

Bultmann is not only clear but emphatic throughout his writings that Christian revelation reveals no new knowledge, metaphysical or moral, that cannot be known by any thoughtful human being reflecting on her or his existence. In fact, he says, the guiding idea of God as a God whose grace is not to be earned by one's accomplishments is not at all a specifically Christian or Jewish idea, but has dawned on people everywhere, proving that, although a perverted need for acceptance has dominated human life everywhere, it has also shown itself to be sinful because there has always been a better knowledge corresponding to it (GV 2: 271 ff.; 48 f.).

So, in Bultmann's view, what comes to expression in the Old Testament-Jewish-Christian tradition, so far as the understanding of human existence is concerned, is only what any human being simply as such is capable of knowing and responsible for knowing.

7 December 2001