

85 Heaven and earth

We're all different in the ways we learn and the ways we picture things and understand things, and, as you may have noticed, I'm a words and diagrams sort of person.

I've been struggling of late with the idea of 'going to heaven'. I've been brought up to believe that there are two places – earth, where we are now, and heaven where we will be when we die – well, three places, I guess, the third place to be studiously avoided!

Yes, the Bible talks about heaven (and hell), but it doesn't talk about our 'going to heaven' – rather, it talks about heaven coming to earth, and today, through Tom Wright's *Surprised by Hope*, I've found a picture/diagram that I can relate to – big time.

Yes, gloriously and ultimately, heaven will come to earth, on Jesus' return, but what about now? And what happened 2000 years ago?

Birth: Heaven came to earth in a single cell, which multiplied inside Mary

Death: Heaven came to earth to conquer death, once and for all

('descended into hell' – did heaven go to hell, as well, maybe?)

Resurrection: Heaven came to earth in a glorious resurrection body

Ascension: Jesus' physical resurrection body became no longer visible on earth

Pentecost: Heaven broke into earth in a massive way, through every believer

These are just raw ideas, coming out of my finger ends as I type, but the picture I'm getting is that heaven and earth (and hell?) are being stitched together, starting with Jesus.

Now, every single Christian believer is a stitch joining heaven and earth (and hell?), through which the wonder and glory and joy and redeeming and renewal and restoration and healing (and how long have you got to list it all?!) flows out into the earth.

Little wonder that the early church turned the world upside down!

'Thy kingdom come, thy will be done **on earth...**'

And I now can't wait to study the scriptures some more – this way of looking at things has massive implications, I think, for my whole way of looking at life.

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