



God the Father, Lord Jesus Christ and Their Interrelationship: 1Corinthians 8:6 as a Test Case*

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RECEIVED: 26-04-18. ACCEPTED: 20-11-18

ABSTRACT: Through an exegetical-theological analysis of 1Cor 8:6, this article studies God the Father in Pauline Theology and how Jesus impacted God's identity. For Paul, God the Father is the Old Testament God, who now has included Jesus within his identity. This alteration produced a dialogical transformation where God is now seen as a Christian God and Jesus is portrayed as divine. Nevertheless, there is no modalism in Paul's thought. Instead, although God and Jesus share the same identity, they remain different from each other with unique characteristics and functions within the Godhead.

KEY WORDS: Christology; Divine Identity; Monotheism; New Testament; Pauline Theology; 1Cor.

Dios Padre, el Señor Jesús Cristo y su interrelación: 1Co 8,6 como estudio de caso

RESUMEN: Mediante un análisis exegético-teológico de 1Co 8,6, este artículo estudia a Dios Padre en la teología paulina y el modo como Jesús impactó su identidad. Para Pablo, Dios el Padre es el Dios del Antiguo Testamento, que ahora ha incluido a Jesús en su identidad. Esta alteración produjo una transformación dialógica en la que Dios ahora es visto como un Dios cristiano y Jesús es representado como divino. Sin embargo, no hay modalismo en el pensamiento de Pablo. En cambio, aunque Dios y Jesús comparten la misma identidad, siguen siendo diferentes entre sí, con características y funciones únicas al interior de la deidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Cristología; identidad divina; monoteísmo; Nuevo Testamento; teología paulina; 1Co.

HOW TO CITE:

Cardozo Mindiola, Cristian. "God the Father, Lord Jesus Christ and Their Interrelationship: 1Corinthians 8:6 as a Test Case." *Theologica Xaveriana* 188 (2019): 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.11144/javeriana.tx69-188.gfjct>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This article is a result of the project "Exegesis del Nuevo Testamento", which was funded by the Corporación Universitaria Adventista. It initiated on June 17, 2017 and ended on October 31, 2018 (number PFT 001).

* Artículo de investigación

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Introduction

The study of God the Father is—as N. A. Dahl long ago called it—a neglected factor in New Testament theology.¹ This is true, especially in the Pauline letters. Only a small number of articles, books and monographs have made an in-depth study of God the Father in the New Testament and Paul in particular.² The reason for this phenomenon lies in the difficulties to study the person of God the Father in the letters of Paul. The challenges arise because God is a “taken-for-granted” belief between Paul and his readers. Therefore, the silence on the topic presupposed that there was no need to discuss in detail the person of God.³

However, the risk of not studying God is that of “missing some of the (theo) logical connections which help explain the slants and turns of Paul’s theology but which lie below the surface, in the foundational substructure of Paul’s theology”.⁴ Consequently, in order to grasp the theology of Paul, it is necessary to answer, who is God for Paul?

On the contrary, christological studies in the New Testament abound. Christology has always been an area of interest for theologians throughout centuries.⁵ Diverse areas of Christology have been studied: historical development of christological ideas⁶, titular Christology⁷, ontological Christology⁸, among others, are the major focus of research in christological studies. However, studies regarding the impact and relationship of Christology to Paul’s theology and vice versa are still on their way. This is extremely important since Christology cannot be studied in isolation but must be studied in relation to God. Only when theology and Christology are studied in conjunction does their singularities appears.⁹

We have noted so far that the study of God the Father and the study of the impact and relationship between Christology and theology are important for Pauline

¹ Dahl, “The Neglected Factor in New Testament Theology”.

² Richardson, *Paul’s Language about God*; Hurtado, *God in New Testament Theology*; Pereyra, “El centro del pensamiento teológico de Pablo: una propuesta”; Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*, 119-167; Morris, *New Testament Theology*, 25-38; Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul’s Eschatology*.

³ Roberto Pereyra suggests that Paul did not explain his discourse about God because he is the center of his theological thought (Pereyra, “El centro del pensamiento teológico de Pablo: una propuesta”, 43).

⁴ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 29.

⁵ Hurtado, “Fashions, Fallacies and Future Prospects in New Testament Studies”, 303-313.

⁶ Bousset, *Kyrios Christos. A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*.

⁷ Cullmann and Pikaza, *Cristología del Nuevo Testamento*.

⁸ According to some scholars, “proper Christology” (Fuller, “The Theology of Jesus or Christology: An Evaluation of the Recent Discussion”).

⁹ Keck, “Toward the Renewal of New Testament Christology”, 363.

and New Testament theology.¹⁰ After a thorough study of scholarly publications, there is still room for exploration on these topics because studies in this area are not exegetical but systematical,¹¹ while others do not take into account the impact of Christ into Paul's beliefs.¹² In order to fill this vacuum, this article seeks to analyze who is God for Paul and how Christ affected his view of him.

In order to accomplish this task, an exegetical-theological analysis of 1 Cor 8:6 will be done.¹³ The selection of this passage is not random.¹⁴ Instead, the text offers a fourfold description of God which allows us to grasp a glimpse of Paul's concept of God and a fourfold description of Jesus. The latter allowed us to get an overview of his Christology, thus offering common ground to understand their mutual relationship. Furthermore, this passage has not been studied with these emphases in focus, hence the reason of this article.¹⁵

Therefore, the first section will analyze Paul's theology contained in that passage, and the second section will analyze his Christology. Finally, it will offer some insights on how the doctrine of God was reworked with the advent of Christ to Paul's theological framework.

Prolegomena

Before the exegetical analysis is presented, it is necessary to explain some points about 1 Cor 8:6. It is clear and widely recognized that this passage is a response to a practical situation.¹⁶ The Corinthians were interested in a response from the Apostle regarding εἰδωλόθυτος.¹⁷ Apparently, a party at Corinth had a position wrongly sustained from

¹⁰ Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*, 120.

¹¹ An in-depth study of passages related to God is still pending in New Testament theology; for example, Pereyra, "El centro del pensamiento teológico de Pablo: una propuesta"; Johnson, "Paul's Concept of God", 99-125. However, Richardson have made laudable progress in this direction; cfr. Richardson, *Paul's Language about God*.

¹² Wright is an exception to this statement; however, there are some exegetical points missed in his presentation (Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 644-707).

¹³ Some exegetical notes are provided. However, the main emphasis of this article is to explore the theological truths that are encoded in the text. Since this article seeks to analyze the interrelationship between God the Father and Jesus, this task is eminently theological. Therefore, the arguments are driven exegetically and theologically with an emphasis on the latter.

¹⁴ Wright suggests 1 Corinthians 8:6 as "one of the key texts in which Paul's christologically revised monotheism comes to sharp and startling expression" (Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 661).

¹⁵ Nevertheless, Rainbow has made an outstanding work on this passage (Rainbow, "Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6").

¹⁶ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, 638.

¹⁷ For food offered to idols, see, Gooch, *Dangerous Food: 1 Corinthians 8:10 in Its Context*; Cheung, *Idol Food in Corinth: Jewish Background and Pauline Legacy*; Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth: Texts and*

the Shema¹⁸ and 1Cor 8:6 is Paul's theological response to the problem. The arguments he laid out here would be pivotal for his later argument in Chapter 10.

Also, there is a heated debate concerning Paul's use of previous material here.¹⁹ However, regardless of his use or not of previous material and conditional circumstances of this declaration, 1Cor 8:6 reflects the theological beliefs of the Apostle. This should not be diminished in the light of the previous observations.

The Theology of Paul

God as One

Paul establishes that God is one (εἷς θεός) in contrast with the many gods (θεοὶ πολλοὶ) of v. 5. This claim is part of the larger framework of the monotheistic tradition of Israel which Paul adheres to.²⁰ The monotheistic faith of Israel excludes the existence of other gods because the God of Israel is the only God (for example, μόνος ὁ θεός ἐστι *Ep. Arist* 132, cfr. Ex. 20:3).²¹ This monotheistic faith has two further implications: First, since God is one, he is the universal creator and sovereign.²² Second, since God is one, then he must be the only subject of worship and adoration.²³

Archaeology, 101; Fotopoulos, "Arguments Concerning Food Offered to Idols: Corinthian Quotations and Pauline Refutations in a Rhetorical Partitio (1Corinthians 8:1-9)"; Fotopoulos, "The Rhetorical Situation, Arrangement, and Argumentation of 1Corinthians 8:1-13: Insights into Paul's Instructions on Idol-Food in Greco-Roman Context"; Gäckle, *Die Starken und die Schwachen in Korinth und in Rom: zu Herkunft und Funktion der Antithese in 1Kor 8,1-11,1 und in Rom 14,1-15,13*.

¹⁸ Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, 124.

¹⁹ Neufeld, *The Earliest Christian Confessions*, 45.

²⁰ Notice the linguistic similarities between Paul's assertion and his Jewish background, for example, Decal 1:65, Ant 1:155 (ἕνα + θεόν); Opif 1:171, An. 3:91, Ps-Hec 4:2 (εἷς + θεός). Additionally, for evidence of the monotheistic faith in Josephus, see, Schlatter, *Wie sprach Josephus von Gott?* For evidence of the monotheistic faith in Jewish Apocrypha and Second Temple apocalyptic literature, see, Wicks, *The Doctrine of God in Jewish Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Literature*, 27-129. For evidence of the monotheistic faith in Jewish Hellenistic texts, see, Marcus, "Divine Names and Attributes in Hellenistic Jewish Literature". A major work on the monotheistic faith of Israel is Rainbow, "Monotheism and Christology in 1Corinthians 8:4-6". See, Redmond, "The New Testament Predication of Christ as the Agent of Creation", 82-83. However, scholars have recently challenged the claim of the monotheistic faith of Israel. They claim that reverence was given to more than one being in Second Temple Judaism, such as angels, the wisdom figure, exalted patriarchs among others. For example, Hayman, "Monotheism—A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?"; Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God*. These claims have not gone uncontested, especially, Larry Hurtado has faced it and found it inconsistent (Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*, 125-127). Nevertheless, the confession of Paul on the uniqueness of God stands clearly on the line of the Hebrew Bible. Therefore, the monotheistic faith of Paul must be understood against the theological profession of *common Judaism*.

²¹ Cohon, "The Unity of God: A Study in Hellenistic and Rabbinic Theology", 430. However, this statement does not entail the denial of other supernatural beings; it only implies that none of them are gods.

²² Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief*, 247-248.

²³ Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism", 14-22.

Paul expresses his monotheistic faith throughout all his letters and this is one of his primary presuppositions (Rom 3:30; Gal 3:20; 1Cor 8:4; Eph 4:6).²⁴ The monotheistic faith of Paul is a continuation of the monotheistic faith of Israel.²⁵ For instance, in the letters of Paul only the God of Israel is God (1The 1:9).²⁶ Also, the God of Israel is the universal sovereign (1Tim 6:15-16) and the only recipient of worship.²⁷ In short, Paul's monotheism is the monotheism of Judaism.

God as Father

Paul designates God as the Father. In the Pauline corpus, *πατήρ* is usually found in apposition to God as a title, and it is one of Paul's favorite ways to represent God. Frequently, *πατήρ* conveys a special relationship between God and Jesus (Rom 15:6; 2Cor 11:31; Col 1:3) and between God and Christians believers (usually as "our father", highlighting his loving and caring character; for example, Rom 1:7; 1Cor 1:3; 2Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3,4; Phil 1:2; 1The 1:3).²⁸

However, the meaning of *πατήρ* in 1Cor 8:6 seems to be unrelated to this common Pauline usage. The absence of specific relations between God and Jesus, or God and humanity in the passage indicate that the word must be understood differently. Contextual parallels of *πατήρ* suggest that, in 1Cor 8:6, "Father" must mean "originator". and therefore. "creator".²⁹ Out of this concept, the idea of sovereignty is also implied in this passage.³⁰ Since God created this world he must also be its ruler.

²⁴ "God at the center made Paul's religion personal, ethical, historical, and officially monotheistic" (Gilliland, *Pauline Theology & Mission Practice*, 20).

²⁵ Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 634-641.

²⁶ For a Pauline understanding of the existence of gods, spiritual beings and his relation to the monotheistic claim of Paul, see, Orr and Walther, *1Corinthians: A New Translation*, 233.

²⁷ There is a Christian mutation since Jesus is included in the adoration of the God of Israel. Worship to Jesus was not a new cult. Instead, worship to Jesus occurred in the worship of God because Jesus is identified with him. See, Hurtado, *Ancient Jewish Monotheism and Early Christian Jesus-Devotion: The Context and Character of Christological Faith*, 301-326.

²⁸ Morris, *New Testament Theology*, 30.

²⁹ Legat. 1:115 (ἐνα νομίζειν τὸν πατέρα καὶ ποιητὴν τοῦ κόσμου θεόν, cfr. Ant 7:380 [πατέρα τε καὶ γένεσιν τῶν ὄλων ἀποκαλῶν καὶ δημιουργὸν ἀνθρωπίνων]; Decal. 1:64 [πατὴρ ἀπάντων εἰς ὃ ποιητὴς τῶν ὄλων ἐστίν]; Eph. 4:6; Mal. 2:10 LXX). For linguistic parallels in classic and Hellenistic literature, see, Danker (ed.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 787. For the use of *πατήρ* in Josephus and Philo, see, Michel, "πατήρ", 54; Conzelmann, *1Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 144; Garland, *1Corinthians*, 375. Additionally, for the use of *πατήρ* in this sense in patristic thought, see, Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1050.

³⁰ Kittel and Friedrich, "πατήρ", 1011.

Furthermore, Paul's designation of God as the Father might be a pragmatic polemic against Zeus. The Greek god Zeus was known as the "Father of men and gods".³¹ This title was given to him because he was considered to be "the source of the spirit of life in animals".³² In this way, *πατήρ*, as an epithet for Zeus, conveys the belief that he is a creator god. Since Zeus worship at Roman Corinth is well attested³³, Paul's designation could have been intended to challenge Zeus claims for the fatherhood of creation, pointing out the true Creator of the world from a Jewish standpoint.

God as Creator

Paul believes that God is the origin of everything (*ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα*). It is noteworthy to highlight the use of the preposition *ἐκ* in order to understand God's role at creation. Usually, this preposition points to the source or origin whether of an action or an element (Rom 2:29; 1 Cor 2:12, 7:7, 11:8; Phi 3:9).³⁴ Wallace states "the simple genitive is being replaced in Koine Greek by a prepositional phrase (in this instance, *ἐκ* + gen.) to indicate source. This corresponds to the fact that source is an emphatic idea: emphasis and explicitness often go hand in hand".³⁵ Accordingly, Paul is asserting that God is the source and the origin of the created order, "*τὰ πάντα*"³⁶, that is, the Creator.³⁷

Some scholars have pointed out that the use of the preposition *ἐκ* by Paul has a Stoic background.³⁸ According to them, 1 Cor 8:6 is a Christian adaptation of this

³¹ Diodorus, *Library of History*, 1.12.2.7. (All translations of this work are taken from Diodorus, *Diodorus of Sicily*).

³² Diodorus *Library of History* 1.12.2. "ὄν αἴτιον ὄντα τοῦ ψυχικοῦ τοῖς ζώοις ἐνόμισαν ὑπάρχειν πάντων οἰοεῖ τινα πατέρα."

³³ Bookidis, "Religion in Corinth: 146 B. C. E. to 100 C. E.", 160. Cfr. Coutsoumpos, *Paul, Corinth, and the Roman Empire*, 49-51.

³⁴ Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, 598.

³⁵ Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 109. On the replacement of cases by prepositions see, Bortone, *Greek Prepositions: From Antiquity to the Present*, 179.

³⁶ In creational contexts, this expression encapsulates the creation of God (for example, 3Mac 2:3 [σὺ γὰρ εἶ ὁ κτίσας τὰ πάντα]; cfr. 1 Cor 11:12; Eph 3:14-15; Heb 11:3). See, Louw and Nida (eds.), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* 1,613, contra Richardson, *Paul's Language about God*, 297. It is important to highlight that Murphy proposed this verse does not refer to creation but to soteriology (Murphy-O'Connor, "1 Cor VIII,6: Cosmology or Soteriology?", 253-267). However, in a recent publication he said: "A correct reading should be as sensitive to cosmology as to soteriology" (Murphy-O'Connor, *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues*, 70).

³⁷ The relationship described is one of nearness (Smyth, *A Greek Grammar*, 377).

³⁸ Norden, *Agnostos Theos. Untersuchungen zur Formgeschichte religiöser Rede*, 240-50.

common stoic formula.³⁹ This so-called background needs to be reconsidered. In the Stoic thinking, the formula is applied to nature (*Quidquid tuae, Natura, ferunt Horae, mihi fructus; ex te omnia, in te omnia, ad te omnia*)⁴⁰ and its purpose is to highlight the unity of all things in one divine principle, which can be taken as a pantheistic doctrine.

Nonetheless, there is no single shred of pantheistic cosmology in Paul. Therefore, there is no common conceptual ground to affirm Pauline dependence on the Stoic formula. The resemblances between Pauline and Stoic thinking are only in a linguistic level. However, without a common conceptual framework, the linguistic signs would be like carcasses filled with a different theology.⁴¹ This analysis leads to think that a Stoic background seems improbable as the backdrop of 1Cor 8:6a.

Moreover, Horsley has suggested a Philonic background for 1Cor 8:6. According to this author, Philo presents a Jewish Hellenistic view of the Stoic formula.⁴² The Philonic doctrine of creation is a combination of allegorical exegesis and Platonic philosophy. Philo depicts God as the “cause” of the universe creating the world of ideas and this physical world just like the platonic demiurge in Timaeus.⁴³ For instance, in Cher 125-126, Philo portrays the creation of the world using the Stoic formula with platonic language for creation.⁴⁴ However, just as with the Stoic background theory, Paul does not share a platonic view of creation. Therefore, there is no common conceptual framework between Paul and Philo for a possible dependence.

Furthermore, the use of the preposition between Paul and Philo varies. For Paul, the preposition ἐκ points to a person as the source of the created order. In Philo, the preposition ἐκ points to the material from which the world is created (ἐξ οὗ δὲ ἡ ὕλη). In Philo, the person responsible for creation is signaled by the preposition ὑπό (ὑφ’ οὗ τὸ αἴτιον). These divergences indicate that a Philonic background must be discarded in 1Cor 8:6a.

Paul does not share neither a pantheistic doctrine of creation nor a platonic view of it. Instead, he adheres to the Old Testament doctrine of creation.⁴⁵ These

³⁹ It follows that neither the form nor the content of 1Cor 8:6a would be Pauline material. Cfr. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 144.

⁴⁰ Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 4.23.

⁴¹ De Silva, “Paul and the Stoa: A Comparison”, 563-564.

⁴² Horsley, “Background of the Confessional Formula in 1Kor 8:6”, 134-135.

⁴³ Radice, “Philo’s Theology and Theory of Creation”, 131-135.

⁴⁴ Notice the linguistic similarities: αἴτιος, δημιουργός (Plato, *Tim* 28a; Philo, *Cher* 1:125-6).

⁴⁵ White, “Paul’s Cosmology: The Witness of Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians”, 94; Hecht, “A Biblical-Theological Analysis of the Description of God as Creator of Heaven and Earth”, 378-381.

conceptual disagreements distance Paul from these alleged backgrounds.⁴⁶ Besides, strictly speaking, there is no real linguistic parallels to Paul's formula. The prepositions used in similar formulas in Stoic philosophy and Philo are not the same and vary from text to text.⁴⁷ 1Cor 8:6 seems to be a Pauline construction instead of a reformulation of known similar formulas.⁴⁸

God as Goal of Christian Existence

1Cor 8:6a contains one of the most difficult expressions to translate in the New Testament (ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν), but a careful reading proves fruitful.⁴⁹ The emphatic ἡμεῖς personalized the confession. Normally, τὰ πάντα would have been the natural subject here.⁵⁰ It would emphasize that God is the origin and end of the created order. Nonetheless, ἡμεῖς points to the whole Corinthian community (strong, weak, Paul and by extension the whole Christian Church) and land the high and complex theological argument into practical concerns.⁵¹ Furthermore, εἰς has a telic sense here and αὐτόν points back to God.⁵² All of this suggest Paul is making explicit that the purpose or aim of the lives and existence of the Corinthian community must be found in God.

This is clearly a soteriological statement. Naturally, humankind head toward the opposite site of God.⁵³ The old aeon is hostile to God.⁵⁴ Therefore, that we move/live/exist for/to him indicates that a new aeon has arrived and redemption has taken place. The promised eschatological salvation has been fulfilled. So, ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν describes the state of affairs for Christians in a soteriological context.

Thus, if the purpose of the Christian is to serve God, it means that Christians live not to accomplish their will but God's (cfr. Rm 14:7-8).⁵⁵ This phrase also means that "we find our true fulfillment in God" and "that our whole life is directed

⁴⁶ Therefore, there is no room for syncretism. Cfr. Kerst, "1Kor 8:6: ein vorpaulinisches Taufbekenntnis?", 130.

⁴⁷ This is even recognized by Horsley, "Background of the Confessional Formula in 1Kor 8:6", 134.

⁴⁸ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 374.

⁴⁹ For instance, "We are to him" (R60, LBLA); "We live for him" (NAB, NIV, TEV); "We exist to him" (NASB, NJB, NRSV, TNT).

⁵⁰ Because τὰ πάντα is the subject of the first clause. Cfr. 1Cor. 8:6.

⁵¹ Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 375–76.

⁵² Moulton, Howard, and Turner, *Grammar of New Testament Greek* 3:266.

⁵³ For an exploration of the hamartiological condition of humankind, see, Velardo, "Por cuanto todos pecaron: consideraciones exegéticas sobre Rm 5,12".

⁵⁴ Ridderbos, *El pensamiento del apóstol Pablo*, 119-122.

⁵⁵ Barret, *Black's New Testament Commentary: The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 192.

Godward”.⁵⁶ This phrase shifts the focus from human selfish action and purposes to heavenly and sublime interests. In short, this phrase indicates that our whole existence from its origin until his realization is framed in God.⁵⁷

The Christology of Paul

1Cor 8:6b deals with the Pauline conception of Jesus Christ. This passage presents a balanced structure resembling 6a where four characteristics of Christ are given.

Jesus as Lord

Paul begins stating that just as there is only one God there is also one Lord (εἷς κύριος). The word κύριος appears in 6a as a title. Usually, it conveys “one who is in a position of authority”⁵⁸ whether of earthly beings or supernatural beings. In the Hellenistic era, several deities, Roman emperors and deified rulers are regarded as κύριος.⁵⁹ Subsequently, these referents are portrayed as authorities of specific spheres, each one of them claiming domain over their area.

The gods as κύριοι are thought of having authority over those who worship them and elements of nature while the Roman emperor claimed to be the “lord of all”.⁶⁰ The Pauline claim in 1Cor 8:5 that there are many lords (κύριοι πολλοί) seems to suggest there was not a universal κύριος but each deity and sovereign rule over a specific domain.

1Cor 8:6b is a polemic against the many lords (κύριοι πολλοί) of v. 5. Just as εἷς θεός (one god) in 1Cor 8:6a served to highlight the uniqueness of God against the many gods of v. 5, εἷς κύριος (one lord) in 1Cor 8:6b entails that only one Lord exists and he is unique.⁶¹ Furthermore, the existence of one Lord prospects a universal

⁵⁶ Trail, *An Exegetical Summary of 1 Corinthians 1—9*, 321.

⁵⁷ Sagnard, “A propos de 1Cor 8:6”.

⁵⁸ Danker (ed.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 578; Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Period (from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100)*, 699.

⁵⁹ Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2:344-6; Foerster, “κύριος” 3, 1049; Bousset, *Kyrios Christos. A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, 146-147.

⁶⁰ Bietenhard, “κύριος”, 511.

⁶¹ Hence the allusion to Deuteronomy 6:4. This text served to highlight the uniqueness of God in the Old Testament against the polytheistic context that surrounded Israelite religion. Paul’s allusion intended to highlight the singularity of Christ against the many lords that surrounded Christian religion. The use of κύριος for Jesus facilitates the application of the language and the purpose of Deuteronomy 6:4 to 1Cor. 8:6b. Moreover, the uniqueness of this κύριος is grounded in his functions. His participation in creation, universal lordship and salvation antagonize him against pagan lords. None of these κύριοι have done what this Lord does. This highlight the non-Hellenistic origin of the designation and concept behind

lordship. Only the one Lord of 1Cor 8:6b exercises authority over the cosmos and all spheres of reality fall into his dominion. εἰς κύριος points to a universal sovereign.

Paul identifies the Lord of this passage with the historical Jesus Christ.⁶² Jesus as universal Lord is a constant throughout Paul's letters (for example, Rom 10:9 and 14:9; Phil 2:6-11; Acts 10:36).⁶³ Jesus is who exercises authority over all cosmos, nothing escape his dominion and all creation is subject to him.⁶⁴ The lordship of Jesus is linked with his exaltation to God's throne (Heb 8:1 and 12:2; Rev 3:21 and 5:6).⁶⁵ Since he is sitting in the throne with God, he shares the prerogative to be the universal sovereign.⁶⁶ By virtue of his exaltation to the right hand of God, above all powers and authorities, Jesus is now the cosmic sovereign who rule the entire reality: visible and invisible (for example, Eph 1:20-22; 1Pet 3:22).

Furthermore, εἰς κύριος (one lord) in 1Cor 8:6b alludes to the Shema.⁶⁷ This is significant since it is an application of YHWH-language from the Septuagint to Christ. In this verse, Paul equates κύριος as the name of God with κύριος as a title for Jesus (For example, Phil 2:5-11).⁶⁸ In this way, Paul includes Jesus in the unique identity of God. According to Paul, Jesus belongs to the identity of the Lord of

the application of κύριος to Jesus. For example, Marshall, *The Origins of New Testament Christology*, 97-108; De Jonge, *Christology in Context: The Earliest Christian Response to Jesus*, 185-186, contra Bousset, *Kyrios Christos. A History of the Belief in Christ from the Beginnings of Christianity to Irenaeus*, 146-147. Cfr. Hurtado, "New Testament Christology: A Critique of Bousset's Influence", 306-317.

⁶² There seems to be an assumption among scholars that the Christ of faith is not the historical Jesus. However, Paul seems to blurry the assumption in this passage. He explicitly affirms that the identity of the universal Lord is Jesus of Nazareth. As Fletcher-Louis says: "If we say very little about the historical life and identity of Jesus, we inevitably drain the word 'Jesus' in 'Lord Jesus Christ' of meaning" (Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism*. Vol 1. *Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond*, 76.) Accordingly, the expression "Lord Jesus Christ" according to Novenson seems to have in view the mortal, human, Jesus of Nazareth (Novenson, *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*).

⁶³ Bietenhard, "κύριος", 514-515.

⁶⁴ Taylor, *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching*, 43.

⁶⁵ Bauckham, "The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus", 43-69.

⁶⁶ Foerster, "κύριος" 3, 1089-1090.

⁶⁷ A careful reading of the text proves that 1Cor. 8:6b met the criteria proposed by Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 15-21.

⁶⁸ For the programmatic identification of Jesus with Yhwh-Kyrios of the LXX, see, Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology*; Tilling, *Paul's Divine Christology*; Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*, 108-118; Cullmann and Pikaza, *Cristología del Nuevo Testamento*, 308; Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-theological Study*, 591-617, 664-669; Foerster, "κύριος" 3, 1089; Fitzmyer, "κύριος" 2, 330.

Deuteronomy 6:4⁶⁹ as it is stated in his use of the word κύριος and his participation in the divine prerogatives of God.

1Cor 8:6b constitutes a *momentum* in the development of Christian theology. As Wright has argued rightly, this constitutes the expression of a “christological monotheism”⁷⁰ where 1Cor 8:6b functions as a Christian Shema.⁷¹ On this, Hays points out:

Paul’s present interest is not to reflect about christological problems or to explain the relation of Jesus Christ to God the Father. Still, we may observe in passing that the early Christian confession cited in v. 6 takes the extraordinarily bold step of identifying “the Lord Jesus” with “the Lord” acclaimed in the Shema, while still insisting that “for us there is one God.” Paul and other early Christians have reshaped Israel’s faith in such a way that Jesus is now acclaimed as Lord within the framework of monotheism.⁷²

The Role of Christ at Creation

In 1Cor. 8:6b, Paul also discusses the role of Jesus at creation. He describes him as “by whom are all things” (δι’ οὗ τὰ πάντα). It is of utmost importance to understand the meaning of the preposition διὰ, in order to grasp the role of Jesus at creation.

Usually, διὰ + genitive express instrumentality (when it is used with inanimate objects) or indirect agency (when it is used with animate beings).⁷³ When the preposition is used for agency, the intermediary is what is between the non-attainment and attainment whether of an action or state.⁷⁴ Therefore, it is the intermediary who performs the action, and not the direct agent. However, the intermediary lacks control and intentionality unlike the direct agent, who controls the action inactively.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Bauckham, *Dios crucificado: monoteísmo y cristología en el Nuevo Testamento*, 44-45.

⁷⁰ Wright, *Christian Origins and the Question of God*, 136.

⁷¹ Beale and Carson (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 717-718.

⁷² Hays, *First Corinthians. Interpretation*, 140.

⁷³ Blass, Debrunner, and Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 119. Humbert states: “Au ens abstrait, cette même notion d’intervalle franchi, rapportée à des choses, tend à les considérer comme le canal suivi pour parvenir à des fins; s’appliquant à des personnes, elle voit en elles des intermédiaires agissants” (Humbert, *Syntaxe grecque*, 303).

⁷⁴ Harris, *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament*, 69.

⁷⁵ For instance, Mt 1:22 and Acts 19:11. In both cases, the intermediaries lacked intentionality and control over the action. However, they performed the action, they were not the agent (in both cases God is the agent of the sentence). For example, Merino, “La preposición διὰ en el griego del Nuevo Testamento: ensayo de análisis semántico”, 254-255.

Frequently, indirect agency is stressed by grammatical markers besides *διά* + genitive. These may include a passive verb and a preposition (*ὑπὸ*) identifying the direct agent (Mat 1:22). But indirect agency is also expressed through active verbs, which usually express the direct agent and *διά* + genitive the indirect agent. This is true in divine⁷⁶ and human contexts.⁷⁷ The emphasis in these cases is placed on the direct agent who controls the action even though he does not perform it.

However, *διά* + genitive sometimes also express direct agency.⁷⁸ Direct agency expressed by *διά* + genitive is not prototypical. Instead, it occurs when the intermediary is also the principal agent of the action. Grammatically, when direct agency is not expressed by *ὑπὸ* or contained in the main verb, agency is stated by *διά* + genitive.⁷⁹ In these cases, emphasis is laid upon the performer of the action and he exercises control and intentionality over it.⁸⁰

A careful reading of 1Cor 8:6b reveals that direct agency fits better the context than intermediary agency. There are no grammatical markers to presuppose indirect agency. There is no passive verb + *ὑπὸ* to express direct agency neither an active verb which identify the agent. Since the intermediary agency grammatical markers are absent in 1Cor 8:6b, *διά* + genitive must be understood as indicating direct agency. In this case, the emphasis is placed upon Jesus, who performed the action (creation of the world) in a fully intentional and controllable way. The full responsibility of the action is placed upon Jesus, designating him with a unique function not subsidiary to the Father.

In other words, the role of Jesus at creation is that of maker, creator, author, and designer of the world. Jesus is the one who stood between the non-existence of the universe and its existence. In this sense, the role of Jesus at creation is not inferior

⁷⁶ Acts 1:2; 2:22; 4:25; 10:36; 1Cor 2:10; 1Cor 15:57; 2Cor 5:18; Col 1:20; Titus 3:6

⁷⁷ Mt 11:2; Mr 16:8; Acts 11:30, 15:12, 28:25; Rom 5:17, 21; 2Cor 12:17; Col 3:17.

⁷⁸ Mayser has identified that *διά* replaces *ὑπὸ* in many cases. However, he states “wiewohl meist nicht direktes Vorgehen, sondern vermittelnde Beteiligung vorzuliegen scheint”. Nonetheless, he acknowledges that there are instances where both prepositions are interchangeably (Mayser, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemierzeit mit Einschluss dergleichzeitigen Ostraka und der in Agypten verfassten Inschriften* 2, 422-423; Kuhring, *De Praepositionum Graecarum in Chartis Aegyptiis Usu Quaestiones Selectae*, 38. See also, Luraghi, *On the Meaning of Prepositions and Cases: The Expression of Semantic Roles in Ancient Greek*, 183-184; and Milligan and Moulton, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 176.

⁷⁹ Mt 2:5, 17:23, 3:3, 4:14, 8:17, 12:17, 13:35, 18:7, 21:4, 24:15, 26:24, 27:9; Lk 18:31; Acts 2:16; Rom 11:36; 1Cor 1:9, 12:8; Gal 3:19, 4:7, 6:14; 2Tim 4:17; Phlm 1:7; Heb 2:3. Among extra-biblical literature, see, Polybius, *Hist.* 3,39,8 (ταῦτα γὰρ νῦν βεβημάτισται καὶ σεσημειώται κατὰ σταδίου ὀκτὼ διὰ Ῥωμαίων ἐπιμελῶς), 5,58,5, 5,61,5. For more evidence on Hellenistic literature, see, Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Period (from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100)*, 357.

⁸⁰ Merino, “La preposición *διά* en el griego del Nuevo Testamento: ensayo de análisis semántico”, 256-257.

to that of the Father, instead, Jesus is his co-worker. Romanov has put it in these words: “The substantiation of his uniqueness through the description of his functions makes him the indispensable participant in the act of creation and the co-worker of God the Father.”⁸¹

Paul associates Jesus with the work of creation in a unique and unparalleled way. Yet, “how Paul arrived at the conclusion that Jesus Christ participated in the creation is never clearly explained”.⁸² Most scholars propose an identification of Jesus with Jewish *Logos/Sophia* tradition as an explanation of Jesus’ role at creation and his pre-existence.⁸³

This entails “that the power of God in creation came so fully to expression in Christ’s death and resurrection that it can be said of Christ what was said of Wisdom”, and also “that Christ is the action of God, Christ embodies the creative power of God [...] *Christ is being identified here not with a pre-existent being but with the creative power and action of God*”.⁸⁴

In spite of the apparent scholar agreement for this background, there is evidence that challenge the predominant view.⁸⁵ First, Wisdom is conceived as the means of creation⁸⁶ whereas Christ is a unique personal creator.⁸⁷ Second, Wisdom is the personification of a divine action or attribute⁸⁸ while Christ is conceived as a divine

⁸¹ Romanov, “Through One Lord Only: Theological Interpretation of the Meaning of *διὰ* in 1Cor 8,6”, 402.

⁸² Orr and Walther, *ICorinthians: A New Translation*, 233.

⁸³ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 269-275; Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 163-209; Habermann, *Präexistenzaussagen im Neuen Testament*.

⁸⁴ Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 182. Italics in the original.

⁸⁵ Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-theological Study*, 93-94.

⁸⁶ This is expressed by the use of the dative and *ἐν* + dative (For example, Ps 103:24 LXX; Prov 3:19; Wis 9:2; Her 1:199). On the impossibility of reading a dative of agency here, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*, 163-164; Zerwick, *Biblical Greek Illustrated by Examples*, 21. Fee has suggested that the dative must be read as associative. In some occasions, wisdom is regarded as the instrument of creation via *διὰ* + genitive (for example, Det 1:54; Fug 1:109). Cfr. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 149.

⁸⁷ What Paul intended in 1Cor. 8:6b is to assign the role of creator to Jesus, but no Jew could say Wisdom is the creator of the world because it was reserved for God. Cfr. Couric, “The Jewish Doctrine of God as Background for the Apostle Paul’s Christian Understanding of Deity”, 24-36.

⁸⁸ Even Dunn recognizes this point. He states that “*it is very unlikely that pre-Christian Judaism ever understood Wisdom as a divine being in any sense independent of Yahweh*”; instead—he says—wisdom is “*a way of speaking about God himself, of expressing God’s active involvement with his world and his people without compromising his transcendence*” (Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 176. Italics in the original).

unique person.⁸⁹ Thus, if Wisdom is just a personification of a God's attributes, the identification of Jesus with Wisdom is actually an identification of Jesus with God himself. Third, Wisdom is never associated with YHWH-Kyrios name, but Jesus is.⁹⁰

Thus, Jesus' participation in creation must be seen not as derived of his identification with wisdom but as a natural consequence of his identification with the God of Israel. God is the creator of the world from a Jewish standpoint, and the identification of Jesus with him includes automatically participation in creation and, therefore, his pre-existence.

Richard Bauckham has proposed that the uniqueness of God can be found in his unique role of creator and ruler of all.⁹¹ A closer look suggests that the sovereignty of God is based on his role at creation. God rules above all because he created all.⁹² Now, 1Cor 8:6b has identified Jesus as the ruler of all (via εἷς κύριος) and as the creator of all (via δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα). The participation of Jesus at creation is the basis for his universal lordship.

Now, if Jesus is conceived as the universal ruler because of his association with God, why would it be different in creation? Why would a personalization of a divine attribute would be necessary to attribute a role to Jesus in creation? Could this be derived as a consequence of his identification with God just as his lordship was?

Jesus Role at Salvation

After Paul links Jesus with the work of creation, he establishes a relation between Christians and Jesus by using δι' αὐτοῦ. The significance of this expression depends on the meaning of the preposition and the correct understanding of ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν, in 1Cor 8:6a. The preposition points—as in the previous sentence—to the one who performs the action implicit in the construction.⁹³ Now, it was argued that ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν encapsulates a soteriological statement where the phrase evidences a reversal of the natural human condition of hostility to God made possible in redemption.

⁸⁹ The structure of 1Cor 8:6b portrays Christ as independent and different from the Father even though he is included in the unique identity of God. Christ is never conceived as “a way of speaking of God” or as dependent of God. Therefore, what is said about Wisdom cannot be said about Christ, because there is no common ground to do so. For example, Romanov, “Through One Lord Only: Theological Interpretation of the Meaning of διὰ in 1Cor 8,6”, 396-399.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 402.

⁹¹ Bauckham, *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity*, 7-11.

⁹² 1En 9:5; 3 Macc 2:2-3; Bel 5.

⁹³ Romanov, “Through One Lord Only: Theological Interpretation of the Meaning of διὰ in 1Cor 8,6”, 404.

Consequently, the second *διὰ* identifies who made the reversal of the human condition, that is, redemption.⁹⁴ In this way, the state where it is possible that we go/live/exist for God is made possible by Jesus as he acts in redemption. Jesus is who rescues humanity from this antagonism against God and restores them to their original purpose⁹⁵. 1 Cor 8:6b presents a framework where Jesus' involvement with humanity is as complete as the Father's. From beginning to end, they are related with the world.

Interrelationship between God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ

Now it is time to answer the first question we posit at the beginning of this paper: Who is God the Father for Paul? Based on the exegetical evidence provided by 1 Cor 8:6, for Paul, God the Father is the God of the Old Testament.⁹⁶ The use of *εἷς θεός*, the title *ὁ πατήρ* and God as creator and goal of everything point out that Paul is essentially Jewish in his view of God.⁹⁷ In this sense, there is a continuity between Saul of Tarsus and Paul the apostle. The God of Saul is the sub-structure of the theology of Paul the apostle.

However, Paul's concept of God did not remain unaltered.⁹⁸ The study of Christology in 1 Cor 8:6 reveals a close association of Jesus and God. Jesus is depicted as the only *κύριος*, as participating in the creation and the ruling of the universe. These characteristics belonged to the God of Israel but now are applied to Jesus. As was argued, this points to the inclusion of Jesus into the unique identity of God. Thus, this association made the Pauline concept of God undergo radical transformations.

The inclusion of Jesus into the unique identity of God established a dialogical transformation between God and Jesus. It affected Jesus because his association with God portrayed him as divine. But it affected God because Jesus is seen as an innate element within God's identity. So now, we can't talk about God without having Christ in view. Thus, the God of Judaism is now seen as revealed in Jesus and working in Jesus. Wright synthesizes this when he writes "one cannot now speak of this God

⁹⁴ Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 376.

⁹⁵ Strecker and Horn, *Theology of the New Testament*, 131.

⁹⁶ Travis, "Judgment", 354.

⁹⁷ He remained faithful to his Jewish heritage in many respects. Cfr. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament* 2, 38-40; Bruce, *Pablo: apóstol del corazón liberado*, 47-61.

⁹⁸ The theological shift in Paul occurred at the Damascus road episode, where Paul understood that "Dios es distinto de como Pablo lo había pensado" (Eichholz, *El Evangelio de Pablo: esbozo de la teología paulina*, 71).

without thinking of Jesus, or of Jesus without thinking of the one God, the creator, Israel's God".⁹⁹

There is a stressing unity between God and Jesus in 1Cor 8:6. With the advent of Christ into God's identity, "Paul's language about God has been opened up, amplified, explicated, justified by language about Christ"¹⁰⁰, and 1Cor 8:6 redefines the concept of God for Paul in terms of a theological *inclusion*.¹⁰¹ God is the beginning and goal of everything, but Jesus stands in the middle. He acts in creation and salvation within God's identity. This theological *inclusio* places Jesus at the center of God's unique identity changing radically the "old" concept of God. From there on, Paul's concept of God is of a Christian God.¹⁰²

A further argument coming from the linguistic theory may be added. Within structural linguistics, words relate to each other by means of synonymy, antonymy, etc.¹⁰³ Hyponymy is one possibility among the relationships of words. Hyponyms are words whose semantic fields are included within one hyperonym.¹⁰⁴ This linguistic element can be helpful to explicate the effect of Jesus in Paul's understanding of God.¹⁰⁵

Monotheistic talk about God for Paul implied the non-existence of other gods. Linguistically, this means that God only had one referent. Paul encounter at the Damascus road with Jesus change drastically his concept of God, as was argued before. The inclusion of Jesus within God's identity would also transform his linguistics. God (his divine identity) would have been seen as a hyperonym which includes the

⁹⁹ Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, 666.

¹⁰⁰ Richardson, *Paul's Language about God*, 304.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 301. It is highly ironic how Richardson places Jesus in the middle of a theological *inclusio* without recognizing this as a clear indication of the identification of Jesus with God in non-subordinate terms. How anybody could be at the center of God's identity without being God?

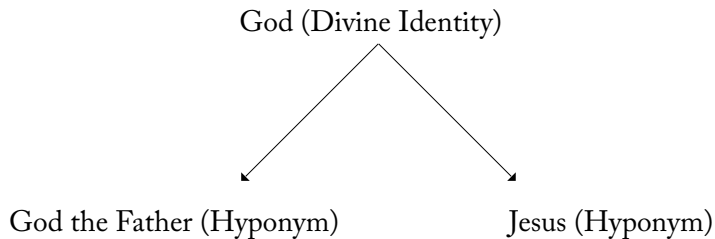
¹⁰² "Das Resultat der Synthese ist die Christianisierung seines Gottesbildes, nicht die Vergottung Christi" (Rodhe, "Gottesglaube und Kyriosglaube bei Paulus", 56.) Two precisions should be made: (1) In this paper it has been argued the idea of the "Christianisierung seines Gottesbildes". However, Jesus is portrayed as divine in 1Cor 8:6. Accordingly, the author of this paper rejects the idea of Rodhe's non-divine Jesus, because it is improbable that Jesus would have affected Paul's concept of God but God wouldn't have affected Paul's concept of Jesus. There is a dialogical transformation not one sided. (2) Richardson has cautioned against this declaration because it allegedly portrays a marcionist concept of God (Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, 73-75). Nonetheless, this section begins establishing the continuity between the God of Judaism and the God of Paul, in order to avoid this pitfall. By no means, in this paper there is a trace of marcionist thought.

¹⁰³ Silva, *Biblical Words and their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, 119-136.

¹⁰⁴ Lyons, *Semantics* 1, 271.

¹⁰⁵ I'm in debt with Stanley Porter, who used this literary figure to explain the biblical trinitarian relationship (Porter, *Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice*, 377-384).

semantic fields of God (the Father) and Jesus. Thus, whenever Paul talks about God (that is, his divine identity) as a hyperonym, God the Father and Jesus are implied. This linguistic argument as an illustration is akin to the kind of relationship which exists between God and Jesus in Paul's thought.



Just as hyponyms remain distinct in his semantics relationship, God the Father and Jesus are distinct, in spite of their unique shared identity. There is great peril if only unity between God and Jesus is stressed but not their singularities.¹⁰⁶ It would follow that the differences between their identities would blur. This is one of the main pitfalls in christological or theological discussion in current scholarship.¹⁰⁷

Accordingly, a closer look at 1Cor 8:6 evidences the particularities of each divine identity within the one divine identity. The first line of evidence is the structure of the passage. Paul does not merely add Jesus to his statement of God, but he creates a new one (1Cor 8:6b). This new statement is equally valuable as 8:6a. The actions of Christ and the actions of God are equally important.

Romanov highlights: “The content of the verse is about God the Father and Jesus Christ, not about God the Father only.”¹⁰⁸ He further adds: “The functions of Jesus Christ described in v. 6b cannot be the same as the functions of God the Father described in v.6a; otherwise, there is no need for Paul to form two different statements.”¹⁰⁹

Consequently, the very existence of 1Cor 8:6 intends to differentiate between God and Jesus; otherwise, Paul could have repeated the Corinthian statement of v. 4, οὐδεις θεος ει μη εις. The inclusion of Jesus in this statement proves that something

¹⁰⁶ It is the risk of falling into modalism. For example, Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence*, 142.

¹⁰⁷ Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism*. Vol 1. *Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond*, 88-101.

¹⁰⁸ Romanov, “Through One Lord Only: Theological Interpretation of the Meaning of δία in 1Cor 8,6”, 396.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 397.

was missing in v. 4, that is, universal lordship of Jesus, his participation in creation and redemption. The unique functions of Jesus were as necessary for the rest of the argument in 1Cor as God's.

Further evidence proves that although Jesus was included within the identity of God, the Father remained distinct. In 1Cor 8:6, God is called *ὁ πατήρ*, and this title never was applied to Jesus. Also, his role at creation as source (*ἐξ*) lacks the emphasis on action stressed by *δι' οὗ*, in 6b. Finally, God as goal of everything is a characteristic that never was applied to Jesus. All these features point to the distinctive identity of God the Father, despite the fact of Jesus being included in his identity.

The same rule applies for Jesus. He is depicted as belonging to the identity of God; yet, he has unique characteristics that differentiate him from the Father.¹¹⁰ The name Jesus account for this. This name points to the earthly and human existence of Christ. Jesus as a name bears testimony of the incarnation doctrine. The Father is never designated Jesus, because he never incarnated. Furthermore, the honorific name-title *Χριστός* points to a specific type of messianism which included the death of the Messiah.¹¹¹ God the Father never dies on the cross. In fact, the Father is never designated as Messiah.

Therefore, *Ἰησοῦς Χριστός* highlights the human identity of the exalted and only Lord. In a remarkable way, Paul includes the human identity of Jesus within the unique identity of God.¹¹² The human identity of Jesus must be part of the shape of an early high Christology, because there is no divine Christ if there is no a human Jesus. All this evidence points to the unique characteristic of Jesus in contrast with God, stressing their peculiarities within their unity.

Other elements within 1Cor 8:6 that stress the uniqueness of Jesus in comparison with the Father are his role in creation and salvation. His role in creation is clearly distinguished because the action of creation is performed by him, not by the Father. Also, he is the one who made it possible for Christians to be in the soteriological scenario where *ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν* is possible. None of these elements are ascribed to the Father.

¹¹⁰ "Jesus Christ has his own identity which is not exhausted by his inclusion within the divine identity" (Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism*. Vol 1. *Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond*, 95.)

¹¹¹ For biblical messianism as a type of messianism among Judaism, see, Novenson, *Christ among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism*, 62-63. For the death of Jesus as a vital element of his messianism, see, Hurtado, *Ancient Jewish Monotheism and Early Christian Jesus-Devotion: The Context and Character of Christological Faith*, 551.

¹¹² Fletcher-Louis suggest "On one reading of the evidence we are invited to conclude that the divine identity now includes an individual human life in a way that means it is right and proper to speak of a humanity within the divine identity" (Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism*. Vol 1. *Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond*, 95.)

In short, 1 Cor 8:6 is paradigmatic for both theology and Christology. On one side, there is a clear picture of a divine identity composed of God the Father, understood in Jewish terms, and Jesus Christ, who is an integral part of the divinity. On the other hand, God and Jesus remain distinct. Both of them have characteristics which belong only to them individually and are not shareable.¹¹³

Conclusion

Who is God the Father for Paul? He is the God of Judaism. 1 Cor 8:6 describes God in characteristically Jewish terms, that is, monotheism, creation and redemption. The unique identity of God is a key element for Paul's theology.

However, Paul's encounter with Christ changed his concept of God. Paul understood Jesus is placed at the center of God's identity. This revelation allowed Paul to understand that Jesus is divine and that he is included in what he used to call God. Yet, Paul never confused their particular identities; they remained distinct due to the emphasis on each side of their identities.

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¹¹³ Jesus appears to have a "multifaceted identity" (Fletcher-Louis, *Jesus Monotheism*. Vol 1. *Christological Origins: The Emerging Consensus and Beyond*, 91).

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