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Eternity Became Time and Dwelt Among Us

I've been wrestling with the way the Resurrection is two things: 1). An event IN space-time, and 2). The redemption OF space-time.

As a space-time event, the Resurrection's focal-point is a person (Jesus) in space (Jerusalem, Judea, Earth, Milky Way Galaxy) and time (~13.4 billion years after universe's birth). As such, the event and person are properly objects of historical inquiry. As a person in human history, we know Jesus as a man.

But he is not just A man. He is Man. He is THE Man, the Last Adam, humanity's True High Priest, the one whose very being defines what humanity IS. Jesus is a person, yes, but he is an incomparably unique person. The particular events of his particular life carry unique significance for all people. Specifically, Jesus' individual victory over his own death is also humanity's victory over human death. From our own time-bound perspective, we can truthfully say that Resurrection has been achieved. It is the current state of one man -- Jesus -- but because of Jesus' unique relationship with creation, we can also say that his Resurrection is the future state of all things. No path escapes the consequences of this already-done deed. On the last day, Father will do for all things what He did for Jesus at Easter.

This in itself is excellent news, but there is more. The Risen Christ -- who is our destination -- has sent his Spirit to us. Through his Spirit who lives now in us, the Resurrection "comes to meet us out of the future" (T.F. Torrance). The Spirit mediates to us the life Jesus experiences now, the life we will experience fully in the future. This has profound effects on those who believe the truth and submit to the Spirit's illuminating/transforming work.

The Spirit leads us toward resurrection the same way He led Jesus -- through death. We share in his Ascended life by sharing in his Descent. It is in the very teeth of death that we experience death's toothlessness. And as the Spirit mediates this life to us, we also share in the work of mediating this life to others, particularly our enemies.

The space-time event of Resurrection is already fully within Jesus' experience. It will someday be fully within OUR experience. And right now, we experience it proleptically through the Spirit who comes to meet us out of the future. In this way, the space-time event of resurrection is disclosed to us in time AS the redemption of space-time itself.

What this means is that we live in the presence of what Father has promised, and it makes us uniquely able to live in the Eternal Now. We are freed from the wounds of the Past. We are freed to love our Infinite Future (Christ's Risen Life), which relativizes our attachment to this or that finite future (future events which may or may not come to pass). Our uncertainty about possible futures bothers us less and less as we find ourselves more attached to The Future. And when we seek first The Future (the kingdom of God), all the rest of those finite things have a way of working themselves out. This is the Risen Life present among us even as we die daily. It is the Ascended Life revealed in us, though not yet fully. What we are experiencing is the ongoing redemption (setting-free) of space-time itself and the creatures in it.

We are now, in T.F. Torrance's words, "caught up in a vectorial movement that runs counter to the regressive flow of corruption and decay and carries us forward into the future to the final and full disclosure of our real being in Christ."

~ John Stonecypher