

If Marxsen is right—as he argued in the first of his three lectures—that one does not and cannot *believe* that events occurred, because one can only be *informed*, mediately if not immediately, that events have occurred,—if he is right about this, then one does not and cannot believe that "Jesus believed God." That Jesus believed God could only be an event that occurred, in the same way in which the fact, if it be a fact, that Jesus was raised from the dead could only be an event. And that the first occurred, exactly as that the second occurred, one can only be informed, whether by one's own first-hand experience or by accepting a report based on someone else's first-hand experience as a true report.

For this reason, the faith-assertion that Jesus is the Son of God cannot be true, as Marxsen claims, because Jesus believed God. If it really is a faith-assertion, then it cannot be true because an event has occurred; and yet the only thing that could be meant by saying that Jesus believed God is that an event has occurred.

This is so, at any rate, if the assertion is properly taken literally—as an empirical-historical assertion about Jesus as a figure of the past. It could be otherwise, however, if the assertion that Jesus believed God were to be properly taken, rather, as legendary—as an existential-historical assertion about Jesus' decisive significance for us in the present. In that event, it would itself be a faith-assertion, which could not provide a reason for the other faith-assertion that Jesus is God's Son. One faith-assertion cannot provide a reason for another, although any faith-assertion, being functionally equivalent with any other, may be interchangeable with it.