



Volume 12, Numbers 3, 4
Fall-Winter, 1987-88

THE
URANTIAN®

Journal of URANTIA® Brotherhood

Special Conference Double Issue

EDITOR'S NOTE: This issue of The URANTIAN, Journal of URANTIA Brotherhood, in our view, captures the spirit of the General Conference held in Maine this past summer. Although we were not able to reproduce here all the fine presentations and workshops offered there, we are pleased to provide a memory for those who attended and a sense of what transpired for those who couldn't. All of these presented here point clearly to the Conference Theme: Personal Transformation and its Power to Transform the World. We begin with Jim Johnston's Keynote Address.

BE YOU PERFECT

The secret of transformation of the individual as well as the world is the vision that you hold of who and what you desire to become, and then acting as though that vision has already become a reality. That's it. That's about all that I will be talking about this morning.

The theme of this conference is "Personal Transformation and its Power to Transform the World." The theme wasn't posed as a question, but rather as a statement. Can personal transformation, even the spiritual transformation of one individual, actually transform the world? I think that it can.

One only need look at the life of Jesus in both his personal and public ministry, to see the influence of one spiritually transformed individual in the world. His apostles and followers, by virtue of his transforming life in this world, virtually "...turned the whole Roman Empire upside down." (*2077:5) During his one visit to Rome, Jesus had an influence on the spiritual awakening of more people than most of us will have an influence on

in a lifetime. The power of his mere presence was so profound that he merely had to smile upon people for them to experience renewed faith and encouragement.

As Aristotle said to his young pupil, Alexander The Great, in answer to Alexander's question "How many is one?": "In the arena of human affairs, one can be a very great number."

I am convinced that the world essentially gets transformed by and through transformed individuals. Therefore, it is not world transformation that I wish to focus on this morning, but rather, the transformation of the individual. *If you want to transform the world, then start by transforming yourself.*

May the mind that was in Christ Jesus be also in you.

Well, how do you transform yourself? One of the essential ingredients seems to be altering your thoughts about who you are. William James noted, "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind."

In his award winning tape, "The Strangest Secret," social philosopher Earl Nightengale identified a powerful axiom for material success. He drew the idea from Napoleon Hill's book *Think and Grow Rich*. The axiom is essentially this: "You become what you think about."

If you think about yourself as being successful, you will become successful. If you focus on personal growth, your mind will generate the ideas and plans that will lead to personal growth. Your life becomes a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy. If you focus on a low self-image, you will provide for yourself a lot of reasons to continue to see yourself in that light. Every mistake that you make will be amplified out of proportion to confirm the poor image that you had of yourself originally. If you focus on fear, you will grow a multitudinous variety of weeds of fear to congest and strangle the garden of your mind. As a Solitary Messenger wrote, "Mind is the cosmic instrument on which the human will can play the discords of destruction, or upon which this same human will can bring forth the exquisite melodies of God identification and consequent eternal survival." (*1217:2)

In his book *Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am*, Father John Powell said this: "It is almost a truism of contemporary psychology that one's image of himself lies at the root of most human conduct." He went on to say: "What is more difficult to accept is that the image each of us has of himself is really the product of what other people, rightly or wrongly, have told us that we are. If one imagines himself to be evil or inadequate and

THE
URANTIA®
Journal of URANTIA® Brotherhood

Published Quarterly by
URANTIA Brotherhood
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago Illinois 60614

Subscription Price: \$5.00 a year

International Subscribers - add \$1.00 for postage

* All quotations within this Journal, unless otherwise indicated, are from *The URANTIA Book*, ©1955, and are used with the permission of the URANTIA Foundation, the copyright owner.

Inasmuch as there is no official URANTIA Brotherhood or Foundation interpretation of the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*, the views expressed herein are based wholly upon each author's understanding and personal religious experience.

Copyright ©1988 by URANTIA Brotherhood Corporation. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

his life to be governed by Murphy's law, it will show in his conduct. He will attempt nothing of challenge and will consider safety as that which must be sought above and before all. He will somehow attempt to hide his shame or inadequacy under a veil of anonymity." As another once said, "So many people seem to be tiptoeing past life's risks so that they can make it safely to death!"

The day-to-day consequences of one's self-image is one of the reasons that effective parenting is so important. In revealing the love of God to children, an effective parent will imbed in their children a high self-esteem, a profound self-respect. They will teach them unconditionally that they are loved, good, and whole. They will enrich their children's lives with an enduring sense of self worth.

Think about the difference between most children and most adults. Stop to consider the difference in enthusiasm, joy, and sense of wonder in their lives. Children are starting out fresh, they have a clean slate and abounding optimism. Too many adults have been beaten down and beaten back by the world, by the opinions, rejection, ill-will, and criticism of others. They are not so much limited by the *reality* of who they are as their *belief* of who they are. They carry with them in the form of messages and images, a thousand and one reasons for preserving their low self-image.

When you look at the adult population of any generation, it is easy to understand why Jesus taught he wanted to set men free so that they could start out afresh as little children.

Jesus' mind was fresh, alive, and unencumbered by fear or self doubt. He kept his mind firmly focused on the chief enterprise of life: seeking the way of God. He believed firmly that the whole universe was friendly toward him. As he told Ganid on their return from Rome: "...I have absolute confidence in my heavenly Father's overcare; I am consecrated to doing the will of my Father in heaven. I do not believe that *real* harm can befall me; I do not believe that my lifework can really be jeopardized by anything my enemies might wish to visit upon me, and surely we have no violence to fear from our friends. I am absolutely assured that the entire universe is friendly to me—this all-powerful truth I insist on believing with a wholehearted trust in spite of all appearances to the contrary." (*1470:1)

His commitment to aligning his life with the way of the Father was so complete, his attitudes of mind so positive, that there was no room for fear, jealousy, hatred, revenge, fear of criticism, or greed. No wonder

that it has been said "Let the mind which was in Christ be also in you." (*1123:2)

Be you perfect.

The poet Goethe said, "Before you can do something, you must be something." Perhaps due to our western material conditioning, we often think that we must *do* something to *be* something.

Instead, in *reality*, it seems to be the other way around. If you want to do something, you must *be* someone in your mind first. You must see yourself as having attained your goal before you attain it. Dr. Dennis Waitley, author of *The Psychology of Winning*, said this, "There never was a winner who didn't first see himself as winning." People generally think that you must have material possessions to be wealthy. Yet the truth seems to be that people see themselves as being wealthy in their mind's eye long before they ever have wealth. In the Dale Carnegie training, you're trained to act enthusiastic so you will be enthusiastic. What you actually get from the experience though, is not genuine enthusiasm, but rather an elaborate act of enthusiasm. To be enthusiastic you must simply *be* enthusiastic. Just as to be of good cheer you must *Be* of Good Cheer. Neither will you be religious by acting religious or doing religious things. "...Jesus talked at great length, trying to show the twelve what they must *be*, not what they must *do*. They knew only a religion that imposed the doing of certain things as the means of attaining righteousness—salvation. But Jesus would reiterate, 'In the kingdom you must *be* righteous in order to do the work.' Many times did he repeat, 'Be you therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.' All the while was the Master explaining to his bewildered apostles that the salvation which he had come to bring to the world was to be had only by *believing*, by simple and sincere faith." (*1584:4)

The supreme goal of eternity is perfection. Jesus said to "Be...perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." (*1584:4) I've always wondered about that statement. It has always bothered me that perfection seems so unattainable in this lifetime. Yet he said "Be perfect" just as he said "Be of Good Cheer" and "Fear not." He didn't say "Try to be perfect," or "Aim for perfection."

I think that part of his message was at least this: Be perfect now in your mind's eye. Know that you are a child of God, that you have the seed of perfection within you, and act as though you have already attained that perfection.

On the way to Rome in a conversation with a Mithraic priest, Jesus said this about time: "...even to man, because of his sectional and circumscribed view, time appears as a succession of events; but as man ascends, as he progresses inward, the enlarging view of this event procession is such that it is discerned more and more in its wholeness. That which formerly appeared as a succession of events then will be viewed as a whole and perfectly related cycle; in this way will circular simultaneity increasingly displace the onetime consciousness of the linear sequence of events." (*1439:4)

I don't pretend to understand the full meaning of the concept of circular simultaneity. Part of it though, I think is this: In our attitude of mind, we can hold perfection as *real right now*, even though many sunsets must follow many sunrises before perfection has fully blossomed in our lives in eternity.

When you see yourself by faith to be a perfect son or daughter of God, then envy, jealousy, anger, and resentment all tend to evaporate - they become virtually unreal and useless. Truly, life becomes an almost effortless adventure. No longer do you see growth as a series of arduous hurdles that must be traversed in order to attain a state of perfection that seems virtually unattainable. Rather, it becomes the obvious condition of continuous germination in which "Trouble will invigorate you; disappointment will spur you on; difficulties will challenge you; and obstacles will stimulate you." (*1438:2)

You begin to act as though your eternal goal has already been attained. Of the twelve apostles, *The URANTIA Book* says, it was the apostle James who "...grasped the thrilling truth that Jesus wanted his children on earth to live as though they were already citizens of the completed heavenly kingdom." (*1582:7)

The goal of perfection and the truth/fact that we are the offspring of the perfect Father of all can be by faith the new gyro-compass of our lives. Once we have made the decision to attain that Supreme goal, our minds will generate the ideas and plans to take us to our eternal destination. "It is your *thoughts*, not your feelings, that lead you Godward." (*1104:6, 1105:1). Seek and you shall find. Knock and the door will be opened.

Love one another as I have loved you.

A new attitude, a new vision of yourself, renewed faith, seem rarely to result in immediate transformation. More commonly, growth is gradual, sometimes imperceptible. Many of the same reaction-habits remain with you

until they are shed to make way for the emerging newly-directed person. Spiritual growth is often like the Asian Moso bamboo plant. After it is planted, no visible signs of growth occur for up to five years. Then it suddenly begins to grow at a rate of nearly 2½ feet per day, reaching a full height of 90 feet within six weeks. The Moso's rapid growth is due to the miles of roots it developed during those first five years, *getting ready*.

Will you continue to make mistakes, to live out of alignment with your new faith/vision of yourself and your relationship to God? Yes you will. What do you do about it? Virtually nothing. Simply keep focusing on the goal of your eternal lifetime. Buckminster Fuller once made the point that you cannot change the old by resisting it, you can only change the old by supplanting it with a new methodology. Continue to seek the way of God and to align your life with the will of God within you. "The possibility of making mistakes is inherent in the acquisition of wisdom, the scheme of progressing from the partial and temporal to the complete and eternal, from the relative and imperfect to the final and perfected. Error is the shadow of relative incompleteness which must of necessity fall across man's ascending universe path to Paradise perfection." (*1435:4)

People with training in finance understand the time value of money, but we seldom stop to consider the time value of people. Small, almost imperceptible growth, when compounded, can result in phenomenal overall growth. A dollar that earns compound interest at one per cent per day over the course of a year would be worth \$36 at the end of one year; \$1,427 at the end of two years; and \$54,000 at the end of three years. At the end of six years, the dollar would have grown to close to \$3,000,000,000! Small, almost imperceptible growth in individuals as well, when compounded, can result in phenomenal overall growth. The key seems to be to keep focusing on the small positive successes — the *movement* toward the goal — and building on that movement.

The focus of a growing person is on where they are growing and not where they are now or where they have been. "All religions before and after the times of Jesus, even Christianity, carefully provide for conscientious self-examination. But not so with the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus' philosophy of life is without religious introspection. The carpenter's son never taught character *building*; he taught character *growth*, declaring that the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed." (*1583:2)

During our lifetimes, we find success frequently in the pattern of visualizing our goals and then persistently acting as though we have already achieved the results. The best corporate managers of change are those who can create a clear vision for the direction of change and then communicate that vision in a thousand and one different ways to their people. As Tom Peters, co-author of *In Search of Excellence* said, "Whenever anything is being accomplished anywhere in an organization, it is being accomplished by a monomaniac with a mission." Most successful entrepreneurs are those who have tenaciously clung, like an English bulldog, to a business idea, until they have effectively made that idea a reality. The highest performing athletes are those who already see themselves as winners and who persistently train and evolve their skills until they have made their vision a material reality.

The Adjuster seems to be entirely in accord with these mortal enterprises: "Although the divine indwellers are chiefly concerned with your spiritual preparation for the next stage of the never-ending existence, they are also deeply interested in your temporal welfare and in your real achievements on earth. They are delighted to contribute to your health, happiness, and true prosperity. They are not indifferent to your success in all matters of planetary advancement which are not inimical to your future life of eternal progress." (*1204:1)

Although these mortal enterprises are enjoyable, satisfying, and often consistent with spiritual goals and values, they ought never take pre-eminence over the spiritual enterprise of seeking God's way and achieving spiritual growth. "... human wills which are fully occupied with passing only upon temporal decisions having to do with the material problems of animal existence are doomed to perish in time. Those who make wholehearted moral decisions and unqualified spiritual choices are thus progressively identified with the indwelling and divine spirit, and thereby are they increasingly transformed into the values of eternal survival — unending progression of divine service." (*1431:4)

Growth and transformation occur because we act on the consciousness that has been born in our hearts that we are children of God. The fruits of the spirit are paradoxically also the roots of the soul. Jesus said that "It is not possible to respect yourself more than you love your neighbor; the one is the measure of the capacity for the other." (*1740:2) "... Love one another ... as I have loved you" (*2044:3) was his final commandment to us. The more that we love others, the deeper our capacity to love them and the more real we become.

In the children's story, "The Velveteen Rabbit," The Skin Horse and The Velveteen Rabbit were talking:

"What is real?" asked the Rabbit one day when they were lying side by side in the nursery before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"

"Real isn't how you are made. It is a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long long time, not just to play with, but really loves you, then you become real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the rabbit.

"Sometimes," said the skin horse, for he was always truthful. "But when you are real, you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"

"It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily or have sharp edges or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are real, most of your hair has been loved off, and you get loose in the joints, and you get very shabby. But these things don't matter at all because once you are real, you can't be ugly except to people who don't understand."

"I suppose you are real," said the rabbit. And then he wished he had not said it, for he thought the skin horse might be sensitive.

But the skin horse only smiled. The boy's uncle made me real," he said. "That was a great many years ago. But once you are real, you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always."

Summary

The secret of spiritual transformation, the process of becoming real, is to change your attitudes of mind — "May the mind that was in Jesus be also in you"; to see yourself as a child of the perfect God right now — "Be you perfect, even as the Father in heaven is perfect"; and to act on that new consciousness — to love one another as Jesus has loved us.

One of the most powerful, complete summaries of the process of personal and spiritual transformation anywhere in *The URANTIA Book* is the dialogue between Jesus and the young man who was afraid. Jesus said:

"Set your mind at work to solve its problems; teach your intellect to work for you; refuse longer to be dominated by fear like an unthinking animal. Your mind should be your courageous ally in the solution of your life problems rather than your being, as you have been, its abject fear-slave and the bond-servant of

depression and defeat. But most valuable of all, your potential of real achievement is the spirit which lives within you, and which will stimulate and inspire your mind to control itself and activate the body if you will release it from the fetters of fear and thus enable your spiritual nature to begin your deliverance from the evils of inaction by the power-presence of living faith. And then, forthwith, will this faith vanquish fear of men by the compelling presence of that new and all-dominating love of your fellows which will so soon fill your soul to overflowing because of the consciousness which has been born in your heart that you are a child of God." (*1438:1)

May the blessings of the Father in heaven ever abide with you. Have a wonderful week.

Jim Johnston
Temple Terrace, Florida

The following two pieces were shared by David Robertson as part of his statement on personal transformation.

ALL I EVER REALLY NEEDED TO KNOW I LEARNED IN KINDERGARTEN

by Robert Faughum Kansas City Times
September 17, 1986

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain but there on the sandbox at the nursery school.

These are the things I learned: Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you. Live a balanced life. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon. When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plants go up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup — they all die. So do we.

And then remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK.

Everything you need to know is there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation, Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all — the whole world — had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes. And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

THE SQUARE ROOT OF NOTHING by Curt Cloninger, 17, April, 1986

My God is a slam dancer on a floor with spectral, psychedelic lights;
and people; and noises; and smells; and bumps
and all He knows is the music.

(He keeps His eyes closed)

My God moves like nobody can;
and breaks and turns, and lunges like some gorgeous blue fluid
at zero gravity.

If the music had life and a body, it would mirror the moves my God makes, and it does.

My God is an oak tree in the desert, alone for 12,000 miles around;

with roots so deep and strong they hold the earth in orbit;

and a trunk so sure and constant to hold up the sky, that it makes Atlas look like Pee Wee Herman in Ethiopia.

(Still, one time I carved "Curt loves God" with my finger into His trunk, and the sky moved).

His branches are too wide for infinity to imagine, and I've climbed all over every one.

My God is the random savagery of a storm's eye.

My God is a terrified butterfly,
crushed under the heel of the boot of a seventeen year-old axe murderer, on Good Friday.

My God is tenderness incarnate.

He hugs everybody constantly, and He loves quiche; but man, He could whip your ass like standing still.

My God is not hip to religion, never has been.
Too many laws and doctrines and subdivided
denominations to keep up with.
My God is love.

He makes the cloth for the lilies of the field.
He can do more with a mustard seed
than Julia Child has ever done with prime rib.
He's the reason strangers smile back.

My God is your God too (take it or leave it),
and what I know and can tell of him is still only the
square root of nothing.

Jesus Christ is risen,
May the sky forever move.

TRANSFORMATION: AND HERE IS MYSTERY

I want to begin by telling you an anecdote about the renowned American evangelist, Billy Graham. It seems he was in a small community where he was scheduled to speak that evening. During the day, he was anxious to put some letters into the mail and went out for a walk. He stopped a young fellow on the street to ask directions to the local Post Office. After the youngster had given him the information, Graham invited him to his evening preaching engagement, saying that he would be speaking on the topic, "The Way to Heaven." But the young fellow replied that he'd probably not be there. "Gosh," he said, "you don't even know your way to the Post Office."

The great Danish philosopher and religionist, Kierkegaard, has said, "Most people believe that the ...commandments, that is, to love one's neighbor as oneself (and so forth) are intentionally a little too severe — like putting the clock ahead half an hour to make sure of not being late in the morning."

I am beginning to think that the act of personal transformation is to bring our interior clocks to the point where they tell true time.

Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary defines transformation in the following way: "To change in character, to convert." There is an additional comment that says "Transform implies a major change in form, nature or function." Certainly, spiritual transformation implies all three, both temporally and eternally.

I believe the good people who asked me to speak today felt that I had had some acquaintance with personal transformation. During my career as an actor, I sometimes transformed myself eight times each week. In addition to this, over the years I have transformed myself from a skinny dope-smoking Hippy into an overweight and stressed-out businessman approaching mid-life crisis. But to return for a moment to the theatre, it is the task of the actor to motivate oneself to behave as though he were another person, in order to achieve the playwright's intended meaning, following the director's instructions, while wearing the costumer's creations. One simply does not act like oneself when the curtain goes up.

What a surprise it must be for sincere spiritual seekers who become students of the fifth epochal revelation to learn that we are expected to choose to write our own portion of the Cosmic Drama, and to act on the highest ideals for the benefit of our fellow mortals. Most of all, to become truly and sincerely real.

On page 1285 of *The URANTIA Book*, a Mighty Messenger tells us: "Into the keeping of mortal man has been given not only the Adjuster presence of the Paradise Father but also control over the destiny of an infinitesimal fraction of the future of the Supreme. For as man attains human destiny, so does the Supreme achieve destiny on deity levels." (*1285:2) "And here is mystery: The more closely man approaches God through love, the greater the reality — actuality — of that man." (*1285:4)

Here then is our motivation as actors in this enormous universe theatre: to love as Jesus loves us.

The Supreme Being needs our infinitesimal input toward his completion, and the Father is asking us to return home. We're not here seeking the way to the Post Office. We're actually taking the first steps on our journey to Paradise.

That same Mighty Messenger also has said: "As we master the problems of self-realization, so is the God of experience achieving almighty supremacy in the universes of time and space." (*1284:3) "It is out of the very reality of the Supreme that the Adjuster, with the consent of the human will, weaves the patterns of the eternal nature of an ascending son of God." (*1284:5)

So, as we transform our personal lives through spiritual growth, we are achieving actuality in the cosmos, we are becoming cosmic citizens, ambassadors of God.

When we take a closer look at the process of personal transformation, we approach the inner life, that

singular most intimate locale inside us, where we choose the Father's will. It is the place where we come closest to the God who is within.

Meister Eckhart, the great German mystic, once wrote: "The seed of God is in us. Given an intelligent and hardworking farmer, it will thrive and grow up to God, whose seed it is; and accordingly, its fruits will be God-nature. Pear seeds grow into pear trees, nut seeds into nut trees, and God seed into God." This deceptively simple statement contains for me the astounding realization that we are transforming our mortal natures into clarified vessels of love. And we know that that love is of God, and from God, and will ultimately lead us into the presence of the Father himself, who is living love.

So, how do we do it? How do we perform the act of transformation on ourselves? Our twentieth century has seen the development of a plethora of cults, "isms" and "ologies", all of them reflecting the deep need many people feel for techniques and training in enlightenment. But, *The URANTIA Book* indicates that our slothful human minds want everything complex rendered simple. We choose secondary status, supporting priesthood on every side, to show us how to become fully conscious. This must be a stage in our evolutionary development, and it brings us quite a variety of kooks and would-be saints packaging their own brand of developmental wisdom. From Shirley McLaine to the Maharishi to Jim and Tammy Bakker, we have a smorgasboard of good advice and bad.

However, the Nebadon Melchizedeks remind us that "Man's sole contribution to growth is the mobilization of the total powers of his personality — living faith." (*1097:5) And the midwayers reassure us that, "It requires time for men and women to effect radical and extensive changes in their basic and fundamental concepts of social conduct, philosophic attitudes, and religious convictions." (*1705:1)

The great task, after we have experienced re-birth in the Spirit, is to realign the concepts we used in the past to simplify and explain our existence, with the real universe and the real influences that our Thought Adjuster and our unseen friends are providing for our development. I'm speaking of the period after we realize that our Thought Adjuster is present in our mind. (What a shame that we don't have an archangel visitation introducing us to our very own Mystery Monitor: "Little Stevie, this is your Father Fragment," while the trumpets blare.) Seriously, though, the assurance of the presence of our divine companion often comes only after one of those "redirecting cataclysms" (*1096:6) has left us on our knees praying for help. We then realize

that the influence of our Thought Adjuster is helping to spiritualize our thinking, literally to change our minds. We are helped to know *how* to pick up the pieces. Remember the remark of the Melchizedek: "New meanings only emerge amid conflict; and conflict persists only in the face of refusal to espouse the higher values connoted in superior meanings. Religious perplexities are inevitable; there can be no growth without psychic conflict and spiritual agitation. . . . But, the great problem of religious living consists in the task of unifying the soul powers of the personality by the dominance of LOVE." (*1097:6,7,8,)

And this, I want to submit to you, is the place where we transform ourselves. With the conspiracy of spiritual help that we have available to us, our unseen friends and our precious Thought Adjuster offer us the opportunity to take the shattered remains of our former lives and use them artfully to create the mosaic of the future. We *can* make the difficult choices, in fact, if we are not to stagnate, we simply *must* make them in order to bring forth Spirit fruit. We must transform our concept of reality into the realization of the actuality of God's living cosmos. We transform ourselves at every juncture by our decisions to do it God's way, the better way toward perfection.

Finally, we know for certain that this is not a "how-to" religion we are involved with. Michael of Nebadon has created a universe based on Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. He was and is a hands-on Creator Son, whose life on this planet has left us with the urgency of loving as he loves, of doing as he does, not according to some pre-arranged formula, but simply by the doing of our living, every day. It is in our prayer and worship sessions that we can acknowledge whatever transformation we have performed upon ourselves, and see the potentials to be realized in growth yet to come. Jesus urges us to jump into experience, not as a divine fool, but as wisdom-hungry human, ready to practice forgiveness and strong to go the second mile.

Remember that Jesus told Ganid: "If we know God, our real business on earth is so to live as to permit the Father to reveal himself in our lives, and thus will all God-seeking persons see the Father and ask for our help in finding out more about the God who in this manner finds expression in our lives." (*1466:3) What an opportunity this is! The transformation process brings us away from our old selves to such an extent that we may actually introduce other mortals to our heavenly Father.

A Mighty Messenger gives us the clue to the whole process: "Man's great universe adventure consists in the transit of his mortal mind from the stability of mechani-

cal statics to the divinity of spiritual dynamics, and he achieves this transformation by the force and constancy of his own personality decisions, in each of life's situations declaring, "It is my will that your will be done." (*1303:1)

In closing I want to read to you the words of a mortal, Francois de Sales, who once questioned the Bishop of Geneva concerning the attainment of perfection. The wise and wily old Bishop replied, "There are many beside you who want me to tell them of methods and systems and secret ways of becoming perfect, and I can only tell them that the sole secret is a hearty love of God, and the only way of attaining that love is by loving. You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; and just so you learn to love God and man by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves. If you want to love God, go on loving Him more and more. Begin as a mere apprentice, and the very power of love will lead you on to become a master in the art."

May God bless you with daily spiritual renewal and lifelong personal transformation. Thank you.

Stephen Zandt
San Francisco, California

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

In my experience with interfaith dialogue, I have learned to share definitions of terms before discussing ideas and will be doing so this morning. However, I am going to adopt the "Jewish" way and take my title "Our Relationship with God" from the end and work towards the beginning.

When I refer to God, using the single word, it is as my father and your father. We share the same father and therefore, a common parentage. The God to whom I refer created our local universe. I relate to him through my knowledge of Jesus' life as learned from song texts, the Bible, and *The URANTIA Book*. Through my awareness of the workings of the Spirit of Truth in my life and in the lives of other believers, I am working towards the realization of the evolving God the Supreme. By striving to strengthen the connection between my errant human self and the divine God presence within me which *The URANTIA Book* calls "the Thought Adjuster," I am reaching toward an understanding of the Universal Father.

"With" seems to be a simple word. Webster defines it as, "a being together, in the company of." The writer of the old Gospel text, "And He walks with me and He

talks with me, and He tells me I am His own," brought this truth to many rural church singers.

"Relationship" . . . a connection, a being related. Our relationship with our Creator has been made possible by the spirit of Truth given to all at Pentecost.

There is an additional element of "relationship" for us to consider today . . . the fact that "This bestowal of the Son's spirit [the Spirit of Truth] effectively prepared all normal men's minds for the subsequent universal bestowal of the Father's spirit (the Adjuster) upon all mankind." (*2061:2)

We all share the manifestations of the Spirit of Truth from God our Father and the Indwelling Adjuster from our Universal Father. That certainly makes us kinfolk, related beings. But now we come to that little word which begins my title, "our" O U R . . . a double possessive. Does it mean you and me . . . the people in this room? Does it mean the readership of *The URANTIA Book*? Does it mean English-speaking, French-speaking, Spanish-speaking people? Jesus said, "... my mission is to live a life in this generation and for all generations." (*1466:1) Taking a cue from the spirit of *The URANTIA Book*, my definition of "our" is inclusive of all human beings, male/female, regardless of race, religion, color or creed; and I am reminded of Jesus' new commandment, "That you love one another even as I have loved you. And by this will all men know that you are my disciples if you thus love one another." (*1944:4)

"Love" . . . now there's an interesting word to define. Webster doesn't do too badly, but I think the paper on God the Supreme says it better, "All true love is from God, and man receives the divine affection as he himself bestows this love upon his fellows. . . . The Father's love can become real to mortal man only by passing through that man's personality as he in turn bestows this love upon his fellows. The great circuit of love is from the Father, through sons to brothers, and hence to the Supreme." (*1289:4)

We have been mandated by Jesus to love each other "as I have loved you." What does that mean to us and how can we show that love to each other? It is a question worth thinking and praying about, for, as the renowned Roman Catholic theologian, Dr. Raymond Brown, states, "... as long as Christian love is in the world, the world is still encountering Jesus."; or, as Jesus said to Ganid, "... the revelations of God flash upon the earth in the lives of the men who reveal God to their fellows." (*1467:3) Remember one of the manifestations of the Spirit of Truth is that Jesus "... now again lives [his life] anew and afresh in the individual believer of each passing

generation of the spirit - filled sons of God." (*2061:5) Our lives are reflections of God to our sisters and brothers. God the Father is an "I" activity. God the Supreme is an "Our" activity. "God the Father can be found by any individual who has attained the divine level of Godlikeness, but God the Supreme will never be personally discovered by any one creature until that far-distant time when, through the universal attainment of perfection, all creatures will simultaneously find him." (*1290:2) Obviously, we must help each other find God and manifest his love in our lives.

Now let's take my title in order, from beginning to end, and review our thoughts. "Our" is inclusive, invoking us to love one another and show Jesus' love for us by the way we live together, by the way the God in each of us reaches out to the God in the other members of our family. Thus we form relationships, connections that link us with God.

As Rabbi Chayim has said: "When we go our separate ways, we may go astray; let us join hands and look for the way together." Let us hold hands and together find our way home to our Father. Let us reach up and in to God, for "When man goes in partnership with God, great things may, and do, happen." (*1467:6)

Eileen Laurence
Armonk, New York

MOTHER TERESA FILM INTRODUCTION

Just as we seem to lose faith in the awesome power of personal transformation to transform our world, and resort to impersonal, mechanistic technique, along comes a person like Mother Teresa. Even all the words in *The URANTIA Book*, or a thousand thousand *URANTIA Books*, pale in comparison to a single life lived as a testament to the reality of our Father among us.

"Lord, make me a channel of your peace. That where there is hatred, I may bring love. Where there is error, I may bring truth. Where there is discord, I may bring harmony. Where there is doubt, I may bring faith. Where there is despair, I may bring joy. For it is by forgetting self that one is found; it is by forgiving that one is forgiven; it is by dying that one awakens to eternal life.

You and I must come forward and share the joy of loving. But we cannot give what we don't have. That's why we need to pray. And prayer will give us a clean heart. And a clean heart will see the God in each other. And if we see God in each other, we will be able to live in peace. And if we live in peace, we will be able to share the joy of loving with each other and God will be with us. God bless you." Mother Teresa's prayer to the United Nations, from the film, "Mother Teresa," Petrie Productions, 1985

*"The call to the adventure of building a new and transformed human society by means of the spiritual rebirth of Jesus' brotherhood of the kingdom should thrill all who believe in him as men have not been stirred since the days when they walked about on earth as his companions in the flesh." (*2084:6)*
