

Bultmann characteristically stresses that we as human beings are temporal beings and that God meets us in time—in the time constituting our own lives. Thus he can claim to speak, not of an idea of God, but of "*dem lebendigen Gott, in dessen Händen unsere Zeit steht und der uns in unserer Zeit begegnet*" (204 [119]).

In "*Die Krisis des Glaubens*," however, he speaks of God—more exactly, of the referent of "God"—as "*die Macht, die des Zeitlichen und Ewigen mächtig ist*" (GV 2: 3). In another place, of course, he still sharply distinguishes God from temporality, or, at least, "*die Geschichtlichkeit*," but speaks as though God could be simply identified with "*die Ewigkeit*" (GV 4: 106). But this only makes the statement in which he speaks of God's power over the eternal as well as the temporal all the more striking.

Just what he means by it, however, is by no means clear. Perhaps the point he wishes to make is simply that the eternal ideals lifted up by the Greeks and by modern idealists are not to be simply identified with God or the divine, but are, in their own way, creatures of God, subject to God's power.

Be this as it may, I don't see any difficulty in saying that, when "God" is used to refer to the universal individual in its actuality or concreteness as inclusive of all other actuality or concreteness, as well as all possibility or abstractness—in other words, when "God" is used token-reflexively, to refer to an ever new, ever different eminent actuality or concreteness—it refers to something that includes absolute^{ly} everything, the eternal as well as the temporal, and, in this sense, is powerful over it and transcendent of it. As the universal individual, God is the one all-inclusive individual who interacts with everything, including Godself. In this sense, then, God is, exactly as Bultmann says, "the power that is powerful over the temporal and the eternal."

4 May 1997