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URANTIA

CONTACTING THE KINGDOM WITHIN

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for readers of The
URANTIA Book by David Glass

In discussing the life bestowal of our Universe Sovereign, Michael of Nebadon, in the likeness of a mortal man, Jesus of Nazareth, the midwayers, on page 2084, make the following comment regarding the earth ministry of Jesus:

"The kingdom of God is within you" was probably the greatest pronouncement Jesus ever made, next to the declaration that his Father is a living and loving spirit.

In Jesus' teachings about the "kingdom of God within," he imparted a great deal of truth and wisdom respecting this inner realm of spirit reality, contactable by our minds, which the Father has bestowed upon each of us. And our knowledge about the Father's inner spirit presence has been greatly augmented by our fifth epochal revelation.

While it is true that Jesus employed the term, "the kingdom of God within you," to refer to various aspects of man's spiritual life, we may, for the purposes of this discussion, identify the term as referring to that convergence in the human mind of the many spiritual presences and influences, from various origins, which minister to such a mortal intellect, as these spiritual realities are coordinated and unified for human reception by the indwelling Spirit, the Paradise Thought Adjuster. More simply, we may say that the term, "the kingdom of God within you," refers to God's spiritual presence within man. At the center of the inner kingdom, there dwells an actual, perfect spirit fragment of the living God.

These eternal spirit gifts of the Father, our indwelling Thought Adjusters, represent our present contact point with divinity. They constitute the means by which we receive and experience the Father's constant and unending love for each of us. The indwelling Monitors coordinate the spirit influences encircling our minds which make it possible for us to grasp spiritual truth and somewhat to comprehend the significance of things eternal and divine.

The inner spirit kingdom is the source of the inspiration and the ideals by which our planetary civilizations are advanced, and the spirit fragments of God within us are the indispensable sources upon which we draw for the evolution of our human wisdom.

The Father's indwelling spirit provides the potential for the unlimited progress and eternal survival of our souls. The divine Thought Adjusters are to be our experiential partners in the undertaking of each of the innumerable enterprises of our long universe ascension to Paradise. At some point in our local universe ascension, our morontia souls shall fuse with their associated Paradise Thought Adjusters, and thereby factualize the indissoluble unity of our eternal selves. Our spirit indwellers represent a divine guarantee of the possibility for each of us to achieve the complete realization of our potentials for perfected creature existence, and that we shall be able to attain the goal of our finite evolutionary progress, the finding of the Universal Father on Paradise. And throughout all the expanding and unlimited adventures of our eternal careers, the divine Thought Adjusters shall continue to reveal to each of us the inexhaustible reality potentials

inherent in their eternal spirit absoluteness.

Since, as we see, the "kingdom of God within us" and its pure-spirit nucleus, the divine Thought Adjuster, are factors in virtually every aspect of our ascending and eternal careers, it is not surprising to find that almost every personality contributing to the writing of the Urantia Papers has something to impart relating to the reality of God's spirit presence within man. From among the many broad themes presented in The URANTIA Book which pertain to this subject, I shall discuss the relevance of four realms of spiritual life to the human attempt to contact the Father's indwelling kingdom. These four domains of spiritual activity shall be: the exercise of faith, the consecration of will, the experience of love, and the ministry of service.

First, let us consider the role of faith in the attempt to contact the kingdom of God within. Almost four millenia ago, when Machiventa Melchizedek appeared on our planet to begin his voluntary bestowal mission, he came bringing mankind a new message of spiritual truth and hope. Machiventa taught that faith in God is all that is necessary to establish a direct and favorable relationship with God. He further imparted that simple faith in the goodness of God is sufficient to insure the post-mortal survival of man's ascending soul.

Faith is man's first and indispensable gateway to the personal and experiential discovery of God. On pages 62 and 63, a Divine Counselor acquaints us with the reasons for the necessity of man's relying on faith in beginning his personal approach to the Father:

The inability of the finite creature to approach the infinite Father is inherent, not in the Father's aloofness, but in the finiteness and material limitations of created beings. . . . Our Father is not in hiding; he is not in arbitrary seclusion. . . . There is an infinite grandeur and an inexpressible generosity connected with the majesty of his love which causes him to yearn for the association of every created being who can comprehend, love, or approach him; and it is, therefore, the limitations inherent in you, inseparable from your finite personality and material existence, that determine the time and place and circumstances in which you may achieve the goal of the journey of mortal ascension and stand in the presence of the Father at the center of all things.

The Divine Counselor further advises us:

Although the approach to the Paradise presence of the Father must await your attainment of the highest finite levels of spirit progression, you should rejoice in the recognition of the ever-present possibility of immediate communion with the bestowal spirit of the Father so intimately associated with your inner soul and your spiritualizing self.

And, on page 64, the Divine Counselor continues:

The divine presence cannot . . . be discovered anywhere in nature or even in the lives of God-knowing mortals so fully and so certainly as in your attempted communion with the indwelling Mystery Monitor, the Paradise Thought Adjuster. What a mistake to dream of God far off in the skies when the spirit of the Universal Father lives within you own mind!

On page 1731, Jesus makes his great appeal to all men to attempt the personal discovery of the indwelling presence of God:

"I have called you out of the darkness of authority and the lethargy of tradition into the transcendent light of the realization of the possibility of making for yourselves the greatest discovery possible for the human soul to make--the supernal experience of finding God for yourself, in yourself, and of yourself, and of doing all this as a fact in your own personal experience. . . .

Your religion shall change from the mere intellectual belief in traditional authority to the actual experience of that living faith which is able to grasp the reality of God and all that relates to the divine spirit of the Father.

Contacting the kingdom within, together with the bestowal and recep-

tion of epochal revelation, constitute man's chief means of acquiring spiritual truth.

In his discussion of truth and faith, on page 1459, Jesus taught:

"Revealed truth, personally discovered truth, is the supreme delight of the human soul. . . . But truth can never become man's possession without the exercise of faith."

By faith man achieves spiritual freedom and the comprehension of spiritual truth through the personal discovery of the reality of God and of his divine presence within, by discovering his spiritual sonship with God. "Faith liberates," a Melchizedek of Nebadon writes, on page 1114.

Because faith is a form of worship, it promotes the spiritual transformation of man whereby he becomes more and more like the Father. "'Forget not,'" says Jesus, on page 1609, "'it is your faith in the exceedingly great and precious promises of God that ensures your becoming partakers of the divine nature.'"

"'Faith acts to release the superhuman activities of the divine spark, the immortal germ, that lives within the mind of man,'" Jesus continues, on page 1609. Man's faith thus promotes the effectiveness of the indwelling Thought Adjuster in its performance of those activities which result in the progressive spiritualization of the soul. Not only does faith make it possible for man successfully to contact the spiritual kingdom within, but human faith likewise assists the Thought Adjuster in its attempt to bring forth the impressions and messages of the Father's love and guidance into conscious human perception.

Faith represents the highest and noblest gesture of the human intellect, for it is only by the exercise of faith that man's mind

is enabled to reach beyond the material and mathematical level of mere rationality and to ascend to the realms of his superconscious mind, there to achieve communion with actual spiritual realities and divine values. It is through the expression of faith that the human intellect ultimately concedes that all those things of which it has become aware during its brief planetary infancy: the myriad forms of living things, the spectacle of the star-swept universes, the mathematical knowledge of the vastness of the scope of the expansive macrocosm, and the intricacy of the subatomic microcosm, the miracle of human experience, the human body, the human mind, the indwelling spirit, and the perceptible growth of the soul. the experiences of human friendship and loving fellowship: these many things which the human mind encounters during life conspire together to urge that mind to the foundation of a living faith in the reality of a divine Creator, a masterful Controller and Upholder, of such a marvelous creation. And by such an admission, and through the exercise of such faith, man may proceed to his own personal discovery of the greatest of experiencable realities: contacting within that God who is both man's spiritual Father and the First Great Source and Center of Infinite Reality.

Faith leads to experience and experience leads to certainty; that is the formula of man's progressive advancement towards his personal achievement of the unassailable assurance of knowing God.

The second factor essential to contacting the kingdom within is the consecration of man's free will to the doing of the Father's

will. Freedom of choice and liberty of will is one of the Father's greatest gifts to his mortal children. "There is inherent joy in freewill existence," a Mighty Messenger writes, on page 312. And man's highest personal use of his freewill liberty consists in the decision to seek and to do the perfect will of his Paradise Father. "The affectionate dedication of the human will to the doing of the Father's will is man's choicest gift to God," a Divine Counselor writes, on page 22. And Jesus extolls the value and significance of such an exalted creature choice. On page 1732. Jesus says, "'Never forget there is only one adventure which is more satisfying and thrilling than the attempt to discover the will of the living God, and that is the supreme adventure of honestly trying to do that divine will.'"

On page 365, a Mighty Messenger writes, "There is in the mind of God a plan which embraces every creature of all his vast domains, and this plan is an eternal purpose of boundless opportunity, unlimited progress and endless life. And the infinite treasures of such a matchless career are yours for the striving!" But man is enabled to fulfill the Father's plan for his individual achievement of perfection only by exercising his divine gift of free will in personally choosing to do so. "As pertains to eternal survival," a Divine Counselor writes, on page 71, "God has decreed the sovereignty of the material and mortal will, and that decree is absolute. . . . The portal of eternity opens only in response to the freewill choice of the freewill sons of the God of free will."

In exercising his free will, man discovers his capacity for both correct and erroneous judgment. But through his decision to

align the functionings of his mortal will with the Father's all-wise will, man causes the creative lines of the thought world of his inner life gradually to draw into concordant unison with the perfect thinking of his individualized fragment of divinity. And this progressive unification of man's will and God's will is ultimately consummated in the fusion of man's surviving soul with its associated Thought Adjuster, which, a Solitary Messenger tells us, is the will of God. (1190)

In these and in other ways, man's personal act of will in choosing to do the will of God results in his direct contact and final unity with the Spirit which lives in the kingdom of God within. The consecration of man's will to the pursuit of the Father's will makes possible man's finding of God in the inner spirit kingdom, in his ascension of the universe, on the Isle of Paradise, and in eternity.

"Love is the greatest of spiritual realities," Jesus declares, on page 1608. And, therefore, love constitutes man's best means of approaching God and of contacting him within the inner kingdom. "It is literally true," a Melchizedek of Nebadon writes, on page 1118, "human things must be known in order to be loved, but divine things must be loved in order to be known."

On page 30, a Divine Counselor writes:

Some degree of moral affinity and spiritual harmony is essential to friendship between two persons; a loving personality can hardly reveal himself to a loveless person.

And, on page 50, the Divine Counselor continues:

Man's nearest and dearest approach to God is by and through love, for God is love.

The love of God for man and for all of his universe children

is unlimited, spontaneous, and inherent in the Father's perfect goodness. The love of man for God makes it possible for man to achieve communion with the Father on the highest level of selfhood, personality. "Love connotes mutual regard of whole personalities, whether human or divine," a Solitary Messenger writes, on page 1228. Therefore, man's love for God constitutes his most profound and effective means of contacting the Spirit Father. It is the indwelling Thought Adjuster which serves as the functional entity by means of which man's communing liaison with the Father is effected, and therefore the entire process of spiritual communion promotes and is conducted through man's direct contact with the spiritual kingdom within.

Love is the only experiential realm wherein man has immediate and unlimited access to the infinite Father. A Divine Counselor writes, on page 50:

Mortal man cannot possibly know the infinitude of the heavenly Father. Finite mind cannot think through such an absolute truth or fact. But this same finite human being can actually feel--literally experience--the full and undiminished impact of such an infinite Father's LOVE.

Let us consider the two great commandments of our Master Son, Michael, to us and to all of his universe children in Nebadon. They are that we shall love the Father with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and that we shall love one another as he, Michael, loves us. A part of the significance of these commandments lies in the fact that love constitutes man's best means of contacting the Father and of coordinating himself with regard to all other sub-Deity levels of reality.

The sharing of love between man and his heavenly Father serves to stabilize, balance and unify the individual selfhood of man. This is because love nurtures man on the level of personality and, thereby, consequently effects the progressive unification of all the subordinate elements of man's being. Increasingly does man's love for God and God's love for man result in the spiritual transformation of man, so that he becomes in reality more and more like his Paradise Parent: Love is the soul of worship.

Man's personal discovery and experience of God's love for him spontaneously leads him to the fulfillment of Jesus' second great commandment, that mankind should love one another as Jesus loves us. A Mighty Messenger writes, on page 1289:

All true love is from God, and man receives the divine affection as he himself bestows this love upon his fellows. Love is dynamic. It can never be captured; it is alive, free, thrilling, and always moving. Man can never take the love of the Father and imprison it within his heart. 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. The love of the Father appears in the mortal personality by the ministry of the indwelling Adjuster.

It is the divine Thought Adjuster within the inner kingdom of God that provides the channel through which the love of God emerges into human consciousness, whereafter it may then be expressed to human brothers. The love of God for man emanates from within the inner kingdom of God. The socializing and transforming power of such divine, fraternal love is man's greatest, presently available, unutilized planetary potential. Brotherly love has sufficient power, in and of itself, to effect the spiritual awakening of all

Urantia. On page 1098, a Melchizedek of Nebadon writes:

Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious. If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man.

The divine love of the Father differs profoundly from human love, just as there is a vast qualitative difference between all things human and things divine: For example, how many times have you been near a television set when its broadcasting is suddenly interrupted and impaired. In an instant, the clear discernible images on the screen disintegrate into a meaningless patchwork of variegated splotches and the audio portion may likewise be impaired. For a few moments, there always ensues that uncertainty among the viewers as to whether the imperfection lies in the transmission of the broadcast or in its reception by their television set. These doubts are usually ended by the appearance of a printed notice, urging the viewers not to adjust their sets, but rather to wait until the malfunctioning transmission can be corrected. In the religious realm of divine love, however, no such comparable incident ever occurs. The universal emanations of the love of the Universal Father shall always be constant and unchanging. The Eternal Transmitter of Infinite Affection is never impeded by the imperfect functioning or by a technical interruption of his broadcasting system. Man's experience of the living love of the Universal Father is dependent only upon his attunement to these divine

emanations, and upon his personal choice to expand his capacity for reception of that love. Throughout the Father's all-encompassing personality circuit, the uncharging God is continuously broadcasting, over unvarying universal frequencies, the infinity of his love. On page 38, a Divine Counselor writes. "God's only personal attitude toward the affairs of the universe is always a reaction of divine affection."

When once man has received the divine affection of the Father and then experienced the consequent impulse of fraternal love, "the desire to do good to others" (648), he is thereby impelled dynamically to participate in the service of the human brotherhood. Service of one's brothers represents the act of the creature's stepping into willing partnership with the Creator. The service of mankind is the active mode of a son's becoming more and more like his Spirit Father. As such, the ministry of service becomes our fourth element in the adventure of contacting the kingdom within.

The ministry of service, like the "deeds of mercy," is "twice blessed — / It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes (William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, IV. i. 186-7). Brotherly service blesses the server by improving his ability to draw forth and actualize his own inner spiritual potentials. Spiritual service benefits its practitioners by coordinating the inner and outer realms of the server's selfhood.

Spiritual ministry blesses him who is served by making the invisible spiritual realities of the inner kingdom, such as love and assurance, readily contactable and directly experiencable.

Loving and serving one's brother releases in him the vast spiritual potentials of his inner kingdom and thereby improves the likelihood of his being able to fulfill his own latent, spiritual endowments. Should he succeed in doing so, his spirit potentials, made newly available through actualization, become a reciprocal blessing to the original server and to all mankind as well. In this way are the collective spiritual achievements of mankind as a whole unendingly expanded through such an inexhaustible harvest of mutual exchange. Like blessed loaves and fishes, through service, man's endowment of spiritual power multiplies through distribution.

One of the most salient messages of Jesus' earth ministry is that the greatest and most potent form of service to man possible, promoting his personal discovery of the kingdom of God within him and also enhancing the outward realization of the Father's kingdom on earth, the brotherhood of man, consists in the proclamation of "the living gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." Jesus foretells, on page 1930, "The persistent preaching of this gospel of the kingdom will some day bring to all nations a new and unbelievable liberation, intellectual freedom, and religious liberty." Jesus' gospel proclaims that all men are spiritual brothers because they are all indwelt by the spirit of the same and only One True God. The preaching of Jesus' spiritual message proclaims to mankind that the "one true light" which lights and animates each man, the common source of all their ideals, their dreams and aspirations, has but one universally identical source--

the indwelling Spirit in the inner kingdom of God. Thus does their spiritual unity rest upon absolute Spirit foundations.

Contacting the kingdom within must result in the realization of the kingdom without. The religionist's task is to contact the kingdom of God within and to draw forth his inner spiritual endowments into outward realization thereby bringing about the transformation of the individual's personality through the bearing of the fruits of the spirit in daily living. The religionist's challenge is to turn the kingdom of God inside out.

Through faith and willful effort, through the reception of divine love and its sharing in brotherly service, progressively shall the Father's will be done and his kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus declares, on page 1569, "This kingdom shall progress in the world until it shall break down every barrier and bring all men to know my Father and to believe in the saving truth which I have come to declare."

And in that day shall come an end to our long planetary Ice Age of Spiritual Ignorance. The giant, glowering glaciers of Indifference and Tyranny shall crack and crash in the resounding waters of Freedom. The dislodged Icebergs of Oppression, Selfishness, and Greed shall melt forever in the warming seas of universal love. The caked and sullied Icebanks of Corruption and Deceit shall resolve into crystal streams of righteous service. As the first new buds of the spiritual springtime appear, a golden Sun of Truth shall shine: "All men are sons of God and brothers in spirit,"

and its radiant rays shall thaw the ageold feuds of the fragmented family of Andon and Fonta, of Michael and his Minister, of the Paradise Three-in-One.

Then shall have come the great day of Jeremiah, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth like an ocean. Man shall not look to man and ask, 'Brother, do you know the Lord?' for all shall know the Lord."

The light of life which lights each life shall blossom in Urantia's light and life. All this and more of the glory of God and the goodness of man shall be forthcoming if men will but heed the great call of the Master: "Seek first the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is within you."