



THE
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SELF-REALIZATION

Personality has its origin in the First Source and Center, and is the direct, not evolutionary, gift of the Universal Father. This majestic origin enables it to function, while unchanged, even on the absolute level. This fact can hardly be known by natural religion; it is characteristically a revealed truth. Only the last epochal revelation states this truth clearly and explicitly.

Personality here and now may have a vague notion of its high origin, and consequently of its high destiny; nevertheless we may say that it virtually does not know itself. Even accepting in faith the revealed truth about itself does not imply that personality knows itself. This revealed truth functions as a signpost pointing to a far destiny, enshrouded in mystery.

But it is more than just a signpost, it also is an urge to follow this path of self-discovery that leads to its origin, the Universal Father. We know the Universal Father, our Father, who stands at the end of this road, if ever there is an end; and it is his love for us, and our love for him, that urges us to discover our true selves, sons of this Father.

Though the last destiny indicated on the signpost is the absolute level, there are more intermediate destinies indicated. We now live in the age of the Supreme with its gradations of completion, and more will follow. Our self-discovery career is now characterized by Supremacy. This includes not only self-knowledge, but also self-realization.

Self knowledge is an attractive theme for most individuals on this planet. On the physical level it is our material body that fascinates us. And millions of people are likewise fascinated by the mind, its conscious functioning and its sub-conscious functioning. But relatively few are fascinated by the super-consciousness, the soul-dominated mind, the realm of discerned meanings and experienced values, the contact-level with the Thought Adjuster.

Therefore is revelation such a great help, in fact it is essential. It helps us to discern what is the true self in contradistinction to the false self, the ego. Our book

stresses that this long road of self-discovery is the way of experience, which implies learning and practicing. Most often our book uses the term "self-realization" instead of "self-knowledge." Knowing that we are sons of the heavenly Father is of little value as long as we don't practice this truth. Though all men are potential sons of God, actual sons are those who experience and practice sonship with God.

We start out by accepting and believing that we are sons of God. The next phase is becoming a *faith-son* of the Father. Gradually this evolves inwardly into the consciousness of being related to the Thought Adjuster, and may sometimes grow into the beginning of a conscious relationship with the Father-within. Outwardly this process of realizing sonship with God begins with understanding to a certain extent what Supremacy is; and the next phase is that we become increasingly conscious of being related to the Supreme, with its practical consequences. Finally, when the long, long road of self-realization is traversed, the finaliter receives the honourable title of "child of the Supreme." "With God the Father, sonship is the great relationship. With God the Supreme, achievement is the prerequisite to status—one must do something as well as be something." (*1260:1)

The oneness of values

Well, we are something, we are sons of the Father. But we must also do something, achieve something. We can only achieve in sonship with God, and this places us in direct relationship with the Supreme Being. The function of the Supreme is to lead the seven superuniverses to settlement in light and life (light is the opposite of darkness and life the opposite of death). This evolutionary process takes place in the three domains of matter, mind, and spirit. As these three are originally one, this oneness should reappear. In the age of the Supreme this purpose is qualified as: *dominion* of spirit over matter through the medium of mind, supremacy. It follows that when we partake in the evolutionary process, we should not separate the three domains. Though in last analysis this would be impossible, as mind is involved in

all human activity, even in what seems to be a purely material activity, it is nevertheless possible that the choosing "I," centered in the mind, places its values wholly or predominantly in the material realm. Then, through the medium of mind, matter tries to get dominion over spirit, the opposite of Supremacy.

So, in considering the evolutionary process, in which we are involved individually, we should evaluate this process of continual change according to the standard of Supremacy, spirit over matter. What spirit really is, is difficult to say. Spirit is above mind, and, therefore, mind cannot define spirit. But we are taught that experienced, felt values are the motivating power of spirit energy.

There are specific values in each of these domains of matter, mind, and spirit. The oneness of values in origin and destiny is perhaps easier to recognize than oneness of the domains themselves. If we take beauty as an example, we can recognize that beauty in the material realm is closely related to the faculty of the mind to recognize beauty, which further leads the spirit-mind on to rejoice in the faith-fact that the real universe is bathed in the beauty of its Creator-Father. Art should not work contrary to Supremacy by making it difficult to connect the three value-domains.

Jesus taught the fishermen Alpheus twins that it was always possible to strive for connecting the three domains in the right order: "Never forget that, when you are a faith son of God, all upright work of the realm is sacred. Nothing which a son of God does [realizing his sonship with God] can be common. Do your work,

therefore, from this time on, as for God." (*2049.4)

Self-realization is more than self-knowledge. Real self-knowledge cannot be attained without acting. Therefore, self realization works along the path of decisions, more decisions, and still more decisions; effort, more effort, and still more effort. But we are helped along this path of Supremacy, of sonship with God, through communion with the Father-within, the Thought Adjuster, who identifies himself with a subject that struggles in the age of the Supreme, and that's why there is an unseen co-operation of the Mystery Monitors, the Spirit of the Supreme Creator Son, and the Supreme. Our part is to dedicate our wills to doing the Father's supreme will, and so doing we surely shall make good progress in self-realization, spiritualization.

—Henry Begemann
Wassenaar, Netherlands

Editors note: The following was given as a speech at the URANTIA Societies Conclave held in Chicago in March.

THE FUTURE OF URANTIA SOCIETIES

In attempting to gain insight into the future of URANTIA Societies I think it's a good idea to go back to the origins of religious groups and examine some of their early functions.

We do not live in an isolated time in which our evolutionary path flies straight as an arrow to perfection. No, we are a product of the past and, in many ways, doing the things that people have done for age upon age. Sometimes our motives are more enlightened and sometimes they aren't.

Let us then examine some of the information we have at our disposal and while doing so try to consider how some of these ways of thinking and reacting correlate with some of our actions and feelings within the realm of Urantia Societies.

The URANTIA Book relates some of the reasons for the formation, by primitive man, of secret societies. They were established "... to practice minority religious rites ... for the purpose of preserving valuable 'spirit' or trade secrets ..." as well as "... for the enjoyment of some special charm or magic. The very secrecy of these societies conferred on all members the power of mystery over the rest of the tribe. Secrecy also appeals to vanity; the initiates were the social aristocracy of their day." (*790:8-11)

Vanity, associated with pride, ambition, and honor,

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has always been a powerful force in the formation of human associations in that "... such emotions are futile without an audience to parade before." (*765:7)

We learn that in the gradual progression of humanity's religious ideas, "words eventually became fetishes, more especially those which were regarded as God's words; in this way the sacred books of many religions have become fetishistic prisons incarcerating the spiritual imagination of man." (*969:4) It is plain that we have yet to consolidate the hard won gains of our forebears and that the seeds of regression are ever present.

Promote Study

URANTIA Societies of the future must diligently promote study of the book. Continued exposure to genuine truth and lasting wisdom will help safeguard the idealistic purposes for which societies are founded.

We have a responsibility also to assure that each member achieves a thorough reading of the book. It is possible to elect to standing committees, to the executive committee, to the general council, and to positions as officers of the Urantia Brotherhood, persons who have not read the book. We must provide some mechanism to insure that each person accepting higher functional responsibility has read the book to the end that we maintain leadership based on the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*.

We can find in *The URANTIA Book* numerous clues and guidelines for the wise development of URANTIA Societies. On page 966, we find that "Regardless of the drawbacks and handicaps, every new revelation of truth has given rise to a new cult." And that "... it is regrettable that so many modern believers... have no... cult of mutual support — nothing to *belong* to." (*965:7) This is not a trivial point. A successful cult makes a great contribution to society. The author states that when the cult has been elastic and adjustable, then truth and social progression have grown rapidly. (*965:9)

URANTIA Societies have the opportunity to provide the nucleus of the most inspiring, most progressive, most idealistic cult in the long history of this weary planet. Or, if we don't watch ourselves, our efforts can become a massive "... obstacle to social reconstruction and spiritual progress," like so many cults of old. (*965:6)

We must be aware constantly of unconscious and unplanned trends in our collective attitudes and activities. The things we never really stop to examine because they seem harmless or because they've always been that way are the things which will take form by themselves, be-

come crystallized, and lead us to stagnation. "Formal religion restrains men in their personal spiritual activities instead of releasing them for heightened service as kingdom builders." (*1092:5) The planning we do must take counsel with wisdom. We must be careful and at the same time avoid enervating stalemate disguised as caution.

Avoid cramping intellectualism

Further guidance from the book tells us that "The old cults were too egocentric." (*966:3) They focused too much on themselves and neglected the real needs of their participants and of the world around them. We, too, can bury our faces between blue covers and neglect the suffering soul in our midst and the timid ones outside our doors. Yes, we must study *The URANTIA Book* but we must use this study as a springboard to higher collective achievements and avoid the pitfalls of cramping intellectualism. We can prepare *ourselves* 'til kingdom come and never see that amorphous day when URANTIA Societies are ready to turn their efforts to the world around them. URANTIA Societies will have to begin turning some of their group effort from egocentric activity to the applied love from which we're told the new cult must emerge.

There is more here from which we can learn. "No cult can endure and contribute to the progress of social civilization and individual spiritual attainment unless it is based on the biologic, sociologic, and religious significance of the *home*." (*966:4) That's strong language. The call for the commitment is crystal clear. No cult can endure and contribute unless it is based on the home.

Webster tells us that a base is "the fundamental part of something, the groundwork, the point from which a start is made in an action or undertaking, the bottom of something considered as its main support." *The URANTIA Book* devotes so much attention to the importance of the home that it can't be emphasized enough. In the future, URANTIA Societies must maintain vigilance in their recognition of this reality. When it becomes difficult for the family to feel a part of any society then that society will stagnate. When the home becomes separated from the activities of the society then will the society fail in its ultimate task.

If we are to move forward, if we are to evolve in meaningful ways, then we must heed these warnings as though they are guiding lights on a darkened shore. "Family life," we're told, "next to personal religious experience, suffers most from the decadence consequent upon the transition from old religious loyalties to the emerging new meanings and values." (*1089:10)

Encourage worship

On page 1092 we find further clues guiding our steps into the future. Here we are told "It is the purpose of group religious activities..." and there follows a list of eight functions. The last of these, almost emphasized by its concluding placement, is "...to encourage group worship." (*1092:3) One of the purposes of group religious activities is to encourage group worship. Let's refresh our understanding of the importance of prayer and worship to the individual. I add prayer because in human experience prayer and worship are like bread and butter, or boys and girls. They always find a way to get together.

We know that "...the truest prayer is in reality a communion between man and his Maker." (*996:2) It is the surest and quickest way of approaching superconscious levels. (1000) We know that prayer is answered by a greater revelation of truth (1002) and that "The great challenge to modern man is to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor..." (*2097:2)

The crucial role of worship, in concert with the highest forms of prayer, is undeniable in man's quest for higher levels of reality. With such potency assured, how can group participation make any difference? Is it merely for social suggestibility, the reinforcement of good intentions? I think not. There is a more compelling imperative. Witness the following.

"Living associations, human families [to]... the Paradise Trinity are not augmented by mere arithmetical summation. The group potential is always far in excess of the simple sum of the attributes of the component individuals." (*113:4) Not only is communion a vital force for real growth, but a group increases its effective power substantially. Spiritual ascent without the benefit of group worship is like harvesting grain with a sickle

and leaving the combine parked in the barn. "The new cult... must facilitate spiritual progress..." (*966:3)

The future of URANTIA Societies is related to what we do today just as the things we do today are related to the actions of our ancestors. We can learn from the past, take thoughtful action, follow the guidance of *The URANTIA Book*, and continue to evolve. There are decisions waiting to be made, decisions that require courage and strength.

We can take satisfaction with the status quo or we can take action with the tools at hand to build toward the future. We can become entrenched in expecting one another to toe the line or we can encourage one another in the leap of faith required to become spirit motivated leaders in a world grasping for direction. We can take the road of orthodoxy and convention or we can pioneer in the realm of collective religious attainment.

David Renn
Evanston, Illinois

UPCOMING

In future issues we would like to examine two subjects of interest, and would like your contributions if you have any thoughts on either topic:

- Does the current level of cultural expression (from art and music to family life) on the planet suggest that we are making progress toward the eventual achievement of light and life?
- Given the level of evolutionary achievement (politics, economics, social, etc.) at which we find ourselves, how can we best interject the relevant teachings of *The URANTIA Book* in each area or discipline?

"When man loses sight of the love of a personal God, the kingdom of God becomes merely the kingdom of good. Notwithstanding the infinite unity of the divine nature, love is the dominant characteristic of all God's personal dealings with his creatures."
(*40:5)
