Christ is risen. — Truly he is risen. Tuesday, April 9, 2024, 4:50 PM

So the Christians have greeted one another during Pascha or Easter. The resurrection of Jesus—not the one generally anticipated by Jews at the end of time for all human beings—remains the heart of the gospel proclamation and has profound as well as problematic consequences for Christian thought and life, in short, Christian worldview.

Please reread **John 5** and continue to get used to its style of narrative and presentation of Jesus as the incarnate *logos* (Greek λόγος), which is translated usually as *Word*—see my previous email re this complex, profound word.

As you proceed, remember some significant Johannine matters, terms, and concepts we have encountered thus far, beside the unique beginning:

dualism:

light, & darkness

spirit-heaven & flesh-earth (world)

the world

the Jews

judgment-decision-decision

Father (the sending one) and Son (the sent one)

testimony-testify-(bear) witness

glory-glorify

Jesus’ omniscience

As you read John 6, please focus on and compare this rare case of a tradition shared or found in all four Gospels:

John 6.1–15

Luke 9.10b–17

Matthew 14.13–21 (also cf. 15.32–39)

Mark 6.32–44 (also cf. 8.1–10)

also cf.: 1 Corinthians 11.17–34

As always, I look forward to seeing you in class and sharing in fellowship as we study God’s Word (see what I did there?). Please bring all your observations and questions. Have a wonder-filled, and wonder-ful evening.



PS:

Below are some helpful reminders from previous emails.

It is the lexicon entry *logos* (Greek λόγος),. which is translated usually as *Word*. The attached file has 10 definitions of *logos*, the last (!) of which is *Word* in John 1.1—please enlarge or magnify the file to find the yellow-highlighted part at the end of the lexicon entry—remember that the ten main meanings in English are given after the capital Roman numerals.

I cannot overstate the significance and complex depth of the Greek word *logos* and its range of meaning, especially its philosophical meanings, particularly as it has been used by the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 bc–c. ad 50) in his expositions of the word *logos* before the author of John used it to set the awe-inspiring tone of his Gospel:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (NRSV)

The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God, in readiness for God from day one. (*The Message*)

I have much, much more to share about *logos*, but as in so many cases, I will let only our taste of the riches of detail study and reflection suffice for now. But as always, please feel free to linger and ask about any part of what we cover in class.

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We are still dipping our toes into the new waters of the Gospel according to John, which provides a very different picture of Jesus than what we may have become used to in the Synoptics, i.e., the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

In this so-called “spiritual” Gospel or the “symbolic” Gospel, we will have to digest a noticeably different set of narratives with a different chronology that depict a Jesus who speaks differently and speaks about different things. We will encounter:

* stories not in the Synoptics (e.g., wedding at Cana, Nicodemus, Samaritan woman, Lazarus)
* a timeline the Synoptics do not share (e.g., “cleansing” of the temple at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministy)
* style of Jesus’ speech (e.g., lengthy discourses as opposed to short parables—there are no parables in John at all; “I am the gate.”)
* topics covered in Jesus’ teachings (e.g., “. . . unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”)

Remember to review **John 1, esp. vv. 1–14** and also review chs. 2–4. And as always, please bring your observations and questions, so that we may mutually benefit from each other’s interests, perspectives, and insights.

Please take notes on the similarities and differences you see between John and the other canonical gospels, the Synoptics (= Matthew, Mark, Luke). What faith lessons might we learn from knowing the gospels in such comparative detail?

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**from previous emails (transposed to apply to John):**

What do you think about the lesson(s) John intends? How about John’s Jesus?

(How) are they applicable in actual life lived at Ann’s Choice or elsewhere?

**+++++++   also   +++++++**

We have been immersed in the language and themes of Matthew (e.g., discipleship-learning-teaching, Kingdom of Heaven, obedience, righteousness) and will be moving on soon to Luke and John.

Please continue to read and wrestle with **Matthew 5–7** and, if adventurous, read on and think about **Mt 20.1–16 and 25.31–46**. As with Mark earlier, please consider the following to digest Matthew and his portrait of Jesus and the disciples/discipleship, **especially in the light of our earlier observations lessons from Mark**; please come ready with your observations and questions, which I still consider the best parts of our class, beside prayer and fellowship.

How does Matthew begin? What might that indicate? — cf. Mark

What are Matthew’s main points or arguments? — cf. Mark

What is it trying to argue or demonstrate? How does it do that—what words and ideas does it present? — cf. Mark

What might we think about Jesus as we watch and hear what unfolds in Matthew? What portrait of Jesus emerges in Matthew? How about the of the disciples, the so-called Twelve? What do you think of the disciples? And of particularly named disciples? — cf. Mark

What does Jesus do and say? — cf. Mark

Who is the intended audience? — cf. Mark

How does the Gospel end? — cf. Mark

What Mosaic concerns or themes do you see in Matthew? What about Davidic? — cf. Mark

What do you find inspiring in Matthew? Or helpful? Curious? Disappointing? Annoying? Troublesome? — cf. Mark

After all the myriad questions and attempted answers, so what? What could we learn from Matthew for our faith journey? What spiritual—or if permitted to suggest, *theological*—insights could we gain for *our* journey of faith? — cf. Mark

As always, I look forward to **your observations and questions**, and please never hesitate to **suggest any biblical, theological, or life topics** along the way, even if they are only tangentially related. We can be flexible and take detours on our journey through the Bible. Remember that the unofficial title of our Bible study thus far is “Anything and everything you always wanted to ask about the Bible but were to afraid or busy to ask.”

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Helpful things from before:

Please review below the information I sent previously on the canon.

As we trek through the Gospels, we will learn about the new empire in charge of the world, viz., that of the Romans, as we review the empire-culture-world built by the Greeks—especially Alexander the Great—after their victory over the Persians, who in turn had replaced, the Babylonians, who replaced the Assyrians, and before that the Egyptians in the time of the Exodus.

consider the Greeks:

<www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/htmlver>

If you are adventurous, read about the “Synoptic Problem,” which I will cover slowly and repeatedly enough for us to find it helpful in our interpretation of the synoptic Gospels, i.e., Matthew, Mark, and Luke—*synoptic* is from the Greek word meaning to *see together* or *to be seen together*. I will say more on this in class, but feel free to ask your questions any time.

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**Bibles & canons**

**Roman Catholic Bible** (46 HB/OT + 27 NT)

73 books + 2 in appendix to Vulgate (Latin translation of the Bible)

**Greek Orthodox Bible** (52 HB/OT + 27 NT)

79 books, including all the books in the Roman Catholic Bible and appendix, plus Psalm 151 and 3 Maccabees

also includes 4 Maccabees in an appendix

Ethiopian Orthodox Bible includes 86 books, including all the books in the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Bibles, plus Jubilees, Enoch, Synodicon, Diddascalia Apostolorum, Testament of the Lord, Qalementus, and 4 Baruch.

**Protestant Apocrypha**

Tobit, Judith, 1 & 2 Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom of Solomon, and Baruch

The books of Esther and Daniel include additional chapters which were excluded in Protestant Bibles.

The Latin appendix also includes 3 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh.