Bultmann speaks of Jesus as having demanded decision for his person as the bearer of the word of God (= der Träger des Wortes Gottes). He also says that Jesus claimed to be God's messenger with the final, decisive word (= Gottes Bote mit dem letzten, entscheidenden Wort).

But both of these formulations are like my saying, more formally, that Jesus decisively re-presented the meaning of strictly ultimate reality for us. That is, they may be understood either as empirical-historical statements that require to be verified in the way of such statements generally, or as existential-historical statements that require a correspondingly different kind of verification.

My question is what, if anything, the systematic ambiguity thus revealed has to do with Bultmann's distinctions between the "what" and the "that" of Jesus., or between his "personaliaty" and his "person."

3 December 2006