

THE OTHERNESS OF GOD

Romans 16

A comment or two before I share my main thought about chapter 16. First, I love that Paul in verse 4 literally says, “They *risks* their necks for my life.” I am also struck by how relational Paul is. Here is this amazing theologian. We have just read some dizzying thoughts, and in the end he rattles off a long list of fellow brothers and sisters. That should give us a bit of different perspective on him.

My main thought for the day is prompted by the end of Romans: the doxology. A doxology is a form of praise to God. The Psalms are full of them. “Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne...his lightnings light up the world.” (Psalm 97:2-4.)

What is it that gets you thinking about the amazing world we live in? Is it those Hubble Telescope photographs? Is it the birth of a child? Is it that you have experienced love, or had your breath taken away by a sunset? God is the creator of all those things and more. For me, it is when I look at pictures of deep *space* and then I think about the world of atoms, I am struck by the range of our world, and yet God is greater. God stands outside it, God is *other*. Yet this other God, and God’s love for us in Jesus is what we have devoted our time to pondering.

There is a website that as you slide your cursor to the right or left you either zoom in or zoom out on the universe. See scaleofuniverse.com.

I have to remind myself that God is even greater and beyond all of this world. The story of Jesus of Nazareth is the story of this infinite

God coming to earth. He is the God who has done this amazing thing out of sheer love for us. This God who is the creator of all, the genius behind what we can barely figure out, makes it simple; he makes it about a relationship. This *otherness* of God can be and is known in Jesus Christ which might just be why Romans ends with:

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.