

"[S]entences are not true or false just *as such*. Sentences are *made* true, or *made* false, only when asserted. It is not the assertions which make them true or false (except in some rather rare cases): it is rather that asserting a sentence puts it in position to be made true or false. The very same sentence, when asserted, is either true or false, depending upon . . . what?

"Assertion is an action which, as it were, engages language with the world. But assertion is less important than our discussion suggests. For we may say, of a given sentence, that were someone to assert it, [she or] he would say something true, or something false, because the required relationship between the sentence and the world holds, or fails to hold. I shall speak of this relationship as *correspondence*."—Arthur Danto

From these reflections, I draw the following inferences that I take to be important for doing Christian theology.

I infer, first, that it is indeed better to speak of *bearing* Christian witness, rather than, simply, Christian witness, when defining the object of Christian theological reflection, or of *doing* Christian theology. Although explicit Christian witness consists in sentences, what makes the sentences properly witness is actually asserting them together with their distinctive claims (implicit or explicit) to validity. *Mutatis mutandis*, what makes the actions in which implicit Christian witness consists properly witness is actually performing them together with their (implied or expressed) validity claims.

Second, I infer that my evaluative terms, "adequacy," "appropriateness," "credibility," and "fittingness," designate so many different ways of "corresponding"—whether with the content of formally normative Christian witness, in the case of adequacy, with Jesus Christ as attested by such witness, in the case of appropriateness, with human existence as attested by "the 'right' philosophy" (Rudolf Bultmann), in the case of credibility, or with the situation in and for which Christian witness is borne, in the case of fittingness.

I infer, third, that, whereas bearing Christian witness as such is the action of putting the sentences or actions expressing the content of witness in position to correspond in these various ways or to fail to do so, doing Christian theology constructively as such is the distinctively different action of saying of a given

sentence that, were someone to assert it, or of a given action, were someone to perform it, she or he would assert or perform something that would or would not correspond in one or more of the several ways in which she or he would have claimed (implicitly or explicitly) that it did.

6 September 2004; rev. 11 January 2010