

There is at least one place where Marxsen argues almost exactly as Bultmann does about the newness or oldness of Jesus' understanding of God. In *Christologie-praktisch*: 72 f., he argues that what Jesus believed *about* God, or believed *that* "dogmatically," is not different from what almost anyone in his environment would have formulated in a similar way. The difference, he says, is only this: while all believed *that* God is thus and so—"belief" here being the expression for an intellectual conviction—Jesus believed *in* God—"belief" (or "faith") here being the expression for entrustment. That is, he entrusted himself to this God *now*. In the midst of the old age he already risked living as one was supposed eventually to live in God's presence around God's table in the new age. For Jesus, God was really there and not just an idea (*Vorstellung*, faith being an *Einstellung*).

I say "almost exactly," however, because, whereas for Marxsen, Jesus preaches the gospel as well as the law (along the lines of the summarium in Mk 1:14 f.), for Bultmann Jesus, like the Old Testament prophets before him, preaches only the law and the promise (even if the "*that*" of his doing so, being a call for decision with respect to his person, is an implicit preaching of the gospel). Thus Bultmann says, "Jesus' preaching does not develop any new ideas; but just as it has always been true of these old ideas that they cannot be possessed through theoretical insight but become actual solely through faithful, obedient action, so his preaching affirms, Even so is it now! And this means that the decision he demands is at the same time a decision with respect to his own person, in which the word is now encountered, God's last word before it is too late."

In short, whereas Bultmann sees the novelty in Jesus' preaching in his call for repentance at the *categorical*, or moral, level of action, Marxsen sees it in Jesus' call for repentance at the *transcendental*, or existential, level of action. In both cases, however, the novelty is not a novelty in ideas, but in a new demand that idea become action—in Marxsen's terms, that the *Vorstellung* of God's reign-rule become the *Einstellung* of a faith that bears good fruit.

11 February 2005