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## **Jesus @ Warp 10**

As we all know, Star Trek is relevant to imaginative theological inquiry.

A case in point...Warp 10. The Starship Enterprise measures speed in exponential multiples of  $c$ , the speed of light. Warp 9.99 (the fastest the Enterprise has ever gone, though I'm sure Scotty could make it go faster if you told him it was necessary) is nearly 8,000 times light speed.

A common misconception is that, by going just a little faster, the Enterprise would get to Warp 10. Not so. A starship can forever get closer to Warp 10 (Borg ships have been clocked at Warp 9.9999, for example), without ever achieving it. An object going Warp 10 would be filling every point in the universe simultaneously, which as we all know, doesn't happen.

Switching gears... I've always been annoyed by the ascension of Jesus—it has just looked corny to me. Jesus dies, is raised from the dead, hangs out with his disciples for 6 weeks or so, and then he flies away like he's Superman or something. My Greek mind (and if you live in Western civilization, you have a Greek mind too) thinks Jesus should just sort of dissolve and disappear, ceasing to be 'physical' and becoming simply 'spiritual.' But that's not what happens. He does the thing Neo does at the end of *The Matrix*—he flies up into the sky until he's too far away to see. His physical embodied nature does not end (which is heresy to the Greek mind, which is damn sure that having a body is a bad thing).

So where is he going? Up into space where God lives? *Come ON...* This has always just been a sort of embarrassing image to me.

Some thoughts... What does Jesus say as he 'flies away'? He doesn't say "My Father lives out in space, and I'm going there now, which means I won't be with you." Nope. He says "I am with you always." A strange thing to hear from someone who is in the process of leaving you.

Okay, here's the whacky but intriguing *Star Trek* connection: Imagine the incarnate Jesus, risen from the dead, jetting into space. Speeding up as he goes. See ya later, Moon... There goes Mars... Jupiter and Saturn are a blur... Here's Alpha Centauri... On to Andromeda galaxy... [you get the idea]. If the Borg are trying to follow him, he's totally left them in the dust by now. We all know Warp 10 is impossible. But then again, the impossible has never stopped Jesus before. What happens if Speedy Jesus hits Warp 10? He is still a human being with a physical body, but by definition he is now filling every point in the created universe simultaneously.

Far fetched? Maybe. But then again, look at what St Paul has to say about Jesus' reason for ascending: Jesus is "*the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe*" (Eph. 4.10). The ascended Christ is "*him who fills everything in every way*" (Ephesians 1.23).

Sounds like Warp 10 to me...

~ John Stonecypher