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Chapter 1

God's Infinitude

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:1-3)

The last eight words of this verse would make a good sermon for anybody: “Your life is hid with Christ in God.” I want to go to a book written six hundred years ago and quote a few things, weaving it into this message about the journey into the heart of God: “with Christ in God.”

The Journey to Infinity

This book was written by Lady Julian of Norwich, a very saintly woman.

I want to quote what this lady said about the Trinity: “Suddenly the Trinity filled my heart with

joy. And I understood that so it shall be in heaven without end.” This is a step up from the utilitarian heaven that most people want to go to, where they’ll have everything right—a split-level home, two cars and a fountain, a swimming pool and golden streets. Lady Julian saw that heaven will be heaven because the Trinity will fill our hearts with “joy without end,” for the Trinity is God and God is the Trinity. The Trinity is our Maker and Keeper, and the Trinity is our everlasting love and everlasting joy and bliss.

All these things marked Jesus Christ, and, as Julian said, “where Jesus appeareth the blessed Trinity is understood.” We must get into our heads and hearts that Jesus Christ is the full, complete manifestation of the Trinity: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). He set forth the glory of the Triune God, all the God there is! Where Jesus appears, God is. And where Jesus is glorified, God is.

I wouldn’t quote anybody unless there were Scripture to confirm it, and Scripture does indeed confirm that the Trinity will fill our hearts. “No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit” (1 John 4:12-13). There you have the Father and the Spirit. “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in

God" (4:14-15). There you have the Father and the Son, or the Trinity.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20-21). Do you believe on Jesus Christ through the word of the apostles? If you do, then Jesus said distinctly here, "I'm praying for you that you all may be one as the Father is in me and I in him, that you may be one in us. I in you and the Father in me."

The other day I heard a man pray this prayer: "Oh God, who art the truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love. It wearieth me often to read and hear many things, but in Thee is all that I would have and can desire." The Church will come out of her doldrums when we find out that salvation is not a lightbulb only, that it is not an insurance policy against hell only, but that it is a gateway into God and that God is all that we would have and can desire. Again I quote Julian: "I saw that God is to us everything that is good and comfortable. He is our clothing; His love wrappeth us and claspeth us and all encloseth us for His tender love, that He may never leave us, being to us all that is good."

Christianity is a gateway into God. And then when you get into God, "with Christ in God," then you're on a journey into infinity, into infinitude. There is no limit and no place to stop. There isn't

just one work of grace, or a second work or a third work, and then that's it. There are *numberless* experiences and spiritual epochs and crises that can take place in your life while you are journeying out into the heart of God in Christ.

God is infinite! That's the hardest thought I will ask you to grasp. You cannot understand what infinite means, but don't let it bother you—I don't understand it and I'm trying to explain it! "Infinite" means so much that nobody can grasp it, but reason nevertheless kneels and acknowledges that God is infinite. We mean by infinite that God knows no limits, no bounds and no end. What God is, He is without boundaries. All that God is, He is without bounds or limits.

Infinity Cannot Be Measured

We've got to eliminate all careless speech here. You and I talk about unlimited wealth, but there's no such thing; you can count it. We talk about boundless energy—which I don't feel I have at the moment—but there's no such thing; you can measure a man's energy. We say an artist takes infinite pains with his picture. But he doesn't take infinite pains; he just does the best he can and then throws up his hands and says, "It isn't right yet, but I'll have to let it go." That's what we call infinite pains.

But that is a misuse of the words "boundless," "unlimited" and "infinite." These words describe God—they don't describe anything *but* God. They do not describe space or time or matter or motion

or energy; these words do not apply to creatures or sand or stars or anything that can be measured.

Measurement is a way created things have of accounting for themselves. Weight, for instance, is one way we account for ourselves—by the gravitational pull of the earth. And then we have distance—space between heavenly bodies. Then we have length—extension of the body into space.

We can always measure things. We know how big the sun is, how big the moon is, how much the earth weighs, how much the sun and other heavenly bodies weigh. We know approximately how much water is in the ocean. It seems boundless to us, but we know how deep it is and we can measure it, so it really isn't boundless at all. There is nothing boundless but God and nothing infinite but God. God is self-existent and absolute; everything else is contingent and relative. There is nothing very big and nothing very wise and nothing very wonderful. It's all relatively so. It is only God who knows no degrees.

The poet says, "One God, one Majesty. There is no God but Thee. Unbounded, unextended unity." For a long time I wondered why he said, "unbounded, *unextended* unity"; then I realized he meant that God doesn't *extend* into space; God *contains* space. C.S. Lewis said that if you could think of a sheet of paper infinitely extended in all directions, and if you took a pencil and made a line one inch long on it, that would be time. When you started to push your pencil it was the beginning of time and when you lifted it off the

paper it was the end of time. And all around, infinitely extended in all directions, is God. That's a good illustration.

If there were a point where God stopped, then God wouldn't be perfect. For instance, if God knew almost everything, but not quite everything, then God wouldn't be perfect in knowledge. His understanding wouldn't be infinite, as it says in Psalm 147:5.

Let us take all that can be known—past, present and future, spiritual, psychic and physical—everywhere throughout the universe. And let us say God knows all of it except one percent—He knows ninety-nine percent of all that can be known. I'd be embarrassed to go to heaven and look into the face of a God that didn't know *everything*. He has to know it all or I can't worship Him. I can't worship that which is not perfect.

What about power? If God had all the power there is except a little bit, and if somebody else had a little bit of power hoarded that God couldn't get to, then we couldn't worship God. We couldn't say that this God is of infinite power because He wouldn't be of infinite power; He'd just be close to it. While He would be more powerful than any other being and perhaps even more powerful than all the beings in the universe lumped together, He still would have a defect, and therefore He couldn't be God. Our God is perfect—perfect in knowledge and power.

If God had goodness, but there was one spot in God that wasn't good, then He wouldn't be our

God and Father. If God had love but didn't have *all* the love, just ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the love—or even a higher percentage—God still wouldn't be God. God, to *be* God, must be infinite in all that He is. He must have no bound and no limit, no stopping place, no point beyond which He can't go. When you think of God or anything about God you'll have to think infinitely about God.

You may have a charley horse in your head for two weeks after trying to follow this, but it's a mighty good cure for this little cheap god we have today. This little cheap god we've made up is one you can pal around with—"the Man upstairs," the fellow who helps you win baseball games. That god isn't the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He isn't the God who laid the foundations of the heaven and the earth; he's some other god.

We educated Americans can create gods just the same as the heathen can. You can make a god out of silver or wood or stone—or you can make it out of your own imagination. And the god that's being worshiped in many places is simply a god of imagination. He's not the true God. He's not the infinite, perfect, all-knowing, all-wise, all-loving, infinitely boundless, perfect God. He's something short of that. Christianity is decaying and going down into the gutter because the god of modern Christianity is not the God of the Bible. I don't mean to say that we do not pray to God; I mean to say that we pray to a god short of what he ought to be. We have got to think of God as being the perfect One.

God Takes Pleasure in Himself

The next thing I am about to say may give you a little shock: God takes pleasure in Himself and rejoices in His own perfection. I've prayed and thought and searched and read the Word too long to ever take that back. God takes pleasure in Himself and He rejoices in His own perfection. The divine Trinity is glad in Himself! God delights in His works.

When God created the heaven and the earth and all things that are upon the earth, He kept saying, "It was good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). Then when God created man in His own image He looked and said, "It was very good" (1:31). God rejoiced in His works. He was glad in what He had done.

Redemption is not a heavy work for God. God didn't find Himself in a fix and have to rush off somewhere and try to get "foreign policy" straightened out with the archangels. God did what He did joyfully. He made the heaven and the earth joyfully. That's why the flowers look up and smile, and the birds sing and the sun shines, and the sky is blue and rivers trickle down to the sea. God made the creation and He loved what He did!

He took pleasure in Himself, in His own perfection and in the perfection of His work. And when it comes to redemption, I repeat that this was not a heavy task laid upon God by moral necessity. God wanted to do this. There was no moral necessity upon God to redeem mankind. He didn't have

to send His Son Jesus Christ to die for mankind. He sent Him, but at the same time Jesus did it voluntarily. If God was willing, it was the happy willingness of God.

A mother doesn't have to get up and feed her baby at 2 in the morning. There's no law compelling her to do it. The law probably would compel her to take some care of the little tyke, but she doesn't have to give him that loving care that she does. She wants to do it. I used to do it for our little fellows, and I enjoyed doing it. A mother and a father do what they do because they love to do it.

It is the same with this awesome, eternal, invisible, infinite, all-wise, omniscient God, the God of our fathers, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and the God we call "our Father which art in heaven." He is boundless and infinite; He can't be weighed or measured; you can't apply distance or time or space to Him, for He made it all and contains it all in His own heart. While He rises above it all, at the same time this God is a friendly, congenial God, and He delights in Himself. The Father delights in the Son: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The Son delighted in the Father: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matthew 11:25). And certainly the Holy Ghost delights in the Father and the Son.

The incarnation, too, was not something that Jesus Christ did gritting His teeth and saying, "I hate this thing—I wish I could get out of it." One of the dear old hymn writers said, "He abhorred not

the virgin's womb." The writer thought about this and said, "Wait a minute here. The womb of the creature? How could the everlasting, eternal, infinite God, whom space cannot contain, confine Himself inside one of His creatures? Wouldn't it be a humiliation?" Then he smiled and said, "No, He abhorred not the virgin's womb," and he wrote it and we've been singing it for centuries. The incarnation of Jesus Christ's immortal flesh was not a heavy thing. The second person of the Trinity, the everlasting Son, the eternal Word made Himself flesh—joyously! When the angels sang about the incarnation, they sang joyously about it.

God Takes Pleasure in His Work

And He also delights in salvation. Notice in Luke 15:5 that when Jesus Christ saves a man, He carries him on His shoulders. And what is the verb in that verse? It is *rejoicing*! God is not only pleased with Himself, delighted with His own perfection and happy in His work of creating and redeeming, but He is also enthusiastic. There is an enthusiasm in the Godhead, and there is enthusiasm in creation.

If there weren't enthusiasm in creation, it would soon run down. Everything is made of atoms, protons, neutrons and electrons, things you can't keep still—not for a second! They dash in all directions at tremendous speeds, and the heavenly bodies move the same way.

The old Greeks called the movement they made as they passed through space "the music of the

spheres.” I don’t think they’ve missed it by very much at all. I believe that God sang when He created things. The motion and speed of the heavenly bodies, the working of little creatures in the earth to make the soil soft, the working of the sun on the earth—all this is God joyously working in His creation.

Enthusiasm is seen in creation; it’s seen in light. Did you ever stop to think what it would be like if there were no light? If God Almighty were to put a lead sack around all the heavenly bodies and suddenly shut out all the light there is, I wouldn’t want to be alive. I would want to turn myself off like a light bulb and ask God please to annihilate me—and I don’t believe in annihilation. Imagine: no light, no speed, no color or sound!

Some people are afraid of color. They think that spirituality consists in being drab. But God made color! He made all shades of colors. Look at the sunset—what is it, just something scientific? Do you think that God splashed the lovely, beautiful sky with rose, cerise, blue and white and wasn’t smiling when He did that? Is that just an accident of nature, scientifically explained? Then you’ve got too much learning for your own good! Go empty your head and get your heart filled and you’ll be better off. The Holy Spirit wrote 150 psalms and in those psalms He celebrates the wonders of God’s creation.

In my state of Pennsylvania the money-greedy scoundrels have bought the coal rights in certain sections of the state. There were beautiful hills

there that I grew up to see and love, beautiful sun-kissed hills sometimes mystic blue in the setting of the sun. And the creeks ran below out to the rivers and down to the sea. It was all very beautiful.

But I went back to my old place years later, and I found that these money-hungry fellows didn't dig a hole to get the coal; they took bulldozers and dragged the top off the earth—trees, grass, everything—to get down to the coal. The result was that thousands and thousands of acres—whole hills that used to go up with their green to meet heaven's blue—lay gashed like one vast, gaping grave. The state of Pennsylvania said, "You've got to fill them all in or we'll fine you \$300." And the mining people looked at each other and grinned and paid the \$300. They left it as it was, and I went away grief-stricken to see my beautiful hills now great ugly sand pits.

I went back in a few more years, and do you know what nature had done? Dear old busy, enthusiastic, fun-loving, joyous Mother Nature began to draw a green veil over that ugly gash. And now if you go back you will see it has cured itself. It's God Almighty in that! We ought to stop thinking like scientists and think like psalmists.

This infinite God is enjoying Himself. Somebody is having a good time in heaven and earth and sea and sky. Somebody is painting the sky. Somebody is making trees to grow where only gashes were a year ago. Somebody is causing the ice to melt out of the river and the fish to swim and the birds to

sing and lay their blue eggs and build their nests and hatch their young. Somebody's running the universe.

Singing for Joy

And I believe I know who it is. I believe it is the eternal Father, "strong to save, whose power rules the restless wave." I believe it is the Trinity, our Father who art in heaven and Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord. God is having a good time in His role. And so let us not think anymore of God as being heavy-browed and gloomy. I repeat that when God made the heaven and earth they sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. There wasn't a funeral at the creation of the world; there was an anthem. All creation sang.

At the incarnation they sang. Some people put a clammy, pasty pall over your happy mouths and say, "The angels didn't sing, 'peace on earth, good will to men.'" According to the Greek, they *said*, 'peace on earth, good will to men.' " But you can't read that without something beginning to move in you. You get a rhythm; you get music in your heart. "Peace on earth, good will toward men," they said. There was singing at the incarnation.

And then at the resurrection there was singing. "I will sing unto thee among the nations" (Psalm 57:9) said Jesus in the psalm. It doesn't tell us in the New Testament that Jesus sang when He rose from the dead. But the Old Testament foretells that one of the first things Jesus would do was sing. And one of the last things He did before He

went out to die was to sing a hymn along with His brethren. I'd love to have heard that hymn!

Did you ever stop to think about the rapture? It's going to be something that's never happened before. You might be walking around on the street and hear the sound of the trumpet—and suddenly you're transformed! You won't know what to do or how to act. And the people lying in their graves, what'll they do? I know what they'll do—they'll sing! There's going to be singing at the consummation, on that great day!

“Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us” (Revelation 5:9)—that's the theme of the new song. The theme of the new song isn't “I am”; it's “Thou art.” Notice the difference! When you look at the old hymnody of Wesley, Montgomery and Watts, it was “Thou art, O God, Thou art.” But when you look at the modern hymns, it is “I am, I am, I am.” It makes me sick to my stomach. Occasionally a good hymn with testimonies is all right, but we've overdone it. The song of the ransomed is going to be “Thou art worthy, O God.”

And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the

earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. (Revelation 5:9-11)

If you can put on a blackboard how many that is, I'll buy you dinner. Isn't it strange that men have got such timber in their heads that instead of getting happy over this they solemnly try to figure out who these deacons and elders and beasts and creatures were? And they write books on who they were and what they looked like. Isn't that strange? How dumb can a scholar get? I don't know about these creatures here. See me five minutes after the rapture and I'll tell you about it. But now I'll just have to take it by faith. "Thou hast made us . . . kings and priests," John said. All the creatures said, "Worthy is the Lamb" (5:12). Not "Look at me. I am wonderful; I am happy, happy, happy." No—the Lamb, the Lamb is worthy.

That's the consummation. The infinite God-head invites us into Himself to share in all the intimacies of the Trinity. And Christ is the way in.

The moon and earth turn in such a way that we only see one side of the moon and never see the other. The eternal God is so vast, so infinite, that I can't hope to know all about God and all there is about God. But God has a manward side, just as the moon has an earthward side. Just as the moon always keeps that smiling yellow face turned

earthward, so God has a side He always keeps turned manward, and that side is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God's manward face. Earth's Godward side, Jesus, is the way God sees us. He always looks down and sees us in Jesus Christ. Then we go back to the quotation from Lady Julian: "Where Jesus appeareth the blessed Trinity is understood."

Are you contented with nominal Christianity? If you are, I've nothing for you. Are you contented with popular Christianity that runs on the authority and popularity of big shots? If you are, I've nothing for you. Are you content with elementary Christianity? If you are, all I've got for you is to exhort you earnestly to press on toward perfection. But if you're not satisfied with nominal Christianity, popular Christianity and the first beginnings of things and you want to know the Triune God for yourself, read on.