

## **T. F. Torrance, Science and New Creation: Did the Resurrection Change the Order of Nature?**

### **How to read the creational theology in *Space, Time and Resurrection* (STR)**

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#### *Goals:*

- Encourage everyone to read *Space, Time and Resurrection* (STR).
- Help readers to find creational theology intelligible & not an obstacle to reading STR.
- Suggest that STR can serve as an intro to TFT's creational theology, and repays careful study.
- Begin to explore *History of Science 101* background for STR, and intellectual context for TFT.

#### *Outline:*

- I. Space and Time: Open and Relational
- II. Divine Freedom and Contingent Order
- III. Stratification of Reality: Levels of Contingent Order
- IV. Conclusion: Reflections, Extensions, Applications

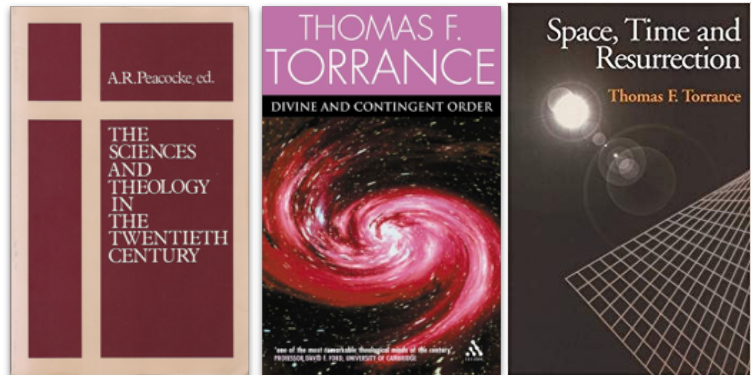
#### *Abstract:*

In Thomas F. Torrance's creational theology, the natural order of space and time is both open and relational. For Torrance, "contingent order" is a corollary of divine freedom. Space and time are but one level of contingent order. By "stratification of reality" we refer to multiple interrelated levels of contingent order. Torrance understood the Resurrection of the humanity of Christ as a re-ordering of the creation in these terms, restoring rather than violating the lawful regularities of any specific level. The Resurrection is the natural starting point for a creational theology in which we begin to comprehend the staggering cosmic significance of the Resurrection to transform the entire creation.

*Screenshots from a longer presentation are included below. Watch or download at [kerrysloft.com](http://kerrysloft.com).*

#### **T. F. Torrance Sources**

- Unless otherwise noted, quotes are from T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* (Edinburgh: Handsel Press, 1976); #1976-331. Hereafter STR.
- T. F. Torrance, "Divine and Contingent Order," in *The Sciences and Theology in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Arthur R. Peacocke (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 81-97; #1981-407.
- T. F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); #1981-385.



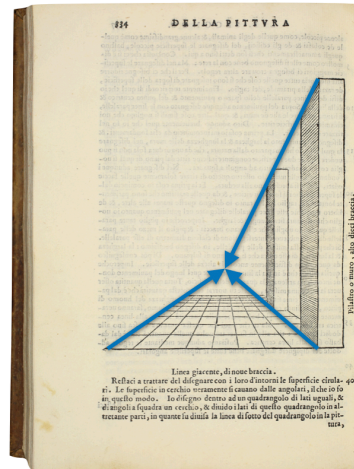
See [tftorrance.org/#](http://tftorrance.org/#) for more information; e.g., [tftorrance.org/1976-331](http://tftorrance.org/1976-331), or [tftorrance.org/1981-385](http://tftorrance.org/1981-385).

## I – Space and Time: Open and Relational

1. “...it is necessary to see that the resurrection means the redemption of space and time, for space and time are not abrogated or transcended. Rather are they healed and restored, just as our being is healed and restored through the resurrection.” (p. 90)

2. “...statements regarding that ascension are closed at man’s end (because bounded within the space-time limits of man’s existence on earth) but are infinitely open at God’s end, open to God’s own eternal Being and the infinite room of his divine life. Here we discern the theological significance of the intention in Byzantine art in a deliberate reversal of the natural perspective in depicting the dais on which the figure of Christ is made to stand, lest it should be enclosed within converging lines, which when produced meet at a finite point. When the lines depicting the dais are made to diverge, against the natural perspective, then when produced they never meet but go out into infinity. At one end of the ikon or mosaic the figure of Christ stands in bounded space and time, but at the other end he transcends all such limitations. He became man without ceasing to be God, and lived within our physical and historical existence without leaving the throne of the universe.” (pp. 131-132)

Linear Perspective



Leon Battista Alberti  
“On Painting” (Venice, 1568)

Open Perspective



Byzantine icon  
The Trinity

3. “We have great difficulty in speaking about this because of our abstract notions of space, but let us remember that as time is to be understood as time for something, the time in which we live our life, time for decision, time for repentance, time for action, and the ‘time’ of God is the time in which God lives his own life, the time which God has in himself for his own eternal will of love, so we must think of space as room for something, as place defined in terms of that which occupies it. This means that we must not abstract the notion of space from that which is located in space – for space concretely considered is place, but place not abstracted from purpose or content, and place not without ends or purposeful limits. Time and space must both be conceived in relational terms, and in accordance with the active principles or forces that move and make room for themselves in such a way that space and time arise in and with them and their movements – they are not receptacles apart from bodies or forces, but are functions of events in the universe and forms of their orderly sequence and structure.” (p. 130)

### Two views of Space and Time

	Containers	Expressions of Relationships
Space	Spherical container (Ptolemaic) or infinite geometrical 3-D grid (Newtonian)	Places in interaction (Biblical, Patristic, Einstein)
Time	Mathematical timeline	Moments in interaction



4. “It should not need to be said that the use of spatial language here, as with the ascension, does not imply some alleged mythical ‘three-storied’ picture of the world; even in the Old Testament it is clearly recognized that ‘the heaven of heavens cannot contain God’ (1 Kings 8: 27; 2 Chron. 2: 6, 6: 18; and Acts 7: 48f.); As I have shown (*Space, Time and Incarnation*) the problem lies in the presuppositions of the biblical interpreter in respect of a receptacle view of space, not in biblical or early Christian theology.” (Footnote 3 on p. 110)



Answer	Reason	View	Example
It's impossible!	There is no space there to place your hand into	Container	Aristotle, Albert of Saxony (14th century)
Yes	Because the presence of your hand creates space	Relational	Jean Buridan (14th century)
Yes	Because space was already there	Container	Shift from spherical to infinite geometrical grid (Newton)

“If you thrust your hand beyond the outermost sphere, would your hand be in a place?”

9. Onto-relations = nothing can be known or understood apart from its relations: “Perhaps the first point to note is the basic change in the concept of reality. This has to do with the transition from the earlier concept of reality, which since the days of Galileo and Newton was identified with what is causally necessary and quantifiable, the world of ‘real, mathematical time and space’, as Newton called it, in contrast to ‘the apparent and relative time and space’ of our ordinary experience, to a new concept of reality in which that kind of dichotomy is transcended and in which structure and matter, or the theoretical and empirical components of knowledge, are inseparably one. The older view of reality was one in which its analysed particulars (atoms, particles, etc.) were conceived of as being externally and invariably connected in terms of causes... Such a view, however, began to shatter itself against the actual ‘fact’ of the electro-magnetic field which could not be explained in such a mechanistic way, and since the emergence of relativity theory has had to give way to a profounder and more differential view of reality in which energy and matter, intelligible structure and material content, exist in mutual interaction and interdetermination. This is a dynamic view of the world as a continuous integrated manifold of fields of force in which relations between bodies are just as ontologically real as the bodies themselves, for it is in their interrelations and transformations that things are found to be what and as and when they are. They are to be investigated and understood not by reference to a uniformity of causal patterns abstracted from the actual fields of force in which they exist, but in accordance with their immanent relatedness in the universe and in terms of their own inherent dynamic order. In such a universe in which form and being and movement are inseparably fused together, things and events are to be explained and interpreted in terms of their ontological reasons, that is by penetrating into what they are in themselves in their interior relations in which they exhibit an intrinsic intelligibility independent of our perceiving and conceiving of them, and thereby discriminate themselves from our scientific constructs and formulations about them. The effect of all this is very far-reaching. It emancipates us from the narrow-minded and cramped way of thinking in which we impose our own abstract patterns upon the universe and rule out of court all possibilities which transgress the prescriptive conditions we have laid down for what is conceivable or real. At the same time it gives rise to a

powerful ontology in which the fatal gap between empirical and theoretical concepts is transcended, and in which being is found to be essentially open, requiring open concepts and open structures of thought for its understanding.” (pp. 184-185)

## II – Divine Freedom and Contingent Order

Tradition:	Contingent order	Intellectualist/Rationalist
Emphasis:	Divine Freedom / Love	Divine Mind, Immutable laws
Regularities:	Contingent order: Might have been otherwise	Necessity
Rare occurrences, unique historical events, singularities:	Contingent order: Intelligible in retrospect	Chance
Methodologies:	Empirical component essential	Causal reasoning, logical demonstration
Scientists:	Basil, Augustine, Peter Damian, Duns Scotus, John Calvin, Pierre Gassendi, Francis Bacon, Blaise Pascal, Robert Boyle, Isaac Newton, Samuel Clarke, Jean André de Luc, James Clerk Maxwell	Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Rushd (Averroës), Peter Abelard, Rene Descartes, G. W. Leibniz, Voltaire, Stephen Hawking
Historians of science:	Michael Foster, Francis Oakley, Amos Funkenstein, Margaret Osler, John Henry, Martin Rudwick	Arthur Lovejoy, Étienne Gilson, Alexander Koyré, Peter Harrison
Theologians:	Duns Scotus, Karl Barth, John Baillie, Eric L. Mascall, T. F. Torrance, Stanley L. Jaki	

10. Torrance: “The universe is contingent for it does not exist of necessity: it might not have been at all and might very well have been different from what it is. Yet in coming to be, the universe is characterised by an open-structured order which partakes of contingency.” (#1981-407)
11. “The creation of things proceeds from God not out of any necessity whether of being or of knowledge or of will but out of pure freedom which is not moved, much less necessitated, by anything outside of itself...” Duns Scotus (#1981-385)
12. Karl Barth, III: The Doctrine of Creation: “In the same freedom and love in which God is not alone in Himself but is the eternal begetter of the Son... He also turns as Creator *ad extra* in order that absolutely and outwardly He may not be alone but the One who loves in freedom.” III/1, 50
13. Torrance, *Theological Science* (1969): “To interpret nature in light of final and primary causes left little room for the element of real contingency in nature, to the recognition of which modern experimental science owes its existence. This had to wait until the period of the Reformation for its

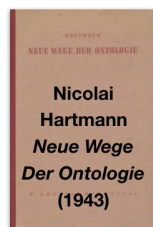
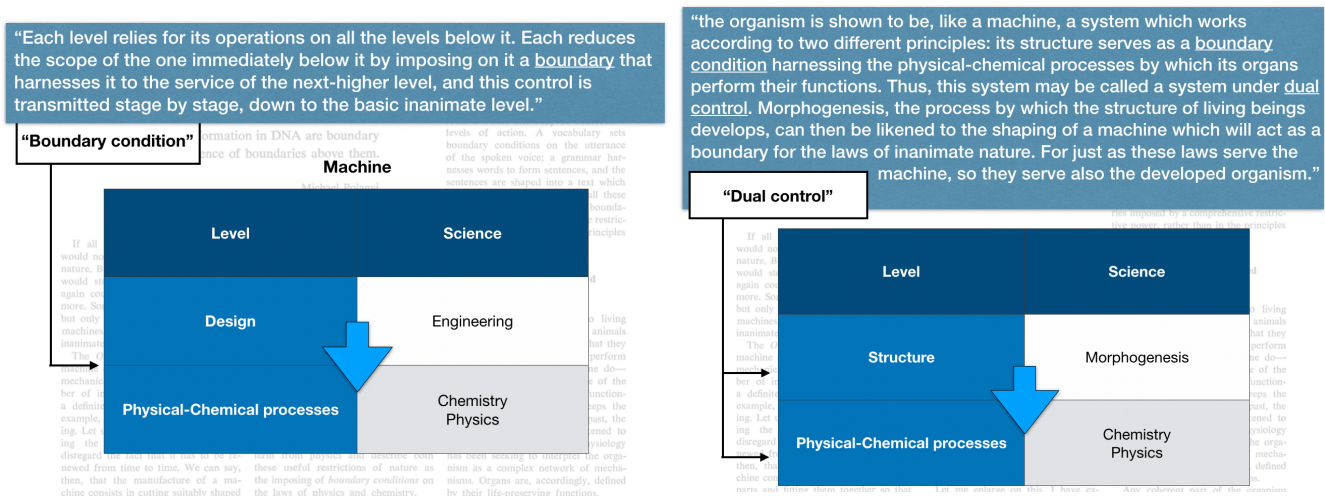
real beginning, when men learned to think differently of the nature of God and of His relation to creation as something utterly distinct from Him while yet dependent upon His will for its being and ultimate order..." (p. 61)

14. Stanley L. Jaki, "Theological Aspects of Creative Science" in *Creation, Christ and Culture* (p. 158): "...rational laws could not be simply derived in a Platonic, or a *a priori* fashion from the preferences of the mind... As a Christian, Copernicus firmly believed that the world was not a self-explaining entity. His Christian faith told him that the ultimate explanation of the world could only be found in the wisdom and will of the Creator. From the wisdom of the Creator it followed that the world had to be fully rational. The will of the Creator implied that the specific pattern of rationality embodied in the world was a choice which man, himself a creature, could not dictate to the Creator..."

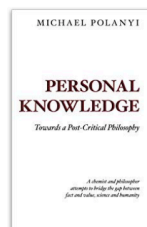
### III – Stratification of Reality: Levels of Contingent Order

Ramifications: *Irreducibility, Integrity, Open Order, Integration* (see separate page)

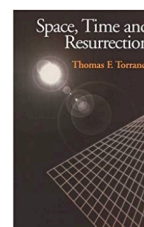
- Michael Polanyi, "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Science* 160 (1968): 1308-1312.



Hartmann
Spiritual being
Mental being
Organic being
Inorganic being



Polanyi
Responsibility
Intelligence/ consciousness
Innate behavior
Growth (including animal muscular)
Vegetative functions
Inanimate nature



Torrance
Resurrection of Christ
Theology
Humanities
Biology
Chemistry
Physics

## Stratification of Reality: Levels of Contingent Order

Level	Description	Sciences	Practices / Examples	Rose
New Creation	Christ's Resurrection, Ascension, Parousia	Beatific vision	Resurrected body/life of Christ & the Spirit	Now hidden in Christ
Worship	Response to revelation or the transcendent, ultimate commitments	Theology	The Church's life and mission, sacraments, creeds, prayers	"Thank you" (praise to God)
Ethical	Love, virtue, values	Ethics	Moral reflection, counsel, epistemic virtues	"with all my love"
Juridical	Justice	Jurisprudence	Courts, legislation	"This is your rose."
Aesthetic	Beauty, integrity, coherence	Art, Aesthetics	Painting, Music, Architecture, etc.	"How beautiful!"
Economic	Use of money and talents	Economics, Business	Business, banking	"How much does it cost?"
Social	Social relations	Sociology	Associations, interactions	"I'll send a rose."
Linguistic	Symbolic communication	Linguistics, Languages	Using language	"My love is like a red, red rose..."
Historical-Cultural	Formative, generative, engineering	History, Historical sciences	Action via contingent events	"I grew it in my garden."
Logical	Distinctions, Analysis	Logic	Probing theories, classifying, abstracting <i>Aristotle's logical works</i>	"It differs from other plants because of its fragrance and thorns..."
Sensory	Sensations, emotions	Psychology	Probing feelings, behavior <i>Aristotle's animal soul</i>	"Mmmm" (nose); "Ouch!" (finger)
Biotic	Life	Biology	Health, conservation <i>Aristotle's plant soul</i>	Growing
Compositional	Combining parts to make new wholes	Chemistry	<i>Aristotle's mixts</i>	Synthesizing fragrance, O <sub>2</sub>
Physical	Energy, matter	Physics	<i>Aristotle's 4 elements</i>	Matter, individuality
Kinematic	Motion	Kinematics	<i>Plato's astronomy</i>	Bends in the wind
Spatial	Magnitude, extension	Geometry	<i>Euclid</i>	Location
Quantitative	Discrete quantities	Mathematics	<i>Babylonian mathematics</i>	How many petals?

Adapted from Roy Clouser, Kenn Herman, Hermann Dooyewerd, Shawn Smith, Mike Keas.

## The Rose column

Imagine that you are giving a beautiful red rose to a dear friend. In this event you, your friend, and the rose participate in reality on more than one level. What dimensions of reality are evident in this event? We experience the reality of a rose in many levels.

### Table notes

Stratification of reality refers to levels of *contingent order*, *knowing* (i.e. disciplines) and *being* (ontology). Fundamentally, it asserts the reality of different kinds of order. The order of a higher level is not a more complex form of the order of a lower level, but its own kind of order. It is not a hierarchy of *degrees* of reality, for each level is equally real, equally part of the created order, and equally dependent upon the Creator's sustaining power. God as Creator is utterly transcendent. All levels depend entirely on him. In Jesus' risen humanity, through the Spirit, all levels are recreated from within space & time.

Stratification of levels and boundary conditions: "Each level relies for its operations on all the levels below it. Each reduces the scope of the one immediately below it by imposing on it a boundary that harnesses it to the service of the next-higher level, and this control is transmitted stage by stage, down to the basic inanimate level." Michael Polanyi, "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Science* (1968).

The dashed line between the biotic and sensory levels signifies the higher levels of the rose as we actively determine or experience it (we are active, the rose is passive). On the other hand, the rose participates in the lower levels actively, independent of our experience of it.

What matters is not the specific levels or how we describe them, nor the precise way we construct such a table *a posteriori*, but that we recognize that each thing or event that we experience has many diverse levels that cannot be reduced to a single one. Reality is rich and multi-dimensional.

### Ramifications

- **Irreducibility**

Opposes reductionistic conceptions of reality and of the sciences. No higher level is reduced to any combination of levels below. There can be no "theory of everything" that reduces all reality to physics, for example. To reduce any level of reality to "nothing but" another is a category mistake.

- **Integrity**

Preserves the integrity of each level and of each science (with its distinctive methodology appropriate to its own subject matter – *kata-physin*). Each level is worthy of study in itself. The natural order of a given level, with its laws and causes, are not set aside or violated, nor found to be incomplete by gaps on its own level. Lower levels appear complete (but contingent) in their own terms; higher levels are not recognized by analysis of lower ones, nor deduced strictly from lower-level evidence. "Dual control" asserts the integrity of both the lower *and* higher levels.

- **Open order**

Emphasizes the open structure of reality, opposes mechanism and determinism. Each level opens upward to the levels above, which provide boundary conditions that implicate the levels below and cannot be specified in terms of any lower level on its own. The order of any level is contingent upon the order passed down from the higher levels. Even now, the top level, Jesus' risen humanity, is hiddenly at work through the Spirit, utterly transforming all levels (*already and not yet*).

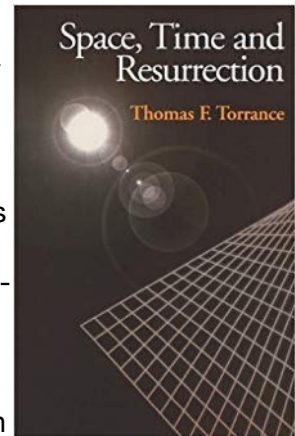
- **Integration**

The higher is more than the sum of the lower; to reach it requires not analysis, but integration, which may be "beyond our power" (Polanyi). Challenges the idea that different sciences have little or nothing to do with one another. This includes the idea that theology and the natural sciences have little or no relation; rather the entire field of sciences has an "inner semantic structure" that requires a "dimension of depth" to comprehend, by means of profound dialogue and arduous "cross-level reference." Elucidating those proper relations between the sciences, including theology, forms the heart of a reconstructed natural theology (i.e. creational theology; or philosophy of science, if the higher levels are bracketed off). "When examining any higher level, we must remain subsidiarily aware of its grounds in lower levels, and turning our attention to the latter, we must continue to see them as bearing on the levels above them" (Michael Polanyi).



## Torrance Quotes – Stratification of Reality: Levels of Contingent Order

15. Irreducibility: “The various sciences themselves, ranging from physics and chemistry to the humanities and theology can be regarded as constituting a hierarchical structure of levels of inquiry which are open upwards into wider and more comprehensive systems of knowledge but are not reducible downwards.” (p. 188)
16. Integrity, Integration: “There are then in our various levels of inquiry or layers of knowledge certain ‘boundary conditions’ (to use Einstein’s expression) where each one is coordinated with a higher system, in terms of which it becomes explicable and intelligible. It is in this way that the various sciences are coordinated with each other through functioning conjunctively on different levels at the same time. While each science is governed by its own distinctive laws, these leave undefined a number of boundary conditions which may be controlled by the operations of a science governed by its own distinctive laws on a higher level. While such a science on a higher level relies on the laws governing the science on a lower level, without infringing them, for the fulfilment of its own operations, these operations are not explainable in terms of the laws governing the science on the lower level. Thus, if we take chemistry and biology as our examples, chemistry may be coordinated with biology through boundary conditions where its own laws are left indeterminate or open to biology, and biology is coordinated with chemistry in such a way that it relies on the laws of chemistry for the fulfilment of its own multivariable organismic operations which nevertheless cannot be explained through reductive analysis in terms of the principles of chemistry. The broad effect of this is to get rid of the kind of segregation that arises between branches of human knowledge when each science, or group of sciences, is regarded as constituting a closed and exclusive system on its own, and to reveal the lines of an inner semantic structure which coordinates and holds together all levels and areas of knowledge within the one universe of human inquiry.” (p. 189)
17. *Kata physin* (“according to the nature of”; *ontology determines epistemology*): “From this point of view the emphasis of the early Church upon *physis* (the real nature of things, or simply ‘reality’) and upon thinking *kata physin* (in accordance with the real nature of things), or what we might call ‘*cataphysic thinking*’, is entirely understandable, for it meant the rejection in the most downright way of all thinking in terms of abstract ‘possibilities’ in favour of thinking in terms of concrete realities or actualities. That is to say, early Christian theologians applied to God the same principle which the Alexandrian scientists employed when they allowed the real nature (*physis*) of what they were investigating to determine the proper way in which to think about it, for that was, they held, the only true or real way to think scientifically (*epistēmonikōs*).” (p. 80)
18. Integration: “For example, in our investigation of nature we frequently come across a set of circumstances or events which do not seem to make sense for we are unable to bring them into any coherent relation with one another, but then our understanding of them is radically altered when we consider them from a different level, for from that point of view they are discerned to form a distinct, intelligible pattern. This can happen when an additional factor is included at the original level which helps us solve the puzzle, but often the all-important additional factor must be introduced from a higher level, which means that the coherent pattern of the circumstances or events we are studying is reached only through a dimension of depth involving cross-level reference.” (p. 188)





19. Open order: "Engineering operations rely upon and do not infringe but transcend the principles of physics and chemistry; instead of being explainable in terms of them, engineering operations exercise control over them through the boundary conditions where they are left undefined, in such a way that patterns, artefacts, happenings, etc., are imposed upon nature beyond anything that nature is capable of producing merely in accordance with its own laws. It is the introduction of an entirely new factor, or set of factors, which brings about such astonishing transformations within nature as we have, for example, in an aeroplane... This provides us at least with an intelligible analogy in helping us to understand the resurrection within the space-time structures of our world...." (p. 190)
20. "As acts of God, however, they are finally explicable only from grounds in God, and are therefore ultimates which are not open to complete formalization, or therefore verification, within the natural order of things in which they nevertheless share. Within that order they constitute the 'boundary conditions', to borrow a term from Einstein and Polanyi, where the natural order is open to control and explication from a higher and wider level of reality, in a way similar to that in which the various levels with which we operate in any rigorous science are each open to the meta-level above it. This participation of the incarnation and resurrection in the natural order of things, however, must not be understood as an interruption of the natural order or an infringement of its laws, but rather the contrary. As acts of God who is the creative Source of all order in space and time, they are essentially ordering events within the natural order, restoring and creating order where it is damaged or lacking, and it is in terms of that giving of order that they constitute the relevant boundary conditions within the natural order where it is open to the transcendent and creative reality of God." (pp. 22-23)
21. "That God the transcendent Creator of the universe and the infinite Source of all its structure and order should thus become one of us and one with us in the birth, life, passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ in such a way as to effect a renewing of the creation and the setting of it on a new basis in which it is eternally bound up with the life of God himself, makes our minds reel with its immeasurable significance; but what is particularly staggering is the fact that it gives Jesus Christ a place of cosmic significance, making him, man of earth as he the incarnate Son of God is, the point of supreme focus for the whole universe of space and time, by reference to which all its meaning and destiny are finally to be discerned" (pp. 21-22).
22. "Far from being an interruption of the processes of nature, creation is the manifestation of the creative source of created reality and its immanent order. It is creative activity itself breaking through and manifesting itself within the events of the created world. That is the kind of creative happening that we meet in the resurrection. By its very nature it is no more observable than creation as such, yet it is just as factual and real as creation. We cannot observe the creative processes but we may observe the created reality. Nor can we observe the resurrecting processes, but we may (or will be able to) observe the resurrected actuality of Jesus Christ – for here too we are concerned with creation, although it is new creation: not creation out of nothing but new creation out of the old order. " (p. 78)
23. "Thus the resurrection means that the Word which God sent forth in creation, and sent forth in a new way in the incarnation, did not return void but accomplished what it was sent to do (Cf. Is. 55: 11; Ps. 33: 9.) In creation and the affirmation of creation, in recreation and the finalizing of creation, the resurrection is the establishing of the creature in a reality that does not crumble away into the dust or degenerate into nothingness or slip into the oblivion of the past. This is a reality that arises and endures, for it is positively and faithfully grounded in its own ultimate source of reality in God." (p. 79)

## Torrance Quotes – Conclusion: Reflections, Extensions, Applications

Three concluding reflections:

- (1) The Resurrection is the natural (*kata physin*) starting point for creational theology.
- (2) Torrance's Resurrection-based, Trinitarian creational theology offers theologians and scientists a rigorous, mutually-beneficial dialogue.
- (3) Union with Christ entails re-creation from within.

Five extensions or applications:

- (1) animals
- (2) astrobiology
- (3) the anthropic principle
- (4) geology and evolution, and
- (5) the stratification of reality (reconsidered in more detail).

The following quotations from STR appear in this final section.

24. "But in his own resurrection Jesus had healed and redeemed our creaturely existence from all corruption and privation of being, and every threat of death or nothingness, so that in him space and time were recreated or renewed. We have no adequate language to describe this, and can speak of it only in apocalyptic language, that is in language that breaks down in its very using, but which must break down if it really is to point us to this new reality beyond, which cannot be captured or enclosed in the language of this fallen world." (p. 127)
25. "The kind of time we have in this passing world is the time of an existence that crumbles away into the dust, time that runs backward into nothingness... As happening within this kind of time, and as event within this kind of history, the resurrection, by being what it is, resists and overcomes corruption and decay, and is therefore a new kind of historical happening which instead of tumbling down into the grave and oblivion rises out of the death of what is past into continuing being and reality. This is temporal happening that runs not backwards but forwards, and overcomes all illusion and privation or being. This is fully real historical happening, so real that it remains real happening and does not slip away from us, but keeps pace with us and outruns us as we tumble down in decay and lapse into death and the dust of past history and even comes to meet us out of the future. That is how we are to think of the risen Christ Jesus." (pp. 88-89)
26. "In fulfilment of the divine purpose of salvation the incarnation of God in our world involved such an entry into our fallen and lost condition that God placed himself under the power of evil in order to break it, and took our pain and hurt and suffering into himself in order to quench them in his divine serenity, thus bringing peace to his creation. This movement of God's holy love into the heart of the world's evil and agony is not to be understood as a direct act of sheer almighty power, for it is not God's purpose to shatter and annihilate the agents and embodiments of evil in the world, but rather to pierce into the innermost centre of evil power where it is entrenched in the piled-up and self-compounding guilt of humanity in order to vanquish it from within and below..." (#1981-385).
27. "through the Spirit we can think of Christ as historically absent and as actually present... Through the Spirit Christ is nearer to us than we are to ourselves" (p. 135)
28. "On one side the Sacraments belong very much to earth and its on-going space and time, as is made clear in the visible, tangible and corruptible elements of this world, water, bread and wine, that are used. But on the other side they are signs of the new order which has once and for all broken into our world in Jesus Christ and in which we have constant participation through the Spirit even though since the ascension that new order is veiled from our sight." (p. 148)

29. "He who was made flesh is the Creator Logos by whom all things were made and in whom all things are upheld. When he became incarnate, and divine and human natures were united in his one person, his humanity was brought into an ontological relation with all creation. So far as our humanity is concerned that means that all men are upheld, whether they know it or not, in their humanity by Jesus Christ the true and proper man, upheld by the fulfilment and establishment of true humanity in him, but also through his work in the cross and resurrection in which he overcame the degenerating forces of evil and raised up our human nature out of death and perdition. But the range of Christ's mighty acts in incarnation, reconciliation and resurrection apply to the whole universe of things, visible and invisible. The whole of creation falls within the range of his Lordship, as he works out his purpose by bringing redemption together with creation, and actualizing the holy will of the Father in everything. Eschatology has here a teleological relation to the whole realm of created existence, and leads into the doctrine of 'the new heaven and the new earth'. God does not abandon his creation when he has saved man, for all creation, together with man, will be renewed when Christ comes again. Since he is the first-born of the new creation, the head in whom all things, visible and invisible, are reconciled and gathered up, the resurrection of Christ in body becomes the pledge that the whole physical universe will be renewed, for in a fundamental sense it has already been resurrected in Christ." (pp. 154-155)
30. "The withdrawal of Christ from visible and physical contact with us in our space-time existence on earth and in history means that Jesus Christ insists in making contact with us, not first directly and immediately in his risen humanity, but first and foremost through his historical involvement with us in his incarnation and crucifixion. That is to say, by withdrawing himself from our sight, Christ sends us back to the historical Jesus Christ as the covenanted place on earth and in time which God has appointed for meeting between man and himself. The ascension means that our relation to the Saviour is only possible through the historical Jesus, for the historical Jesus is the one locus within our human and creaturely existence where God and man are hypostatically united, and where man engulfed in sin and immersed in corruption can get across to God on the ground of reconciliation and atonement freely provided by God himself. The ascension thus means that to all eternity God insists on speaking to us through the historical Jesus." (p. 133)
31. "Thus the ascension means that we cannot know God by transcending space and time, by leaping beyond the limits of our place on earth, but only by encountering God and his saving work within space and time, within our actual physical existence... The ascension, on the contrary, sends us back to the incarnation, and to the historical Jesus, and so to a Word and Act of God inseparably implicated in our space and time. It sends us back to a Gospel which is really accessible to frail creatures of earth and history, and a Gospel that is relevant to their bodily existence day by day in the structures and coherences of space and time. Thus all true and proper knowledge of God is mediated through the historical Jesus Christ. Now that God has taken this way of revealing himself to us in and through the incarnation of his Word in the space-time existence and structure of Jesus Christ, he has set aside all other possibilities for us, no matter how conceivable they were a priori." (p. 134)
32. "...the contingent nature of the universe challenges science to reckon with it no longer as a negligible factor in rigorous scientific understanding and interpretation of the natural order... the orderly connections which it seeks to trace within the universe cannot be followed through scientifically to any final end, for they break off at the limits of space and time, but that nevertheless... they refer our thought meta-scientifically... to an ultimate intelligible ground on which all orderly connections within the universe must depend...
- The problem of natural science... [is that it] runs the risk of lapsing into an empiricist rationalism in which contingence is abjured and genuine empirical science is pushed aside." (#1981-407)

33. Creational theology and the task of Integration: "It will be through dialogue at the deepest level between Christian theology and natural science, in which each remains faithful to the nature and character of its own field of inquiry, and in recognition that both operate within the same field-structures of space and time as the bearers of all rational order in the universe, that interpretation and intelligible appropriation of the message of the resurrection may take place." (p. 45)
34. "It was not just a miracle within the creation, but a deed so decisively new that it affected the whole of creation and the whole of the future. The resurrection of Jesus Christ has creative and constitutive character, and as such cannot but transform our understanding of the whole relation of God to the universe of things visible and invisible, present and future." (p. 36)
35. "Such a resurrection of the incarnate Word of God within the creation of time and space which came into being through him is inevitably an event of cosmic and unbelievable magnitude. So far as the temporal dimension of creation is concerned, it means that the transformation of all things at the end of time is already impinging upon history, and indeed that the consummation of history has already been inaugurated. And so far as the spatial dimension of creation is concerned, it means that the new creation has already set in, so that all things visible and invisible are even now in the grip of the final recreation of the universe. The resurrection of Jesus heralds an entirely new age in which a universal resurrection or transformation of heaven and earth will take place, or rather has already begun to take place, for with the resurrection of Jesus that new world has already broken into the midst of the old." (p. 31)
36. "There is no point in playing down the staggering significance of the incarnation and resurrection. God the Creator of the universe, transcendent over all time and space, has himself become a creature within time and space, the man Jesus Christ, and precisely as such, 'within the measures and limits' of our human historical existence, he is at work in immeasurable love defeating the forces of darkness, irrationality and evil within creaturely being where they are despotically entrenched." (p. 21)
37. "Meantime in all its waiting and expectation the Church is commanded by its Lord to lift up its head in thanksgiving and joy, for its redemption draws nigh. The Church of the risen Lord has no right to be a prophet of gloom or despair, for this world has been redeemed and sanctified by Christ, and he will not let it go. The corruptible clay of our poor earth has been taken up in Jesus, is consecrated through his sacrifice and resurrection, and he will not allow it to sink back into corruption. Hence the whole creation groans and travails waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, looking forward with eager expectation to the hour of final liberation and renewal in the advent of its risen Saviour.\* The Church must learn to take into its mouth the Good News of the resurrection and new creation, for that must be its primary note, one of limitless joy and thanksgiving." (p. 105)
- \*"As H. R. Mackintosh has pointed out, the transformation of nature which St. Paul has in view (Rom. 8: 19ff.), takes in even the irrational creation which will be redeemed from vanity, bondage and corruption..."