

January 10, 1973

Application of Method in Theology to Christology

Christology: doctrine of the person of Christ

Soteriology: doctrine of the work of Christ

NT much more a soteriology than a Christology

hence, Lucien Cerfaux, *Le Christ dans la théologie de saint Paul*

MT not the application of a set of rules

not a process of deduction from a set of premisses

but a self-appropriation

an explicit self-awareness

a finding out for oneself and in oneself

of what it is to know (to experience, to understand, to judge)

why is doing that knowing

what does one know when one does it

of what the human good is

of the carriers of meaning of its elements functions realms stages

of what it is to be religious

of field and subject and functional specialties

of interpretation history dialectic foundations doctrines systems

so that one can enter into the minds of other peoples

at other times and places

so that one can discern the developments of language thought feeling

so that one can determine what was going forward

so that one can be confronted by people better than oneself

and learn from that confrontation

Quidquid recipitur, ad modum recipientis recipitur

One's capacity to assimilate determines how much one will assimilate

Method is concerned principally to enlarge and enrich one's

capacity to assimilate

Method applied to Christology

means a further stage in one's self-appropriation

You may have acquired some self-appropriation from Ins Meth

Applying to Christology means a set of practical tasks

in which that self-appropriation is challenged to growth and

development

Sitz im Leben: what they were up to (form reveals function)

Method : what I am up to

Do I prefer Fuller to Cullmann?

My sole preference is to follow the advice of people who I am sure know far more about the matter than I do.

Last year I was teaching this course at Harvard divinity and I was living in a community of six of whom ~~xxx~~ three had first class doctorates and one a first class master's degree in Xtian Origins. I asked them what would be the best book to use to introduce students to current studies in NT Christology. They advised Fuller.

In choosing Fuller I am not settling any issue in the later functional specialties: Dialectic Foundations Doctrines Systematics; I am solely concerned in urging you to become acquainted with the present state of the question.

Method 187: "What starts the process.....

188 f "Now I have been.....

193 "Besides the Judgements....

J. H. Hester, Doing History, Bloomingdale and London: Indiana University Press, 1971 (PB Midland Book 147) pp. 81 ff. on the society of professional historians.

My purpose at present is not to move you into membership in the society of professional historians; it is simply to convey to you as convincingly as I can that the society of professional historians exists and, in some incomplete fashion what it is like.

It remains of course that I have no regrets about having followed the advice of my learned companions at 1627 Mass Ave in Cambridge

Those that have read Method in Theology will be fully aware that it is in terms differentiations of consciousness, cultural differences, the scholarly bridge over cultural differences, the methodical bridge over differentiations of consciousness.

While Fuller does not discuss any of these methodological issues, he is fully aware of them in the concrete. He distinguishes three distinct cultural backgrounds and goes on to treat the NT from four different viewpoints and with an openness to a fifth. First, from the viewpoint of Jesus who proclaimed the kingdom of Gpd. Secondly from the viewpoint of the early Palestinian community that proclaimed Jesus as Lord and Messiah. Thirdly from the viewpoint of Hellenistic Judaism that read the OT in Greek. Fourthly from the viewpoint of the Gentile mission that did not know the OT. Fifthly with an openness to later developments such as the councils of Nicea and Chalcedon.

This openness to later developments is x somewhat lacking in Cullmann

P. 247: "One can hardly say with Cullmann that the Christology of the NT is purely functional. Much of it certainly is, especially in the purely Jewish phases...."

P. 257, note 1:

Many years ago Mortimer Adler published a book entitled,  
How to read a book.

There are very many ways of reading a book. But some books are seminal. They lead one on to reading further books and to writing books of one's own. To read such books properly one has to assimilate them, to make what they have to say one's own.

I would distinguish two different manners in which Fuller's book may be assimilated.

Assimilation by a doctoral candidate in NT studies would involve the assimilation not only of what Fuller has to say but also of all the authors to whom he refers and defers.

Assimilation by students in a different field of specialization will involve only a study of Fuller: study is not just reading the printed page; it is working out the questions Fuller is attempting to answer (Collingwood, Gadamer) and why he gives the answers that he does.

This is a general course in Christology not confined to NT specialists, so the second manner is all that the present course demands.

Team work is quite acceptable provided, of course, it is not only one member of the team that does any work.

Please note what is the value of taking a course at a university. The value has been put very succinctly. It makes you a lot<sup>do</sup> of work that is really useful but that otherwise you would would never have done.

As has been noted, critical history involves two interdependent parts

First one endeavors to understand one's sources so that one will be able to use them intelligently

Secondly one uses the sources intelligently to discover what they have to reveal

Marrou 187 f.

Fuller chapters two to eight: understanding one's sources  
chapter nine: using one's sources; building on the foundations

Method xi first #  
70 f.

Fuller: three cultural settings: Palestinian community  
Hellenistic Judaism  
Gentile Mission

Jesus ministry

His reception in each of three settings

Notion of context

Formal: words sentences paragraphs chapters books life & times

Actual: nest of questions and answers that is gradually discovered  
cf Method 163 f 184 f

Method pp 253 - 262: already accessible public meaning; the origination of new meanings for existing words and the coining of new words; under the auspices of a commonsense differentiation of consciousness, or a systematic differentiation, or of the self-appropriation of interiority

Stages on meaning Method 85 ff)

Early language. The Greek discovery of mind. Modern science, scholarship, philosophy.

# Sample of how to go about study

## Meanings available in early Xtian Palestinian community

### 1. Messiah, Christos, the anointed one. (Fuller 23 ff )

In specific NT sense: the regent of God's eschatological kingdom  
Never so used in OT

#### a) In OT primarily used to denote the historical kings

Beginning with Samuel's anointing of Saul (1 Sam 10 1)

the kings of Judah customarily consecrated to their office by anointing  
Today generally recognized that the custom of anointing and  
as well the practice of monarchy itself were taken over by  
by the Hebrews from neighboring Canaanite peoples

With the practice was taken over much of the ideology of kingship  
This ideology finds expression in the royal psalms 2 20 21 45 72  
89 110 132 which now are widely believed to date from the age of m  
The king is hailed as son of God (2 Sam 7 14; Ps 2 7). He is  
promised rule over the whole earth as viceroy of Yahweh  
himself (Ps 2 8), and his reign will be one of supernatural  
peace justice and prosperity (Ps 72). Such ideas are general  
in the ancient east.

This concept of kingship was baptized into the Yahwist religion.  
The monarchy was established under the covenant made by Yahweh  
with his people. The king remains responsible to Yahweh for the  
exercise of his power. If he fails in his duties, he is  
censured by the prophets who speak in the name of Yahweh himself  
(of Nathan and David, 2 Sam 12 1-15); Hebrew only limited monarchy  
Though the king was named son of God (as were Assyrian kings),  
there is hardly a trace of any divinization of the king, (unlike  
Egyptian Pharaohs). He is not ontologically divine, but  
predestined elected and adopted into sonship with Yahweh,  
and that involved responsibilities no less than privileges.

Messiah throughout the OT means only an empirical figure,  
never as eschatological one; always one reigning the present  
never one to come in the future. Two passages (Gen 49 10;  
Num 24 17), taken messianically at Qumran and by Xtians,  
today are thought to refer originally to David and his reign.

b) Messianic hope

The title, Messiah, Anointed One, is not used

The hope is for a future king that will live up to the ideal David

The hope is occasioned by bad kings, Ahaz, who do not

Proto-Isaias 7 10-16; 9, 1-7; 11, 1-9; Micah 5, 2-4

Is 7 10-16: if one assumes with J Barr that Immanuel (v. 14)

is an ideal king of the Davidic line to be born in the near future and to reign as the true embodiment of God's presence with his people, restoring them with peace and prosperity

Is 9 1-7: almost certainly an authentic prophecy of Isaiah made in 733 when Tiglath Pileser III incorporated part of northern kingdom into Assyrian empire. The prophet hopes for a new king of the Davidic line who will recover the lost territory and will restore the peace, prosperity, and justice of David's reign. Perfect relation between king and Yahweh is stressed (v. 6).

A century later Jeremiah was still looking for the coming of an ideal king, the righteous Branch whom Yahweh will raise up for David (Jer 23 5 f.). His reign will be characterized by justice and peace and there is a hint of charismatic endowment in the prediction that he will "deal wisely." Difficulty from Jer 22 30 perhaps merely apparent.

A little later Ezechiel still retains something of the traditional hope of an ideal king from the Davidic line (Ezek 34 23 ff). In 21 25-27 after referring to the deposition of the reigning king (Zedekiah ?), he speaks of the restoration of the monarchy when "he comes whose right it is." (v 27) but here there is no reference to David. Has Ezekial begun to detach Messianic hope from the Davidic line? The overall impression is that, if he retained the traditional Davidic hope, at least he was growing cool towards it. So he paved the way for the transference of hope from a future king to a future priest. It is in the P tradition that the rite for the consecration of a priest by anointing first appears (Exod 29 7; 40 13-15; Lev 8 1-12).

In Deutero-Isaiah (ch. 45) there is a vivid prophecy of the return to Palestine as an eschatological event, but there is no mention of a Davidic king or anointed priest. The one named God's anointed is Cyrus.

The exile marks the emergence of various messianic hopes: in addition to the initial Davidic hope, there is a priestly hope (Ezek 40-48), and an eschatological hope detached from any specifically messianic connections (Deut-Is)

Revival of Davidic hope when Zerubbabel a descendent of David's was enthroned. Hag 2 23 Zech 3 8-10; 4 7; 6 9-14. It is felt that the name of Zerubbabel has been removed from Zech 6 11 and replaced by that of the priest Joshua, when Zerubbabel proved unworthy

After this Davidic messianic hope, even in its generalized form of the expectation of an ideal king, continued for long only as an occasional flicker. It is absent from the P tradition (in which the Messiah is a priest), from 1 and 2 Chron, and even from much of post-exilic prophecy.

Nehemiah and Ezra are preoccupied with the organization of the community under the law

The eschatological passages of the later prophets (Tr9ito-Isaiah, Malachi, Zechariah 9-14) often contain no reference to the ~~xt~~ Messianic figure thus continuing a tradition begun by deutero Isaiah. One of the few specifically messianic passages from this period is Zech 9 9 f. where the term, king (melekh), is used.

As the Maccabees were not of Davidic descent, it is not surprising that their time did not give rise to a messianism of the specifically Davidic form. In that era the predominant type of eschatological hope was apocalyptic, and its redemptive agent was a super-historical figure, the Son of man. Only occasionally in apocalyptic literature is there mention of a messiah.

In Dan 9 25 f., two figures are mentioned, each is named messiah, commonly thought to be past historical figures

The Similitudes of Enoch (37-71) are unique among apocalyptic writings: the figure of the Son of man and the messiah have completely coalesced.



The Testament of the twelve Patriarchs in its present form includes Xtian interpolations; but parts of it have been found at Qumran so there is no doubt that the original nucleus was pre-Christian. Here we find for the first time the expectation of two Messiahs, one priestly of the tribe of Levi, the other kingly of the tribe of Judah. Unlike Zech 6, 11, these two are not already existing historical figures but future eschatological figures; further the two are not of equal rank but the priestly one takes precedence.

Exactly the same picture reappears in the Qumran writings, except that the Damascus Document speaks of the Messiah (singular) of Aaron and Israel

The Qumran texts witness to the first significant revival after the exile of the strictly messianic hope -- in the sense of a davidic king -

Nor was THE REVIVAL confined to a single group. Disappointment with the Hasmonean rulers, foreign conquest by the Romans in 63, the Hellenizing policy of the Herods, all combined to foster a renewal of Davidic messianism. Nowhere so well expressed as in Ps Sol 17. He is a son of David. He triumphs over the enemies of Israel and rules over God's people in peace justice and prosperity. He is charismatically endowed with the Holy Spirit. He is a human figure. He has no miraculous powers. He is not an apocalyptic son of man.