

"Success and failure are externally conferred upon action, as truth and falsity are externally conferred upon assertions."—Arthur Danto

This epigram strikes me as entirely apt with respect to the success or failure of bearing Christian witness. Considered in its one aspect, as *act* of witnessing, bearing witness's success or failure depends on its fittingness or unfittingness, i.e., on fitting its situation or not doing so. Considered in its other aspect, as expressing the *content* of witness, bearing witness's success or failure depends on its adequacy or inadequacy, i.e., on expressing its content adequately, and so both appropriately and credibly, or not doing so. In respect to both its fittingness and its adequacy, the success or failure of witness is, as Danto says, "externally conferred": in the first respect, by its situation; in the second, by the content of formally normative Christian witness, in the matter of its appropriateness to Jesus Christ, and by the content of "the 'right' philosophy" (Rudolf Bultmann), in the matter of its credibility to human existence.

And, of course, the epigram is just as apt, *mutatis mutandis*, with respect to the success or failure of doing Christian theology.

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