

The Radical Renewal of Creation and the New Earth

The scope of redemption

Watch episode 4  aroc.me/global-classroom/renewal 

Think

What do you think about when you think of life after death? What has shaped your thinking about ‘the end times’ and the future of creation?

Reflect

‘The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.’ Romans 8:21

The hope and promise of redemption is the radical renewal of all things.

Creation itself will be ‘brought into’ freedom: the completion of God’s good works involves the continuity between new and old.

This is what we see in our own redemption. Our life post-death in Jesus is the completion of our humanness. And because our humanness is rooted in earthly creation, our redemption is consistent with this.

Jesus’ resurrected bodily existence is our model for redemption: resurrected bodily existence is the completion of God’s good work and the renewal of the original created bodily existence of Adam and Eve.

God’s faithfulness means redemption is our certain hope as Christians, but as Ed Brown’s analogy with the body highlights, this does not change our obligations now. We will surely be held to account for our destruction and exploitation of what is loved by God.

Discuss

How do you feel when you consider the prospect of bodily resurrection? Can you imagine creation free from decay?

Do you agree that humanness is rooted in earthly creation? Why or why not?

What is helpful about Ed Brown’s analogy with the body? What makes it work? Why does certain hope leave our obligations now unchanged?

Take some time to read through 2 Peter 3. You may like to consider this passage in light of NT Wright’s short booklet ‘New Heavens, New Earth: The Biblical Picture of Christian Hope’, or Dave Bookless’ chapter ‘The new creation: on earth as in heaven’ in his book ‘Planetwise’. What questions does this leave you with?

Pray, thanking God for the hope and promise of redemption.