

"If Christ Was Always Is"

Texts on Trinity Sunday, June 6, 2004

Readings: Proverbs 8:1-8, 22-31; John 1: 1-5

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When scientists think about the very beginning of creation, they speak of a "big bang." The science and equations that lead to the theory of the big bang make a fantastic proposal: a dot of matter almost infinitely tinier than a grain of salt, and almost infinitely heavier, was *all* there is. It did not exist "in space" for space was in it too; it was all there is. Then about fifteen billion years ago, it blew up, making time and space. It expanded so fast that after one trillionth of a second it was the size of the universe.

Did God make that happen? If God's job title is Creator, he certainly needed to report for work *that* day! But kidding aside, how would you know? The sciences cannot provide an answer to the question *behind* the big bang; no equations can delve that dense dot at the beginning. So when we affirm "I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth," all the while holding our minds and eyes wide open to the spirit and wonder of modern science, we intend to say something about our trust in God. We need not raise a fist in the face of science. We don't have to pretend that the Bible shows *how* God creates, or when, and over what span of time. To affirm God the Creator this Trinity Sunday is to say that intelligence—consciousness—wisdom—God—is already in the dough of creation when it starts to rise, and calls all things into being.

Now, when does Christ first come into the picture? Since you were little, the Christmas story has delivered Christ Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes just about two thousand years ago. People are often satisfied with that picture. Consequently, their Trinity-picture looks like this: *God is the Creator: was, is, and forever more shall be. Christ was sent by God after lots of efforts at getting through to people failed. And, after he returned to heaven, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to renew faith that God had in fact sent him as Savior.*

But this formulation makes God so small, so man-like! This god tries out plans that fail, then devises new ones. Alternatively, he knows all along that he's going to send in his star quarterback to save the game, but he bides his time through the ages as folks fumble and lose and fail. Absurd! Such a god acts just like you or me. If our God is so small, then creation's Wisdom and Love is small. And if consciousness and love are small, then your idea of God becomes a justification for being small-minded and for loving only a little, or

only a few. The size of your God matters to the whole conduct of your life.

When does Christ first come? The Bible stories answer in a few different ways. In each decade or so after Jesus lived on earth, Bible writers offered answers that went deeper and earlier and bigger. Finally, John, reader of Genesis' "In the beginning" wrote his own vision of creation. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* When does Christ first come? In the beginning! Does this mean Jesus is there? Be clear. Jesus was a particular man, with hair that curled just so and earlobes and finger nails shaped this way, not that. The DNA of his mother—perhaps his father too—was in him. Was this man, with legs this long and eyes that dark, there at the beginning? Absurd. So what can we mean by saying that the Word was with God, and was God, already in the beginning—before the big bang?

I am sure you noticed that Proverbs speaks of Wisdom—she!—*there at the first, before the beginning, before the first bits of dust had been made.* Whom Proverbs calls Wisdom, John's Gospel calls Word, or *Logos*. John knew the Proverbs passage. He knew *Genesis*, how it says that from the first, the Spirit of God was moving upon the face of the waters. John was doing what Peter was doing in the square on Pentecost Day. He was bringing old scriptures to life. He was saying *This! This Incarnation of God in Christ, this Spirit moving through you now in powerful new ways, making love and communion known before death—this is not new! This is the power of the very God we have always known. The Desire that gave birth to the Son is the very Desire that gave birth to the cosmos is the very Desire that gives you power now to become children of God. The same wisdom! The same consciousness unfolding! The same love! We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.*

That is what John is saying to the churches. If with some confidence you step on the ground, expecting it to hold you, then O child of God, step with same confidence on the ground of your being, God, revealed in Jesus Christ—for the power that holds wood and stone together is that same power that holds all humanity together—holds all things together! Why, hydrogen and oxygen are held as water by one Mind, one Love. Everything, everything is one.

Has a Christian any advantage over others for seeing God's Word so wide, so spread, so "perfect in power, in love, and purity"? Any advantage at all in heaven or earth? Only one: You see what God is doing: Christ was always "Is." Nothing can separate you from this Love. Really. *Nothing.*

So live as you believe before God so *merciful and mighty*. When you live like that, and love like that, you're an ever-expanding

universe. You're in the big bang. You always were, and are, and always will be. So seeing gives rise to song: "God in Three persons, blessed Trinity."

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