

Within only a few pages, Marxsen says three different things about what he means by the phrase, "die Sache Jesu, " as used in his statement, "Die Sache Jesu geht weiter" (*Die Sache Jesu geht weiter*: 14, 12, 16). My question is how these things are to be understood so that all three are consistent and appropriate.

The three things are:

1. "Die Sache Jesu " is "das, worum es ihm ging, worauf es ihm ankam"—"Jesus' thing" is "what he was about, what concerned him."

2. "Die Sache Jesu" is (to be understood as) "einbrechende Gottesherrschaft"—"Jesus' thing" is (to be understood as) "(the) breaking in of God's rule."

3. "Die Sache Jesu" means "[Jesus] selbst in seinem Verkündigen, Tun und Verhalten"—"Jesus' thing" means "Jesus himself in his proclaiming, doing, and conduct."

But if, according to 1 and 3, what Jesus was about, was concerned with, was himself in his proclaiming, doing, and conduct, then how could it be that, according to 1 and 2, what Jesus was about, was concerned with, was the breaking in of God's rule? Only, I take it, if Jesus himself in his proclaiming, doing, and conduct was the *means* wherethrough the breaking in of God's rule took place.

Interestingly, a very similar question might seem to arise from what Bultmann has to say in *Jesus* about "das Werk Jesu" in the sense of "die Sache, für die er sich einsetzte," or "als das, was er eigentlich gewollt hat" (*Jesus*: 12). This, Bultmann says, "läßt sich ja nur reproduzieren als ein Zusammenhang von Sätzen, von Gedanken, als L e h r e" (13). But, then, toward the end of the same book, he says "es gibt eine Würdigung Jesu Person, die seiner Absicht entspricht, sofern er gesandt ist von Gott, sofern er T r ä g e r d e s W o r t e s ist" (181; cf. *Glauben und Verstehen* 1: 204, where Bultmann says *expressis verbis* that Jesus "wollte der Träger des entscheidenden Wortes von Gott in der letzten Stunde sein"). In this case, however, any question about

consistency is anticipated by Bultmann's saying expressly that Jesus "hat d u r c h , das Wort gewirkt " (italics added), thereby making clear that Jesus' willing his teaching was simply the *means* wherethrough he realized his intention to be the bearer of God's word.

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