

What is "the Christian *proprium*" in the sense of "what alone makes anything properly Christian"? Following are some passages that bear more or less directly on answering this question.

"[W]hat alone makes anything properly Christian [is] that particular experience of Jesus as of decisive significance for human existence which somehow comes to expression in all that Christians think, say, and do. To be a Christian is to have experienced Jesus to be thus significant; for it is decisively through him that one's own existential question about the ultimate meaning of reality for us receives its answer" (*Doing Theology Today*: 6).

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"[T]he Christian *proprium* . . . is the experience of Jesus as the Christ, or, as we might say today, the experience of Jesus as of decisive significance for human existence. One experiences Jesus to be thus significant insofar as it is decisively through him that one's own existential question about authentic self-understanding is directly and explicitly answered. But the faith that is of a piece with such experience and through which this answer is received is, in purely formal terms, an explicit self-understanding—an understanding of oneself and others in relation to the whole, decisively re-presented through Jesus as the all-encompassing love of God.

"In the same way, the witness through which this faith then comes and must come to manifold expression is correctly understood purely formally as the life-praxis that necessarily follows from just such a self-understanding. . . . It comes to explicit expression as praxis of the Christian religion, which, like all religion, functions as the primary form of culture that explicitly mediates authentic self-understanding and the life-praxis that follows from it. But existence in faith is also expressed implicitly through all of the other so-called secular forms of praxis and culture, both primary and secondary. Whatever one thinks, says, or does somehow expresses one's faith as a Christian and therefore cannot fail to be at least implicit Christian witness.

"Implicit or explicit, however, all Christian witness, like any other life-praxis, makes or implies certain claims to validity. Different as these claims are materially, because of the *proprium* of Christian witness, they are nonetheless similar formally to those made or implied by other cases of life-praxis both religious and secular. . . .

"What is distinctive about any instance of Christian witness . . . is its content, which is determined by its *proprium* in the experience of Jesus as of decisive existential significance. But even here there is a formal similarity to other witnesses of faith, [and] to the other specific religions through which such witnesses become explicit. Not only the Christian religion, but any religion is constituted as such by some explicit primal source through which its particular self-understanding is decisively re-presented. At the same time, any religion . . . lays claim to decisive existential authority because it also claims that its particular self-understanding is true and hence of universal significance. So, in claiming as it does to be adequate to its content as well as fitting to its situation, any instance of witness claims in effect to be both authorized by its explicit primal source and worthy of belief by any woman or man simply as a human being. In the case of Christian witness, this becomes the distinctive twofold claim to be both appropriate to Jesus Christ, or to Jesus as Christians experience him, and credible to human existence [as every woman and man experiences it]" (24 f.).

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"According to the Christian witness, faith is the kind of basic human attitude or disposition that can be formally characterized as an existential self-understanding, or understanding of our own existence, in relation to others and to the encompassing whole of ultimate reality. As such, however, faith is the only self-understanding that is not only explicitly authorized by Jesus who is said to be the Christ, but—as Christians claim in saying that this is who Jesus is—is also implicitly authorized by the whole of ultimate reality itself as our authentic self-understanding. . . .

"[F]aith in the sense in which the Christian witness understands it may be characterized formally as an existential self-understanding. But . . . it is the only self-understanding explicitly authorized by Jesus, whom Christians assert to be the Christ, the

point of their assertion being that it is also the very self-understanding implicitly authorized as the authentic understanding of our existence by the mysterious whole of ultimate reality that they call by the name 'God.' If we ask now for the material content of this self-understanding, the only adequate answer is that it is an understanding of ourselves and all others as alike objects of the unbounded love of God, which is to say, of the inclusive whole of reality of which both the self and others are all parts. It is precisely the gift and demand of this unbounded love that are decisively re-presented through Jesus; and to understand ourselves as we are thereby explicitly given and called to do is to actualize the one possibility of self-understanding that is properly called 'Christian faith'" (109 ff.).

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"Rightly understood, the present proclamation of the kerygma is not some other source of faith to be taken in itself independently of the Jesus of history, but rather the very means by which he himself can be experienced here and now as faith's only [explicit] primal source. . . .

"In other words, the present proclamation originates in the kind of immediate experience of Jesus that Bultmann calls 'genuine historical understanding' of his significance; and in proclaiming him to be the salvation event, it seeks to do nothing other than to express this very significance, thereby mediating to the hearer the same kind of experience of Jesus himself. . . .

"Not only does [Bultmann] clearly point to the apostles' immediate experience of Jesus' person as the primal source of their original and originating faith and preaching, but he is also clear in insisting that even our own faith today, in response to the proclamation normed by their preaching, has its only primal source in the same kind of experience of Jesus himself. Of course, our experience of Jesus, being mediated by theirs, can only be a mediate, not an immediate, experience, for exactly the same reasons that would apply to our experience of any other fact of the past that we could not possibly experience at all except through the experience of others. But provided that the proclamation to which we respond is indeed normed by the apostles' preaching, which

itself arose out of their immediate experience of Jesus' person, the primal source of our experience no less than of theirs is not the kerygma, but precisely and only the Jesus of history.

"To recognize this, however, is to understand why the real issue . . . is not at all the issue of *whether* the Jesus of history is the source of our Christian faith in God; it is entirely the issue of *what* Jesus of history is rightly said to be the source of our faith. Is it . . . the Jesus of history whom we first come to know only more or less probably by historical inquiry back behind the preaching of the apostles as well as of all other Christians who follow after them? Or is it, rather, . . . the Jesus of history whom we already know most certainly through the same apostolic preaching as well as all later Christian preaching insofar as it is authorized by that of the apostles? Either way, we clearly have to do with the Jesus of history as a fact of the past, even if in the one way exactly as in the other, our experience of him today is and must be a mediated experience.

"Nevertheless, there remains the issue—and it is a rock-bottom, fundamental issue—between a position . . . for which the apostolic preaching that mediates our experience is forced to function as the primary source from which the Jesus of history must still be reconstructed, and a position . . . for which this same earliest preaching is allowed to function as the primary authority through which the Jesus of history is even now to be encountered. In the one case, we have to do with the Jesus of history in his being in himself then and there in the past; while in the other case, we have to do with the Jesus of history in his meaning for us here and now in the present" (227 f.).

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"By considering in some detail each of the three points in . . . 'the contemporary revisionary consensus,' we have carried out something like a Heideggerian 'dismantling' (*Destruktion*) of the usual revisionary christology. . . . That is to say, we have tried to return from the whole long tradition of christological reflection, of which contemporary christologies are typically the revision, to the original experience underlying the constitutive christological assertion. In this way, we have tried to recover the point of this assertion, so as to give an adequate account of its meaning and truth. Thus we have asked

about the *question* to which it is the answer, the *subject* about whom it is the assertion, and the conditions that must be satisfied in order for any *predicate* appropriately used in formulating it to be . . . asserted [of its subject truly]" (*The Point of Christology*: 86 f.).

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"[T]he point of the first distinction between Jesus-in-his-being-in-himself and Jesus-in-his-meaning-for-us is that the actual Jesus, i.e., the human being Jesus bar Joseph, or Jesus of Nazareth, like any other human being, had a being in himself; he was what he was, and, assuming the objective immortality of everything actual, we may also say that he *is* what he was, whatever that may or may not have been, everlastingly. At the same time, this actual Jesus was experienced and re-presented as having a meaning for us, i.e., for any and all human beings, in that his being actual, in the meaning belonging to it, opened up a new historical situation for any and all who experience his actuality in a certain way, either immediately or mediately. Indeed, the re-presentation of the actual Jesus by those who immediately experienced him in that way functions to confront others with the decision of whether they, too, will live in this new historic situation by appropriating his meaning as also his meaning for them. To speak of Jesus-in-his-being-in-himself, then, is to speak of the actual Jesus in the first way, even as to speak of Jesus-in-his-meaning-for-us is to speak of the same actual Jesus in the second way. One may also say with Bultmann, that to speak of Jesus-in-his-being-in-himself is to speak of the '*what*' of the actual Jesus, while to speak of Jesus-in-his-meaning-for-us is to speak of the '*that*' of the actual Jesus as confronting others with a decision about the '*what*' of their own actuality

"So much for the first distinction. As regards the second, between the empirical-historical Jesus and the existential-historical Jesus, I mean: by the first, whatever could be known of the '*what*' of the actual Jesus by those who immediately experienced him or can still be inferred concerning it using their re-presentations of him as a primary empirical-historical source; and by the second, whatever could be said about the '*that*' of the actual Jesus by those who immediately experienced him and must still be said about it, accepting their re-presentation of him as a primary existential-historical authority.

"Thus, whereas the first distinction between Jesus-in-his-being-in-himself (≡ the '*what*' of the actual Jesus) and Jesus-in-his-meaning-for-us (≡ the '*that*' of the actual Jesus) is exclusively ontic, having to do with someone or something prior to and independent of us, the second distinction between the empirical-historical Jesus and the existential-historical Jesus is noetic as well as ontic, having to do with someone or something prior to and independent of us from the different standpoints of someone else experiencing [the someone or the something] accordingly" (cf. Notebooks, Spring 1991; rev. 9 October 2004).

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"[John] Knox is moved by a 'sound instinct' when he distinguishes, however confusingly and confusedly, between one kind of remembering and another and insists, in his own way, on 'the reality and importance of an extrascriptural source of knowledge of the Church's own intimate past.' Such an extrascriptural source is indeed real and important because Christian experience is not only distinguishable from scripture, but also prior to it—as well as, indeed, to the formally normative Christian witness of which the scriptural writings themselves are but [later] formulations. And this experience is a historical, more exactly, an existential-historical experience, which as such is an experience of the past and, as such, a matter of 'memory,' or 'remembrance'—not, to be sure of the '*what*' of that past, but of its '*that*,' or, to use the slightly different terms that Bultmann also uses to express the same distinction, it is the memory of 'what happened in the past, however it may have happened,' as distinct from a memory of 'how it happened.' Moreover, the proper function of scripture, as well as of the formally normative Christian witness by which the scriptural writings themselves are to be [authorized], is to mediate Christian experience as just such an existential-historical experience of the Jesus of history.

"On the other hand, the only way whereby the existential-historical experience, and thus the memory, of Jesus that is constitutive of the church can be mediated from one individual to another is through the first individual's [somehow bearing] witness to the second. Because this is so, it is hardly enough to say, as Knox does in speaking of what

for him is formally normative Christian witness—namely, the New Testament—that it serves as 'a check upon, as well as a resource for, the life of the Church (including its memory) in every age' (*The Church and the Reality of Christ*: 50). Formally normative Christian witness, whatever is rightly taken to be such, is not simply *a* check or *a* resource for the life of the church, but rather is *the* check (*auctoritas normativa*) and *the* resource (*auctoritas causativa*) therefor" (Notebooks, 25 January 1997).

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"A Christian in the strict and proper sense is a person who so experiences Jesus, immediately or mediately, as to come to obedient faith in God decisively through him—where 'obedient faith' means, first, entrusting oneself to God without reservation; and then, second, living loyally to God and to all to whom God is loyal without qualification.

"As such, a Christian at least implicitly believes certain things (*credenda*) and does certain things (*agenda*)—namely, whatever is necessarily presupposed or implied by coming to obedient faith in God decisively through Jesus, in the sense of unreserved trust in God and unqualified loyalty to God and to God's cause" (Notebooks, 18 August 1998; rev. September 2002).

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"There is no basis for speaking even of an implicit Christian faith or witness except where there is particular historical experience of Jesus in his decisive existential significance. Whether or not Bultmann is correct that *authentic* existence is not even possible prior to such experience, he is certainly correct that *Christian* existence is not so much as possible prior to it. For what makes one a Christian is not that one has an authentic self-understanding, but that one has come to such an understanding, mediately if not immediately, decisively through Jesus and is engaged in enacting this self-understanding in one's life-praxis by bearing witness to Jesus as the Christ" (Notebooks, n.d.).

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"The question christology answers could not possibly be simply the existential question because even though it is not *only* a question about Jesus, it very definitely *is* a question about Jesus; and this means that it would never so much as arise, much less ever be answered, except on the basis of particular historical experience of the Jesus about whose meaning for human existence it is the question.

"Because the christological question could not even arise except on the basis of particular experience of Jesus, it is and must be historical as well as existential, and the truth of the christological assertion that answers it could only be an a posteriori, not an a priori truth" (Notebooks, n.d.).

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"Just as Jesus himself is a historical fact, so the assertion of his decisive significance, however formulated, must also *be*, in one important part, a historical assertion. And this means that it could not be made or implied at all except on the basis of particular historical experience, mediate or immediate, of this fact" (Notebooks, n.d.).

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"Marxsen and others are clearly right in holding that Christian faith originates in the apostles' existential experience of Jesus, not in their encounter with the Christian kerygma. And they are also right in inferring from this that the kerygma, or any formulation of it, has to be validated as appropriate by appeal to this original and originating experience.

"But where they go wrong is in not clearly and consistently distinguishing this *existential* experience from *empirical* experience of 'the historical Jesus,' in the senses in which the quests of the historical Jesus, old and new (and 'renewed!') understand the term" (Notebooks, September 2000).

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"Who is a Christian?

"A Christian is someone whose human faith is Christian faith: someone, therefore, —who has come to faith in God by experiencing the explicit gift and demand of boundless love decisively through Jesus; and

—who continues in this faith by believing 'the truth as it is in Jesus' and by acting in and for 'the freedom for which Christ has set us free.' . . .

"So, if [some]one asks, When did Christian faith begin? or Since when has there been Christian faith? the answer can only be: Since there has been someone who has actually come to faith in God by experiencing the explicit gift and demand of God as boundless love decisively through Jesus. This means, among other things, that the question sometimes asked, whether Jesus' own faith was Christian faith, so that Jesus himself was a Christian, has to be answered negatively. . . . [W]hatever form of faith Jesus' own faith may have been, it could not have been, in the nature of the case, properly Christian faith, because he could not have actually come to it by experiencing the explicit gift and demand of God's boundless love decisively through Jesus. Because for Christian faith experience of Jesus himself as thus decisive is necessary to the actualization of such faith, so that Jesus must always already exist as the one decisively through whom a Christian comes to faith by experiencing the explicit gift and demand of God's love, Jesus' own human faith necessarily could not have been properly Christian faith—although it certainly could have been a form of . . . 'anonymous Christian faith.' . . .

"[T]he Jesus whom Christians assert to be the Christ is not as such one *with* whom they believe in God, but rather the one decisively *through* whom they believe in God—either immediately, as in the case of the apostles, or mediately, as in the case of all other Christians, who actually come to Christian faith only by means, directly or indirectly, of the apostles' prior faith and witness. . . . There are these two ways—and, in the nature of the case, *only* these two ways—in which [Christians] can so experience Jesus as thereby to come to faith in God decisively through him. . . . Either they experience him *immediately*, as the apostles experienced him—an apostle in the strict sense of the word being someone whose experience of the explicit gift and demand of God's love decisively

through Jesus is unmediated by any earlier such experience and witness thereto; or else they experience Jesus *mediately*, by means of the unmediated experience of the apostles and their witness of faith—however few or many the other witnesses by which the apostolic witness itself has, in turn, been mediated before they finally experience it. Thus to be a Christian is always either to *be* an apostle or else to have come to one's own Christian faith in God only through the apostles and *with* them.

"A further point to be noted about the apostolic experience of Jesus as the gift and demand of God's love made fully explicit is that it could have been experience either of the earthly Jesus or of the risen Jesus" ("Who Is a Christian?" 3 f., 8 f., 9 f.).

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"In the case of the kind of Protestant Christianity represented by the writings of Luther, . . . the explicit primal source of authority is the faith experience of the apostles, and thus the appearance in history of Jesus Christ, which, in its ontic aspect, was the man Jesus in whose truth the apostles were brought to believe and, in its noetic aspect, their experience of believing in him as this truth.

"For this kind of Christianity, then, what is taken to be formally authoritative, and thus has primary authority for it, are the concepts and symbols constituting the apostles' witness to Jesus, while all of its other concepts and symbols are taken as at best substantially authoritative, and thus have only secondary authority" (Notebooks, 5 December 1994).

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"A religion is . . . constituted as a religion by an explicit primal source of all existential and therefore religious authority, comprising both an *ontic* and a *noetic* component. The ontic component of the explicit primal source of authority is the pre-existing reality experienced as authorizing the religion; the noetic component of the source is the immediate experience of that reality as thus authorizing it. These two components are interdependent, the ontic component being, in a way, dependent on the

noetic as well as the other way around. Even though immediate experience of the authorizing reality obviously depends on the reality's being pre-existent, its only reality, so far as such immediate experience of it is concerned, is its reality as thus experienced, i.e., as authorizing, and hence both entitling and empowering, the religion in question.

"As for the Christian religion, its explicit primal source, which constitutes it as such, as the Christian religion, is the immediate experience of Jesus by the apostles as authorizing it—Jesus as thus experienced being the ontic component of the source, the apostles' immediate experience of him as such being its noetic component. Keeping in mind the interdependence of these two components, one can say that, if what is properly meant by the apostles are those who immediately experienced Jesus as the explicit primal source of the Christian religion, what is properly meant by Jesus is the one who was thus experienced by the apostles and to whom they bear witness accordingly. Because this is so, the witness of the apostles, which expresses their experience of Jesus as the explicit primal source of all existential authority, is the sole primary authority (and thus the formal norm) of the Christian religion" (Notebooks, 26 June 1980; rev. 29 April 1995).

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"Christian witness is the thought and/or speech about God that arises from specifically Christian experience and faith. But, then, what is specifically Christian experience and faith if not the experience of Jesus and the faith in God that is mediated decisively through him insofar as one is either an apostle or else someone who experiences Jesus and believes in God *with* the apostles, in communion with them? By 'apostles' here [is meant] those who were the first so to experience Jesus as to come to this faith in God through him, and whose witness of faith, being the original and originating, and hence constitutive Christian witness, is, accordingly, formally normative" (*The Understanding of Christian Faith*: 27).

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"The Jesus who is the subject of the [christological] assertion is the historical person or event, even to be able to ask about which is possible only because of particular historical experience of just this person or event. True, this experience need not be immediate, as it was in the unique case of the earliest Christian witnesses, although it cannot fail to be at least mediate historical experience, in the sense of experience mediated by that of the first witnesses as well as any of their successors through whom theirs has eventually come down to us. But if the Jesus who is the subject of the christological assertion is in this broad sense none other than 'the Jesus of history,' or 'the historical Jesus,' we still have to make a clear and sharp distinction between . . . 'the *empirical*-historical Jesus' and 'the *existential*-historical Jesus.' We must make this distinction because, as it happens, we can always be related not only to Jesus in particular but also to persons and events of the past in general in two very different ways: either empirically, in their being in themselves then and there in the past, or existentially, in their meaning for us here and now in the present.

"By 'the empirical-historical Jesus,' then, I mean the historical reality that we are accustomed to refer to by the proper name, 'Jesus,' or 'Jesus of Nazareth,' considered in its being in itself then and there in the past insofar as we are able to know it today by way of empirical-historical inquiry. On the other hand, I mean by 'the existential-historical Jesus' this same historical reality in its meaning for us here and now in the present insofar as we are able to know it through existential encounter with it, mediate if not immediate. . . . [I]n both cases, we have to do with nothing other or less than the historical Jesus, or the Jesus of history, in the very broad, undifferentiated sense of these phrases. This is . . . because we could not even ask about either the empirical-historical Jesus or the existential-historical Jesus, much less say anything at all by way of answering our question, except on the basis of a very particular historical experience of him—mediate if not immediate.

"But because Jesus could not be experienced sufficiently to ask or answer either question apart from particular historical experience of him, we today, who are neither his immediate contemporaries nor any of their earlier successors, could not possibly have such experience except mediately through the experience of those who were. Since it is also only mediately, through their experience, that we can ever hope to answer either

question, we must sooner or later have recourse to the witnesses borne by such immediate contemporaries, through which alone we have access to their experience. This means, for all practical purposes, that we must eventually recur to the earliest stratum of Christian witness to Jesus that we today are in a position to reconstruct" (87 f.).

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"From a historical standpoint, it can be said without risk of contradiction that 'the sole residuum of the event [of Christ] was the church' [John Knox]—understanding, of course, that the church, in turn, then left its mark on a much wider history in all kinds of direct and indirect ways. Although the church has always understood itself as the response to an event prior to it and independent of it, it has also claimed—and with justification—that the only access to this event is in and through its own life and witness. Thus, in our own individual faith and experience as Christians, it is always and only in and through the church that we have any share in the event of Jesus Christ, which is not only the origin of the church in history but the very principle of its existence as the church. The church continues to exist *as* the church only because, or insofar as, it is the community of believing and witnessing response to the event of Jesus Christ. And yet no Christian who understands the conditions of her or his own existence can ever think of playing the event off against the church in such a way as to imply that the church is somehow unimportant. And this is so, regardless of the judgments that she or he may make, and even find it necessary to make, about some one or more of the institutional churches. As critical as we may and must always be of all the Christian churches, our own included, the only ground of the appropriateness of our criticism—because the only source of its criterion—is the church itself as the community of believing and witnessing response to the decisive event of Jesus Christ" (110 f.).

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"It is distinctive of Christian faith and experience . . . to think and speak of the church as precisely the community of the Spirit—even as what Christians think and speak

of as the Spirit is the empowering presence whose continuing work occurs explicitly and decisively in and through the community of the church. The church . . . is the community that first came into being as a visible community with the explicit coming of the Spirit and in which the event of Jesus Christ that constitutes the community ever continues to take place through the Spirit's own witness to it. Thus the very existence of the church as the community of obedient faith responding to God's decisive self-revelation through Jesus is the gift of the Spirit of God; and so, in encountering the church, as Christians do, as the immediate ground of their own Christian faith and witness, they cannot but understand this encounter as itself an encounter with God—with God's own Holy Spirit. Even as the church is the community that the Spirit of God calls into being, so the historical community that is the church is adequately understood theologically only as the visible, audible presence of the Spirit of God. . . .

"So much, then, by way of general comment on the relation of the Christian understanding of the Holy Spirit to specifically Christian faith and experience. The point . . . is twofold; (1) that the church as the visible community of witness to Jesus Christ participates in the primary authority of the apostles that explicitly authorizes all specifically Christian faith and experience; and (2) that the primal source of such faith and experience as well as of the church's authority in explicitly authorizing it essentially involves what Christians understand by 'the Holy Spirit'—just as sure as it essentially involves what they mean by 'Jesus Christ'" (111 f.).

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"[I]n thus developing the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, I have not at all departed from the procedure I have been concerned to follow in previous discussions. In beginning, as I have . . . , with Christian faith and experience, I have still begun, in effect, with Christian witness and its constitutive christological assertion that Jesus is of decisive significance for human existence because he decisively re-presents the meaning of God for us, and so the meaning of ultimate reality for us. I say I have begun with this assertion 'in effect' because it is precisely Christian faith and experience that this christological assertion, in one formulation or another, makes explicit. In the present chapter, however,

... we have focused our attention ... on the meaning of God for us as the presence empowering our own existence in obedient faith as well as our existence and all other creaturely existence simply as such. But the connection with the constitutive christological assertion should be clear, for we have Paul's testimony that, if 'no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit,' it is also true, conversely, that 'no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says, "Jesus be cursed" (1 Cor 12:3)'" (116 f).

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"Christ and grace and faith are the interdependent moments that determine the Christian *proprium*, in the sense of the distinctively Christian answer to the existential question of the ultimate meaning of human existence. Christ is the *historical* moment, grace and faith together, the *existential* moment—grace being its *metaphysical* aspect, faith its *moral* aspect. Moreover, if grace and faith are essential to the decisive significance of Christ, Christ is essential to grace and faith's decisively becoming event. In other words, the existential-historical Jesus is not just the external combination of two independent realities; he is a new, distinctively different reality, each of whose two essential moments, existential and historical, is qualified by the other. . . .

"Thus . . . the meaning of God for us in its metaphysical aspect is the prevenient love of God that is decisively re-presented in this Jesus, just as, in its moral aspect, it is the faith and returning love for God and all things in God that this Jesus decisively authorizes" (Notebooks, Fall 1982-83; rev. 10 September 2003).

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"[I]t is at best one-sided to define 'Christian faith and witness' in purely formal terms as I have sometimes defined them—namely, as 'human self-understanding and [life-]praxis insofar as they are mediated—immediately or mediately—through Jesus Christ' (*Revisoning the Past*: 17 f.). So formulated, the definition focuses solely on the *ontic*, as distinct from the *noetic*, pole of the Christian *proprium*; and as understandable as such one-sidedness may be, it is nonetheless exactly that. Consequently, my definition

needs to be reformulated in some such way as this: [Christian faith and witness are] human self-understanding and life-praxis insofar as they are mediated—immediately or mediately—through **experience of Jesus Christ**. . . .

"[T]he significance of the orthodox doctrine of the *media salutis*—given the insight that Jesus Christ himself is *the* (= primal) *medium salutis exhibitivum*—is that it allows one rightly to elaborate the distinction (= the difference as well as the unity, and the unity as well as the difference) between Christianity—or, better, perhaps, 'Christianness' (= *die Christlichkeit*)—on the one hand, and authentic human existence (= [eternal] life), on the other. Christianness is related to authenticity as means is related to end—as "means of salvation," or, more formally, "means of ultimate transformation" from inauthentic to authentic existence. As such, however, Christianness has two poles: an *ontic* pole = Jesus Christ, and a *noetic* pole = faith. The first pole, accordingly, is rightly distinguished as the (= primal) *medium salutis exhibitivum*, the church and its so-called means of salvation being the other—primary and secondary—*media exhibitiva* respectively, while the second pole is rightly distinguished as *the* (= primal) medium *ital* *salutis apprehensivum*, hope and love being the primary *media apprehensiva*, and good works, of mercy as well as of piety, being the secondary *media apprehensiva*" (cf. Notebooks, 1 November 1994).

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