E. Fuchs, ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 210.

bestellt den kleinen Fleck Erde bei dem Haus. Es gibt da Reiche und Arme, Ehrliche und Halunken, Freude und Not, Trauer und Dankbarkeit. Aber das alles ist nicht nur Milieu, nicht nur "Stoff" für einen Dichter... Jesus benützt nicht nur die Details dieser Welt, als eine Art "Anknüpfungspunkt", sondern er meint gerade diese "Welt".⁵⁶

With the recognition of the character of Jesus' language one begins to move beyond the confines of the chronological-quantitative approach to time and so come nearer to the real centre of Jesus' proclamation as Fuchs understands it.⁵⁷

56. E. Fuchs, ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 211.

57. Fuchs's interpretation receives support from an unexpected corner in the work of the American linguist, Benjamin Lee Whorf, in the book entitled Language, Thought and Reality (ed. John B. Carroll, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, pp. 139-40; German translation, Sprache, Denken und Wirklichkeit, Hamburg, 1963, pp. 79-80). Whorf draws attention to the tendency of all Indo-European languages to "objectify" time. These languages draw two entirely distinctive sets of phenomena into the same thought pattern. We say "ten days" in the same way as we say "ten oranges"; that is, "days" are regarded as physical, observable entities just as are oranges, whereas "ten days" exist only in the sphere of imagination and as such cannot be counted in the same way as physical objects. Some non-Indo-European languages (such as that of the Hopi Indians) account for the phenomenon of time in an entirely different way from the way they account for physical objects. It would seem from this, therefore, that the natural inclination of a scholar whose mother-tongue belongs to the/.....

The usual way of putting the question of Jesus' understanding of time is to ask what form of eschatology can be ascribed to Jesus. The question can be made more specific by asking what the relationship is between the present and the future in the faith of Jesus. Fuchs gives a glimpse of his conclusion by adding to this question the following one: "Etwa so, daß Jesus eine Zukunft kennt, die den Glauben erst recht an die Gegenwart bindet? Dann hätte Jesu Verkündigung allerdings die Situation, in welcher Jesu Verkündigung verständlich wird, sogar geschaffen!"⁵⁸ Just as the language within the family applies to the distinction between the times, so does the language of Jesus apply to the distinction and relationship between the present and the future.

To some extent, Fuchs's presentation is parallel to Bornkamm's with its emphasis on the "Unmittelbarkeit" of

the Indo-European group would be to objectify time or regard it quantitatively. This lends all the more interest to Fuchs's assertion that Jesus' view of time is primarily qualitative. As he says in criticism of O. Cullmann's view that the primitive Christian understanding of time was linear - "Es gibt...noch andere Möglichkeiten des Zeitverständnisses. Wenn ich sage: ich gebe dir Zeit, dann heißt das nicht: ich gebe dir Linie, sondern: ich gebe dir Frist" (Ges. Auf. I, p. 83). Time is something one can lose; it is also something one can be given. It is Jesus' gift of time that concerns Fuchs.

58. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. I, p. 309.

Jesus. The goal of Jesus' proclamation, according to Bornkamm, was a present which could not become past, a goal which was retained in the kerygma. Fuchs's formulation is different but the main point is not dissimilar. For Fuchs too, the goal of Jesus' preaching is the concrete present, which, in its essence, is not a transitional stage leading to the future - a view which would deprive the present of its significance - but a time which corresponds (entspricht) through the word of Jesus to the future of the Kingdom of God.

A pericope, such as Luke 12,57-59 (par. Matt. 5,25-26) seems to give support to the view that Jesus viewed the present as a transitional stage before the impending dawn of the Kingdom of God; the image used would seem to convey principally that one should straighten out one's affairs before it is too late to do so. The present in this view would be something to be left behind as soon as possible, a time of transition.

In Wahrheit ist aber gefordert, daß ich der Gegenwart selbst ins Gesicht sehe und mich ihr stelle, indem ich meine berechtigte Angst überwinde. Dann handle ich gerade nicht mehr getrieben wie der Mann in der Bildhälfte. Nur dieser Sinn wird dem ganzen Zusammenhang zumal in Matth. 5 wie auch dem Liebesgebot gerecht;

das ist in Luk. 12 nicht anders. Alle diese Forderungen appellieren nicht bloß an die Zeit, sondern sie geben sie, sie schenken Zeit! Es gilt also, sich selbst nicht länger zu entfliehen. Der Text will, das jeder die Gegenwart in ihrer Begrenztheit auf sich nimmt, damit er gerade durch die Begrenzung der Gegenwart volle Freiheit gewinne. Das ist dann eschatologisch gesehene Gegenwart!⁵⁹

The present is seen eschatologically not because something is expected in the immediate future but because a parable like this draws one to see one's present from the outside, when one is told: "Nur in deiner Gegenwart kannst du und wirst du frei sein! Nicht die Zukunft, sondern die Gegenwart ist deine Sache! Denn: für das Ergebnis sorgt nun nicht mehr der Mensch, der sich sonst mit Recht fürchten müßte, sondern Gott, der uns durch das Wort an unsere Gegenwart verweist."⁶⁰ In the proclamation of Jesus man and the present belong together as do God and the future.

This point is reinforced by the parable in Mark 4, 26-29. The different times are distinguished not just by being different points in a chronological development but also as the time for something - it may be the time

59. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 317.

60. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 317-318.

for two different things at the same time. Everything has its own time - the sowing, the earth (or the growing), the harvest, and the farmer who in the meantime has become free for other things. This freedom is not mentioned in itself but it is taken for granted and is the logical counterpart to the unusual emphasis on the activity of the earth, which has taken over the work of the farmer between sowing and harvesting. "Die Erde gibt dem Bauern Zeit, weil sie ihn entlastet. Das weiß er. Also wird man als Tertium comparationis formulieren dürfen: A l l e s h a t s e i n e Z e i t."⁶¹ In Jesus' proclamation this served his purpose of freeing his hearers from any worry about the future in order to direct them anew to the present.

Wer der Zukunft in demselben positiven Sinne gewiß ist wie der Bauer im Gleichnis nach der Saat der Ernte, der wird mit der Gegenwart fertig weil er in der Hauptsache, der Sorge um die Zukunft, zufriedengestellt ist. So leitet das Gleichnis für sich betrachtet zur mutigen Unterscheidung von Gegenwart und Zukunft an, weil alles seine Zeit hat. Gerade der s i c h e r zu beurteilende Ablauf der Zeit ändert die Situation und k e h r t s i e u m : was vorher

61. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 339.

als Gegenwart nur Übergang zur Zukunft war (Saat bzw. Sorge); das gewährt jetzt als Gleichnis die volle, von aller Sorge befreite Gegenwart im Sein aus der Freiheit zu anderem, vorher durch den Sorgezusammenhang ausgeschlossenen Beginnen.⁶²

Jesus' proclamation, particularly in his parables and similitudes, singles out his hearers as the recipients of the Kingdom of God. He does not give a new answer to the question of when it will come nor does he give a new theological explanation of the Kingdom. Rather his words give his hearers a new experiential status; they are now on the side of God. For Jesus there are two distinct miracles which condition one another, the miracle of his call (Berufung) and the miracle of the coming of God. This is Jesus' understanding of time. "Denn Gegenwart und Zukunft sind nun aufeinander bezogen wie das Wunder der Berufung und das Wunder des Kommen Gottes selbst."⁶³ This thought itself

62. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 339-340. The rather difficult last sentence of this quotation is made clearer by Andrew Scobie's translation: "Sowing or care was previously, as present, just a transition to the future. Now, as a parable, this bestows the full present, freed from all care - the present in being (sein), based on freedom for the other enterprise which had been excluded by the context of care (Studies of the Historical Jesus, London, 1964, p. 134).

63. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 347.

was not new but new was the event of his proclamation. He who hears Jesus' word and does it has become his "mother and brother" (Luke 8,21). His word is itself a gift to his hearers - "das Wort, das gibt, weil es sich selber gibt, so das sich Gott bei diesem Wort behaften läßt, wie jene Syrophönizierin Jesus gegenüber tat (Mark 7,28). Dies nenne ich ein 'Sprachereignis'. So also geht es bei dem Anfang ums Ganze."⁶⁴ Jesus' words are parallel to his conduct. His words like his conduct draw his hearers into his time, the time of the "Berufung" for the Kingdom, the time of and for love, the time of freedom for a new beginning.

Jesus' present is in fact a chronologically impossible time. It is a "Zeit zwischen den Zeiten".⁶⁵ For this reason the interpretation of it has been tempted to compare it with the punctum mathematicum.

Aber der Vergleich hinkt, weil er dialektisch ist. Er hängt logisch noch von einer Vorstellung der Zeitkontinuität ab und erhebt so Jesu Gegenwart

64. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 347.

65. Ibid., p. 366.

in die Reflexion über sie, statt diese Gegenwart bei sich selbst zu belassen. Das logisch Gewalt-same in Jesu Vorgehen ist einfach zuzugeben: Jesus nimmt seine Zeit als Gegenwart vor Gottes Kommen so in Anspruch, daß er sie jeder anderen Zeit entgegenstellt.⁶⁶

Jesus' time was basically qualitative; it was the time of and for love. The effect of love is the gift of time. "Die Zeit der Liebe fügt sich als Zeit zur Liebe in keine andere Kontinuität ein, denn sie hat selber Kontinuität. Weit entfernt davon, auf andere Zeiten angewiesen zu sein, bleibt die Liebe bei ihrer Zeit. Von dieser Art ist Jesu Zeitverständnis. Es ist nur in seinem Wort zugänglich, weil sein Wort ein W o r t d e r L i e b e war. Deshalb war auch seine Zeit von jeder anderen Zeit unabhängig. Daher war seine Situation singulär."⁶⁷

With the death of Jesus the question was raised whether God would stand by Jesus' word of love, i.e. whether the time had come for love or not. The criterion whether this question has been properly understood will be shown if one now, more than ever, has retained the ability to distinguish between the present and the future,

66. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 366-67.

67. Ibid., p. 368.

between man's freedom for faith and God's work of love. Jesus has become the Word to be proclaimed because now the question goes out to everyone whether Jesus' call was the event of love which drew us over onto the side of love, onto the side of God.

Gerade die H i s t o r i z i t ä t des Wortes Jesu machte ihn selbst zum Worte Gottes, weil im Blick auf Jesu Zeitverständnis nur diese Eine Frage zu entscheiden ist, ob die Liebe damals ein für allemal gerufen hat, so gewiß die Zukunft auf Grund des Rufens Jesu ganz allein Gottes Sache bleiben sollte. Damit verwandelt sich die törichte Frage, ob sich Jesus damals in der Zeitspanne getäuscht habe, in die richtige, bleibende, ob sich Jesus darin getäuscht hat, daß er glaubte, die Zeit zur Liebe sei gekommen. Aber das ist für die Liebe überhaupt keine Frage! Die Glaubenden werden also die Liebenden sein, und der Glaube der Liebenden wird fest bleiben. Die urchristliche Bekenntnisbildung drückt von Paulus her gesehen nichts anderes als diese Festigkeit aus.⁶⁸

So we get the picture of Jesus who spoke of the Kingdom of God as the mustard seed, the treasure, and the pearl, himself becoming "Gottes Saat, Gottes Schatz, Gottes Perle, Gottes Versprechen und Schulderlaß, Gottes

68. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 375.

Brot, Wein und Liebespfand".⁶⁹ Faith recognises in the fate of Jesus, that God stands by his revelation in the historical Jesus. "War bei Jesus die Tat der Oberbegriff über dem Wort, so wurde nun das Jesus verkündigende Wort zum Oberbegriff über der Tat, damit sich die Gemeinde des Glaubens der durch nichts zu brechenden Gemeinschaft in Gott erfreue und jeder sich selbst frei werden möchte."⁷⁰

69. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 213.

70. Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS : "ABSCHLUß UND ANSCHLUß"

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In the past six chapters we have followed, in a selective way, the course of research into and interpretation of the New Testament from 1730 to the present, with the goal of coming to an informed appreciation of the issues involved in the debate which has been going on in Germany over the past decade and a half regarding the relationship between the historical Jesus and the Christ of Faith. Ernst Käsemann, Günther Bornkamm, Hans Conzelmann and Ernst Fuchs have been chosen as the major representatives of the so-called "Bultmann School". It will, however, have become clear that there is a common desire among them to carry on the debate with Bultmann, but by no means complete unanimity in their results. Their attitudes, at the moment, towards the "New Quest" vary from the enthusiastic emphasis on the historical Jesus by Fuchs to the increasing reserve of Conzelmann. The question which is to be posed in this concluding chapter is: what measure of consensus about the central issues can be perceived among these four New Testament scholars and at what points can suggestions be made for carrying their insights one step further?

As we saw from the first chapter, the roots of the present discussion reach all the way back to the eighteenth century and indeed back to the Reformation and the Enlightenment. The Reformation's search for a criterion of faith apart from the Roman Catholic concept of the authority of tradition coupled with the rationalistic investigation of history which issued from the Enlightenment led almost inevitably to the search for the Jesus of history "as he really was". The issues which were raised in the course of the "Quest of the Historical Jesus" up to the turn of the twentieth century are the issues which, whether welcome or not, are still with us. The question of the role of eschatology which Reimarus raised is still a key one in the attempt to interpret the relationship between the historical Jesus and the Christ of Faith. The question of the theological reason for the writing of the gospels which Herder raised in such a far-sighted way is still a central issue in the present debate. There is still the problem of the appropriate method of the interpretation of the New Testament documents which is being discussed in terms not dissimilar from those in the debate between G.L. Bauer and C.F. Stäudlin. Moreover, there is no question about the service performed by the New Testament scholars of

the nineteenth century in the laying of the foundation for the historical-critical investigation of the New Testament. K.L. Schmidt, Martin Dibelius and Rudolf Bultmann built upon the foundation provided by the results of their predecessors as surely as the scholars involved in the "New Quest" have built upon the insights and results of the form-critics.

The biographical efforts of the nineteenth century have been rejected by Bultmann and by his former students as historically questionable and as theologically illegitimate. In doing so, they have appropriated and developed the protest of such scholars as Martin Kähler and Wilhelm Herrmann. The combination of the historical work of the "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule" and the theological perspective of dialectical theology brought the original "quest" to an end, at least in Germany. All the same, it must be emphasised that this has meant a wholesale rejection neither of the historical achievement nor of the theological perspective of the liberal school of thought. In the new edition in 1950 of Adolf von Harnack's Das Wesen des Christentums, Rudolf Bultmann has given expression both to his criticism of the liberal position as embodied in this work by Harnack and

to his appreciation of its continuing relevance for the theological enterprise today. Bultmann criticises Harnack for, among other things, his lack of appreciation of the central significance of eschatology in the New Testament. But, as he says, it should be emphasised that the liberal understanding of Christianity is by no means "das unlebendige Residuum einer vergangenen Epoche...das nicht mehr ernst genommen zu werden brauchte, daß vielmehr in diesem 'liberalen' Verständnis zum mindesten Motive wirksam sind, die, obwohl heute verdeckt, ihr Recht behalten und auch wieder geltend machen werden".¹ Bultmann ends his "Geleitwort" with an appeal for the faithful and therefore critical appropriation of the legacy of Harnack. "Echte Treue ist nie repristinierende 'Wiederholung', sondern allein kritische Aneignung, die sich die legitimen Motive der Tradition zu eigen macht und sie in neuer Gestalt zur Geltung bringt."² To some extent, the present debate with Bultmann which is being carried on by his former students represents just the critical appropriation of the liberal

1. From Adolf von Harnack, Das Wesen des Christentums, Stuttgart, 1950, p. VIII.

2. Ibid., p. XVI.

legacy which Bultmann recommends in this "Geleitwort". This is basically what Käsemann was trying to say when he observed that in his work and that of his colleagues they have turned out to resemble their grandfathers more than their fathers at times.³

However, to label what Käsemann and the others have done "Neo-liberalism" after the pattern of "Neo-orthodoxy" would be very misleading. It would indicate the "Wiederholung" rather than the "kritische Aneignung" of which Bultmann spoke. But there is no question that several aspects of the liberal position have recently been taken more seriously than they had been for many years previous to the advent of the "New Quest". Before going on to the specific issues around which the "New Quest" has revolved, one example will serve to show the similarity of content which can often be detected between the liberals and the "Bultmann School". Bultmann cites the passage from Harnack where he says that the religion of Jesus "bringt nur e i n e Erfahrung, aber läßt in ihr ein neues Weltbild entstehen: das Ewige tritt ein, das Zeitliche wird Mittel zum Zweck, der Mensch gehört

3. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 7.

auf die Seite des Ewigen".⁴ A very similar point is made by Fuchs in his article on Jesus' understanding of time; to be sure, Fuchs uses a different vocabulary and makes his point from a different frame of reference, but the similarity is there nonetheless. Fuchs asserts that the purpose of Jesus' use of images in his parables and similitudes was to make God understood to men. He goes on to say: "Jeder, der zur Basileia berufen wird, soll Gott so auf seiner Seite haben, daß er auf Gottes Seite hinübergezogen ist und alles mit Gottes Augen zu sehen lernt."⁵

Having said this much, it is equally clear that many of Bultmann's criticisms of the liberal position belong to the presuppositions of the "New Quest". The desire of many of those involved in the original search for the historical Jesus to find rational proof for the truth of faith by recourse to the Jesus of history was rejected by Bultmann and is still rejected by his former students as an enterprise alien to faith. He and his former students regard the attempt to reconstruct an objective biography of Jesus not only as alien to faith but as an

4. From A. von Harnack, op. cit., p. XIII.

5. Ernst Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 363.

historical impossibility. The gospels do not furnish us with the material for such a biography, in which chronology and psychological development play a major part. Moreover, the gospel writers did not intend to present an "objective" picture of the earthly Jesus entirely free from their belief in and experience of him as their crucified and risen Lord. The gospels are confessions of faith, not just historical reports.

But Bultmann and his former students begin to differ with regard to his restriction of the interest that faith should have in the historical Jesus to the "Das" of his having existed plus the "fact" of his crucifixion.

Bultmann's presentation of Jesus' ministry as basically "urmessianic" has also been called into question as has his description of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God as essentially futuristic. These three issues have turned out to be the major ones in the present debate, and especially Ernst Käsemann, Günther Bornkamm, Ernst Fuchs, and to a somewhat lesser extent, Hans Conzelmann have reached a general consensus of opinion regarding them, although each has his own approach as we have seen.

The issue of Bultmann's insistence on the "Das" is actually the principal general issue of the discussion, for the other two issues just mentioned receive attention

because of the decision of the "New Quest" to go beyond the "Daß". Bultmann has restated his case in the monograph to which we have referred several times (Das Verhältnis der urchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus). This monograph has increasingly moved into the centre of the debate and has been specifically replied to by Käsemann, Bornkamm, and Fuchs.⁶ Bultmann reformulates the heart of his position in the following words:

Der Versuch, die Legitimität des Kerygmas durch wissenschaftliche Forschung zu erweisen, dient einem modernen Interesse, denn sie stellt an das Kerygma eine Frage, die diesem ganz fern liegt. Dieses ist nicht an der "objektiven Geschichtlichkeit" über das Daß hinaus interessiert, sondern es fordert den Glauben an Christus den Gekreuzigten und Auferstandenen, und von da aus versteht es die Geschichte Jesu, - soweit es für sie überhaupt Interesse hat, wie es zwar nicht bei Paulus und Johannes, aber bei den Synoptikern der Fall ist.⁷

Thus Bultmann condemns any attempt by historical research to inquire about the actual life of the historical Jesus as an attempt to seek legitimisation for the

6. From the standpoint of the systematic theologian, Gerhard Ebeling has also replied to Bultmann's monograph with one of his own under the title, Theologie und Verkündigung (Tübingen, 1962).

7. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., p. 13.

kerygma. Or, as he formulates it elsewhere, "Es wird versucht, dem Glauben eine Begründung zu geben, die sein Wesen zunichte macht, weil überhaupt eine Begründung versucht wird."⁸ He makes a two-fold point: the kerygma is misused and the essence of faith is misconstrued when one goes back to the Jesus of history except under the severe restriction of the "Daß". But his former students question whether Bultmann has thus done justice either to the emphasis on the earthly Jesus in the New Testament - particularly in the synoptic gospels - or to the nature of faith.

Ernst Käsemann has given expression to the view which the other three share with him that the New Testament itself places the obligation upon us to turn our attention to the historical Jesus in so far as the gospels ascribe their kerygma - no matter where it may have come from - to the earthly Jesus and thereby attribute to him an unmistakably primary authority.

Offensichtlich ist sie (die Urchristenheit) der Meinung, daß man den irdischen Jesus nicht anders als von Ostern her und also in seiner Würde als Herr der Gemeinde verstehen kann und daß man

8. R. Bultmann, Glauben und Verstehen I, p. 13.

umgekehrt Ostern nicht adäquat zu begreifen vermag, wenn man vom irdischen Jesus absieht. Das Evangelium steht also immer in einem Zweifrontenkrieg.⁹

In the two-front war the danger of doceticism is at least as serious as the danger of Ebionitism and it is the former danger which Bultmann's presentation runs. The only reason which Bultmann can detect for the writing of the gospels is that the gospel writers wished to place the words and deeds of the earthly Jesus in the light of kerygmatic Christology. But, as Käsemann points out, the gospel writers wished to give expression to their belief that the *kairos* which determined their lives had begun with the earthly Jesus. "Sie wollen, möchte ich formulieren, das *extra nos* des Heiles als Vorgegebenheit des Glaubens herausstellen... Der Osterglaube hat das christliche Kerygma begründet, aber er hat ihm seinen Inhalt nicht erst und ausschließlich gegeben."¹⁰ Much the same point is made by Bornkamm with his emphasis on the solidarity of the disciples after Easter with the ones before Easter. In spite of the fact that the early Christian community had the cross, as it

9. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 201.

10. Ibid., pp. 202-203.

were, behind them and had the living Christ present in the Word and Sacrament, nevertheless the members of this community remain one with those who "von dem irdischen Jesus zum Glauben erst gerufen sind. Die an den gegenwärtigen und zukünftigen Herrn Glaubenden werden darum erneut an die Geschichte und das Wort des vorösterlichen Jesus verwiesen."¹¹ Similarly Hans Conzelmann refers to the fact that the continued historical interest in the earthly Jesus preserves the autonomy of Jesus "und verhindert, daß man den e i n s t i g e n Jesus mir nichts dir nichts 'aneignet', d.h. für die eigenen Zwecke ausbeutet".¹² And Fuchs has taken this even further when he says: "Das Licht selbst ist d e r, der sich für die in der Nacht zu schenken vermochte... Das größere Gewicht liegt also beim historischen Jesus selber, nicht in der Osterbotschaft, die nicht isoliert werden darf, übrigens auch in der Theologie Paulus nicht isoliert worden ist."¹³

11. G. Bornkamm, Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, p. 267.

12. Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus von Nazareth und der Glaube an den Auferstandenen", in Der historische Jesus und der kerygmatische Christus, Berlin, 1964₃, pp. 188-89.

13. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 218.

The second goal of Bultmann's insistence on the "Daß" has been to preserve what he sees as the nature of faith. The kerygma calls for belief in the crucified and risen Lord and places one in the situation of decision. To ask for proof, as it were, from the kerygma by wanting to know more about the earthly Jesus would be to deny the kerygma's call to faith. But, as Käsemann points out, the kerygma is to be found not in one unequivocal form, but in the form of very different "Kerygmata". And the responsibility for the "Unterscheidung der Geister" which Paul calls for, can not be taken from one by any philosophy new or old. The testing of the spirits is part of the faith response to the gospel. And in order to do this one needs criteria as the church has always needed them. The question can be summed up, according to Käsemann, in this way: "Rechnet das Kerygma des Neuen Testaments den irdischen Jesus zu den Kriterien seiner selbst? Diese Frage ist ebenso schlicht und rund zu bejahen."¹⁴

Ernst Fuchs has carried the question of the nature of faith one step further. Bultmann's presentation of

14. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. II, p. 53.

the nature of faith, Fuchs maintains, concentrates all too exclusively on the beginning of faith. Fuchs asks what experiences faith has once it is present. The first experience of faith is that of the forgiveness of sins, but the question is: what then?¹⁵ It is at this point that the general consensus of the "New Quest" could be best summed up in the words of Martin Kähler:

...unseren Glauben an den Heiland weckt und trägt die kurze und bündige apostolische Verkündigung von dem erhöhten Gekreuzigten. Zum gläubigen Verkehr aber mit unserem Heilande hilft uns die Erinnerung seiner Jünger, die sie als den höchsten Schatz ihres Lebens vererbten. Und im Verkehre mit ihm durch sein biblisches Bild werden wir zur Freiheit der Kinder Gottes erzogen.¹⁶

In other words, faith is awakened and sustained by the hearing of the word of the kerygma, but the experience of faith is aided by the memories of the earthly Jesus. One could also put it in another way. Bultmann often uses the analogy of inter-personal relationships to bring out the nature of faith. Using this analogy he has

15. E. Fuchs, "Das Neue Testament und das hermeneutische Problem", *ZThK*, Vol. 58, No. 2, pp. 204 ff.

16. M. Kähler, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

rightly pointed out that to question the offer of forgiveness from a friend would be the same thing as refusing it. It is the same with the offer of forgiveness which comes to us in the kerygma. But one could carry the analogy further and ask what follows after the forgiveness has been accepted. Certainly a re-establishment of the relationship and a new knowledge of the one from whom we have received forgiveness would follow. The new knowledge would bring a fuller love and this in turn would lead to a deeper knowledge. Seen against this background, it must be acknowledged that the desire for a greater knowledge of the one in whom one believes need not necessarily be illegitimate. In the words of Fuchs, "Der eigentliche Zweck der Evangelien bleibt die Gemeinschaft mit Jesus selbst. Sie will wiederholt sein, weil nur der konkrete Glaubensgehorsam weiß, daß Jesus wirklich der Anfänger der Gottesherrschaft war."¹⁷

Beyond the theological justification for the renewal of interest in the historical Jesus, there is a common agreement among the former students of Bultmann whom we have been considering that there is no cause for historical

17. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 212.

scepticism with regard to the historical possibility of ascertaining what was characteristic of the earthly Jesus. There is still no possibility, nor would it be a goal to be desired, of having a biography of Jesus, but there is no question that there are some things that can be determined as belonging unmistakably to the earthly Jesus. As Käsemann says: "Zur resignierenden Skepsis ist...kein Anlaß, da wir wenigstens einiges mit größter Bestimmtheit erkennen, was uns erlaubt, den Glauben der Gemeinde nicht als willkürlich und sinnlos zu bezeichnen."¹⁸

If any issue could be singled out as the test case for the interpretation of the relationship between the proclamation of the earthly Jesus and the early Church's proclamation of him, it would be the issue of eschatology. It was the recognition of the place of eschatology in the New Testament by Reimarus and his English predecessors which first brought the problem of this relationship into sharp focus. It was the rediscovery of eschatology which played a major role in bringing about the end of

18. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 235.

the original "Quest", and the question has once again become one of primary issues in the debate between Bultmann and his former students.

As we saw in the second chapter, Bultmann has continued to maintain a position on the question of eschatology not essentially different from that of his teacher Johannes Weiß. According to Bultmann, the signs of the Kingdom are already present for Jesus and a radical decision is demanded by Jesus of his hearers for or against his word of the coming of God's Reign. Jesus connected the decision for his word with the coming of the Son of Man, who was, nevertheless, other than himself. The coming of the Kingdom of God and the Son of Man were expected by Jesus in the near future - Jesus' so-called "Naherwartung". Regarding the expectation of the Son of Man by Jesus, Fuchs and Bornkamm still hold that he did, while Conzelmann and Käsemann maintain that he did not. This is not, however, as important as the general consensus among them regarding the eschatology of Jesus as a whole. The consensus could be characterised in broad terms in this way: the primary emphasis in Jesus' proclamation is on the present; the present is (already) the time of the (eschatological) salvation expected from the Kingdom of God; and finally, Jesus'

concept of time was more "qualitative" than "quantitative".

To put it in the most cautious way, the position of the four scholars we have been considering represents a noticeable reduction of polemic against the nineteenth century and liberal position with regard to eschatology. This is not to say that they have gone back to interpreting the Kingdom of God as an "inneres Reich der Sinnesveränderung", but eschatology has generally moved from the centre of their interpretation and Christology in one form or another has become increasingly important. There has been more and more attention devoted to the kind of life lived by Jesus and those who followed after him in the light of his eschatological proclamation, rather than to the problem of the "eschatological timetable" in terms of "Naherwartung" and its sequel the "Parusieverzögerung". Two passages from Fuchs's essays well illustrate this. The first is his detailed comparison of Albrecht Ritschl and Bornkamm in his review of Bornkamm's Jesus von Nazareth.¹⁹ The other is his reply

19. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, pp. 191 ff.

to Grässer's book (Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung, Berlin, 1957). As he says: "Grässer wird mich vielleicht unter diejenigen einreihen, welche die 'Naherwartung' 'verharmlosen' (S.12 ff.). Ich muß ihn jedoch, obwohl ich ihm nicht selten zustimme, fragen, ob er selbst dem Phänomen des 'Glaubens' gerecht geworden ist? Daß die Naherwartung psychologisch gesehen die 'Form' von Jesu Hoffnung bzw. der Hoffnung seiner Umgebung war (S.16), bestreite ich natürlich nicht."²⁰

The faith to which Fuchs refers here - the faith which Jesus meant, encouraged, and made possible - was not a faith in some kind of "Naherwartung". Since the appearance of John the Baptist the "Naherwartung" was

20. Ibid., p. 312. W.G. Kümmel has disputed Fuchs's position in a recent essay, "Die Naherwartung in der Verkündigung Jesu" (in Zeit und Geschichte, ed. E. Dinkler, Tübingen, 1964, pp. 31-46). He sums up his position thus: "Eine unvoreingenommene kritische Prüfung der in Betracht kommenden Texte zeigt...eindeutig, daß Jesus mit der nahen, auf seine Generation beschränkten Zukunft der Gottesherrschaft gerechnet hat. Man wird darum auch nicht bestreiten können, obwohl das immer wieder als 'törichte Frage' hingestellt und bestritten wird, daß Jesus sich in dieser Erwartung getäuscht hat. Aber wichtiger ist natürlich der Sachverhalt, der sich aus dieser Prüfung von neuem ergibt, daß die Verkündigung Jesu von der nahen Gottesherrschaft in der Tat ein z e i t l i c h naher Geschehen meint, und daß darum die vielfältige Bestreitung dieses konkret zeitlichen Sinnes der Verkündigung Jesu von der Gottesherrschaft angesichts des Textbefundes nicht haltbar ist" (pp. 45-46).

in the air and was, so to speak, taken for granted without faith. No, the faith that Jesus called for was

...ein Glaube eben z.B. an Sündenvergebung, an die Wirkung des Reiches Gottes schon in der Gegenwart wie sie von Jesus mit seinen Jüngern und anderen Menschen auch in Mahlzeiten gefeiert wurde, so daß ihm die Bußtaufe des Johannes offensichtlich nicht mehr das Wichtigste war. Hatte Johannes einen Bruch mit dem bisherigen Leben gefordert, so feierte Jesus bereits den Beginn des neuen Lebens, eines Lebens schon im Bereich des Reiches Gottes.²¹

This same general emphasis can be detected in Käsemann's placing of the "Aeonenwende" with John, in Bornkamm's portrayal of the "Unmittelbarkeit" of Jesus' word and deed, and in Conzelmann's assertion that the question of "When?" has been superseded by the qualification of the present as the time of salvation through Jesus' word.²²

However one views the problem of eschatology, it will be generally acknowledged that the emphasis upon the present as the focus of Jesus' proclamation is a welcome

21. E. Fuchs, "Das Neue Testament und das hermeneutische Problem", ZThK, Vol. 58, No. 2, p. 206.

22. Cf. above, pp. 130, 162-166, 208.

corrective to Bultmann's strongly futuristic position. Welcome too, it would seem to the present writer, is the emphasis upon what the proclamation of the Kingdom of God meant for the lives of those who heard it. As long as there is a preoccupation solely with the logical resolution of the symbolic language used by Jesus to express both the presence and the future coming of the Kingdom of God, it would seem that the debate will never come any further than the stating and restating of firmly-held positions. In terms of the debate as it has traditionally been carried on, however, there seem to be a growing number of scholars who would agree with the position originally formulated by Haenchen of the "sich realisierende Eschatologie". Käsemann has formulated his position in very similar terms as "die sich von jetzt ab verwirklichende Gottesherrschaft" and the position of his three colleagues is not dissimilar. This plus the consideration of the place of the proclamation of the Kingdom in the context of Jesus' ministry of word and deed as a whole has led the four scholars we have been considering to concentrate on the present of Jesus as the time of salvation. The relationship between Jesus and Paul, between the earthly Jesus and the kerygmatic proclamation of Christ is then no longer seen as the

relationship between law and gospel (as Bultmann saw it), but between the gospel in two different times. What Bultmann said - that what was future for Jesus was present for Paul - must now be revised to the statement that what for Jesus was present became present for Paul but in a new way.

The last major issue in the present debate between Bultmann and his former students is the interpretation of Jesus' messianic role. Bultmann presented the earthly Jesus as basically unmessianic.²³ Jesus was for him primarily the Proclaimer. The roles which he saw as belonging certainly to Jesus were those of prophet, rabbi, and teacher. Jesus remained within the confines of Judaism and never called for belief in himself but only in his word. Jesus' call to decision did imply a Christology and when the early church called him Messiah they showed that they had understood him. Paul and John, however, show that "das Daß seiner Verkündigung das Entscheidende ist".²⁴ The only messianic title which

23. R. Bultmann, Theologie des Neuen Testaments, pp. 25 ff.

24. R. Bultmann, G.U.V., I, p. 266.

Bultmann retains as belonging to the time of the earthly Jesus is the title "Son of Man", and this Jesus used for a coming figure other than himself. The titles otherwise all belong to the confessional response of the primitive Christian (i.e. post-resurrection) community and are relational, not descriptive. When one says, "Jesus is Lord," one does not state a fact about Jesus' nature, one confesses, "I am Jesus' servant."

In his recent monograph Bultmann has made a partial concession to the "New Quest". In his words:

Aber jedenfalls darf man sagen, daß er sich selbst sozusagen als eschatologisches Phänomen verstanden hat, als welches das Kerygma ihn ja auch versteht. So ist wohl verständlich, daß die Jünger, die ihm nach der Kreuzigung die Treue hielten, nachdem sie zum Glauben an seine Auferstehung gekommen waren, diesen seinen 'eschatologischen' Charakter dadurch zum Ausdruck brachten, daß sie in ihm den Messias selbst sahen... Insofern Jesus sich als 'eschatologisches' Phänomen verstand, kann man sagen, daß seine Verkündigung eine Christologie implizierte. Und man kann das dadurch noch deutlicher machen, daß man auf den in seinem Auftreten enthaltenen Anspruch hinweist, den man, wie es gerne geschieht, 'Vollmachtsanspruch' nennen mag... Man kann auch die 'Unmittelbarkeit' Jesu in seinem Umgang mit Menschen betonen, wie Bornkamm sie in seinem

Jesusbuch eindrucksvoll dargestellt hat.²⁵

But any hope that this represented a basic shift in his position is quickly dispelled when he says in the following paragraph that this still does not prove there to be a "sachliche Einheit" between the ministry and proclamation of Jesus and the kerygma even though it makes it understandable how the Proclaimer became the One-Proclaimed.²⁶

None of the former students of Bultmann we have been considering has maintained that Jesus used any of the messianic titles in application to himself, but they have all tried to show that at least some of the titles were an appropriate response to the ministry of Jesus, not just to the crucifixion and resurrection. They have significantly revised Bultmann's estimate of the life of the earthly Jesus as basically "unmessianic". Bultmann's concession to them - that Jesus understood himself to be an eschatological phenomenon - actually goes no further than his earlier opinion that Jesus' call to decision implied a Christology. Both "Entscheidungsruf" and "eschatologisches Phänomen" are all but void of

25. R. Bultmann, Das Verhältnis..., pp. 16-17.

26. Ibid., p. 17.

content, whereas "Messiah" and the other titles had a specific meaning if and when they were applied to Jesus. The messianic titles may well be relational, but they indicate a specific kind of relation and in fact do say something about the person to whom one relates. If one disputes this, one actually ignores the kerygma's assertion that the Christ is J e s u s. Each of the four scholars involved in the "New Quest" whom we have considered has attempted to do justice to this assertion of the kerygma and to show that, at the very least, the title "Messiah" was not inappropriate when applied to the earthly Jesus. This is not to say, as Bultmann would accuse them of doing, that they are attempting to seek proof for the kerygma's assertion that the Messiah is Jesus. After all, even those who saw Jesus could reply either that he was inspired by God or by the devil, but there was something there to reply and respond to in the word and deed of Jesus.

Fuchs actually takes the problem beyond the discussion of the specific titles to the consideration of what the kerygma says about Jesus as the Christ. The kerygma states that He is the one who acted and indeed acts on behalf of God. He is also the one who intercedes on our behalf before God. Both of these assertions are not just

the response to the Easter-event but are anchored in the conduct and word of Jesus - the earthly Jesus. The proclamation of the resurrection tells those who hear in faith that it is none other than the historical Jesus "der...auf uns zugekommen i s t. Der sogenannte Christus des Glaubens ist in der Tat kein anderer als der historische Jesus."²⁷ Already the earthly Jesus acted in God's stead. "Jesu Verhalten...ist weder das eines Propheten noch das eines Weisheitslehrers, sondern das Verhalten eines Menschen, der es wagt, an Gottes Stelle zu handeln, indem er, das muß stets hinzugefügt werden, Sünder in seine Nähe zieht, die ohne ihn vor Gott fliehen müssen."²⁸ The earthly Jesus also interceded for his disciples through his prayer for them. Moreover, it is clear, "daß er den Glauben an Gottes Kommen f ü r s i e gewagt hat. Insofern drücken auch die später formulierten kirchlichen Abendmahlsworte genau wie die ebenfalls später formulierten Leidensweis-sagungen Jesu Selbstverständnis aus."²⁹ The faith-response of the early church was then a response to the

27. E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 166.

28. Ibid., p. 156.

29. Ibid., p. 255.

"Verhalten" of the earthly Jesus.

In Conzelmann's thought, the concentration on a "Christological" interpretation of Jesus' words and conduct has displaced eschatology from the place of primary importance it has held ever since Schweitzer. In each of the areas of Jesus' teaching, which seem at first to lack interconnectedness, as indeed in his person as well, one comes upon the phenomenon of an indirect Christology. Through Jesus man is confronted directly by God. Or, as Conzelmann formulates it, Jesus understands himself as the realisation of this confrontation. "Die Bindung des Heils an die Person Jesu liegt einfach darin, daß er dieses Heil als jetzige, letzte Möglichkeit darbietet, da er jetzt die Armen tröstet, die Sünder zu sich ruft. Indirekte Christologie und Theologie sind zur Deckung gebracht."³⁰

Bornkamm agrees with his colleagues that Jesus used none of the messianic titles in application to himself. More important, however, is the fact that Jesus "...das was wir sein Christusamt nennen, ausrichtet, Ereignis

30. E. Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus", RGK III³, Col. 634.

werden lässt, und jedes seiner Worte und Taten unlöslich auf ihn selbst bezogen und mit ihm verbunden ist. Dies gilt und steht in Kraft, ganz unabhängig von der Frage, ob er auch nur einen einzigen jüdischen Messiasstitel für sich in Anspruch genommen hat."³¹ No title serves to legitimise his mission and none completely describes him. But one title is a particularly appropriate response to one aspect of Jesus' teaching, namely the term "Son of God". Jesus' use of the term "Father" for God shows special features which stand in the closest connection with his proclamation as a whole.³² Sonship is something which man receives from God only in grace as the parable of the prodigal son shows. It was the mission of Jesus to bring God near to his hearers, to make God immediately present so that they too are enabled to say "Abba-Father". In Paul, we find this mission of Jesus and his teaching regarding the gift-character of sonship preserved. For this reason Paul never speaks about the "sons of God" except in connection with the mission of "the Son" (cf. Gal. 4,1 ff.) and for this reason God is called the

31. G. Bornkamm, Die Frage nach dem historischen Jesus, pp. 66-67.

32. Cf. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 118.

"Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 1,3; Eph. 1,3, etc.). "Nicht kraft ihres natürlichen Seins, sondern in der Kraft des 'Geistes', der in ihren Herzen schreit, rufen die Glaubenden: 'Abba-Vater' (Röm 8,15; Gal 4,6)." ³³ The titles that are given to Jesus are the response in faith to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Käsemann's presentation of Jesus' teaching and conduct has the basic aim of showing that he taught and acted as Messiah even though he did not use the title. Jesus acted and taught with sovereign authority. He was filled with and understood himself to be inspired by the Spirit of God. His teaching completely broke down the basic distinction between (what was deemed to be) the holy and the profane sphere of life. With his gospel, he brought in the rule of God but he painted no specific picture of the future. No, he did what was necessary for the present and placed not his person but his mission in the centre of his preaching. The primitive Christian community showed that they had understood the character of his mission by confessing him - in

33. G. Bornkamm, JvN, p. 118.

response to his own proclamation - as Messiah and Son of God.³⁴

In the introductory paragraph of this chapter, the question was posed: "At what points can suggestions be made for carrying their insights one step further?" The suggestions to be made have less to do with the basic aim of the "New Quest" than with the methodology which has been employed. Käsemann has formulated the rule - which has been generally accepted by the other three - that that could be considered "authentic" which could neither be attributed to the early Christian community nor derived from Judaism.³⁵ As was noted (cf. above, p. 122), Kümmel criticised this rule because it does not take into account the fact that we know much more now about the milieu of Jesus' activity because of recent discoveries, and because agreements between Jesus' teaching and the ideas present in Judaism do not present any absolute reason for denying authenticity. This criticism does not exactly meet the point of Käsemann's rule, however, because he meant it as a guide

34. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf., p. 211.

35. Ibid., I, p. 205.

for obtaining the absolute minimum of what genuinely belongs to Jesus. As Käsemann admits: "Allerdings müssen wir uns dabei von vornherein dessen bewusst sein, daß man keine Klarheit über das erhält, was Jesus mit seiner palästinischen Umwelt und seiner späteren Gemeinde verbunden hat."³⁶ What one can say about this rule and the way it has been used, however, is that it could be expanded now in two directions. The present debate can be strengthened and gain in clarity by a re-examination of both the Judaic background and the views of the early Christian community. This can be illustrated with respect to two "titles" which play a central part in the discussion between Bultmann and his former students - the titles "prophet" and "Messiah" or "Christ".

Bultmann sums up the position which his former students have disputed in the section of his Theologie des Neuen Testaments entitled "Das Problem. Der un-messianische Charakter des Lebens Jesu" (§ 4.1). As he says:

Daran, das das Leben und Wir-
ken Jesu am traditionellen Messiasgedanken
kein messianisches war, läßt...

36. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 205.

die synoptische Tradition kein Zweifel...Rm 1,4
 ...und Act 2,36 (zeigen), das man in der ältesten
 Gemeinde die Messianität Jesu von seiner Aufer-
 stehung ab datiert hat. In der Tat: 'Messias'
 ist die Bezeichnung des eschatologischen Herr-
 schers; das Wort bedeutet 'der Gesalbte' und hat
 den einfachen Sinn von 'König' gewonnen. Jesus
 aber ist nicht als König aufgetreten, sondern als
 Prophet und Rabbi... Nichts von der Macht und
 Herrlichkeit, die nach jüdischer Vorstellung den
 Messias charakterisiert, ist im Leben Jesu
 verwirklicht.³⁷

To start with the characterisation of Jesus as
 "prophet" first, we find that Käsemann has objected to
 Bultmann's position on this point. Bornkamm has ex-
 plicitly stated his agreement with Käsemann, and Fuchs
 has taken issue with Bultmann on this point as well.³⁸
 Käsemann points particularly to Jesus' authority.
 Because Jesus challenges the authority of Moses, he
 cannot be called a prophet, for there was never a pro-
 phet except under the authority of Moses. But why -
 one must ask - does neither Käsemann, nor Bornkamm, nor

37. R. Bultmann, Theologie des Neuen Testaments, pp.
 27-28.

38. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf. I, p. 206; G. Bornkamm,
JvN, pp. 51, 91; E. Fuchs, Ges. Auf. II, p. 166.

Fuchs go further into the Judaic background and into the synoptic evidence for the use of the word "prophet"? One can agree with Bornkamm, that one cannot fully grasp the mystery of Jesus by use of any of the titles and categories that the Judaism of the time had to offer, and still wish for a fuller discussion of what it meant that Jesus was called "prophet". People called Jesus "prophet" during his lifetime, and the title was still retained by the gospel writers (including John) whose Christology was already much more "advanced".

The principal point with regard to the background (which has not found its way into the considerations of Käsemann and the others) is the widespread popular expectation of a prophet as a messianic figure. The evidence for this expectation is presented by R. Meyer and G. Friedrich, by C.K. Barrett, and by Franklin W. Young.³⁹ The evidence from Qumran has given further evidence of the expectation of an eschatological prophet. As Matthew Black says: "There is every reason to believe that the expectation of a Moses-like Prophet was one of

39. R. Meyer and G. Friedrich, TWNT VI, esp. pp. 817 ff., 838 ff.; C.K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition, London, pp. 94-99; Franklin Young, JBL 68 (1949), pp. 285-99.

the liveliest popular beliefs in pre-Christian Judaism."⁴⁰ If one considers that the paramount sign of the presence of the Kingdom of God would be the coming (or return) of the Spirit of God, that the prophet was considered to be the prime example of the man empowered to speak by the Spirit of God, and that the Messiah was expected to be the Spirit-filled man (Isa. 11,1-3),⁴¹ one has a rich background which cannot be ignored when one either accepts or qualifies the application of the designation "prophet" to Jesus (Matt. 21,4; Mark 6,15; 8,28; Luke 7,16; 7,39; 24,19; John 4,19; 6,14; 7,40; 9,17). As Young says: "The problem of the 'messianic consciousness' of Jesus confronts us if and when we acknowledge that he was a 'prophet' in the eyes of the people."⁴² If one substitutes "the messianic character of Jesus' words and deeds" for "messianic consciousness" to bring it into line with the terms of the present discussion, one has a good indication of the kind of question which ought to be considered if the "New Quest" is to be taken "one step further".

40. Matthew Black, The Scrolls and Christian Origins, New York, 1961, p. 158.

41. Cf. E. Schweizer, Πνεύμα, TWNT VI, pp. 382 ff.

42. F.W. Young, op. cit., p. 298.

The title "Messiah" or "Christ" presents a rather similar picture. For Bultmann, Jesus' life was un-messianic and the use of the title "Messiah" or "Christ" reflects the fairly developed confessional response of the early Christian community to the resurrection of Jesus. All four of his former students whom we have considered have shown that there were aspects of Jesus' life which were in fact "messianic" - his authority (Vollmacht), his proclamation and offer of eschatological salvation, his celebration of eschatological meals, his loose organisation of an eschatological community, and especially his being the "Werkzeug des lebendigen Gottesgeistes".⁴³ But the title "Messiah" is still regarded by them as relatively late.⁴⁴ W.C. Van Unnik has shown quite convincingly, however, that the title represents a very early, if not the earliest stage of the tradition.⁴⁵ Conzelmann, in his treatment of the

43. E. Käsemann, Ges. Auf., p. 210.

44. Cf. Hans Conzelmann, "Jesus Christus", RGG³, III, Col. 629.

45. The point at issue is not the appropriateness of the title to Jesus, although Van Unnik shows that very well, but the stage in the tradition when it was applied to Jesus. Van Unnik feels that "the essential element in the Messianism of Jesus for these early Christians was not the outward activity of a king, but the person being possessed by the Spirit", a formulation not dissimilar to Käsemann's (W.C. Van Unnik, "Jesus the Christ", NTS 8, p. 115).

title, considers only evidence drawn from the synoptic gospels, but Van Unnik draws upon Paul's letters as well. In the Pauline Epistles the title in its Greek form

...was so closely connected with the proper name of Jesus that it had almost become a second name. It does not function except in the combination II Cor. 1.21: ὁ βεβαιῶν ἡμᾶς σὺν ὑμῖν εἰς Χριστὸν καὶ Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς Θεός. It will also be remembered that Paul does not use the word βασιλεύς for Jesus, though he speaks about the βασιλεία of Jesus.

We deduce from this fact that within twenty years after Jesus' crucifixion this Jewish title had been so firmly connected with Jesus that it had almost lost its original meaning; that it had been translated in the course of two decades, which shows that at that stage it was still understood in its original meaning.⁴⁶

In both cases, then, in the case of the title "prophet" and of the title "Messiah", both the background and the "foreground" should be more carefully considered if the "New Quest" is to carry its insights "one step further".

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46. W.C. Van Unnik, op. cit., p. 105.

The insights of Käsemann, Bornkamm, Conzelmann and Fuchs represent a truly significant achievement. The issues which have emerged as central in their discussion are the really key issues in the interpretation of the New Testament. Without losing what was valuable in the work of Bultmann, they have re-discovered some aspects of the liberal heritage which had threatened to be lost, and have developed a formidable position of their own. The task which remains now is for the international world of New Testament scholarship to carry their insights one step further in real dialogue with them. If this paper has made a small contribution to the fuller understanding of the Leben-Jesu-Forschung in recent research and debate in the light of the historical background, it will have achieved its purpose.

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