

The Cosmic Christ

The Cosmic Christ

Adult Forum – December 15, 2013

Calvary Episcopal Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Presenter: The Rev. John J. Fetterman

The birth of Jesus that we celebrate on December 25 marks the extraordinary manifestation of God in human history. The child that is born is both fully human and also fully divine. This union of two natures (human and divine) in one person is the mysterious union called the Incarnation of God (God into flesh) without the divinity being diminished. To celebrate the full import of this birth we will turn our attention to the meaning of God taking on our humanity.

The presentation will follow this outline:

1. A – brief review of the birth narratives in the Gospels.
2. A – What and When was “in the beginning”. God and the Big Bang.
B – Why would God do such a thing?
– motivated entirely by love
C – Application; - An expanded sense of Ecumenism. God loves and saves everyone.
3. Evolution: An expanding universe is a scientific fact.
A – The scientific base (George LeMaitre and Edwin Hubble)
B – Both the universe and our humanity, as part of the whole, is expanding and developing.
C – What are we to become “in Christ” vs “in Adam”.



Above: The Andromeda Galaxy (NGC 224). Front cover: Thor's Helmet (NGC 2359).
All photographs in this document are from the Hubble telescope, courtesy of NASA.

Background Notes for The Cosmic Christ

The World of Jesus

Since the conquests of Alexander the Great (d.323) the language and the culture of the area was Greek. Scriptures were available in Greek (The Septuagint) and also in Hebrew. People, in general, knew enough Hebrew to read and assimilate the Scriptures. Aramaic was the common language, especially in the villages. Latin was practically unknown.

Only Matthew and Luke have birth narratives. They are both more theological presentations than historical records. Both authors show two main goals in composing their texts. One was to write the story as a faith document emphasizing fulfillment of prophesies and, secondly, not to compose an historical record as we use that term.

Jesus probably looked like all the Palestinian men we see on the TV news shows. He probably spoke Aramaic but knew Hebrew well and was deeply formed by the scriptural texts. He is often referred to as a Nazarene which is a small town where Aramaic would have been the common language. His public life lasted for one year, if you follow the Synoptic Gospels (Mt., Mk., Lk.). Following John's gospel we read of Jesus spending as many as three years attending three Passovers during this period.

The Cosmos and this planet earth, “our island home” (Eucharistic Prayer C)

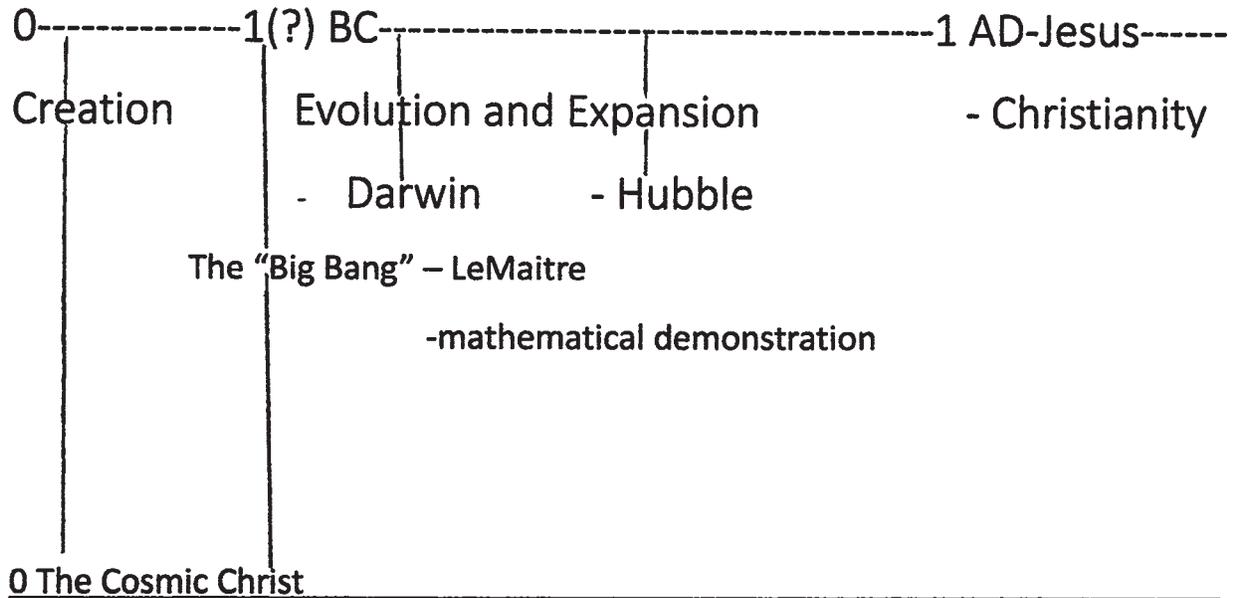
The universe is approximately 13.82 billion years old and planet earth, “our island home” is approximately 4.54 billion years old. In our solar system, there are approximately 300 sextillion planets. British scientists have recently said that there are about 40,000 planets in our Galaxy capable of sustaining life.

The work of discovering and demonstrating that the universe is expanding is attributed to the Rev. Dr. George LeMaitre, S.J. and Doctor Edwin Hubble.

Following LeMaitre's mathematical proof, the term “Big Bang” began to be used.



The Cosmic Christ



-at the beginning as God in Trinity
-manifested in Jesus calling back into union with God the whole creation (Aka – salvation, redemption) as a second Adam.

Darwin:
- identified the process of evolution giving us as a new image of God as continuing to create.

Hubble:
-with his new telescope the expansion could be observed.
-we are part of the developing whole.

