

I've only recently become aware that Bultmann says more than one thing about "the true scandal" that he regularly opposes to "the false scandal" posed for modern persons by the mythical world picture of the Bible and of traditional church proclamation. Indeed, if he doesn't exactly refer to more than one scandal by the phrase, the one scandal he refers to evidently has two ~~different~~ <sup>distinct</sup> aspects.  
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In one passage where he he expressly refers to "the real stumbling-block" (*der wirkliche Anstoß*), identifying it as that "the [w]ord of God calls man out of all man-made security," he goes on to say:

"The scientific world-view engenders a great temptation, namely, that man strive for mastery over the world and over his own life. He knows the laws of nature and can use the powers of nature according to his plans and desires. He discovers more and more accurately the laws of social and of economic life, and thus organizes the life of the community more and more effectively. . . . Thus modern man is in danger of forgetting two things: first, that his plans and undertakings should be guided not by his own desires for happiness and security, usefulness and profit, but rather by obedient response to the challenge of goodness, truth and love, by obedience to the commandment of God which man forgets in his selfishness and presumption; and secondly, that it is an illusion to suppose that real security can be gained by men organizing their own personal and community life. . . .

"It is the word of God which calls man away from his selfishness and from the illusory security which he has built up for himself. It calls him to God who is beyond the world and beyond scientific thinking. At the same time, it calls man to his true self. For the self of man, his inner life, his personal existence is also beyond the visible world and beyond rational thinking. . . . By means of science men try to take possession of the world, but in fact the world gets possession of men. We can see in our times to what degree men are dependent on technology, and to what degree technology brings with it terrible consequences. To believe in the [w]ord of God means to abandon all merely human security and thus to overcome the despair which arises from the attempt to find security, an attempt which is always vain" (*Jesus Christ and Mythology*: 39 f.).

Although Bultmann speaks of the true scandal here as lying solely in God's calling human beings to abandon all their attempts at self-contrived security, it is significant that he also speaks of modern man's being tempted to forget *two* things: not only the illusory character of all self-contrived security, but also that what should guide his life is not his own desires, but obedient response to God's commandment, which is glossed as "the challenge of goodness, truth and love." In other words, as Bultmann puts it here, modern man is scandalized by the word of God *both* as the gift and demand of grace, which calls for faith and thus for giving up all self-contrived security, *and* as the challenge of God's commandment, which calls modern man away from doing what he wants to do, to radical moral obedience.

This second aspect of the true scandal, then, is expressly referred to in another earlier passage in the same book, where Bultmann says:

"For modern man the mythological conception of the world, the conceptions of eschatology, of redeemer and of redemption, are over and done with. . . . [O]ught we to pass over those sayings of the New Testament which contain such mythological conceptions and to select other sayings which are not such stumbling-blocks to modern man? In fact, the preaching of Jesus is not confined to eschatological sayings. He proclaimed also the will of God, which is God's demand, the demand for the good. Jesus demands truthfulness and purity, readiness to sacrifice and to love. He demands that the whole man be obedient to God, and he protests against the delusion that one's duty to God can be fulfilled by obeying certain external commandments. If the ethical demands of Jesus are stumbling-blocks to modern man, then it is to his selfish will, not to his understanding, that they are stumbling-blocks" (17 f.).

It seems clear enough, then, that the Christian message is scandalous in at least two respects: in respect of its proclamation of grace alone/faith alone over against the vain attempts of human beings to save themselves; and in respect of its moral demand, which is a scandal to human selfishness.

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