1. The criteria proper to doing any fully critical reflection are the ultimate (or primal) criteria of human experience and reason based on experience as they require to be differentiated to fit the relevant context and the particular case.

2. Insofar, then, as doing Christian systematic theology is a way of doing fully critical reflection, the criteria proper to it, also, can only be just such ultimate (or primal) criteria—so differentiated, however, as to fit (1) the context of critical reflection remotely and also proximately oriented by the existential question about the ultimate meaning of human existence; and (2) the case of critically validating the claim of bearing Christian witness to be the answer to this question because it is adequate to its content.

3. Because the claim of Christian witness to be adequate to its content necessarily implies two further claims—to be appropriate to Jesus Christ, and to be credible to human existence—the particular case of critically validating the claim is really the *two* cases of (1) determining whether bearing Christian witness is appropriate; and (2) determining whether it is credible.

4. To determine whether bearing Christian witness is appropriate is to determine whether it is authorized by specifically Christian experience of Jesus as expressed by "formally normative Christian witness"; and to determine whether bearing Christian witness is credible is to determine whether it is authorized by common or generically human experience of existence and reason based thereon as expressed by "the 'right' philosophy" (Rudolf Bultmann).

5. Thus 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 "formally normative Christian witness" and "the 'right' philosophy" respectively.

6. To solve the one criteriological problem by determining, first, what is to count in principle as "formally normative Christian witness" is (1) to determine,

by doing philosophy, and, specifically, philosophy of religion, what bearing any religious witness must either be or substantially agree with in order to be appropriate—namely, the earliest, the original and originating, and therefore constitutive, instance(s) of bearing witness; and (2) to determine, by doing history, what is to count as the proper principle for identifying the earliest, the original and originating, and therefore constitutive instance(s) of bearing Christian witness—namely, either the classical principle, according to which what is to count is the witness of the apostles, implicitly or explicitly, to Jesus as the Christ; or the revisionary principle, according to which what is to count is the witness of the historical Jesus himself to the coming reign or rule of God.

7. To determine, then, second, what is to count in fact as "formally normative Christian witness" likewise requires doing history in order to determine just what instance(s) of bearing Christian witness is(are) identified by the proper principle, i.e., by either the classical "apostolic principle" or the revisionary "historical Jesus principle."

8. To solve the other criteriological problem by determining, first, what is to count in principle as "the 'right' philosophy" is to determine, again, by doing philosophy, and, specifically, philosophy of religion, (1) what bearing any religious witness, including bearing Christian witness, necessarily has to agree with in substance in order to be credible—namely, our authentic self-understanding/true understanding of existence as human beings; and (2) what self-understanding/understanding of existence is in principle authentic/true—namely, the one that is approprate to, and therefore authorized by, ultimate reality in its structure in itself/meaning for us.

9. To determine, then, second, what is to count in fact as "the 'right' philosophy" also requires doing philosophy in order to determine which philosophy, and, specifically, which metaphysics/ethics, rightly explicates ultimate reality in its structure in itself/meaning for us and therewith our authentic self-understanding/true understanding of existence as human beings.

10. Thus to determine "the 'right' philosophy" is to do nothing less than to *construct* it, this being the objective of doing philosophy, whereas to determine "formally normative Christian witness" is simply to *identify* it as already given, as the thrice-privileged datum, or "canon," for doing Christian theology.*

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*This presupposes that the data for doing theology in general, whether in the sense of "philosophical theology" or in any generic-specific sense such as "Christian theology," are human self-understanding and life-praxis in general as mediated by all the forms of culture, religious as well as secular. Privileged among these data for doing philosophical theology as well as for doing Christian theology, are the data provided by religion, as distinct from data provided by secular culture. They are privileged, namely, not for the purpose of determining validity, whether the validity of religion in general or the validity of the Christian religion in particular—for which, in the nature of the case, there can be no privileged data—but solely for the purpose of determining *meaning*, both the "surface" meaning of particular religious phenomena and the "depth" meaning, or logical *kind* of meaning, of any religious phenomenon as such. But doing Christian theology, like doing it in any other generic-specific sense, differs from doing philosophical theology, both because the data provided by Christian religion and culture in particular are its twice-privileged data and because it has a thrice-privileged datum in what Christian witness itself attests as "canonical," or "formally normative Christian witness." Here, too, however, the datum is privileged solely for the purpose of determining meaning, its authority as Christian "canon" being, like any other authority, a limited authority only.

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