

For Paul, as Bultmann puts it, the cross is God's judgment, God's liberating judgment, of everything human. As such, the cross is a historic occurrence: a fact of the past whose historic significance is to be the liberating judgment of God. The cross, then, is not a symbol, a figure for expressing an eternal idea. Rather, the naked fact of Jesus' cross signifies for each person the question whether she or he will surrender her- or himself in her or his self-contrived security, thereby also giving up all "boasting," and whether the cross will thus be for her or him the decisive fact of salvation.

It's imperative to realize that these two "whethers" coincide: the question whether I will surrender my old self-understanding and understand myself anew in the light of God's liberating judgment is one and the same with the question whether I will acknowledge Jesus' cross as the decisive fact of salvation (*GV 1: 284*). This, I take it, is Bultmann's real point in saying provocatively that theology is at the same time anthropology, even as christology is at the same time soteriology (*TNT5: 192*).

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