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REACHING CHILDREN WITH THE URANTIAN TEACHINGS

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I. INTRODUCTION

My topic, Reaching Children With the Urantian Teachings, is a nice, broad, open, title for which I am very grateful, as it permits one to explore this subject from several angles. Any topic with the word children in it, has so many variables, because of the different age levels, ability levels, interest levels, and other individual differences-- there can never be one pat answer - which would apply to all youngsters such as one booklet - or one package of materials.

Our major thrust in this paper will be toward the pre-school youngsters--birth to ages 5-6 for reasons which I will elaborate upon later. I've often thought, as you have I'm sure, that stories about the early life of Jesus would be simply delightful for little children--would be a great way to present these teachings to them. But as little ones--this age--do not yet have the necessary vocabulary or concepts we would have to reword the stories and add illustrations to help build concepts. For example, if a child does not know the word round, what do we do? After he holds a round apple, an orange, a ball--the parent saying the word round each time--then he sees a picture of a circle and the word round is again associated with it, he has the concept and vocabulary round forever his. The illustration then begins to serve as a short cut and they are needed with his first stories. Little songs are another big help in building vocabulary and concepts.

Imagine a story for little ones about Jesus when he was about 4 years old and all the excitement in that little Nazareth home when the new baby James arrived. Jesus was of great help to his mother and thoroughly enjoyed that new baby. He would stand around by the hour just watching the activities of that baby James. Many stories and illustrations could be woven around this scene. Several parents and I entertained the thought that a group of these little stories would be the way to present the Urantian Teachings to little children.

But more careful consideration and thoughtful study of the book added other needed factors. If we had done this with some possibility of reproduction, the problem of our major trust in guarding that copyright looms up. It doesn't seem wise to have extra versions or even sections of this magnificent revelation around, no matter for what valid purpose, until more books are all over the world.

Also, if we take stories about Jesus out of context we might end up with the same problem the apostles had--with stories about Jesus rather than of his great teachings. I, then, decided to do an in-depth study of our topic, teaching little children.

Using Clyde Bedell's new and enlarged Concordex, I collected all of the quotations and annotated them, on the topics, children, family, instruction and parents. This resulted in a large, annotated Bibliography which I organized into seven categories. You have the outline in your hands. After this Bibliography is approved by the Foundation, it will be available upon request. I believe it should prove an invaluable guide to you young parents. There are about 100 quotations.

It points up so clearly what can be done to reach children with these teachings. I outlined these several methods which are recommended in the URANTIA Book in this paper. In essence the Urantian Teachings can best be learned by the children by being an integral part of the family life, day by day and continuously with the two parents taking a firm leadership role. Those delightful stories about Jesus--yes they should be used, but by the parents only who tell them directly from the big blue book, so they are associated in the child's mind with that URANTIA Book their parents love and try to live by. The vocabular

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On a Neighboring Planet, in the Garden of Eden, in Dalamatia and even in Jesus' childhood home (chosen as one of the best on this planet), in all of these places, children received their religious training from their parents and in the home. In fact, on a Neighboring Planet it is required that parents must take training to do this. To obtain guardianship of an orphan, prospective parents must secure the highest grade in competitive examinations on parenthood. (Don't you wish they had sent along a copy of that examination so we'd know some of their expectations?) All of these examples are given to us, they tell us, with the major purpose of upstepping our life on this lowly planet. At this time, the authors also state, our spiritual and family life are at a standstill and in serious danger. P. 909:7 It's up to us, who have this great guide to take steps to correct this. Let's not bury our talent in the ground, for I sincerely believe we who know these truths are held accountable.

Listen to this from P. 811:5. "Religion is so entirely a family matter that no religious institutions such as the URANTIA churches have ever developed." Here's another, P. 1363, "Jesus received his moral training and spiritual culture chiefly in his home," from his mother and father. Following innumerable quotations like these (which are in the bibliography) I believe you'll agree with me that our first priority need, in reaching children with the Urantian teachings must be the preparation of a guide for parents. Parents have been begging for this help for a long time. Second to this would be training courses for parents. These could be by correspondence for those not near URANTIA Centers. Could any project be more important, when the whole future of the URANTIA movement lies in the hands of our children? So reaching children with the Urantian teachings must be through the parents as an integral part of their family life--a continuous process--Those delightful stories? Yes, but by the parents as only a small part of a complex learning situation given to us in the URANTIA Book. A Melchizedek once told us, P. 1094:5, "Give every developing child a chance to grow his own religious experience; do not force a ready made adult experience upon him." Then this same author goes on at great length to show how the parent must provide the soil, the environment for this growth. That will be told about in our section on Methods, and is one of the major purposes of this paper.

II. THE ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCE OF PARENTHOOD

In order to have children, we must have parents, so let us consider then, the role of these parents. One of the supreme experiences of the human on this planet, is that of becoming a parent--of bringing a potential soul into this world. That is a heartfelt statement from my own personal experience. But listen to this statement P. 516, from a Melchizedek now on URANTIA: "No surviving mortal, midwayer, or seraphim may ascend to Paradise, attain the Father, and be mustered into the Corps of Finality, without having passed through that sublime experience of achieving parental relationship to an evolving child of the worlds or some other experience analogous and equivalent thereto. The relationship of child and parent is fundamental to the essential concept of the Universal Father and his universe children. Therefore does such an experience become indispensable to the experiential training of all ascenders."

Some very worthy, but unfortunate people, who through no fault of their own, are unable to have children on this planet, will not be denied that sublime, that essential

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experience of parenthood. This is so very necessary to the ascension plan that the universe organizers have arranged that they can have this experience in the Nursery Sections of the Finaliter World or on Jerusem with those superb parents the Material Sons and Daughters. 516.

The Chief of Seraphim states on P. 939:7, "New mores are emerging designed to stabilize the marriage-home institution. One is the new role of religion--the teaching that parental experience is essential, the idea of procreating cosmic citizens, the enlarged understanding of the privilege of procreation--giving sons to the Father."

Most current literature does not indicate that anyone knows about this except Urantians because I had just finished reading literally dozens and dozens of quotations from the Book about the essential experience of parenthood and the sublime experience of procreating cosmic citizens when I picked up a current issue of the Reader's Digest which painted just the opposite and typical picture of current thinking. It pointed up all of the material advantages of ZPG (Zero Population Growth) and how much more time for personal pleasures one would have. We are all familiar with the many reasons advanced such as air pollution, shortage of food, overpopulation, etc. But what they miss entirely, is a big truth all of us as Urantians know--and that is, that this could be achieved by very needed "biologic renovation of the racial stocks--the selective elimination of inferior human strains. Religion is powerless apart from the fulcrum of sound and normal mind resting securely on sound and normal heredity. This by a Melchizedek of Nebadon P. 793. There are many further quotes on this. In training our children, especially teenagers, these truths can be instilled so they will consider them when they are ready to marry and have a family. We can start with individuals. As Vern Grimsley says, "Only transformed individuals can make a transformed world." It's up to parents to start this training of their children.

The Chief of Seraphim, now stationed on URANTIA says, P. 941:4, "The advancing ideals of family life are leading to the concept that bringing a child into the world, instead of conferring certain parental rights, entails the supreme responsibility of human existence." He goes on further to say, "Any attempt to shift parental responsibility to state or church will prove suicidal to the welfare and advancement of civilization." As we know this is being tried in certain countries and we can guess the results. In my opinion, it is also very serious that such a huge number of very small children in our own country are being kept in state and Federally sponsored nurseries--and they are there for very long hours, sometimes all of the daylight hours. I consider this to be one of the most serious problems in our country today for reasons which will be brought out later in this paper.

The team of a mother and father is always needed to assure a well-balanced child. On P. 939 we read: "These two variations of humankind (men and women) continue to intrigue, stimulate, encourage and assist each other; always will they be mutually dependent on cooperation in the solution of perplexing universe problems. While the sexes can never hope to understand each other (isn't that great? Always that mystery!) they are effectively complementary. This is why all children need to be trained by both parents in the home. And I believe all schools should have a couple (man and woman) to teach each class. The Chief of Seraphim now stationed on URANTIA points up the many advantages of the man-woman role in rearing a family

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and says: "The family is man's greatest purely human achievement." P. 939. She also states: "Women seem to have more intuition than men, but they also appear to be somewhat less logical"---m-m-m. That's a brave seraphim, the women's lib might waylav her. However, she hastily recoups with this great statement--listen carefully girls: "Woman has always been the moral standard bearer and the spiritual leader of mankind. The hand that rocks the cradle still fraternizes with destiny." P. 938. What a challenge girls--so it's up to you to lead the way in bringing about this greatly needed spiritual renaissance! I submit that this may start right in the homes with this newer method of training children.

I would like to conclude this section on parenthood with Jesus' superb words: "Marriage is honorable and is to be desired by all men . . . and it is the divine will that men and women should find their highest service and consequent joy in the establishment of homes for the reception and training of children, in the creation of whom, these parents become co-partners with the Makers of heaven and earth." P. 1839.

III. THE FAMILY AND HOME

It is in this setting of the Home and Family, that children will really be reached with the Urantian Teachings. As this will be an entirely new approach in the vast majority of Urantian families, it is apparent that training courses for marriage and family are needed. As some very sincere and dedicated Urantian parents have pointed out, this will require a revolutionary change in life-style to really organize the home to teach and live with the children according to the URANTIA Book. The pressures of modern life and earning a living have taken far too much time for parents to properly devote the needed time to their children. And here is where the time and care really should go.

Our major thrust will be toward the 2-5 year olds in all of our training materials, because all current research and the URANTIA Book indicate that those years are by far the most important years. Dr. Benjamin Bloom in his famous studies in Europe as well as in this country points up the following (also see bibliography):

"Not only are the first five years crucial for a child's emotional growth; they are critical for his intellectual growth as well. Children develop approximately 50% of their intelligence by age 4, another 30% by age 8, and the remaining 20% by age 17. Many authorities corroborated these studies and they are used freely by Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson in his newest book, "How to Father" 1974.

Compare those statistics with these comments made by Jesus to the truth-hungry lad, John Mark, the day they spent together in the hills: "Your whole afterlife will be more happy and dependable because you spent your first eight years in a normal, and well-regulated home. You possess a strong and well-knit character because you grew up in a home where love prevailed and wisdom reigned. Such a childhood training produces a type of loyalty which assures me that you will go through with the course you have begun." 1922:3

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"The Master went on to explain to John how a child is wholly dependent on his parents and the associated home life, for all his early concepts of everything intellectual, social and moral, and even spiritual since the family represents to the young child all that he can first know of either human or divine relationships . . . A human being's entire afterlife is enormously influenced by what happens during those first few years."

It is for those very important reasons that we are slanting all of our first children's planning toward very early childhood--birth to five years--or pre-school.

We know from the laws of learning in children and from the URANTIA Book that children learn more easily and retain longer in a setting where love and acceptance prevail. So this is the setting for which parents are responsible. This setting builds a child's self-concept and gives him the security so essential to his first learning. And that is one of the priorities in how to reach children with the Urantian teachings.

We Urantians know that religion, not only should be taught in the home, but should be an integral part of the home life. Let's consider what is currently being done for children in our own country. Many parents depend upon the church of their childhood or upon the neighborhood church for all of the religious training of their children, which adds up to about one hour a week. Even that is better than the majority of the children of this country have. Further, they do not hear anything about religion at school any more as this subject is forbidden in most places so a large majority of children really know nothing about the Father in heaven. This is dire tragedy. It's no wonder that we read on P. 909, "Modern civilization is at a standstill in spiritual development and the safeguarding of the home institution."

It is incumbent upon us, who have this great guide, the URANTIA Book, to use it, to live it, to train our children to live it. Because--listen to this great news on P. 913:2 --"While religious, social and educational institutions are all essential to the survival of cultural civilizations, the family is the master civilizer. A child learns most of the essentials of life from his family and the neighbors." There it is--the spark that ignites the next spiritual renaissance will be the improvement of the home and family through using this great guide the URANTIA Book to upstep the religious training and spiritual life of the children. P. 1089:6 we read: "Together with children, religion is the great unifier of family life, provided it is a living and growing faith. Family life cannot be had without children."

"The family occupied the very center of Jesus' philosophy of life--here and hereafter. He based his teachings about God on the family, while he sought to correct the Jewish tendency to overhonor ancestors. He exalted family life as the highest human duty." P. 1581

* The greatest threat that has ever been leveled against family life, the home, is the present widely spread pleasure mania. This overindulgence of selfish desires for pleasure with no thought of giving up and curtailing for the sake of the family and home, this is so serious that it may cause the collapse of man's supreme evolutionary acquirement the home--which is civilization's only hope of survival. P. 942 and 943.

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The children are so especially important to the whole universe plan that they even have special angels. who are assigned to guard them. P. 1241. These angels and the angels of the home are now working very actively on this planet to aid the children and the home. It is comforting to know that they will be aiding us in all efforts we make to upstep the family life and the spiritual training of the children.

Jesus talked to the group in Peter's garden that evening after they had returned from Mount Herman. He called one of Peter's children over to them and said: "Whosoever causes one of these little ones to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea. . . Most of all, see that you despise not one of these little ones, for their angels do always behold the faces of heavenly hosts." P. 1761

It is in the exalted environment of the home and family--a true family, that children can best be reached by the Urantian teachings. In fact, there is no other way that children can be effectively given their religious training except by two parents and in the home. With the help of these special angels and superhuman personalities and our many divine helps as well as this great guide, the URANTIA Book, young families should be able to easily swing right into a great new program which will upstep, strengthen and improve the whole course of civilization for on P. 913:2, we are told: "The family is the master civilizer."

IV. THE UNIQUE ROLE OF THE EARTHLY FATHER

The earthly father role--is described in innumerable quotations throughout the Book. I have placed a comprehensive group of them in the Annotated Bibliography but it can never be an exhaustive list as there are so many others which can be deduced by their connotation.

On P. 933:6 we read: "The stupendous change from the mother-family to the father-family is one of the most radical and complete right-about-face adjustments ever executed by the human race. This change led at once to greater social expression and increased family adventure."

The great and unique role of the earthly father is pointed up on P. 1923: "As long as we teach our children to pray, "Our Father who is in heaven," a tremendous responsibility rests on all earthly fathers so to live and order their homes, that the word father becomes worthily enshrined in the minds and hearts of all growing children." P. 1923

"It is our sincere belief that the gospel of Jesus' teaching, founded as it is on the father-child relationship, can hardly enjoy a world-wide acceptance until such a time as the home life of the modern civilized peoples embraces more of love and more of wisdom." P. 1922:5

Here are two answers about developing more love and more wisdom to improve our present day homes. Among other things Jesus said: P. 1597: "And now have I come in the flesh to reveal the Father in new glory and to show forth his love and mercy to

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all men on all worlds. As this gospel of the kingdom shall spread over all the world with its message of good cheer and good will to all men, there will grow up improved and better relations among all families of all nations. As time passes, fathers and their children will love each other more, and thus will be brought about a better understanding of the love of the Father in heaven for his children on earth." P. 1597:2 And a study of Jesus' life as an earthly father will develop more love and understanding of our heavenly Father.

In this year of 1974, the first book that we know about, specifically geared to the father-role, was published. (show book) This very popular and well-documented book is entitled: "How to Father", by Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson, a nationally renowned psychologist and author. It stresses the need for love and nurturing attitudes by the father toward his baby and how this builds a desirable self-concept in the new child. So much of this book agrees with the philosophy in the URANTIA Book about the importance of the father role very early in life. In the appendix, Dodson has a marvelous and practical "Whiz-Bang, Super-Economy Father's Survival Kit".

Of all the many examples given of the supreme importance of experiencing the earthly-father role, none seems more significant to me than the astounding fact that our own creator of the local universe, Michael of Nebadon, served as an earthly father here, more than half of his entire bestowal career on our planet. On P. 1389, we are told: "For almost a score of years, until he began his public ministry, no father could have loved and nurtured his daughter more affectionately and faithfully than Jesus cared for little Ruth. And he was an equally good father to all the other members of his family." On P. 1419:1, "He continued right up to the event of his baptism, to contribute to the family finances and to take a keen, personal interest in the spiritual welfare of every one of his brothers and sisters. And always was he ready to do everything humanly possible for the comfort and happiness of his widowed mother."

View this lad, who at 14, cheerfully shouldered the responsibility of caring for seven brothers and sisters and one more yet to be born, and a widowed mother. Listen to this P. 1389:2 "Jesus rightly reasoned that the watchcare of his earthly family, must take precedence of all duties; that the support of his family must become his first obligation." P. 1389-1390. Later we read: "He lived on, day by day, doing well the present duty, and faithfully discharging the immediate responsibilities of his station in life. Jesus' life is the everlasting comfort of all disappointed idealists." 1393:1

What a superb guide we have for our own lives, where we are and as we are. If we do the work day by day to fulfill our immediate responsibilities as he did, we can gain courage and faith by knowing that this is what the Master chose to do. "The rigorous experience of supporting his family was a sure safeguard against his having overmuch time for idle meditation or the indulgence of mystic tendencies." P. 1393:6

How fortunate all of you young earthly fathers are, to have as a beacon light, the superb life of this wise and loving earthly father, Joshua Ben Joseph. It is heart warming and awe-inspiring to consider that this man who came to show us the heavenly Father, also showed us by living, the ideal life of the earthly father. And one of the key words of both is love.

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I'd like to conclude this section on the Earthly Father with a quotation and ask you to consider that this magnificent revelation, this encyclopedia of information, this greatest of all spiritual guides, the URANTIA Book, ends on P. 2097 with the Father concept: "The Father is living love, and this life of the Father is in his Sons. And the spirit of the Father is in his Sons' sons--mortal men. When all is said and done, the Father idea is still the highest human concept of God."

V. HOW CHILDREN LEARN

A. Seven Methods of Motivating Learning

1. Environment. A warm, receptive environment is the first requisite for learning. From birth, the child needs to feel loved, nurtured, cuddled and talked to, sung to, by both parents and in every possible way led to build a good self-concept. If the child trusts his environment, he feels self-confident and can learn more easily. Research indicates that whether a child will reach his maximum potential, intelligence, depends to a great extent on how much sensory and intellectual stimulation he gets in the first five years of life. This is all necessary groundwork for teaching the child the Urantian concepts. The actual first teachings will be an integral part of the scene at ages 3, 4 and 5. And again, love is the essential ingredient for learning in the home.

Jesus knew and practiced love in the home. He refused to join the Zealots even when the wealthy Jew, Isaac, came forward and offered to support Jesus' family. Jesus maintained, "that his first duty was to his earthly family, that a widowed mother and eight brothers and sisters needed something more than mere money could buy." P. 139⁸. Then he made his never-to-be-forgotten statement that "Money cannot love." ~~P. 139~~. "Love is the highest motivation that man may utilize in his universe ascent." P. 2096⁶

2. Recognition. Another strong motivation for learning is recognition and reward for effort and accomplishment. This method was opposed in schools for many, many years and still is frowned upon because the theory is expressed that this would harm the children who did not win the stars, or prizes for completing tasks or getting the highest grades. Recently in Santa Monica, a prominent educator began using gumdrops for completed tasks with such success that other districts are beginning to use them and he was dubbed "The Gumdrop King".

However, in the URANTIA Book, honors and recognition are given unstintingly all along the inward ascension trail. We read, P. 231:3--"Recognition indicative of effort and achievement is granted to all, ascending mortal, or ambitious cherubim, who complete these adventures in wisdom and truth." On the other hand, the Book points up the importance of learning to fail or lose gracefully. There are many beautiful quotations about the art of failure. One is on P. 1779⁵ "But life will become a burden of existence unless you learn how to fail gracefully. There is an art in defeat which noble souls always acquire: you must know how to lose cheerfully." This must be taught at home in early years.

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This important learning seems to have escaped the public school systems in general. I searched through all of the available publications and teaching tools to try to find something that taught this important skill, but could find only one company in the United States that had an excellent lesson: Science Research Associates, or SRA, who put out a Reading Box which has an exciting lesson entitled: "Mistakes can be helpful if you learn from them." Much stronger youngsters result from learning how to be a good sport about losing and this isn't hard to learn if they have a good self-concept to begin with and feel secure within themselves.

3. Repetition for Reinforcement. This important learning principle is the immediate reinforcement of new learning. There are many ways to do this but on the Morontia Worlds and on through the long ascension adventure, they teach those just behind them. P. 342:7. Morontia ascenders studied and worked on the worlds of the local universe, so spirit ascenders continue to master new worlds, while they practice at giving out to others that which they imbibed at the experiential founts of wisdom." Parents can use this principle easily by having the older children teach the younger, or often when there is just one child, he can role play by teaching to a doll or imaginary younger child. They often play this way even without much encouragement. However, it's wise to guide this procedure.

This method was formerly used in the early one-room schools of America where the older ones taught the younger. It is currently being reactivated all over the nation in the big brother and sister programs of tutoring. The same method was used in the Garden and in Jesus' home. It is interesting that Jesus was teaching James the alphabet when James was 4 years old. P. 1364

4. Socialization. The URANTIA Teachings point up the great value of socialization as a learning and educational tool, not only for youngsters but for all ages in all of the universe. Jesus' very wise parents utilized this method when Jesus was only 2-3 years old, when he was allowed to play in the garden and home at Alexandria with eight other children about his age. This provided the invaluable experience of adjusting to others, P. 1355:2, and also prevented him from being self-conscious and somewhat self-centered.

We are told further, P. 1363:1, "Jesus received his moral training and his spiritual culture chiefly in his own home . . . But his real education--that equipment of mind and heart for the actual test of grappling with the difficult problems of life--he obtained by mingling with his fellow men." . . . "He made contact with human nature from the four quarters of the earth as men from many lands passed in and out of his father's repair shop. When he grew older, he mingled freely with the caravans as they tarried near the spring for rest and refreshment. Being a fluent speaker of Greek, he had little trouble in conversing with the majority of the caravan travelers and conductors." P. 1362 . . . "Jesus was highly educated in that he thoroughly understood men and devotedly loved them." P. 1363:1

In presenting the many and varied lessons of the URANTIA Book to children, we can consider the following in planning their social experiences: "While your religion is a matter of personal experience, it is most important that you should be exposed to the

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knowledge of a vast number of other religious experiences (the diverse interpretations of other and diverse mortals), to the end that you may prevent your religious life from becoming egocentric, circumscribed, selfish and unsocial. P. 1130:3

One of the advantages of having several children in a home is that they are able to contribute so much to their mutual training. They have the advantages of some socialization within the family circle. On the Spheres of Light and Life there are usually five children in a family and the childbearing period is not prolonged so that the children are close together in ages. All of these children are magnificently trained by the competitive system of keen striving. On the Mansion Worlds, the children are also grouped in families of five--two years apart. P. 532-533. On a Neighboring Planet, the average number of children in each family is also five. P. 811. This pattern of five appears to be common in the universe. However, on a planet such as ours where we have not even started selective elimination of inferior human strains I note that there is no mention of family size, only that it is wise to have ^{socialization with} several, not only because this provides a necessary spiritual training ground for parents, but-- "Ethical awareness is simply the recognition by any individual of the rights inherent in the existence of any and all other individuals. Socialization is the only way to practically develop true ethics in children. Every new person a child meets adds one more level of ethics to be recognized and complied with. And this is true all through the inward ascending career of mortals. And your child has something from his own personality and experience to impart to every child he plays with so that everyone is thus made forever different and better for having associated with one another." P. 300:4

Any parent tending to shield his child from social contacts should carefully review "The Cause of Judas's Downfall". P. 2055. In part it reads: "As we look back upon this tragedy, we conceive that Judas went wrong primarily because he was very markedly an isolated personality, a personality shut in and away from ordinary social contacts. He persistently refused to confide in, or freely fraternize with his fellow apostles. But his being an isolated type of personality would not, in and of itself, have wrought such mischief for Judas if it had not been that he also failed to increase in love and grow in spiritual grace. And then, as if to make a bad matter worse, he persistently harbored grudges and fostered such psychologic enemies as revenge and the generalized craving to "get even" with somebody for all his disappointments." P.205!

It is the parent's responsibility, and a serious one it is, to foster habits of confiding in parents or trusted friends, and to help the child increasingly grow in love. When the child is taught "The Believer's Prayer", for example the one line, "Forgive us every one our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors", can be woven into dozens of lessons and stories to really instill in the child the deep importance of not holding grudges nor ever seeking revenge.

Another cause of Judas's downfall is the fact that, P. 2056: "As a child, life had been too easy for him. He bitterly resented thwarting. He always expected to win; he was a poor loser. Wise parents will carefully train a child so that these faults will not have a chance to appear.

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5. Competition. Another motivator and a very strong one is competition. For a long time some educators have been opposed to this technique in a classroom because they feared what it would do to those who did not win. It was argued that this would lower a child's self-esteem and self-concept. However, we note that competition is used throughout the universe. But the art of being a good loser is also taught and learned there while we have almost missed teaching that entirely in our present school curriculum.

In the Annotated Bibliography are many references to examples of the use of competition. One is given, P. 835:6: "The entire purpose of the western school system of the Garden was socialization. The forenoon periods of recess were devoted to practical horticulture and agriculture, the afternoons to competitive play." On the Spheres of Light and Life, the children are "magnificently trained by the competitive systems of keen striving in advanced domains and divisions of diverse achievement in the mastery of truth, beauty and goodness." P. 625:7

6. Learning by Doing. This method of actually doing as one learns is used throughout the universe scheme of education. We know from the laws of learning that the child really learns only when he is participating or "doing". On P. 394:6, we read that "Ascending pilgrims pursue studies in practical schools of applied knowledge-- actual training in really doing things they are being taught."

The quest for knowledge and wisdom is the 4th stage of progressive civilization. Every child is provided an opportunity to learn by doing; education is the watchword of these ages." P. 577:#4

Jesus learned by actually doing as a young child. He helped his mother with the various tasks around the house such as caring for the vines and flowers and the ~~feeding~~^{feeding} grinding of the grain in the mill. Later on he worked with Joseph in carpentry and then with his uncles who were farmers and fishermen.

7. Play and Humor. The need for play and humor is emphasized all the way through the universe ascension activities. Children can be taught methods of relaxation and humor from very early years. If work is interspersed with play at intervals, and humor is cultivated in the home, work will be more effective and children will easily adopt these patterns of living. Children delight in humor and it is sad that so few of our present day classrooms really cultivate humor. But note the URANTIA Teachings P. 549:4-- "The need for relaxation and diversion of humor is greatest in those orders of ascendant beings who are subjected to sustained stress in their upward struggles." Also, the higher the mortal species, the greater the stress and the greater the capacity for humor as well as the necessity for it." P. 549:5

One of the big responsibilities of the parents is to help the child develop a good and balanced self-concept. This effort starts at birth and continues. In order to guard against any over-development of the ego by the child, the parent has an invaluable aid in teaching him to view and study the universe--the sky, the stars and moon. At first it's just the development of awe and wonder. An archangel of Nebadon tells us, P. 549, "When we are tempted to magnify our self-importance, if we stop to contemplate the

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infinity of the greatness and grandeur of our Makers, our own self-glorification becomes sublimely ridiculous, even verging on the humorous. One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego." P. 549

VI. DISCIPLINE

The term discipline stems from the word disciple, meaning "to teach". The teaching of self-control, of giving up one's personal wishes for the good of the group, if begun very early and consistently maintained, is comparatively simple.

"Jesus began wise discipline with his brothers and sisters at such an early age, that little or no punishment was ever required to secure their prompt and whole-hearted obedience." When you consider that when Jesus became head of the family after Joseph's death, there were four children under six years of age when little Ruth was born. He really started with these children during their most formative years. He had some problems with Jude and used the Family Council plan to resolve those. He handled all of this procedure so very wisely that even Jude assented to their joint plan. P. 1401. This is the ideal way if we can manage it.

This Family Council method is recommended so many places in the URANTIA Book and also in many current volumes of child training. All agree on the great importance of starting early training and maintaining it consistently.

The Chief of Seraphim tells us, P. 941:7: "Human society would be greatly improved if the civilized races would more generally return to the family-council practices of the Andites. They did not maintain patriarchal or autocratic form of family government. They were very brotherly and associative, freely and frankly discussing every proposal and regulation of a family nature. They were ideally fraternal in all their family government. In an ideal family, filial and parental affection are both augmented by fraternal devotion. Family life is the progenitor of true morality, the ancestor of the consciousness of loyalty to duty."

Wise and orderly leadership must be provided by the parents and it must be consistent just as it is in the universe. This avoids laxness which leads to discipline problems. Our universe is not permissive nor lax in any way. Listen to this: "The divine plan of education provides for the intimate association of work and instruction. We teach you how best to ~~do~~ ^{execute} the things we command you to do." P. 412:5. Not very permissive is it?

This leads up to another strong point in preventing discipline problems and that is a powerful, four letter word not used frequently--and that is W-O-R-K. "Jesus quoted with approval on this afternoon an old Hebrew saying: 'He who will not work shall not eat.'" P. 1579:4. Jesus carried out this policy in rearing the eight children, just as he was taught to work as a very young child by Mary and Joseph. On P. 1394, we read: "Even the little tots had their regular duties to perform in the well-regulated scheme of management which characterized the home life of this Nazareth family."

Duties and tasks around the home and garden can be assigned to very little children and if brought up this way, it is a matter of course. This prevents many, many discipline problems as it is well known that idle children and idle youth are the ones who get into mischief.

Jesus used the positive methods of child training--the positive injunction rather than the negative. The psychology of the child is naturally positive, not negative and sad to relate he only learns the negative attitude. In the absence of wrong teaching the child moves positively, in the emergence of moral consciousness, toward moral righteousness and social ministry, rather than negatively away from sin and guilt. ~~██████████~~

Jesus took a firm stand against overindulgent and lax parental control in many of his teachings. "He warned the apostles against the foolishness of the child of God, who presumes upon his Father's love. He declared that the heavenly Father is not a lax, loose or foolishly indulgent parent who is ever ready to condone sin and forgive recklessness. He cautioned his hearers not mistakenly to apply his illustrations of father and son so as to make it appear that God is like some over-indulgent and unwise parents who conspire with the foolish of the earth to encompass the moral undoing of their thoughtless children and who thereby certainly and directly contributing to the delinquency and early demoralization of their own offspring." P. 1653:3

But love, wise and kind love, is always the greatest preventive of disciplinary measures.

Jesus also said: "Farseeing fathers also make provisions for the necessary discipline, guidance, correction and sometimes restraint of their young and immature offspring." P. 1604:#4. On P. 941:1, we are told the importance of permitting children to take the natural consequences of any foolish act whenever it is possible. If the child is continually late and not ready when the family is preparing for a family outing, simply arrange for him not to go for a time or two. A Brilliant Evening Star says: "It is civilization's protection of the child from natural consequences of foolish conduct that contributes so much to modern insubordination." P. 941:1

VII. RELIGIOUS TRAINING

I placed six areas of home training ahead of this #7 entitled, Religious Training, because all areas of the home life of a little child are inextricably woven into the pattern of religious training of the child. On a Neighboring Planet it is expressed: "Religious training is deemed to be the exclusive privilege of parents, religion being looked upon as an integral part of home life. . . Religion is the striving to know God and to manifest love for one's fellows." You can't separate that, it must be a way of life, and the parents are continually involved in training children. P. 811

On P. 1094:5, a Melchizedek of Nebadon tells us: "Give every developing child a chance to grow his own religious experience; do not force a ready made adult experience upon him." This implies that the parent must provide a rich environment conducive to religious growth. It probably would never come from a weekly lesson in a nearby Sunday School, or even a weekly lesson at home. This same author goes on to say:

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"Love supplies the soil for religious growth" also, "The soil essential for religious growth presupposes a progressive life of self-realization, the coordination of natural propensities, the exercise of curiosity, the enjoyment of reasonable adventure, the experiencing of feelings of satisfaction, the functioning of the fear stimulus of attention and awareness, the wonder lure, a normal feeling of smallness, humility. Growth is also predicated on the discovery of selfhood (self-concept) accompanied by self-criticism (conscience).¹⁾ All of this must be planned and guided by the parent, from birth on when parents start to build that self-concept in the child by love and attention. Just as a plant grows from seed when the proper rich soil, water and sunlight are provided, so will the child develop his own religious experience under the correct stimuli provided by the parents." P. 1094.6

Prayer:

How shall we teach our children to pray? Again we are admonished to study the life of Jesus and how he lived it and his teachings. As a child, Jesus always insisted on talking to his heavenly Father much as he would talk to Joseph, his earthly father. He would say his prayers as he had been taught, after which he would have "just a little talk with my Father in heaven." P. 1360

This method of "having a little talk with my Father in heaven" is very easy to teach small youngsters. It is only a step from their own play habits of carrying on a conversation with an unseen playmate. Often they will converse as with an alter ego. This is very real to small children. I have noted my little granddaughter sitting at a small table with dishes on each side and while she thought I was busy writing, she would carry on endless conversations with this imaginary person across the table. She would pour his tea, pass food and live in a joyous little world of her own. This is shown also in evolution of prayer, P. 996-997. This is the strategic time to teach the child to talk to her Father in heaven. Later, her idea of the Father will grow and develop but the habit will be instilled and encouraged by parents. P. 996-997.

I tried to instill this method in my own children at the table at meal time as this was one of the few times you gather the family together in a busy world. This was family council time and prayer time. Recently my little granddaughter was visiting and I used this method of talking to the Father when returning thanks before the meal. She was so intrigued with the idea that she wanted to talk to Him too. She got completely carried away and talked on and on and on, while the food was getting cold and we were nearly starving.

During Jesus' fifteenth year as he was serving faithfully as a father to five brothers and three sisters, he formulated the "Family Prayer". They had many forms of praise and several formal prayers in this Jewish household. Jesus tried to teach them to say individual prayers but they could not grasp the thought and would invariably fall back on the memorized prayer forms. It was in this effort to encourage them to express themselves individually that Jesus would suggest a line for them to finish, and without intending to, he formulated the "Family Prayer". This later became the "Lord's Prayer" and now is called in the URANTIA Book, "The Believer's Prayer". P. 1389. One evening late in October, he sat down by the little squat lamp on the low stone table and, on a smooth piece of cedar board about 18 inches square, with a piece of charcoal

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he wrote out the prayer which became from that time on the standard family petition.
(Show picture)

It is suggested that we continue to teach children to formulate their own prayers because children in this 20th century have had much more opportunity for self-expression than in the more restricted Jewish homes of Jesus' time.

After Jesus gave his first sermon in the synagogue, he and "James climbed the Nazareth hill and when they returned home, Jesus wrote out the Ten Commandments in Greek on two smooth boards in charcoal. Subsequently Martha colored and decorated them and for years they hung on the wall over James' small workbench." P. 1392. This is something the children can help with and if this is done at home in a family project, it will prove very meaningful to the whole family.

"Together with children, religion is the great unifier of family life, provided it is a living and growing faith. . . During the early decades of the 20th century, family life 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." P. 1089. However, now that these Urantian teachings are available, those who have them can begin to establish religious loyalties to these new meanings and values, especially with children.

"Religious meanings progress in self-consciousness when the child transfers his ideas of omnipotence from his parents to God. And the entire religious experience of such a child is largely dependent upon whether fear or love has dominated the parent-child relationship." P. 1013:2. One great upstepping should occur on this planet in the religious life of this present group of young children whose parents are truly rearing them in the environment and atmosphere so clearly delineated in the URANTIA Book.

At Jericho, the Master spoke further on the environment for the religious training of children. Jesus impressed upon his apostles the great value of beauty as an influence leading to the urge to worship, especially with children. The Master, by precept and example, taught the value of worshiping the Creator in the midst of the natural surroundings of creation. He preferred to commune with the heavenly Father amidst the trees and among the lowly creatures of the natural world. He rejoiced to contemplate the Father through the inspiring spectacle of the starry realms of the Creator Sons. P. 1840:5

"The child should be introduced to worship in nature's outdoors and later accompany his parents to public houses of religious assembly which are at least as materially attractive and artistically beautiful as the home in which he is daily domiciled." P. 1840:6

At Jericho, the Master said: "Suffer little children to come to me; forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Verily, verily, I say to you, whosoever receives not the kingdom of God, as a little child, shall hardly enter therein to grow up to the full stature of spiritual manhood. . . . And then the Master received all of the children, laying his hands on them, while he spoke words of courage and hope to the

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mothers. . . The onlooking intelligences of Nebadon beheld the children of Jericho playing with the Creator of a universe. . . . and so does the sacred oftentimes appear to be the common. P. 1840:1, 2, 3

Jesus said: "Many of your brethren have minds which accept the theory of God, while they spiritually fail to feel the presence of God. And that is just the reason why I have so often taught you that the kingdom of heaven can best be realized by acquiring the spiritual attitude of a sincere child. It is not the mental immaturity of the child that I commend to you, but rather the spiritual simplicity of such an easy-believing and trusting little one." P. 1733. And you young people who have yet to experience the supreme joy of parenthood, will learn as much from the sincere trusting attitude of the little child as he will learn from you. You will also develop and grow in spiritual qualities as you provide the continuous--service ministry necessary to build a true family. Together you will all increasingly grow in the ability to feel the presence of God. Trusting children gain this so readily.

It is startlingly clear that there will have to be a revolutionary change in family life when we, as true Urantians, actually organize our homes according to the Urantian teachings. When we make these teachings an integral part of the home life, as was the case in the home Jesus organized for nearly a score of years, then the two parents can more easily reach the children. We recommend that training guides and courses be prepared to help young people enter marriage and family life with more security from the Urantian teachings.

In closing, I repeat the quotation given earlier, P. 909: "Modern civilization is at a standstill in spiritual development and the safeguarding of the home institution!" What a challenge they give to us with that statement! It is now in our hands--that with this great guide, the URANTIA Book, we reorganize the home and build a solid religious program. That goal of upstepping the spiritual development and the home is worth every effort and every sacrifice. On P. 913, we learned that--"The family is the master civilizer," and there is power inherent in this to change the whole course of civilization! It is up to us!

REACHING CHILDREN WITH THE URANTIAN TEACHINGS

Orientation for Parents

I. Introduction

- URANTIAN Teachings: Taught by two parents in the home. P. 811, 835, 1363
Continual process, integral part of family life, vary methods and materials to fill needs of differing ability and interest levels of children.
- First Priority: Need Parents' Guide and Training Courses for Parents. P. 811:2
- Next Needs: Supplementary materials for pre-school children, ages 2-5, using multi-media (music, art, to help build concepts and vocabulary).

II. The Essential Experience of Parenthood - P. 516:3, 939:7, 1839:5

Parenthood entails the supreme responsibility of human existence. P. 941:3
New mores are emerging among which is the new role of religion - the teaching that parental experience is essential, the idea of procreating cosmic citizens... giving sons to the Father. P. 939:7

III. The Family and Home

Jesus exalted family life as the highest, human duty. P. 1581:1
The family is man's greatest, purely human achievement. P. 939:3
The home is the crowning glory of the whole, long and arduous, evolutionary struggle. P. 913:1

IV. The Unique Role of the Earthly Father

The child is "wholly dependent on his earthly father for his first ideas of his heavenly Father." P. 1922:4, 5

The great significance of Jesus' bestowal life here, in which nearly one-half the time was served as an earthly father to eight brothers and sisters - "almost a score of years." 1389:5 By comparison, four were served with the apostles and he lived about fourteen years as a boy in his home.

V. How Children Learn

Crucial years from birth to five - Bloom's studies and others, indicate 50% of intelligence by age 5 and 80% by age 8. See P. 1922:3, 4
Seven types of motivation for learning used throughout universe career (next page)

VI. Discipline - (from term disciple - meaning to teach)

Start discipline early (Jesus' method, P. 1401:4)
Help develop self-control in children (first in self)
Family council P. 941:7
Work - Jesus advocated keeping busy. Children have small duties early. P. 1822:3

VII. Religious Training

Province of home and duty of parents - P. 811:5, 835:6, 1922:4, 5 + 1923
"Integral part of home life." P. 811:5 (Neighboring Planet)

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