

Marxsen says, "Jesus ist auferstanden' heißt nichts anderes als: Der gekreuzigte Jesus ruft heute in den Glauben" (*Die Auferstehung Jesu von Nazareth*: 130). I say, in response, "This is a dangerously elliptical formulation that fails to do justice to the meaning of Jesus' resurrection, even as Marxsen himself understands it."

Accordingly, I should wish to reformulate his statement—whose positive point I unhesitatingly take—as follows: "'Jesus is risen' means that the crucified Jesus, by the action of God, is God's Messiah ^{who} ~~and~~, as such, calls to faith today through the Christian witness of faith." Alternatively: "'Jesus is risen' means that the Jesus who calls to faith today through the Christian witness of faith is the crucified Jesus who, by God's own action, is the Messiah of God."

Of course, these formulations, with their talk of "the action of God," "God's Messiah," and so on, are, in part, mythological and require to be demythologized and understood symbolically. But they are not "*only* symbols" because the meaning they express, in part, symbolically can also be expressed in literal terms by saying: "'Jesus is risen' means that the crucified Jesus made really present through the Christian witness of faith is the decisive re-presentation of the meaning of ultimate reality for us and is therefore of decisive significance for human existence, including *your* existence here and now."

In other words, whether or not "Jesus is risen" is credible depends entirely upon the same condition upon which any other formulation of the constitutive christological assertion necessarily depends: whether or not the possibility of self-understanding that the Christian witness explicitly calls its hearers to actualize is one and the same with the possibility that ultimate reality itself always already implicitly calls every human being to actualize.

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