

According to Bultmann's interpretation, the Johannine representation of Jesus as speaking and acting, not on his own authority, but on God's (as, e.g., in Jn 7:16 f.), is so far from in any way minimizing Jesus' authority that it is intended to maximize it. But, then, why can't one say the same thing, *mutatis mutandis*, about the synoptic representation of Jesus as speaking and acting in the consciousness of a difference between himself and the coming Son of Man (Mk 8:38; Lk 12:8 f.)?

Surely, the point of the synoptic representation is not in any way to minimize the decisiveness of the encounter with Jesus, but rather to maximize it. What happens in and around Jesus is not merely preparatory to the last things, but belongs to the last things themselves, so far as they can already happen in and through things that are not last.

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