

## **Views from the Pews – No Boundaries?**

We like to have boundaries. During our flag referendum, one wag suggested our national emblem should be the plan of our traditional quarter-acre section, as shown on our certificate of title. And most neighbour against neighbour disputes involve the location of boundaries, and the location of fences.

So to venture onto the James Webb Telescope site and to consider what is displayed there, is to both amaze, and confound. The universe is more beautiful, more diverse, and more subtle than previous technology had demonstrated. We marvel at these aspects of creation.

But, for all the technology, and especially all the advanced astrophysics, or perhaps because of the technology, something is clearly missing. None of the advances in celestial imagery have been able to establish that there are any boundaries; no walls, no limits. Space, as far as we can ascertain, seems to be infinite. We can explain each new heavenly body, because astrophysics has the answers. Science is pretty confident that there's an explanation even for black holes.

But what about infinity? What about the lack of boundaries? This is far beyond the random meetings described by Darwin. It is far beyond Newton, or even Einstein. Intelligent Design? Is infinity a likely product of intelligence?

Probably not. We are left then with the likelihood that another Designer has been at work, intelligent without doubt, but capable of much more than we can even dream of.

Infinity challenges everything we know about the world as we imagine it to be, and challenges the notion that everything must have a scientific explanation.

We are left then with the option – no, even the obligation – of returning to the early words of Genesis, and looking afresh at Creation as it is described there.

And astrophysics isn't the only discipline that throws up new questions. Nuclear physics is the same. Every particle – however small- is made up of yet smaller particles, none of which are 'matter' in its traditional sense. Is the atom itself a universe of sorts? Again, there appear to be no boundaries.

This is a golden opportunity for Christianity. We can plausibly point to evidence of a Designer, a Designer who loved creation enough to send a Son to redeem it. A creation that is at once of infinite value, but also without tangible boundaries.

Look at the images sent back from the telescope, and be amazed.

*Richard Swarbrick*