

A review of my writings shows that recognition of the pertinence of Paul's implicit definition of God as the all-empassing, transcendental whole is nothing new or recent—or confined solely to my Notebooks (22 November 1996; 15 September 1999). Already in "Present Prospects for Empirical Theology" (published in 1969), I say that "the God of Scripture is the utterly transcendent One of whom Paul says, finally, that 'from him and through him and to him are all things' (Rom. 11:36)" (73). And, in "On Revelation" (first published in 1975), I say that "[w]hen Paul confesses . . . that for Christians, 'there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist' (1 Cor. 8:6), or, in ascribing glory to God, attests that 'from him and through him and to him are all things' (Rom. 11:36), any merely mythical or categorial understanding of God is clearly transcended" (quoted from *On Theology*: 25).

But be this as it may, the more I've continued to reflect on Paul's statements in these passages, the more I've been struck by his assigning to God in Rom 11:36 the role or function as medium that he so carefully assigns to Jesus Christ in 1 Cor 8:6, as distinct from the roles or functions of God the Father as the primal source of all things and the final end for which we exist. Whatever his own intention in doing this may have been, I find it entirely apt. In fact, it serves to make the very point I seek to make by distinguishing (1) the being of God in itself from the meaning of God for us; and (2) the meaning of God for us as the *implicit* primal ontic source authorizing—entitling and empowering—our authentic existence from Jesus Christ as the *explicit* primal ontic source of the same authorization. Just as we are who we are authentically through our understanding appropriation through faith of the primal authorization by God through Jesus Christ, so all things are what they are through that same primal source whether or not they understand it even implicitly.

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