

There is clearly a problem with talking about "the meaning of x for us."

To say, for example, that christological predicates are by way of expressing the meaning of Jesus for us may be (mis)understood to mean that they express the meaning that Jesus has only for those asserting the predicates, or, worse still, that the christological assertion they somehow express or imply is true only in the sense of *true for* them. But as certain as it is that faith, *sensu stricto*, exists only where I accept the meaning of Jesus *for me*, it is just as certain that his meaning for me is not the only meaning I intend to express when I confess, e.g., "Jesus is the Christ." In making this confession, I also intend to assert or imply that Jesus is worthy of having the same meaning for any human being whatsoever.

Recognizing this is evidently closely connected with the criticism I've long made of Marxsen's typical analysis of "second statements." That God is *my* Creator is indeed what I confess when I confess the Creed authentically as a symbol of my own obedient faith and belief. But what I *imply*—and *necessarily* imply—by my confession is that God is the primal source and final end of everything and everyone and is therefore worthy of being acknowledged as such by anyone "capable of God," and so capable of making such an acknowledgement.

Of course, that x is worthy of being so acknowledged need not imply that y isn't—where x and y are different values of the variable, "the all-encompassing whole from, through, and for which are all things and for which we exist, and which is therefore our primal source and final end." Provided that x and y , although verbally and even conceptually different, are not really so because they both necessarily imply the same self-understanding as authentic and the same metaphysics and morals as true—provided that this condition is satisfied, x and y may both be worthy of being acknowledged by anyone as the primal source and the final end of her or his own existence and of all existence, even though her or his actual experience and reflection warrant so acknowledging one or the other but not both.