

Our Brotherhood and its Future

In Paper 170, which deals with the concept of the kingdom of God, five epochs or phases of the kingdom are enumerated:

1. The kingdom in the heart of the individual believer.
2. The brotherhood of individual believers.
3. The supermortal brotherhood of invisible beings.
4. The next age of man.
5. The age of light and life.

In this enumeration, the human brotherhood is linked up with the supermortal brotherhood and the next age of man. And we could indulge ourselves in speculations on what important position we have and what important part we shall play.

But let us not be premature.

That next age of man depends on the supermortal brotherhood, and the supermortal brotherhood depends on the human brotherhood, and the human brotherhood depends on the individual believer. He is the basis of the kingdom.

This first phase of the kingdom is defined on page 1862 as follows:

"The personal and inward experience of the spiritual life of the fellowship of the individual believer with God the Father."  
(Emphasis supplied)

You will notice that the authors do their utmost to stress the point that this phase of the kingdom, upon which the second phase rests, is an inward experience. Only insofar as we personally experience this fellowship with the Father, insofar as we are a constituent part of the brotherhood. It is not a matter of formal membership, study of The URANTIA Book and so on, but the basis of our brotherhood is a spiritual basis. Over and over again the URANTIA Book stresses this point. Another definition it gives for instance is: a human brotherhood based on the spirit. But this same definition of the brotherhood as based on the spirit also proves the necessity of the human brotherhood, the organization. This is because our fellowship with the Father is not yet complete. We are incomplete members of the spiritual brotherhood.

To compensate for this incompleteness and the dangers which go along with this incomplete living the spiritual brotherhood, the human brotherhood with its constitution and rules comes into the picture. It can protect the individual member and the purposes and aims of the spiritual brotherhood, because it is not arbitrary or subjective. It works along the accepted and objective lines of its constitution and rules. Every member of the spiritual brotherhood, who knows his human nature a little bit, recognizes the possibility that he may need the correction of these objective standards. That means an essential protection for himself, too.

But, on the other hand, the basis of the brotherhood remains the personal experience of fellowship with the Father. The human brotherhood, the organization, should not become a substitute for that.

The next age of man, for which we are looking forward so fervently depends on our progress in that experience of fellowship with the Father. I have chosen two aspects of that inward spiritual life to say something about. The first is love; the second is problem solving.

### Love

The source of love is the Universal Father. He loved us first, before we loved him. Were we such lovable persons before we loved him? I don't think so. I think he did not like at all the way we lived. Nevertheless, he loved us. And as a result of that love we began to love him.

What does the Father see in us that he may love when he does not like our behavior?

The URANTIA Book says that he sees in us the potential finaliter. His mercy and goodness may go out to the human being, but his love is focused on the potential in us.

What this love is I cannot define. It may be a force, an energy, or what have you, but it most certainly is dynamic, a dynamic influence. In the life of the man Jesus, this love of the Father was practically revealed. His practice was to pray for his disciples--the members of his small brotherhood. And the result we all know.

Jesus saw the potential in his commonplace brothers. But he needed prayer to see that, he needed the experience of communion with the Father to see reality instead of the human picture. "The Son can do nothing of himself, only what he sees the Father doing," he declared. He needed the communion with his Father to feel the Father's love, and that love of the Father he projected to his brothers.

Jesus admonished his disciples to make use of that same mysterious but effective energy or power; to love each other with a fatherly love. We cannot do that by ourselves. We need, as Jesus did, prayer and communion. In that worshipful and childlike attitude, I feel the Father's love for me. I experience that as an amazing fact when I remember my evil ways. The Father loves me, not because of what I am, but notwithstanding what I am now. He sees me as his son. And I begin to desire to become his son. Then I am entering the brotherhood. I see my brother as I see myself, God's son, not because of what he is, but notwithstanding what he is. I visualize him as reflecting the Father's truth, beauty and goodness. Love sees the real thing, not error. Love is positive, it sees what mortal eye cannot see.

Love (Continued)

Jesus spent whole nights in communion with his Father, mainly praying for his disciples, struggling to see them as his Father saw them. And how these commonplace fishermen were changed through this dynamic love.

It is the challenge for the individual believer, and his prerogative, to follow Jesus and to build the brotherhood on this basis of spirit love.

Problem Solving

A second aspect of the fellowship with the Father within, which I would like to mention, is problem solving. He, who finds God, finds all, even the solving of his problems.

In daily life we usually take our decisions on the basis of the available facts and our intentions and motives. Jesus broke with that method. When he stood at the beginning of the public ministry of the fourth epochal revelation, during the forty days in the desert, his fundamental decision was to reject his own desires and motives and seek for the Father's will.

Now Jesus' own desires and intentions and motives were of a very high, religious nature, much higher than ours ever can be. It is therefore remarkable that he rejected them. Why did he do this? Well, they belonged to his human mind, a highly spiritualized mind, but nevertheless mind. But the kingdom is spirit. Therefore he turned to spirit, to the communion with his Father, to seek the Father's will.

But here we meet a great difficulty - we cannot know the Father's will. The Father is infinite and even Jesus was not infinite. The purposes of the Father are beyond our comprehension.

Besides that, the Father respects our personality too much to deprive us of the privilege to take our own decisions. We are not marionettes. The Father never tells us what to do. How can we then do the Father's will? What is the Father's will?

The Father's will is the Father's way, the way he works, which is expressive of his infinite wise, good, and loving character. Jesus saw the attributes of divinity as the will of the Father in heaven (p. 2087) and he could know these attributes only by experiencing them in the fellowship with the Father. He decided to act from this communion. He decided that it was more important to express these experienced values in his acts than his human motives, how noble and spiritual they might be. In his communion with his Father, he did not hear what he should do, but he felt how he should do what he himself decided to do. So it became "the divine will of his choosing" as The URANTIA Book calls it.

(Continued on Page 4.)

Problem Solving - (Continued)

It requires faith to trust the Father in this way; to trust that, when we seek this communion with the Father within to experience these values, that then the practical way we can go unfolds. This even is a spiritual law. Value is spirit, and spirit is creative; it creates its own channels through which to express itself. Jesus trusted completely that if he worked as he saw his Father working, the Father would open the way and that that way would in the long run prove to be the most practical way. His life proves that this method of problem solving is inherent to the kingdom. If our decisions in the brotherhood are not characterized by love, mercy and ministry, they may seem right to the human mind, but our Father disapproves.

We have accepted the challenge of the human brotherhood, based on the spirit. Let us be true to our pledge. Let us solve our problems like Jesus did. Let us be very suspicious of our own good motives. It might well be that the good motive is the greatest danger for our brotherhood because it is a meager, human substitute for fellowship with the Father. The way to the Father lies open for us. We find him if we seek him in the childlike attitude as our Universe Sovereign did.

If we seek and find the Father, then our problems will be solved, individually and in the brotherhood. It is quite natural that problems arise. We are also a human brotherhood, even a very young brotherhood where child's diseases will present themselves. If we persistently seek the communion with the Father, we don't need to take them too serious. We must learn. We must grow. Let us remember what a powerful and effective force is love, even that personal love wherewith the Father loves us.

If we demonstrate that our brotherhood is based on the spirit, based on "the personal and inward experience of the spiritual life of the fellowship with God the Father", then we will gladden the hearts of the supermortal brotherhood who are waiting for us to join forces for the ushering in of the next age of man.

End