

It is careless and forced to say, as I have said too often, that, even as Christian witness claims to be appropriate to Jesus Christ as attested by normative Christian witness, so it also claims to be credible to human existence as attested by common human experience and reason. The evident proper counterpart term to "common human experience and reason" is not "normative Christian witness," but rather "specifically Christian experience and reason"—just as the evident proper counterpart term to "Jesus Christ as attested by normative Christian witness" is not "human existence as attested by common human experience and reason," but rather "human existence as attested by "the 'right' philosophy" (i.e., the philosophy that correctly explicates what is disclosed about human existence by common human experience and reason).

Underlying this self-correction is my concern to argue as clearly and carefully as I can that the only criteria proper to Christian theology, just as to any other form of fully critical reflection, are the ultimate, or primal, criteria of human experience and reason as they require to be differentiated to fit the relevant context and the particular case. So far as Christian systematic theology is concerned, the relevant context is established by Christian witness and its distinctive claim to be adequate to its content and therefore its two further claims to be both appropriate to Jesus Christ and credible to human existence. And the particular case, accordingly, is, in reality, two cases: the two logically independent and mutually irreducible cases of (1) determining the appropriateness of Christian witness; and (2) determining its credibility. Consequently, if Christian witness is appropriate to Jesus Christ, it is because or insofar as it expresses specifically Christian experience of Jesus as attested by "normative Christian witness." And if Christian witness is credible to human existence, it is because or insofar as it expresses common human experience of existence as attested by "the 'right' philosophy."

So it is that two of the three basic problems of Christian systematic theology are the criteriological problems of determining what is to count both in

principle and in fact as "normative Christian witness" and "the 'right' philosophy" respectively.

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