

*Is the constitutive christological assertion a metaphysical assertion?*

1. A *strictly* metaphysical assertion it certainly is not, because it could not satisfy the criterion for strictly metaphysical assertions—namely, unavoidable belief for *any* believer, even a *divine* believer, or necessary application through experience as such, even *divine* experience. Therefore, if it is a metaphysical assertion at all, it is a metaphysical assertion only in the broad sense, for which the criterion is unavoidable belief for any *human* believer, or necessary application through *human* experience.

2. But even this it cannot be, because it is evidently not an unavoidable belief for any human believer simply as such, nor does it apply necessarily through human experience simply as such. Consequently, I should say that it is not a metaphysical, but, rather, an *existential-historical*, assertion—specifically, the kind of existential-historical assertion that asserts Jesus to be the explicit primal source of authentic self-understanding, as distinct from being merely one of the authorities, even the primary authority, authorized by this source.

3. As such, however, the constitutive christological assertion necessarily *implies* certain metaphysical assertions—namely, all the assertions involved in asserting that the meaning of ultimate reality for us is decisively re-presented through Jesus, just this being the point of all formulations of the christological assertion. Because the one function performed by any appropriate christological predication is to assert that Jesus is the decisive re-presentation, and thus the explicit primal source, of the meaning of ultimate reality for us, anything with respect to the structure of ultimate reality in itself that is necessarily implied by this assertion necessarily belongs to its metaphysical implications. Consequently, even though this assertion itself is not, and could not be, a metaphysical assertion, it neither is nor could be true unless the metaphysical assertions that it necessarily implies are true assertions.

n.d.; rev. 31 July 2009