Verweyen appeals to Mark’s Gospel as the primary biblical support for his proposal concerning the basis of Easter faith. He emphasizes that in regard to the question concerning the basis of Easter faith, Mark takes a special position among the evangelists. “Not only does he — like Luke and John — make it clear that the disciples properly (de jure) could and should have come to Easter faith before the appearances of the Risen One, although de facto (apart from the ‘beloved disciple’ in John and the women in Matthew) they first came to the faith through such manifestations.” Mark “places the actual origin of the fully valid confession of Christ” as the Son of God “at the conclusion of the earthly life of Jesus: in the mouth of the centurion at the cross.” Verweyen observes that there is a growing consensus among exegetes that the confession of the Roman centurion (15:39) represents the only fully valid confession of a human person to Jesus Christ in the entire Gospel of Mark. Two things, however, remain contested: (1) the meaning which the Markan “Easter story” possesses against this background; (2) the evidence which led the centurion to make this confession.²³¹

(1) In the original Markan conclusion, there is not a single explicit appearance narrative. Appearances of the Risen One are first reported in the appended conclusion to the Gospel (16:9-

20). The evangelist himself only has the young man at the tomb take up the promise of Jesus himself (14:28) and command the women to tell Peter and the disciples that they will see him in Galilee (16:7). “But here the relation to what otherwise in the New Testament is known as Easter appearances is so obscure that some exegetes could think of a reference to the parousia.”

In any case, Verweyen judges that on the basis of the centurion’s confession (15:39) and the lay out of the whole Gospel, one can hardly speak of an announcement of a “confirmatory vision.”

Verweyen dismisses recent tendencies to praise Mark for his evaluation of the women as first witnesses of the resurrection and to see in this witness the proper finale of the Gospel. “As historically plausible as the supposition of a first witness of the women may be, it cannot be advocated as a statement of Mark.” Verweyen concludes that Mark’s guiding intention in Mk 16:1-8 — in continuation of his critical ecclesiology motivated by the theology of the cross — should most likely be the effort to show, how despite the Easter message and the instruction of the kerygma, the faith of the established Church remains hanging in the balance (and behind the confession of gentiles).

(2) Verweyen attributes central significance to the question:


236. “The attempt of E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *Zu ihrem Gedächtnis . . . , to get around Mk 16:8 does not appear to me to be convincing” (Verweyen, *Gottes letztes Wort*, 459, n. 52).

in the perspective of Mark, what is the decisive reason for the confession of the Roman centurion? "Is it the supernatural accompanying circumstances of Jesus’ death, or is it the special character of this human dying — and wherein, then, is this special character to be seen?"

A number of circumstances have received consideration as possible basis for the "seeing" of the centurion:

- the darkness which came over the whole land from the sixth to ninth hour (15:33);
- Jesus’ prayer of Ps 22:2 in a loud voice (v. 34);
- the loud death cry of Jesus (v. 37);
- the tearing of the curtain of the temple (v. 38).

Verweyen concludes that in the confusing multiplicity of proposed interpretations, every attempt to take into account the discussion of at least the most important arguments on the way to a proposable interpretation, unavoidably possesses a fragmentary character. He cautions that those attempts at interpretation should be approached with great reserve, which are ultimately based on unprovable hypotheses concerning the actual occurrences at the crucifixion of Jesus or concerning the redactional history of the Markan text.238

Verweyen also claims that the attempt to soften the prayer-cry of Jesus (v. 34) by the assumption that (actually or according to the insinuation of the passion narrative) Jesus recited the entire Psalm 22 — a song of complaint and thanksgiving — is hardly to be grounded from the Markan text.239 "This assumption is unnecessary for warding off the idea that Jesus died in despair; rather it would weaken the power of Jesus’ union with God maintained in the most extreme circumstances, which comes to expression here." In the words of Hans Urs von Balthasar, this consisted precisely in the fact that Jesus “in full consciousness of having been abandoned by the Father, did not lose ‘faith’ in the Father, whom he addresses as ‘my God, my God’, with

238. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 459. In this category he classifies G. Lohfink, Der letzte Tag Jesu. Die Ereignisse der Passion (Freiburg, 1987) 74-76.
239. Verweyen refers to the balanced judgement of J. Gnilka, Das Evangelium nach Markus, 2. Teilband (Zürich: Benzingier, 1979) 322.
whom, therefore, he maintained the one-sided dialogue and thus surrendered himself to ‘the no longer felt hands’ of the Father.’  

Other interpretations ground the confession of the centurion in the miraculous accompanying circumstances of Jesus’ death. One is more reserved and relates the seeing of the centurion, not to the cry of Jesus but only to occurrences at the death of Jesus, especially to the miraculous darkness. Another supposes that the centurion could observe from Golgotha (possibly localized by Mark on the Mount of Olives) how the gigantic (outer) curtain of the temple tore asunder. Verweyten sees no essential difference between the two interpretations from a theological point of view: “In both cases it is presupposed — as already by Thomas Aquinas — that supernatural events had to come to the aid of the eyes of the gentile in view of the powerlessness of Jesus.”

According to Verweyten’s interpretation, the wording of Mark 15:39 provides the key: “Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, ‘Truly this man was God’s Son.’” Here precisely the fact that the centurion stood facing Jesus is emphasized. “Hence, only the special manner of Jesus’ expiring comes into consideration as object of the ‘seeing’ of the centurion.” Verweyten judges that the reference to the tearing of the temple curtain (v. 38) would then, in the intention of the evangelist, be thought of as a help for the reader to understand the confession of the centurion correctly.

241 Cf. Gnirka, Das Evangelium nach Markus, 2., Teilband, 313.
243 Summa Theologica, III, Q.44, a.2, ad 3.
244 Verweyten, Gottes letztes Wort, 460-61.
245 Verweyten believes that J. Ernst presents a plausible interpretation of the contested v. 38: “As v. 39 shows, Mark probably had the symbolism of the separation (concretely through the outer curtain) in mind and wanted to play upon the revelation of the Gospel for the Gentile world. The death of Jesus has removed the last hindrance; now the nations have free access” (J. Ernst, Das Evangelium nach Markus [Regensburg: Pustet, 1981] 437).
darkness lasting from the sixth to the ninth hour signals to the reader the eschatological significance of the death hour of Jesus beginning after it."²⁴⁶

The "expiring" of Jesus has also been interpreted as a miraculous basis for the centurion's confession of Jesus as Son of God. "From the patristic period until today, the idea has been advocated that the reference to the 'loud voice', with which Jesus uttered his death cry (v. 37), underscores his superhuman power."²⁴⁷ But Verweyen objects that that is difficult to reconcile with the fact that Jesus also utters the prayer-cry "with a loud voice" (v. 34), which, however, brings to expression his aban-
donment by God.²⁴⁸

Verweyen contends that for the correct understanding of this passage one must bear in mind that the confession of the gentile centurion does not stand completely unprepared in the Gospel of Mark. First of all, Mark's presentation of the baptism in the Jordan and of the death of Jesus — interpreted by Mark himself as a baptism (10:38) — forms a bracket of the revelation of the Son of God: "at the descent of the Spirit the heavens are rent and Jesus is addressed by his Father as Son (1:10f.); when Jesus renders his spirit to God, the temple-curtain is rent and the centurion proclaims the Son of God." In the power of the Spirit Jesus accomplishes deeds of power. Verweyen explains that in the Markan presentation these deeds of power are clearly directed to the revelation of the servant of God as point of culmination; revelation of the Son of Man, who has come "to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (10:45; 14:24 and also 1:11).²⁴⁹

Secondly, a background for understanding the confession of the centurion is "the opposition between the understanding of the Gentiles and the incomprehending Jews and disciples of Jesus," which already begins in Galilee. "After the hard judg-
ment concerning the lack of understanding of the disciples in connection with Jesus' walking on the sea (6:52) and the

²⁴⁶ Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 461.
²⁴⁷ For the literature Verweyen refers to Jackson, "The Death of Jesus in Mark," 17f., nn. 6-9 (cf. above n. 242).
²⁴⁸ Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 461-62.
²⁴⁹ Ibid. 462.
programmatic controversy with the Jews about apparent and true purity (7:1-23), Jesus encounters the great faith of the Gentile woman (7:25.28). At the sight of the healing of a deafmute, Gentiles understand that Jesus ‘has done everything well’ and that the time of salvation promised by Isaiah has broken into the world (compare 7:37 with Gen 1:31 (LXX) and Is 35:5f.) — while the disciples do not yet understand (8:14-21) and even after the immediately following cure of the blind man (8:22-26) do not yet attain an adequate messianic confession (8:27-31).”

But the emphasis on the faith of the Gentiles begins even earlier in Mark’s Gospel. Verweyten points out that in comparison with the conclusion of the miracles worked by Jesus in the Jewish context, the outcome of Jesus’ first deed of power in Gentile territory stands out, especially the way and manner in which the Gerasene liberated from the unclean spirit proclaims Jesus in the Decapolis (5:19f.). “The cured possessed man is the Gentile missionary.” Verweyten sees here a clear connection with the proclamation by Gentiles in 7:36f. — and a sharp contrast to the garrulous talk and its consequences, described in 1:44f. He concludes that on the basis of this ending of the Gerasene narrative, one will have to interpret its beginning from Is 65:1: “I was ready to be sought out by those who did not ask, to be found by those who did not seek me. . . . I held out my hands all day long to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good’. — The visit of Jesus in Gentile territory is of foundational kind.”

Verweyten contends that if one keeps in view the background against which the confession of the centurion is to be read — especially the thematic of the opposition of incomprehension and unbelief on the side of the Jews and disciples and understanding on the side of the Gentiles — then it is suggested not to separate the wordless-loud death cry (15:37) from the loud prayer-cry (15:34). But “the insertion concerning the Elijah-misunderstanding (vv. 35-36) is necessary, in the mind of Mark, in order to once again, in conclusion, give the faith of the Gentile sharper

250. Ibid.
251. Ernst, *Das Evangelium nach Markus*, 158.
outline. Those who daily had the psalms on their lips could only with stopped up ears interpret this cry of the righteous man to God as a call to Elijah the helper in need.” Verweyen concludes that the true understanding of the fulfillment of Scripture in this last breath of Jesus fell to a barbarian who was not a master of the biblical language and a representative of the hostile occupying power.253

CRITIQUE OF D. MARK

Verweyen discovers the primary biblical support for his thesis in the Gospel of Mark, in particular in the confession of the pagan centurion upon witnessing Jesus’ death: “Truly, this man was God’s Son” (Mk 15:39). Here he sees Mark corroborating his view that the Easter faith (i.e., the conclusive and definitive judgement that the man Jesus transcends all human categories) was adequately grounded during the earthly life of Jesus, inclusive of his dying — not first with the resurrection appearances. Verweyen claims that Mark “places the actual origin of the fully valid confession of Christ at the conclusion of the earthly life of Jesus: in the mouth of the centurion at the cross.”254

In making this claim, Verweyen misinterprets the literary intention of Mark in the formulation of this scene in the narrative context of his Gospel. In order to understand the meaning of the confession of the centurion at the death of Jesus, it is necessary to understand the motif of the secret of the Son of God in Mark’s Gospel. For the confession of the centurion plays a climactic role in the motif of the secret of Jesus’ identity as Son of God. “This motif spans the narrated portion of Mark’s story, though not Chapter 13, and extends from the baptism (1:11) on the one hand to the crucifixion (15:39) and resurrection (9:9; 16:6-7) on the other.” In the baptism scene at the beginning of his story, Mark portrays God as affirming that Jesus is his beloved Son, thus presenting God’s evaluative point of view concerning Jesus’ identity. In the crucifixion scene at the end of his story Mark, for the first time, presents a human being,

253. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 463-64.
254. Ibid. 457.
other than Jesus himself, as perceiving that Jesus was truly God's Son in agreement with God's evaluative point of view. J. D. Kingsbury explains that the point Mark is making is that for one to "think" about Jesus the way God "thinks" about him (8:33d), namely, to perceive him to be the beloved Son of God, one must know him not only as authoritative preacher, gatherer of disciples, teacher, healer and exorcist (1:14-8:26), but also as the one who has obediently gone the way of the cross (8:27-16:8). The function of the confession of the centurion upon seeing how Jesus died (15:39) is to illustrate this for the reader. 255

The lifting of the secret continues in projected fashion in the empty tomb scene. After announcing to the women that Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified has been raised, the angelic messenger gives a message to be relayed to the disciples: "he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him" (16:7). "Because this word of the young man is based on a previous word of Jesus (14:28), and because Mark is careful in his story to show that Jesus' predictions come to pass, the attitude the reader is invited to take is that of assuming that this prediction, too, has its fulfillment." Kingsbury affirms that, given Mark's story, the reader can project that at the meeting of Jesus with his disciples in Galilee, the disciples penetrate the secret of Jesus' identity. "In seeing the risen Jesus as being one with the crucified Jesus, the disciples are able at last to 'think' about Jesus aright, that is, to 'think' about him as God revealed to the three disciples atop the mountain of the transfiguration that he 'thinks' about him, namely, as his royal Son (sent to die, to be raised and so vindicated, and to create for God a people living in the sphere of his eschatological Rule)." 256

This lifting of the secret of Jesus' identity, when Mark's story arrives at the events surrounding his death and resurrection, raises the question of the purpose of this motif both narrationally and theologically. Kingsbury answers that narrationally, the purpose of this motif is to guide the action of the story in such a manner that the way God "thinks" about Jesus, that is, the

256. Ibid. 151.
“evaluative point of view” he expresses to Jesus alone at the baptismal scene (1:11) and to the three uncomprehending disciples on the mountain of the transfiguration (9:7) should, despite repudiation on the part of Israel’s establishment leading to the death of Jesus (12:12; 14:61,64), nonetheless be espoused at the end by human characters, explicitly by the centurion (15:39), and anticipatively by the disciples at their projected meeting with the resurrected Jesus in Galilee (16:6-7). “The motif of the secret is thus a device for showing in the telling of the story of Jesus, how ‘human thinking’ about Jesus is, under God’s direction, brought into alignment with ‘divine thinking’ (cf. 8:33d).”257

Kingsbury’s second answer to the question raised above concerning the purpose of the secrecy motif is that, theologically, its purpose is to invite readers to appropriate for themselves that “thinking” about Jesus which places them “in alignment” with God’s “thinking about” Jesus. “This takes place when the readers, through the ‘hearing’ of Mark’s story, are led to perceive that Jesus of Nazareth is of ultimate significance as far as their relationship to God is concerned,” because he is God’s beloved Son, “through whom God proffers salvation and life in the sphere of his eschatological rule.” Should this perception occur, they have the opportunity of embracing, “or being confirmed in a life that is ‘in alignment’ with the will of God because it is ‘in alignment’ with the life of Jesus himself: ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and let him follow me’ (8:34).”258 By following Mark’s story, whose action is guided by the motif of the secret of the Son of God, the reader is invited “to join with the centurion (15:39) and the post-Easter disciples (14:28; 16:7) to ‘see’, that is, to confess Jesus of Nazareth to be the royal Son of God” and to follow him on the way of the cross that leads to the resurrection.259

In narrating his story under the guidance of the secrecy motif, Mark has presented three theophanies in which the veil between heaven and earth is breached in order to instruct the Christian reader concerning the identity of Jesus of Nazareth hidden until

257. Ibid. 154-55.  
258. Ibid. 155.  
259. Ibid. 176.
the end from the characters in the story. At the baptism of Jesus (1:11) and his transfiguration (9:7), God proclaims: “this is my beloved Son.” On both occasions this announcement is accompanied by symbolic images that grace the theophanies of the Jewish tradition: the rending of the heavens, the divine voice, dazzling white garments, overshadowing cloud of God’s presence, and at the transfiguration, the stupor of the witnesses.260

The hour of Jesus’ death is portrayed in similar fashion as a revelatory event. Nature is affected as darkness covers the land (15:33). The veil of the temple is “torn in two from top to bottom” (15:28). But here the revelation is not made by a voice from heaven, nor by an angel of the Lord, but by the manner of a man’s dying. “Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said: ‘Truly, this man was God’s Son’”(15:39).

This theophany, like the two previous theophanies, is presented for the instruction of the Christian reader. Just as the theophany at the baptism is intended to reveal to the reader the evaluative point of view of God concerning Jesus of Nazareth (“This is my beloved Son” — 1:11), and just as the theophany of the transfiguration is intended to confirm the revelation at the baptism (“This is my beloved Son” — 9:7), exhort the reader to hear and obey Jesus’ revelation concerning the way of the cross (“Listen to him” — 9:7; cf. 8:31-36), and present a proleptic unveiling of the resurrection glory261 to which the way of the cross will lead (cf. 9:2-3.9), so also the theophany of the death of Jesus is intended to unveil for the Christian reader the mystery of Jesus hidden in his dying, but perceptible to the post-resurrection faith of the Gentile-Christian Church symbolized by the Gentile centurion. In the context of the whole Markan Gospel, “the centurion becomes the representative of the Gentile-Christian Church under the cross, which already looks back to the destruction of the temple announced in the prodigy of the rending of the curtain of the temple.”262

261. R. Schnackenburg, Die Person Jesu Christi im Speigel der Vier Evangelien (Freiburg: Herder, 1993) 42.
Israel has failed and killed the “beloved Son” sent by God (cf. 12:1-12), “but the Gentiles are there to replace her in God’s purpose.” Looking over Chapters 11-15 [the cursing of the fig tree (11:12-14.20-22), the cleansing of the temple (11:15-19), the parable of the vineyard (12:1-12), the trial and condemnation of Jesus (14:53-15:15), the death of Jesus (15:37), the rending of the temple curtain (15:38), the confession of the centurion (15:39)] we see that Mark has placed the death of Jesus in relation to a new people of God drawn from the Gentiles who will confess Jesus as Son of God.263

Therefore, when the crucifixion scene is interpreted in the narrative and theological context of Mark’s story of Jesus, it is not correct to say that Mark “places the actual origin of the fully valid confession of Christ at the conclusion of the earthly life of Christ: in the mouth of the centurion at the cross.”264 Rather, Mark places an anticipated post-resurrection confession in the mouth of the centurion, who symbolizes the Gentile-Christian Church, in order to instruct the Christian reader concerning the veiled revelation present in the manner of Jesus’ dying and now perceptible to the eyes of the post-resurrection faith of the Church. Verweyen has mistakenly identified a confession in the story world of Mark’s Gospel which symbolizes the post-resurrection confession of the Gentile Church with a pre-Easter confession de jure possible for the witness of Jesus’ life and death. The latter does not correspond to Mark’s intention.

A clue that Mark does not place “the actual origin of the fully valid confession of Christ at the conclusion of the earthly life of Christ: in the mouth of the centurion at the cross,”265 but recognizes that this confession was only possible after the resurrection, is provided by the command to silence after the transfiguration when the disciples saw the resurrection glory of the “beloved Son” of God. “As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead” (9:9). This is formulated in the post-Easter perspective. “First when the

264. Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 457.
265. Ibid.
Son of Man is raised, is his mystery to be unveiled." In Mark’s perspective, that Jesus is the Son of God can only become victorious certitude for the disciples of Jesus at their projected meeting with the resurrected Jesus in Galilee (16:6-7).

Verweyen’s attempt to undercut the importance for Mark of the revelation of the risen Jesus for the adequate foundation of Easter faith is unconvincing. For Mark the earthly activity and death of Jesus without the revelation of the risen Jesus is inadequate to ground Easter faith. By means of the message of the young man at the tomb, Mark informs the reader that “first and alone the risen Jesus appearing to the disciples in Galilee gathers the ‘dispersed’ disciples (16:7; 14:28) and in this way makes possible renewed discipleship, world-wide proclamation of the Gospel (13:10) and open discourse of Jesus’ dignity as Son of God (9:9).”

E. PAUL

Verweyen summarizes his conclusions from his analysis of the Gospels in this way: The Easter narratives of the evangelists do not provide evidence that first the appearances of the Risen One would have supplied the *de jure* adequate basis for faith in Jesus as the definitive Word of God — although *de facto* this faith first arose through Easter experiences of this kind. “Moreover in Mark, Luke and John a criticism of this *de facto* situation of Easter faith’s origin becomes clear: actually, against the background of the Scriptures of Israel, the disciples ought not have interpreted Jesus’ death as failure of his eschatological mission.”

How does Paul’s Easter testimony compare with the Gospel witness? Ever since exegetical consensus has been attained that the Gospel Easter narratives are not to be understood as secretarial recordings of historical events, discussion has concentrated “above all on a tradition- and redaction-historical reconstruction of 1 Cor 15:3-8.” Literally this is the oldest passage concerning appearances of the Risen One and contains

266. Schnackenburg, *Die Person Jesu Christi*, 84.
traditional formulations of pre-Pauline origin. Since Paul includes his own experience of the risen Lord in a series with the earlier appearances, this is the only text in the New Testament, in which an eyewitness testifies to the appearance of the risen Lord.\textsuperscript{269}

Verweyen points out, however, that in respect to a fundamental-theological evaluation of Easter appearances as the ultimately decisive cognitive basis for faith, a number of problems arise from this text. "The inclusion of manifestly quite varied phenomena (individual encounter, mass manifestation) under the one bracket of the ὀφθηὲ allows the supposition that Paul considers this term to be a rather elastic concept." But Verweyen believes the greatest difficulty arises from the central role which is most often attributed to the appearances as occurrences in which the risen Lord manifested himself as identical with the earthly Jesus (in this sequence!). "Precisely the element that here eyewitnesses would have recognized the earthly Jesus in the exalted Lord can not have been central for Paul, who according to all probability had never encountered the earthly Jesus." Verweyen concludes that with respect to the earthly Jesus, this apostle, who placed such value on the fact that he belonged to the series of the original witnesses of the Risen One, is a 'disciple of second hand.'\textsuperscript{270}

Verweyen concedes that without doubt, according to Paul, the ὀφθηὲ (also) mediated the knowledge that the Crucified One was the Exalted One (in this sequence!). To explain this there is no need of appealing to abstruse hypotheses, e.g., "the appearance of a stigmatized glorified figure who affirms he is identical with the earthly Jesus." Although the narratives of the Acts of the Apostles are not the objective recordings of historical occurrences, they no doubt correctly communicate the decisive facts. "The appearance of the Risen One provides the apostle no (expressed in Johannine terms) 'postcarnal' evidence 'from above' with reference to the historical reality of Jesus, of which until now he only had knowledge by way of historical report." Verweyen proposes that the appearance rather revealed to him the meaning of a 'carnal' experience, which he had shared

\textsuperscript{269} Ibid. Cf. "Die Sache," 77; "Die Ostererscheinungen," 444.

\textsuperscript{270} Verweyen, Gottes letztes Wort, 464-65; "Die Sache," 77-78. Cf. "Die Ostererscheinungen," 444.
previously, but whose truth he had until now resisted. "The 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' (Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14) allows what was proper to his experience with the persecuted witnesses of Jesus to come into view, in whom Jesus' victory over death becomes transparent, or, in the conceptuality of the apostle: Christian community as 'body of Christ' (without article, cf. 1 Cor 12:27) becomes for him transparent for the body of Christ, which through his death has become the comprehensive sphere of salvation for all men, so that from now on Paul can sum up the totality of his experiences with Jesus Christ as 'word of the cross' (1 Cor 1:18; cf. 2:2)."\(^{271}\)

And so, according to Verweyen, the dying Son of Man's surrender of his spirit, inaugurating universal salvation, which the evangelists affirm from the perspective of the earthly Jesus, Paul affirms from the perspective of the body of Christ. "For all, the experience of this decease (Hingang) — of Jesus and of his witnesses — is the decisive ground of the Easter evidence. In contrast to this, the appearances of the Risen One add no new fundamental datum, but are most suitably understood as the factual break-through of that de jure evidence for the Easter faith, as a revelation event in which God or the exalted Lord overcame the inertia of heart and the resistance of the apostles in face of the death of Jesus or of his first blood-witnesses."\(^{272}\)

Even for Paul, the appearance of the risen Jesus was not the real ground for Easter faith. Rather, it triggered the break-through of the basis which had already been layed.

CRITIQUE OF E. PAUL

Verweyen's final biblical argument for his thesis concerning the adequate de jure foundation of Easter faith, drawn from Paul's Damascus experience, is the weakest of all. One major flaw is the absence of an analysis of Paul's own statements concerning this experience. His argument is based on the later Lukan presentations of Paul's Damascus experience (Acts 9:3-19a; 271. Verweyen, *Gottes letztes Wort*, 465; "Die Sache," 78. Cf. "Die Ostererscheinungen," 445.

22:6-16; 26:12-18), which "are not primary materials for the interpretation of Paul's experience."\(^{273}\)

In 1 Cor 15:8 Paul places his Damascus experience in a series with the other appearances of the tradition and expresses it with the same traditional term (ὑπήθη): "Last of all, . . . . he appeared (ὑπήθη) also to me." Since the New Testament use of ὑπήθη + dative was most probably influenced by the deponent usage of the Septuagint in its translation of the theophany texts of the Hebrew Old Testament, ὑπήθη is to be understood as a passive with intransitive deponent meaning and translated: "he appeared" or "he let himself be seen" or "he made himself visible."\(^{274}\) The linguistic background of the verb ὑπήθη in both the Hebrew Old Testament and the Septuagint shows that the visual element (the making visible) is clearly contained in the verb ὑπήθη and may not be eliminated in favor of its interpretation as a purely theological term of revelation.\(^{275}\) J. Schmitt affirms that for the Judaeo-Christians familiar with the Hebrew and Greek expressions of the Old Testament, the word ὑπήθη, which corresponds to the niphal of ra'ah, offers a precise, specific meaning. "It translated the visual perception of a person or of an object which, belonging to the real but invisible world of the divine, cannot become perceptible to man except by a gracious dispensation, lifting for a moment its essential invisibility."\(^{276}\)


\(^{275}\) Cf. Hoffmann, "Auferstehung Jesu Christi," 4:492-93; Vögtle, in Vögtle and Pesch, Osterglauben, 42-43; against W. Michaelis who affirms: "... when ὑπήθη is used as a technical term to denote the resurrection appearances ... the dominant thought is that the appearances are revelations. ... The appearances are to be described as manifestations in the sense of revelations rather than making visible" ("ὁράω," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. G. Friedrich [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1967] 358-59).

\(^{276}\) J. Schmitt, "Résurrection de Jésus dans le kerygme, la tradition, la
However, the concrete mode of this becoming visible is left in darkness.

In the appearance statements of 1 Cor 15:3-8 ὅπθη, interpreted in the context of its use in theophanies in the Septuagint (e.g. Ex 3:2; 6:3), designates “a revelatory self-disclosure. . . . of the eschatologically resurrected Christ.” This disclosure “has the character of an encounter (ab extra), of an encounter that befell the disciples.” This surprising self-manifestation of the risen Jesus out of the hiddenness with God in the historical experience of the disciples is the decisive reality which comes to expression in the word ὅπθη (“he appeared”) or in talk of “appearances.”

Paul’s use of ὅπθη to describe his Damascus experience means that Paul was convinced of the “qualitative equality” of his experience with the original Easter experiences. This is true despite the fact that Paul, unlike the disciples, was not an immediate witness of the earthly Jesus but, in respect to his ministry, passion and death, “a ‘disciple of second hand.’” Consequently, as Fuller has rightly observed: “We may argue from the appearance of Paul to the earlier appearances, since he arranges them in a continuous series.”

But Paul throws more light on his understanding of the Easter experience by speaking of the Damascus experience in quite different terminology. In defence of his authority as an apostle and in the language of a prophetic call vision (cf. Is 6:1.5: ἠδὼν τὸν κύριον = “I have seen the Lord”), he can designate his experience as an apostolic call grounded in “seeing: ἔδρακα τὸν κύριον = “Have I not seen the Lord?” (1 Cor 9:1). While ὅπθη emphasized the appearance as proceeding from the initiative of Christ, ἔδρακα describes the experience from the side of the witness as a perception of the risen Christ himself. “What kind

278. Kessler, Sucht den Lebenden, 216.
279. Vögtle, in Vögtle and Pesch, Osterglauben, 60.
of 'seeing' this is remains just as open in details as the proper nature of such an appearance." 283 J. Kremer comments that because of the mode of existence of the one seen (cf. 1 Cor 15:44), this is not a seeing like that of everyday, but still a perception leading to knowledge (cf. Phil 3:10). 284

On another occasion, again in confrontation with opponents of his apostolate, Paul describes his Damascus experience in terms of a prophetic vocation and as a "revelation" or eschatological unveiling (ἀποκάλυψις) by God of a previously hidden reality: the risen Son of God as the essential content of the Gospel Paul is called to proclaim (Gal 1:12.15-16; cf. Is 49:1-6; Jer 1:5; Is 6:1-13). 285

Finally Paul can characterize his Damascus experience as a "seizure" by Christ (Phil 3:12: καταλέμφθαν = "I have been seized") which communicates a personal, existential knowledge of the Lord and of the power of his resurrection (Phil 3:8-10). By his action Christ made Paul his own. "In Phil 3:10 and 12, Paul uses the words δύναμις and καταλέμψις to characterize the most intimate aspect of the Christophany of Damascus." 286

In the light of Paul's statement concerning his Damascus experience, which he places on a level of "qualitative equality" with the original Easter experiences, it is impossible to agree with Verweyen's claim that "the appearances add no new fundamental datum" to pre-Easter experience of the ministry and death of Jesus of Nazareth. 287 This revelatory experience of the hidden reality of the risen Son of God illuminated the pre-Easter experience of Jesus with a new light that made all things new. A. Vögtle is certainly correct in affirming that a fundamental datum of the primitive Christian preaching and tradition is that the Easter faith of the disciples was grounded in a new revelatory impulse in addition to their previous experiences with Jesus. "This Easter faith contained as its content precisely that God had

conclusively confirmed the earthly and crucified Jesus as the definitive revealer and mediator of salvation.”

Verweyen’s argument from the Pauline Damascus experience is not drawn from Paul’s own statements concerning that experience but from Luke’s later presentation of it in the Acts of the Apostles (9:3-19a; 22:6-16; 26:12-18). He justifies this with the assurance: “Although the narratives of the Acts of the Apostles are not objective recordings of historical occurrences, they no doubt correctly communicate the decisive facts.”

However, more detailed justification is required than this general statement. What are the decisive facts correctly communicated? Do they really include the dialogue between Jesus and Paul during the appearance (9:4-6; 22:7-10; 26:14-16); in particular the question of Jesus: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (9:4; 22:7; 26:14), upon which Verweyen relies as the basis of his argumentation? This is very doubtful.

According to J. Roloff it is clear that in Acts 9:3-19a, Luke is using a popular narrative tradition, “an ecclesiologically oriented conversion legend,” which arose independently of Paul’s own statements concerning the experience and whose tradition-history point of origin is to be seen in a statement like that of Gal 1:23 (“They [the Churches of Judea] only heard it said: ‘The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy’.”). Luke incorporated this tradition in Acts 9:1-22 with little redactional reworking. The parallel passages (22:4-16 and 26:9-18) are free redactional variations of this tradition, in which Luke brings to expression in an essentially stronger degree his own understanding of the Damascus event as the call of Paul (not as an apostle — Paul’s own understanding) but as a special witness of the risen Lord to the nations (26:16; cf. 22:15).

In answer to the question concerning the historicity of the

290. Ibid.
conversion story that lies at the basis of the three accounts, Roloff answers that the tradition highlights in one-sided fashion from the perspective of the community, but in essentials correctly, one aspect of the Damascus event: "what Paul experienced before Damascus was in fact a radical turning point of his life which brought with it a transvaluation of all values and made him a paradigm for the transforming power of the exalted Christ." As historical remembrances he lists the statement concerning the role of Ananias and about the stay of Paul in the house of Judas on "the street called Straight" (v. 11). "All remaining details, however, will have to be attributed . . . to the taking over of narrative motifs current in the environment." 292

One of these motifs is what G. Lohfink calls the "apparition dialogue," a literary form present in Acts 9:4b-6; 22:7-10; 26:14-16, which follows a pattern found in Old Testament Jewish literature: (1) address with a double vocative by the one appearing; (2) a brief question asked by the person involved; (3) the self-presentation of the one appearing, followed by a commission given by the one appearing. 293 Lohfink observes that "form-critical analysis demonstrates that the apparition dialogues are certainly not historical reports of what really happened between Christ and Paul." 294

In Acts 9:4b; 22:7b and 26:14c, the address (the first element of the pattern) contains the double vocative: "Saul, Saul," but deviates from the pattern by continuing with a question: "Why do you persecute me?" C. Burchard comments that the question is contrary to form but fits the context. 295 Paul, described as a persecutor in verses 1-2, is interrupted in his persecuting activity by a light and challenged by a voice from heaven demanding

292. Roloff, Die Apostelgeschichte, 147. For examples of these motifs cf. ibid. 145-47; G. Lohfink, Paulus vor Damaskus (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1965) 42-64; G. Schneider, Die Apostelgeschichte, II. Teil (Freiburg: Herder, 1982) 24-25; Burchard, Der dreizehnte Zeuge, 54-118.
294. Ibid. 68.
295. Burchard, Der dreizehnte Zeuge, 93.
an accounting. Jesus "confronts him as the one against whom his action has been directed and at the same time as the judge of his offence." G. Schneider correctly affirms that "behind this reproach hardly stands the Pauline Body of Christ ecclesiology, but a conception and mode of expression like Mt 25:35-40.42-45" or Lk 10:16. The reproach contained in the question: "Why do you persecute me?," is directed at Paul's total rejection of Jesus which is manifested in his persecution of Jesus' followers in order to eradicate faith in Jesus from among the descendants of Abraham. In his disciples Paul is persecuting Jesus and all he stands for.

Verweyen uses the question; "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4b; 22:7b; 26:14c), which is one of the literary vehicles for vividly portraying the radical transformation of Paul from persecutor of the Christians to the witness of Christ among the nations, as an occasion for expressing once again his thesis concerning the de jure adequate basis of Easter faith. This is an eisegesis which has no foundation in this text or in the statements of Paul concerning his Damascus experience. Neither this question in Acts 9:4; 22:7; 26:14 nor the statements of Paul suggest that the Damascus experience revealed to Paul "the meaning of a 'carnal' experience which he had previously shared but whose truth he had until now resisted." The "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?", in its literal meaning does not bring to expression or "allow to come into view what was proper to his experiences with the persecuted witnesses of Jesus, in whom Jesus' victory over death becomes transparent." And since the Pauline Body of Christ ecclesiology is not present there, the question does not suggest that in the Damascus experience "Christian community as 'body of Christ' becomes for him transparent for the body of Christ which through his death has become the all-embracing sphere of salvation for all men."

Rather, as we have seen, Paul's own interpretation of his Damascus experience leads to its identification as a revelatory

296. Roloff, Die Apostelgeschichte, 149.
297. Schneider, Die Apostelgeschichte, II. Teil, 26. Also cf. Roloff, Die Apostelgeschichte, 149; Burchard, Der dreizehnte Zeuge, 94.
298. Burchard, Der dreizehnte Zeuge, 94.
self-disclosure of the risen Christ, possessing the character of an encounter *ab extra* (1 Cor 15:8); as a “revelation” of the crucified Jesus as the Son of God “in power” (Gal 1:12.16); a “seizure” by the risen Christ communicating a personal, existential knowledge of him and of the power of his resurrection (Phil 3:8-10).

It is true that Paul summarizes his entire message as “word of the cross” (1 Cor 1:18; cf. 2:2). But this is not because the cross of Christ is the exclusive content or foundation of this message. “Paul’s view sees the passion and death as a prelude to the resurrection. All three phases make up ‘the story of the cross’ (1 Cor 1:18); for it was the ‘Lord of Glory’ which was crucified (1 Cor 2:8).”³⁰⁰ K. Rengstorf explains that for the kerygma, the cross of Jesus is “event of salvation” only through the fact that Jesus is the one risen from the dead. “At any rate that is the opinion of Paul (1 Cor 15:17). Because the Crucified One is the Risen One, for this reason, the event of the cross is ‘event of salvation’; for this reason can the Crucified One be the proper object of the kerygma and for this reason the faith and future-expectation of his own are directed to him.”³⁰¹

According to Paul’s own statements concerning the Damascus experience, he came to know that Jesus, who was crucified and whose followers he persecuted, was risen “through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal 1:12) when God decided “to reveal his Son to me” (Gal 1:16). H. Schlier explains that by “his Son” is meant the “Son of God in power” who is that “by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom 1:4): “ ‘Revelation’ (ἀποκάλυψις) implies for the apostle the unveiling of an absolutely hidden mystery and immediate experience of an inaccessible reality in opposition to every other mode of communication, e.g., by way of doctrinal tradition, . . . the anticipation in the sphere of the provisional of definitive ‘eschatological’ disclosure. Paul understood his encounter with the Exalted One and that of the disciples before him to be a revelation of this kind. It is the anticipation of the eschatological occurrence,” and is foundational.³⁰² This is a “new,

³⁰² Schlier, *Über die Auferstehung Jesu Christi*, 33-34.
fundamental datum,” added to the pre-Easter experience of the ministry and death of Jesus in the case of the other disciples, and added to Paul’s second-hand experience of it and to his experience of the persecuted followers of Jesus.

The revelation of the reality of the “Son of God in power” in the encounter with the risen Jesus was the immediate experience of a reality inaccessible by any other form of communication, e.g., by verbal communication during Jesus’ earthly life. Such a “doctrinal” communication could, perhaps, reveal the future fact of the resurrection, but not its mysterious reality and existential meaning. As Mark phrases it: “So they kept the matter to themselves questioning what this rising from the dead could mean” (Mk 9:10). It would remain a veiled revelation until the Easter encounter.

CONCLUSION

H. Verweylen is correct in affirming that the earthly life of Jesus, inclusive of his dying, is foundational for Easter faith. In this there is agreement with H. Kessler who also maintains that “the earthly Jesus is a necessary foundation of the (Easter) faith.” Kessler agrees that R. Pesch, E. Schillebeeckx and others are justified in taking seriously the human-historical mediatedness of the Easter events of revelation. He affirms that R. Pesch is right in opposing every establishment of faith in Christ “from the faith experience of the resurrection of Jesus alone,” and in emphasizing the earthly Jesus as constitutive and necessary condition for the coming into existence and grounding of Easter faith. He insists that the Easter experiences of the disciples had presuppositions without which it is inconceivable. Among these presuppositions he lists: “the unique experiences of the disciples with the earthly Jesus (who had linked the entry of the merciful

303. Ibid. 33.
God of the lost upon his eschatological rule to his own powerful activity) and of his sudden end through his execution on the cross; their remembrance, continuing esteem of Jesus and certainly also their preoccupation with Jesus and his fate.” He concedes that there is no doubt that all these things entered into the Easter experience of the disciples and was activated by it.\(^{307}\) He is also open for good arguments and founded perspectives concerning the question whether the resurrection faith of the first disciples is to be anchored still more strongly in the historical life and death of Jesus.\(^{308}\)

Verweyen is not correct, however, in contending that the earthly life of Jesus, inclusive of his dying, is the adequate *de jure* foundation of Easter faith. The pre-Easter (earthly and crucified) Jesus is without doubt necessary presupposition and basis for Easter faith, “but because of his death, he is not a sufficient foundation.”\(^{309}\)

The execution of Jesus on the cross was a catastrophe which shook the foundations of the disciples’ incipient faith in him. The Roman practise of execution by crucifixion, reserved for slaves and insurrectionists, has been described by Cicero as the “most extreme and most severe punishment,” the “most cruel and most dreadful execution,” and by Tacitus as the “most shameful death.” The Jews resolutely opposed this abominable form of capital punishment and Jewish penal law did not make use of it. But Jewish law did prescribe “hanging on the wood (stake or tree)” as an ancient additional punishment for idolaters and blasphemers *after* their death by stoning or beheading (Dt 21:22-23). By this the executed person was publicly branded as one cursed by God (Dt 21:23b: “God’s curse rests on him who hangs on a tree” [NAB]). “Already in pre-Christian times this passage — contrary to its original meaning — was applied also to the form of execution by crucifixion.\(^{310}\) Kessler’s conclusion is that according to this contemporary interpretation of Dt 21:23 (which also stands behind texts like Gal 3:13; 1 Cor 1:23; Acts 5:30; 13:29;

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310. 4QPNah 7f.; 4QPHeb 8; Temple Scroll 64:6-13. The Temple Scroll ex-
Jn 19:31ff.; Justin, *Dial.* 89,1-90,1) a crucified person was considered to be one accursed of God.\textsuperscript{311}

P. Fiedler has objected that we must be on our guard against the false conclusion that among the Jews every crucified person was cursed by God. He appeals to G. Friedrich who has commented:

That that is not the case, follows from the fact that too many Jews had been crucified, because they had fought for their nation, the temple and the law. . . . At the time of Jesus probably more messianic pretenders were crucified than only Jesus of Nazareth. Whoever was a zealot had to reckon with his end on the cross. Could a man who gave his life for his confession to the one God, only because the Roman occupational power applied the draconian punishment of crucifixion, be looked upon as one cursed by God because of this manner of execution?\textsuperscript{312}

This point is well made, but in turn, one must be on guard against drawing a false conclusion from it, as Fiedler does. He concludes that the crucifixion of Jesus by the Romans in no way had to act as radical refutation of the claim of Jesus to be the mediator of salvation, of his mission from God, of his preaching concerning God and the kingdom of God and with that as the complete calling into question of the discipleship of his disciples, shocking though that event must have been in itself.\textsuperscript{313}

This is to overlook two things. First, the crucifixion of Jesus was not simply the crucifixion of a zealot, a righteous man, a pressily affirmed that crucified persons “are accursed of God and of men” (64:12).

311. Kessler, *Sucht den Lebenden*, 105. He affirms that even if one were of the opinion that this understanding of the death on the cross (from Dt 21:23) ought not to be presupposed yet for broad circles and the public of Judaism around 30 A.D., still one will not avoid the fundamental assumption that for this public a person crucified at the instigation of their own authorities could not possibly be the Messiah. “In the Jewish context of that time, a suffering, killed, crucified Messiah was a self contradiction and completely unthinkable. That means: . . . for the Jewish public, through his death on the cross, Jesus was in fact proved wrong” (Ibid., n. 63).


committed Israelite. H. Kessler rightly points out that here there was question not merely of the ignominious end of the just man because of his fidelity to the God of the law, or of the violent Jerusalem-fate of the prophets, which according to Jewish tradition did not of itself mean the refutation of their claims. In the case of Jesus was involved something else and more. During his ministry Jesus had raised a unique and unheard of claim to authority as the eschatological mediator of salvation and agent of the kingdom of God.\(^{314}\) "In the name of God, he had sovereignly placed himself beyond the boundaries of the law." He had claimed to authentically interpret the will of God in a way that conflicted with the tradition of the Fathers. "He had made the claim that his appearance and God’s coming coincide." He "had linked the arrival of the unconditioned rule (of the goodness) of God among the lost to his own existence."\(^{315}\)

Second, Jesus’ execution on the cross by the Romans was initiated by the highest religious court of judgement in Israel, the guardian of Israel’s religious-cultic order of law. The official representatives of God and interpreters of his will declared that he was worthy of death and sanctioned his shameful and scandalous death on the cross. In this context, Jesus’ "hanging on the wood" (Dt 21:23b) would certainly appear as a death under the curse of God. His death on the cross in extreme abandonment by God appeared to be a public refutation by God himself of Jesus’ claim to be the agent of the in-breaking rule of the merciful God. For the Jewish authorities and the Jewish public the question concerning the validity of Jesus’ claim was settled once and for all. He had been exposed as a false prophet.

Against this background, "the confusion in the circle of disciples" and the sudden return of the "twelve" to Galilee "is easy to understand."\(^{316}\) Jesus’ execution on the cross at the initiative of the highest religious court in Israel, the guardian of Israel’s religious-cultic order of law, was well-qualified to raise


\(^{315}\) Kessler, Sucht den Lebenden, 107-8.

\(^{316}\) G. Lohfink, "‘Der Ablauf der Osterereignisse und die Anfänge der Urgemeinde,’ Tübinger Quartalschrift 160 (1980):163. The return of the ‘Twelve’ to Galilee is well attested (Mk 14:28; 16:7; Jn 16:32), and “today with reason
the question, even in the minds of his closest disciples, whether in fact his death was not a divine judgement on him. Kessler rightly emphasizes that the execution of Jesus on the cross, therefore the annihilation on the cross of the one who had tied the coming of God's rule precisely to his own existence, and his public exhibition as one cursed by God at the instigation of the highest religious authority in Israel radically affected the disciples' faith, shook it to its core and caused an irreparable epistemological rupture. "The earlier faith of the disciples existed, one must assume, only in remembrance, no longer as actual performance." He concludes that it is scarcely conceivable that the disciples of themselves and without a new revelatory impulse could master and overcome the scandal of Jesus' death on the cross. 317

Kessler contends that his death on the cross made the earthly pre-Easter Jesus an open, unanswerable question. "Jesus' execution . . . posed the utterly fundamental question whether Jesus' (existentially and practically vouched for) affirmation that God is the forgiving and saving reality for the lost, was not radically refuted by his own annihilation and lost condition (Verlorenheit)." Or, expressed in another way, "If the one who tied the arrival of the unconditioned rule (of the goodness) of God among the lost to his own existence, was now dead and lost himself, was not the possibility of faith in this God destroyed, the discipleship of Jesus (as the final messenger of God) at an end?" 318 U. Wilckens responds: "Now, only the end-time judge himself could pronounce the final word as to whether Jesus had been right or wrong. . . . Without confirmation of Jesus by God, the possibility of discipleship was shattered." 319

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The encounter with the risen Jesus was this final word of God, the culminating and decisive revelatory action of God which by bathing the pre-Easter activity of Jesus in its light, initiated Easter faith and in unity with this veiled pre-Easter revelation constituted the adequate foundation of that faith. "Through the resurrection of Jesus God stepped forth from his hiddenness on Golgotha, 'broke his silence' and spoke the definitive and no longer retractable word of his self-promise." 320 The earthly life of Jesus, inclusive of the cross, was not sufficient. "If the eyes of the disciples had not been opened at Easter, so that they were able to newly see the Crucified as the one living in God, then the event of the cross would not have become the revelation of the love of God." 321

Hansjürgen Verweyen has not proven his thesis either by his systematic arguments or by his biblical arguments. The majority of present-day theologians are correct in holding that the appearances of the risen Jesus were the decisive revelatory impulse grounding Easter faith. "Divine self-revelation reached its climax with the end of that particular life-story: the resurrection of the crucified Jesus. . . . The risen Jesus' appearances (were) the primary and positive cause of faith in his resurrection." 322 The resurrection of Jesus was both the definitive definition of God and the definitive identification of Jesus as God's Son.

The resurrection of Jesus was "the eschatological deed of God" by which he definitively and irrevocably "defined and committed himself in relation to the lost world as the God of loving, forgiving and saving nearness." Kessler explains that through the revelation of the raised Jesus (in the appearances and in the experience of his enduring presence) God makes known to the world this irrevocable self-commitment and turning


to the world, i. e., he reveals his justice and love. "At the same time with that he makes known his ultimate intention with creation and he does this in such a way that he already begins to translate it into action."\textsuperscript{323} For the resurrection of Jesus "is the perfect accomplishment of God's saving action for the world and for men in which he irrevocably communicates himself to the world in the Son . . . and so admits the world to salvation with eschatological finality. All that still remains, then, is simply the carrying out and disclosure of what happened in the resurrection."\textsuperscript{324}

Moreover, "the resurrection definitively identifies and acknowledges" the Son.\textsuperscript{325} Kessler comments that through the encounters with the Risen One it was definitively revealed that God himself had eschatologically acted \textit{in Jesus} (and nowhere else), that \textit{Jesus} was and is the eschatological (surpassing all that preceded and not surpassable by all still to come) messenger and mediator of salvation of God, the Messiah, Word of God and Son himself; his life and cross and he himself were placed in force and validity as universally significant for salvation. "First from there can it be said that Jesus' total humanity is the definitive and exhaustive self expression of God in history, therefore, the Incarnation of the Word or Son of God (John 1:14)."\textsuperscript{326} Consequently, as K. Rahner emphasizes in agreement with the New Testament, "the experienced resurrection contributed to the \textit{content} of the interpretation of the essence of the person and work of Jesus and was not merely the divine confirmation of a knowledge already clearly expressed by Jesus before the resurrection."\textsuperscript{327} Further, the death of Jesus "as entered into in free obedience and as surrendering life completely to God reaches fulfillment and becomes historically tangible only in the resurrection."\textsuperscript{328}

\textsuperscript{323} Kessler, \textit{Sucht den Lebenden}, 304.
\textsuperscript{325} Ibid. 331.
\textsuperscript{326} Kessler, \textit{Sucht den Lebenden}, 319-20.
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid. 284.