

St John's Lindow

INTOUCH

Winter 2021



God Is Not Silent

'in these last days God has spoken to us by his Son'
Hebrews 1:2

www.saint-johns.org.uk

SIMON'S SCRAWL

by Simon Gales

'*Silent night, holy night*' is a favourite carol, but silence should be the last thing you associate with Christmas – the tearing of wrapping paper, the whoops of delight (or dismay) as contents are discovered, not to mention the shrieks from the kitchen when it all goes wrong!

It wasn't very silent that first Christmas Day either. Any trip to a maternity ward will tell you that childbirth is not silent. And the Bible's account of Jesus' birth is full of noise – the joyful singing of the angels, the hustle & bustle of the shepherds, other well-wishers arriving and passing on the news.

No, the arrival of Jesus was not silent. But most significantly it was noisy because God was speaking as never before. The full text quoted on the front cover says: '*In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son*' (Hebrews 1:1,2)

The writer says that in the past God was speaking in lots of different ways, bit by bit, revealing more of his plan (what we know as the Old Testament). But now, in the birth of Jesus, God was speaking as never before. Now he has spoken in a final and decisive way – Jesus is God's last word to the human race!

When Professor Chris Whitty speaks, there is nothing more to be said – he is the expert! Well, Jesus is God's final Word- there is nothing to be added, nothing more that needs to be said. People sometimes say 'Why can't I meet God in a burning bush like Moses did? Then I really would believe!' but who are we to dictate terms to God? when he has

wonderfully spoken to us by his Son?

That's why there is no more 'up to date' message! It's why we go back to events of 2000 years ago, with a message 2000 years old – there has never been an 'upgrade', it has never been needed. Jesus is God's final Word.



So the brilliant news of Christmas is that God has spoken once and for all in the coming of his Son. And if that is so, then we must surely listen, in the place where God has spoken. When our daughter phones up from Australia we are desperate to get hold of the phone - Sarah is speaking and we want to hear! Is it not amazing that the Creator of the universe should choose to speak to us? What better Word to hear than that!

So let me invite you to our Christmas services this year to hear God speaking to you, and continuing into 2022 as, week by week, we look at the Bible (see back page) - the immense privilege of God speaking to us!

May God give us listening ears!

Yours,

Simon

"Silent Night..."

SKETCHY THEOLOGY
BY BEN HOLLINSHEAD



From a Christian perspective, the domain of science is the exploration of the *secondary causes* established by God in creation. Science, *as such*, can neither prove nor deny the existence of God, the eternal *Prime cause*. Scientists as normal human beings, however, usually do either *affirm* or – simply by default – *deny* God’s existence. In many cases, the latter outlook often arises from a deficient concept of “god” – as some kind of “super engineer” that tinkers around with cosmos from time-to-time and is perceived as superfluous.

Professor Brian Cox, a physicist from Manchester University, is a highly competent

communicator well known for his rather unique style of TV science programmes. His approach is secular and at least mildly atheistic in that he indirectly affirms that, however beautiful and amazing, the universe is ultimately impersonal and pointless – it just exists without any ultimate explanation or purpose. At the private level, he is not overtly hostile to Christians and has given invited presentations to Anglican clergy to great acclaim.

In the present TV series, we see Prof. Cox’s typical enthusiasm, with emotive music, and stunning images and videos of galaxies from the Hubble space telescope. These are subtly

TV Series by Professor Brian Cox

UNIVERSE

A review by Andrea McConchie & David Watts

combined with computer generated animation (CGA) models such that it becomes difficult to discern where the original images end and the CGA takes over.

Whatever we may think of the subtle combination of science and the atheistic worldview that is communicated by Prof. Cox, a Christian viewer can greatly benefit from viewing this series for two primary reasons. Firstly, its popularity means that many of our neighbours may be influenced by its core message that only life gives the universe meaning. This may provide the opportunity to talk about the alternative Christian belief, that the universe is meaningful not because of life, but because it is upheld by God’s

continuous work. God declared the world as ‘very good’ not because of human presence, but because the ordering of creation is complete. Secondly, watching this series, and the ones before it, provides the opportunity to rejoice in the reflection of God’s glory and majesty seen in the vastness and beauty of the heavens above. As the apostle Paul stated the universe declares God’s eternal power - *For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.* (Romans 1:20)

Universe is available on BBC iPlayer or DVD.

REVELATION IN THE SKY WITH DIAMONDS

By Martin Haywood



The ancient Book of Psalms affirms God's self-disclosure to the entire human race (Psalm 19:1-4a).

***The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world.***

The canvas of this disclosure is the night sky with the vastness of the starry heavens above us. Living in the 'civilised' world with its endemic light pollution we may choose to ignore this. Yet our telescopes show further amazing detail. The ancients were acute observers of the night sky and observed the regular cycle of the constellations, denoted as "the laws or decrees of the heavens" in the books of Job and Jeremiah. This was not a 'one off', but a continuous daily proclamation of God's existence and glory.

Moreover, all understanding we finite earthlings have of the world about us comes from God giving us the ability to appreciate it. We recognise the passing of time and the brevity of human life. Modern science has now returned to something like the Christian understanding that the present universe had a beginning with a gradual development and a certain and ultimate end. We can now quantify the enormous lengths of time and scales of energy observed or inferred from observations. These broad dimensions of scale speak volumes of the greatness of God as Creator.

Another dimension of God's 'general' revelation to humankind is our inbuilt sense of God - as real as our self-awareness - though we may suppress this witness, as the apostle Paul declared in the opening chapters of Romans.

But wonderful as such 'general' revelation is, it is insufficient (being wordless) as a way of communicating God's 'special' or saving revelation - the message of Jesus Christ as Saviour of the world.

For that, a clearer and more explicit verbal revelation was both necessary and provided, culminating in the New Testament, as the apostle John declared (John 1.1-5; 1 John 1.1-4).

The author of Psalm 19 also went on to rejoice in the verbal 'special' revelation from God that was available in his day - the written "Law of the Lord" that gives joy to the heart and light to the eyes (v8). These words are more precious than gold; they bring great satisfaction, more than fresh honey and guard the recipient (v10,11). God is not silent and distant but has provided for his people instruction and guidance for a wise, joyful, steadfast community life leading to great blessing!

“
***These broad
dimensions of
scale speak
volumes of God
as Creator***
”

VIEW FROM THE PEW

Linda Baddely

Marc: So what brought you to Wilmslow?

Linda: I was actually born in Wilmslow so I've always been here. I was also christened at St Johns!

Marc: And have you enjoyed living in Wilmslow?

Linda: Well, I originally wanted to work in Greece because I had a fascination with the language, but it didn't happen as I had my son, Oliver. I actually came to faith through him.

Marc: Oh, wow! How did that happen?

Linda: When he was young, Oliver asked to go into St Phillip's in Alderley Edge. The church had "pram services" and he actually got christened there. I was eventually confirmed in my 40s, however I felt like I was still searching for something more at the time.

Marc: So what happened next?

Linda: I remember thinking "this can't be it." I went to the Keswick convention and met a lady there who wound up telling me that I was in the wrong church which was a surprise to hear! I then ended up having a break from St Phillip's and got into a relationship with a non-Christian.

Marc: So, what led you to become a true believer?

Linda: It was when I read the book "Stop Dating the Church" that I felt God was telling me something. The relationship I was in felt wrong, so it was as though I was being led in faith. I used to do cleaning jobs and saw a lot of little Bibles and books of the Psalms, too. However, it was when Barbara Noah, whom I already knew, invited me to a BBQ over ten years ago that I actually came to St John's!

Marc: What's kept you at St John's since then?

Linda: I appreciate the good Bible teaching and when I recently moved I wanted to stay nearby. It's an answer to prayer being able to live near the Wilmslow Leisure Centre as well as having a good mission field to talk to others about God.



Marc: How about your son, Oliver? How old is he now?

Linda: Oliver will be thirty this December! He lives in Goostrey with his wife, Laura and son, Harry, who is eight months old.

Marc: Do you speak to them about your faith?

Linda: I have some Bible picture books at home and when Oliver comes round with Harry, he reads them to him which is really encouraging for me as Harry's Nana.

Marc: That's definitely encouraging! How would you say God is currently speaking into your life now?

Linda: I feel spiritually loved and at peace with God. I'm very blessed and have a new mission field where I live. I've been adopted into a church family with a focus on Jesus, which is amazing. It's God who is leading me as I don't have a clue on my own!

Marc: What a fantastic truth to end on. Thank you, Linda, for taking the time to share some of your life with us.

9 ⁹ Because of his strength I will give heed unto thee; For God is my high tower. 10 My God with his lovingkindness will meet me: God will let me see my face upon mine enemies. 11 Slay them not, lest my people forget: Scatter them by thy power, and bring them down. O Lord our shield. 12 For the sin of their mouth, and the words of their lips, Let them even be taken in their pride, And for cursing and lying which they speak. 13 Consume them in wrath, consume them, so that they shall be no more: And let them know that God ruleth in Jacob. Unto the ends of the earth. ¹⁴ And at evening let them return, let them howl like a city. 15 They shall wander up and down for food, And tarry all night if they be not satisfied. 16 But I will sing of thy strength: Yea, I will sing aloud of thy lovingkindness in the morning: For thou hast been my high tower. And a refuge in the day of my distress. 17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing praises: For God is my high tower, the God of my mercy.

Lament over Defeat in Battle, and Prayer for Help.

For the Chief Musician; set to Shoshan Eduth, Misrah of David, to sing when he strove with Arimathairim and with Ananias, and Jehu returned and smote of Edom in the Valley of Beth Zeriim.

60 O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast broken us down; thou hast been angry; oh restore us again.

1 Acc. to Sept. and Vulg. My strength is God, whom thou hast cast off for me. 2 Heb. Make them wander in and fro. 3 That is, the city of Jerusalem.

635

2 Thou hast made the land to tremble; thou hast rent it: Heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. 3 Thou hast showed thy people hard things: Thou hast made us to drink the wine of staggering. 4 Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, That it may be displayed because of the truth. ⁵ That thy beloved may be delivered, Save with thy right hand, and answer us. 6 God hath spoken in his holiness: I will exult; I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. 7 Oil and wine are mine, and Manna-corn is mine; ⁸ Ephraim also is the defence of my head; Judah is my sceptre. 9 Upon Edom will I cast my shoe: Philistines' heads, shout thou because of me. 10 Who will bring me into the strong city? Who hath led me unto Edom? Hast not thou, O God, cast us off? And thou goest not forth. O God, with our hosts, 11 Give us help against the adversary: For vain is the help of man; 12 Through God we shall do valiantly: For he it is that will tread down our adversaries.

Confidence in God's Protection.

For the Chief Musician; on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.

61 Hear my cry, O God; Attend unto my prayer. 2 From the end of the earth will I call unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed:

1 Another reading is, me. 2 Or, I am poor. 3 Or, I am low. 4 Or, I will send me down. 5 Heb. Will not thou, O God, when thou hast cast us off and gone. 6 Heb. I will be a house. 7 Heb. salvation. 8 Heb. Justice.

PSALMS 60.2—62.6

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. 3 For thou hast been a refuge for me. 4 A strong tower from the enemy, 4 I will dwell in thy tabernacle for ever: I will take refuge in the covert of thy wings. ⁵ For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear thy name. 6 Thou wilt prolong the king's life: His years shall be as many generations. 7 He shall abide before God for ever: Oh prepare lovingkindness and truth, that they may preserve him. 8 So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, That I may daily perform my vows.

God alone a Refuge from Treachery and Oppression.

For the Chief Musician; after the manner of Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.

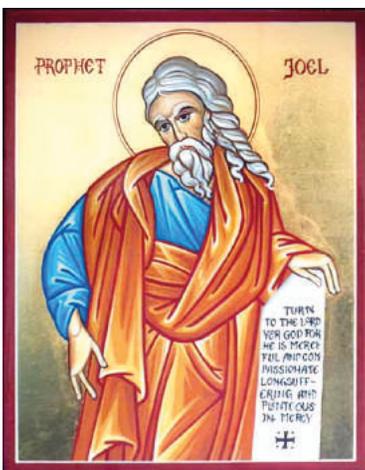
62 My soul waiteth in silence for God only: From him cometh my salvation. 2 He only is my rock and my salvation: He is my high tower; I shall not be greatly moved. 3 How long will ye set upon a man? That ye may slay him, all of you: Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? 4 They only consult to thrust him down from his dignity: They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly. ⁵ My soul, wait thou in silence for God only: For my expectation is in him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation:

1 Or, a rock that is too high for me. 2 Heb. tent. 3 Or, given a heritage unto those etc. 4 Heb. of righteousness God. 5 Or, an enemy who roars. 6 Ye shall be slain etc. 7 Heb. be thou alone unto God.

GOD'S WORD WRITTEN

By David Watts

Modern computer-typeset Bibles in the English language are readily available from all major bookshops. They are scarcely different in outward appearance from *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* or a substantial textbook. At church we are familiar with well-worn copies in the pews. We can purchase our pick of several translations, such as the *New International Version* (NIV). These days, Bibles can be compact enough to toss into our backpack or read on a smartphone. But, as the saying goes, familiarity can breed contempt!



Joel, Old Testament Prophet

At the deepest level, the *Holy Scriptures* are to be acknowledged as divine/human communication,

being 100 percent from our Holy God and yet 100 percent human in composition. For this is no “zero-sum game” wherein the Bible might be, say, 60 percent human and thus possess only 40 percent divine qualities. Rather “All Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16) and “Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). Nevertheless, the Scriptures – possibly excepting the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20) – were written down by inspired human agents largely without any element of dictation. And generally, they are products of investigative human thought and research - for example: Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Luke 1:1-4 and the Acts of the Apostles – or poetic composition, as in the Psalms and many of the prophetic oracles. The Old Testament books were written in the Ancient Near East mostly in Hebrew and partly in the Aramaic language. The New Testament was written in the common Greek language, although the native language of Jesus was Aramaic, which remains a living language in parts of Syria such as the village of Maaloula. Thus, Jesus used the familiar thought forms, metaphors and idioms of Israelite culture to convey his amazing teaching.

The task of both Christian self-edification and public preaching involves the study and *interpretation* of Holy Scripture, followed by its *application*. And the first step is to recognise the *distance* between the original context and our own context, plus the type or ‘genre’ of literature we are dealing with. For many

readers, the Biblical books are the only ancient books they have ever read. We may attempt to read the Bible as if it had been written only last week! Nevertheless, it does remain the case that “The Bible Speaks Today”. The human condition and predicament have not changed significantly over the centuries, nor has the power of God manifest in the Gospel to bring salvation to everyone who believes. Thus, alongside *our interpretation* of Biblical meaning, *God also interprets us* and our present situations, through Holy Scripture, bringing his heavenly light and life into the dark corners of our existence.

Holy Scripture thus parallels the person of Jesus Christ in that both are wholly divine and wholly human. Just as we reverence Jesus, as God’s Word incarnate – “manifest in the flesh”, so we should

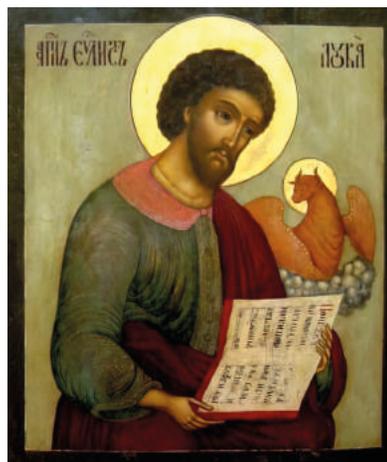
“
*The proclaimed
 Word can address
 us directly bringing
 hope, salvation,
 guidance and
 challenge.*
 ”

maintain a reverential attitude to God’s Word *inscripturated*. This is not worshipping a book, though we might unintentionally give that impression. Within the context of Christian worship, the public reading – and hearing - of Scripture should be a priority.

Accompanied by the power of the Spirit of God, the proclaimed Word can address us directly bringing hope, salvation, guidance and challenge.

During the 2,000-year history of the Christian Church, believing scholars have considered the question of multiple levels of meaning in Holy Scripture, sometimes denoted by the Latin expression: *sensus pleior* that means “fuller sense” or “fuller meaning”. This refers to possible deeper meanings intended by God but that go beyond the conscious intentions of the human author. Conservative Christians have used the term to mean the larger or whole teaching of Scripture.

In the Middle Ages, this tendency was arguably taken to excessive levels when, for example, the parables of



*Luke the evangelist,
 Gospel Author*

Jesus were interpreted with allegorical significance assigned to every single detail. Since the Reformation of the 16th Century, perhaps the pendulum has swung too far to the opposite direction amongst Protestants, with emphasis upon a bare literal meaning that

can fail to recognise in one passage the echoes and overtones from earlier scripture texts. A good example is the ‘inverted’ echoes of the *Tower of Babel* narrative, manifest on the Day of Pentecost when the apostles spoke to people of many nations, each in their own language. Insistence on the maxim: “Interpret literally whenever possible” has produced some bizarre results when interpreting aspects of the broad-brush primaeval history in Genesis 1-11 and the apocalyptic language of the Book of Revelation.

Probably better advice is to encourage the *Spiritual Reading* (interpretation) of Holy Scripture. This gives full recognition to historical narrative and the doctrinal and ethical content of the New Testament letters. But it is also an attitude open to receive the entire spectrum of Biblical content, with its many literary styles and interconnections, together with the inexhaustible riches of divine grace. As the Apostle declares in Romans 11:33-36,

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor?”

“Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?”

For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be glory forever. Amen.

Silent Night?

Luke Ch. 1 and 2

Some truly amazing things happened in the first Christmas story – they might leave us lost for words! Can you draw some amazed faces in the green circles?



But Dr Luke has carefully investigated all that happened at the first Christmas so that we can be certain and believe it. Can you draw a picture in the magnifying glass of an animal that Luke mentions?



God sent lots of messages that first Christmas. How did he send his messages?



Two of the people who received messages from God were:

Z _ _ _ _ _
(lv11,12)

M _ _ _ _
(lv28,29)

Which of them believed God's message?

God was not silent at the first Christmas but somebody was. Who was silent and why? lv19,20

What was the first thing he did when he could speak again? lv64
Can you draw him below?

What was the good news that the angel brought to the shepherds?
Why is this still good news for us today? 2v10,11

Can you draw the angels singing praise to God?

Free Book Giveaway

'A Very Messy Christmas' by Jago Wynne

Lindsey Wild

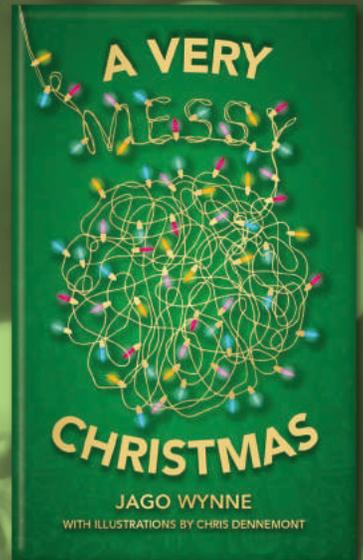
Did you know that you were given a present in the past that can bring joy today and equip you for the future?

Jago Wynne takes us through the messy society surrounding Jesus' birth and our messy world now. However he brings a great deal of chuckles to his guidance from mess to Messiah, reflecting on personal experiences from midwifery and Paddington to surprise gifts and school nativity plays! Each smile brings its message and reflections: God came to us to rescue us; Jesus lived and died for us; he took our mess on to the cross and we can receive that gift with joy.

Jago gloriously reinforces how to see Christmas as the focus for Good News, the gift of love and joy brought by our Messiah and King.

This short book invites us to see God in this Christmas birthday and receive that present of "pardon for the past and paradise for the future".

Editor's note: 'A very Messy Christmas' is available as a free Christmas giveaway from the church porch, for yourself and to pass on to others.



Northwest Women's
Convention - St
John's cohort



Remembrance
Sunday



Gareth Crispin
(PhD) with Luke,
Tom and Ben



"We are the Wong family with Rico (father), Phillis (mother), Charlotte (7), Philip (5) and Parker (1.5). Settling into St John Lindow is purely God answering prayers."

welcome!

hello



"Hi everyone. We are Rane and Michael, with our 2 sweet daughters Stefanie & Perri. We are from Hong Kong and moved to the UK just 1 year ago. Glad to meet you all in this lovely church."

nice to meet you



"There are four people in our family. Alex, Jessie and two lovely children, Chablis and Javi. We are from Hong Kong and have been in Wilmslow for a year. We are so delighted that St. John's Lindow welcomed us warmly."

hi!

nice to meet you!

NEW FACES

hi!



I'm Jill Paterson - I moved up to Wilmslow earlier in the year to live with my sister on Cumber Lane, and have enjoyed coming along to St John's.

nice to meet you



"We are the Earnshaw family, Mike, Leonie and Izzie.

Prior to our move to Wilmslow 3 years ago we lived in East Didsbury, and continued attending our old church in Fallowfield until churches closed for worship during the pandemic. We have been attending St John's since Christmas Eve 2020 and enjoy the teaching and music which are inspirational. We are very grateful for the warm welcome we have received."

hello!

hi



Hi, I'm Karen Vibert. My early fond recollections of St John's are of Sunday School, Girl Guides and getting married. I now live in Macclesfield, and over the past 12 months have completed Christianity Explored and Bible study courses with Simon. I attend Leonie's home group on Thursday evenings and enjoy our discussions and learning so much more. Thank you to everyone for welcoming me back to St. John's.

hello

nice to meet you



"We are Iris & Ronald, together with Titus & Kaylan who are HongKongers, and first came to UK early this year! We have never been to the UK before and Wilmslow is our first "visit" and we are thankful for Christ's love and all the nice people we meet here; we are greatly settling in."

welcome!



Wentao and Yejing moved to England in 2013 after having their education in the U.S.. They had lived in Lancaster for 4 years and then in Durham for another 4 years, and relocated to Greater Manchester this July. They are blessed with three beautiful girls, Gloria, Danielle and Hannah. They are very thankful for our church family at St John's and very excited about this new journey with Jesus.



Refusing to be silent

The example of Maximus the Confessor

There are many privileges we can take for granted in the Christian life – our biblical resources, our theological heritage, our world-wide church – none of which would have been possible without the efforts and sacrifices made by countless men and women down the ages: people who refused to remain silent, but who spoke up. We are truly standing on the shoulders of giants.

One such giant was St Maximus the Confessor, an eastern scholar and monk living at the end of the 6th century in the so-called Byzantine period. Although not well known in evangelical protestant circles, Maximus is a great example of someone who refused to remain silent in the face of many dangerous theological ideas that were rocking the church, east and west, at that time. One was that Jesus Christ, although both fully God and fully human, possessed only a single, combined will. Proponents of this idea feared that if Jesus had two wills then the two might come into conflict leading to a

schizophrenic Jesus unable to make decisions. Maximus, however, insisted that if any part of Jesus were not fully human then that same part would not be 'assumed' in the act of incarnation and would not therefore be redeemed in Jesus' sacrificial atonement. Maximus' view eventually prevailed but only after his cruel death following the amputation of his tongue and right hand.

Another doctrine we might take for granted today but which had been fiercely contested in Maximus' day was the doctrine of creation. There were alternative theological visions as to how creation came to be, each carrying serious repercussions for how we understand the divine-human relationship. One of these visions, attributed to Origen and his followers, was that all creatures were initially pure spiritual beings enjoying God's presence but fell away from God, causing God to punish them by clothing them with material bodies of different 'thicknesses.' The 'Origenists' hoped that this would account for why creatures today are unequal and are clothed with unspiritual bodies.

In contrast, Maximus argued that creaturely difference and materiality was a good thing, bestowed by God as his original plan and not as a result of some punitive concession. According to Maximus, God created everything from nothing (ex nihilo) and yet the designs or specifications of every creature – the logoi as he called them – are rooted in the Word of God – the Logos – who is their exemplar or archetype. In this way, creation in all its material variety is good because God himself is good, even though creation is at the same time utterly 'other than' God.

Maximus paid the ultimate price for all his thinking and speaking up. His martyrdom reminds us that, just as God is not silent, neither should we be silent.



Andrew Jackson attends church at St Andrew the Great [StAG] in Cambridge. He is undertaking a PhD in Maximus the Confessor and evolutionary biology.

WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMME

	Mornings 10am	SUNDAYS	Evenings 6.30pm	HOMEGROUPS
2 Jan	Motto verse (John 5:24)			<p>Meeting in various homes around the parish during the week (evenings and afternoons) to study God's Word and to encourage and support one another. During the first half of term we will be sharing in some training for A Passion for Life. Later, as we head towards Easter, we'll look together at some key chapters from Hebrews.</p> <p>Passion for Life Training</p> <p>13 Jan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Making meaningful connections Loving through listening and questioning <p>20 Jan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing hope in today's world Answering tough questions with Jesus <p>27 Jan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How God sees people What is the gospel? <p>10 Feb</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> God's role and ours Prayer in evangelism <p>17 Feb</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Right expectations and crossing the pain line Gospel outlines and personal stories <p>24 Feb</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Making the most of courses and events Helping people become Christians <p>Jesus is Better! (Hebrews)</p> <p>24 Mar</p> <p>The man who rules the future</p> <p>31 Mar</p> <p>From shadow to reality</p> <p>7 Apr</p> <p>The priest who sat down</p>
9 Jan	Jonah: the reluctant Evangelist Jonah 1:1-3 Running from God	2 Corinthians: Strength in Weakness 2 Cor 5:11-6:2 The scope of gospel ministry		
16 Jan	Jonah 1:4-10 Our lives for his mission	2 Cor 6:3-7:1 The loyalties of gospel ministry		
23 Jan	Jonah 1:11-17 The pattern of love	BIG QUESTION: Doesn't religion cause violence?		
30 Jan	Acts 8:26-40 Beyond the boundaries Rev Steve James			
6 Feb	Jonah 2:1-10 The transforming power of God's grace	2 Cor 7:2-16 Two kinds of repentance		
13 Feb	Visit of Bishop Sam, Bishop of Stockport			
20 Feb	Jonah 3:1-10 God's call to all	BIG QUESTION: How can you say there's only one true faith?		
27 Feb	Jonah 4:1-4 Heart Storms	Understanding the Cross: Galatians 1:3-5		
6 Mar	Jonah 4:5-11 Our God is full of Compassion	Understanding the Cross: Galatians 2:20		
13 Mar	All age Parade	Understanding the Cross: Galatians 3:13		
20 Mar	Passion for Life Guest service Rev Steve James			
27 Mar	Jesus: Destiny Decided John 12:20-36 The hour has come!	BIG QUESTION: How can you take the Bible literally?		
3 Apr	John 12:37-50 It's not faith that's blind!	Understanding the Cross: Galatians 5:24		
10 Apr	John 12:37-50 A love to follow	Understanding the Cross: Galatians 6:12-18		
14/15 Apr	Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services			
17 Apr	Easter Day All-age service		Easter Praise	

SPECIAL EVENTS

8 Jan Prayer breakfast Church rooms, 8.30-9.30am

15 Jan Men's Breakfast Alderley Edge Golf Club, 8.15am

22 Jan 'Delighting in Christ', Northwest Gospel Partnership

annual conference: 10am-4.30pm, The Edge, Wigan

23 Jan Evergreens Lunch

3 Feb Prayer evening Church rooms, 8.00pm - 9.30pm

3 Mar Prayer evening Church rooms, 8.00pm - 9.30pm

11-20 Mar Passion for Life events

13 Mar Evergreens Lunch

19 Mar Youth & Children Leaders training day

Apr 2 Prayer breakfast Church rooms, 8.30-9.30am