

Existential-historical statements have as much to do with history, in the broad sense of facts of the past, including especially facts of the human past, as do empirical-historical statements. But whereas empirical-historical statements are about such facts in their being in themselves, then and there in the past, existential-historical statements are about such facts in their meaning for us, here and now in the present.

This explains why empirical-historical statements necessarily exclude the pseudo-historical statements of legend as well as the transhistorical statements of myth, while existential-historical statements, on the contrary, may very well include both of these types of statements, legends as well as myths both providing terms in which existential-historical statements may be (but do not have to be) expressed.

Thus the statement that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and, for a time, at least, labored alongside John as one of his followers is an empirical-historical statement whose truth or falsity can and should be determined by strictly empirical-historical evidence and arguments. On the contrary, the statement that, after his baptism by John, the Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness, where he remained for forty days, was tempted by Satan, and so on, is an existential-historical statement in mythical as well as legendary terms, whose truth or falsity can and should be determined by the evidence and arguments required to verify or falsify existential-historical statements of that particular type.

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