

On Bultmann's interpretation, the Johannine representation of Jesus as speaking and acting, not on his own authority, but on the authority of God (cf., e.g., 7:16 f.), is so far from in any way diminishing Jesus' authority as to be intended to increase it.

But, then, why can't one say the same thing, *mutatis mutandis*, about the synoptics' 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.)? In other words, the point of the synoptics' representation is in no way to diminish the definitiveness of encounter with Jesus, but, rather, in every way to increase it. What happens in and around Jesus is not merely preparatory to the last things, but the last things themselves, so far as they can happen in and through the things that are not last.

n.d.; rev. 20 April 2005