

On the whole question of the assumptions made in formulating the constitutive christological assertion, it is important to be open to the possibility that they include assumptions of logically different kinds.

Insofar as they include properly religious assumptions, they must also include, by implication, not only metaphysical and moral assumptions, but also existential-historical ones. This is because a religion as such is constituted not only by a certain possibility of self-understanding and, by implication, of metaphysical belief and moral action as well, but also by some particular and therefore historical occasion of insight or revelation whereby this possibility is explicitly re-presented as our authentic possibility, and which is itself, accordingly, of decisive existential significance for adherents of the religion. The assumptions may also include different types of properly empirical assumptions, including, not least, empirical-historical assumptions about the explicit primal ontic source of the christological assertion. Also typically included, particularly in moral teachings or ethics, are yet other assumptions making or implying properly empirical claims about human existence and society as well as about the world more generally.

Whatever assumptions may be included among those made in formulating it, however, the christological assertion itself is one thing, its formulations and the assumptions made in formulating it, something else. Just as such authority as the formulations themselves may have depends entirely on the existential assertion that they serve to formulate, so such authority as may be claimed by the assumptions made in formulating it depends entirely on the existential question that they formulate and to which the assertion presents itself as the answer.

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