

Dear All,

The Study Service topic for Sunday is RESURRECTION & NEW CREATION. If the creation of the universe out of nothing was momentous, the resurrection of Jesus is, if anything, even more so - for his bodily resurrection is the guarantee that God will not allow his creation to lapse back into nothing. If incarnation of God as man tells us he takes our bodily existence with the utmost seriousness, the fact that Jesus is risen in his body tells us that the incarnation was not temporary, but permanent.

The cross tells us God died on the cross, not the death of God, but the death of man, and the death of Jesus was the final judgment of God on all that is twisted in human life, for in Jesus' death for us, we were all put to death with him.

His resurrection tells us his bodily rising from the dead was the beginning of the new creation, the beginning, in Jesus, of the resurrection of the whole of creation in him, **IN HIM, not yet in us or in creation as such**. For Paul, Jesus' resurrection is the "first-fruits" (1 Cor 15.20-23), of the harvest, for what happened in Jesus will happen to us and all creation. Creation is therefore destined, along with us, to follow in the pattern of Jesus. Hence the significance of his resurrection is simply mind-blowing, astonishing in its implications.

What is remarkable is that modern understanding of scientific law would not rule out such a renewal of the cosmos. To make his point when lecturing at Princeton on the difference between the modern and the Newtonian concept of law which excluded miracles, Richard Feynman, the celebrated American physicist, expert on scientific law & not a Christian believer himself, said "You know, this would not be hostile even to Christian views of incarnation and resurrection".

Preparatory reading: Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 15

Readings:

Romans 8.18-25; 1 Corinthians 15.17-26

Ephesians 1.9-10, 15-23;

Colossians 1.15-20.

7-8.30 by Zoom meeting (details on request).

Happy Easter to you all and apologies for this late email.

Christos anesti, Christ is risen - Bob