

TOPIC: WORSHIPFUL PROBLEM SOLVING

*Bill Bartley*

TITLE: "AN OFFER TOO GOOD TO REFUSE"

JULY 3, 1990 AT 3:30 - 4:30

Several months ago, while talking to God, I mentioned that if I was going to be doing workshops and seminars in Business Ethics, it would be nice to have some experience speaking in front of large groups of people. You know, not one or two or even twelve people, but a sea of faces out there in front. At the end of prayer time that day, I mentioned that Urantians are friendly people and would make a good audience on which to practice, and closed prayer with the question, "How do you get on the Urantia speaking circuit?"

When Marta Elders called two months later and asked if I'd speak at Snowmass my immediate response was to forget Marta on the other end of the phone and ask God, "How'd you do this?" I found it incredible then and still do now, that I was being given this wonderful opportunity to share and to learn. When I finally remembered that Marta was still on the phone and turned my attention back to her, she was saying over and over "I'm sure you can do it. I've heard you at USCC and this would be a little larger, but you can do it." I don't think to this day that I have convinced Marta that I never questioned my ability to do this speech, my mind was just otherwise occupied at a critical moment.

Have you ever tried to figure out someone's reaction when you can't see their body language, and they aren't saying anything?

Marta gave me the topic and some other details of the presentation and we agreed to talk later so I could think it over and work out some details concerning my schedule. Obviously I accepted the offer and Marta sent me more information. She hadn't mentioned that I would have to title and describe this speech that was not to be written until the end of the graduate school term in May, several months away.

Have you ever thought about how you do something? I sat there looking over this sheet of paper and wondered -

How do I solve a problem?

How does my relationship with God effect my solutions?

How do I weigh and balance the circumstances?

What do I look at?

What might I have to say about problem solving and the

URANTIA Book?

Does my method, if I have one, coincide with the

URANTIA Book?

Suddenly I realized that I was getting out in front of the problem, and what I needed to do was to back up and consider what happened the instant I first realized there was a



situation that I had to deal with. I sat there puzzled for a few minutes, then decided that I would ask God, cause I was stymied. I didn't know how I dealt with problems.

I suddenly stopped and laughed because I realized that I had reverted to my 'method' without thinking about it. I would ask God. That's what I do - I have finally learned to ask for help. It makes sense and we are told to do that in the URANTIA Book, it refers to it as -  
(1838:3)

**"THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE: ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE;  
SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND." (1838:3)**

It is natural for me to ask. I am very lucky for my mother nurtured my curiosity. She taught me that questions were okay; and except for once, she always responded with a positive action such as, "Let's go see what the encyclopedia (or dictionary) says about that." Or "Why don't we go to the library and see if they have some books on that subject."

The one exception I mentioned was on a hot, muggy, August afternoon in northwest Ohio. I was about 8 or 9, and standing at my Mother's elbow asking questions. She was canning something from the garden and August in Ohio is like a steam bath; the temperature normally is over 100 degrees and the humidity would be over 100 also if it could. My Mother was in a cotton dress and knowing my practical Mother there probably wasn't much on under the dress. I don't

remember the topic of my questions, but I can still see my Mother suddenly turn to me and say, "Is WHY the only word you know?" Age has made me realize that there is a time and place for everything. Canning season is not the time to harass someone with a barrage of questions.

This example stands out because it is the only time she didn't respond to my questions in a positive manner. My Mother encouraged my curiosity; she taught me to ask questions and then how to go seeking an answer. It was very natural to apply this same technique in my relationship with the Father. When I have a question of God I ASK. (This was not automatic, it took time and experience for a shy young girl to approach God in this casual a manner.) Imagine how pleased I was when I learned that the URANTIA Book speaks so strongly and positively of asking and curiosity. On page 160 it says:

**"CURIOSITY - THE SPIRIT OF INVESTIGATION, THE URGE OF DISCOVERY, AND THE DRIVE OF EXPLORATION - IS A PART OF THE INBORN AND DIVINE ENDOWMENT OF EVOLUTIONARY SPACE CREATURES." (160:1)**

I challenge all whose lives touch a child to always remember that curiosity is a sacred thing - it is a divine endowment. (159:3)

**"NOT UNTIL YOU TRAVERSE THE LAST OF HAVONA CIRCUITS AND VISIT THE LAST OF THE HAVONA WORLDS, WILL THE TONIC OF**



ADVENTURE AND THE STIMULUS OF CURIOSITY DISAPPEAR FROM  
YOUR CAREER." (159:3)

It was this characteristic of asking questions that brought me to the URANTIA Book. I, like so many other readers, had reached a point of confusion and disbelief in the established religious institutions. I didn't even know whether to believe in God. There was a point when I asked God that all important question, "IF YOU ARE THERE, THEN HELP ME FIND YOU! I DON'T KNOW WHAT OR IF TO BELIEVE ANY MORE." What if my Mother had not nurtured my curiosity and taught me to ask questions? It was this habit of asking that turned me around and brought me on the journey that placed me here today.

However, I'm getting ahead of myself, for I want to talk about the topic a minute. 'Worshipful problem solving'. Two out of three words are fine, but I have a problem with the word 'problem', and personally prefer to use 'opportunity' or 'challenge'. The word 'problem' often carries a negative concept, at least it seems to; while 'opportunity' or 'challenge' imply there is something to obtain in the action, some goal towards which you are going. I like to consider problems to be opportunities because it gives a positive concept to situations that can sometimes be rather difficult. Attitude has a great deal to do with how you approach situations and it can effect the outcome.

Remember the book tells us,

(1125:2)

**"THE POSITIVE ALWAYS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OVER THE  
NEGATIVE." (1125:2)**

I personally consider 'problem, opportunity and challenge'  
to be interchangeable and ask you to keep in mind the dual  
concept for the word 'problem' - negative and positive.

Along with a positive attitude it helps to get beyond the  
emotions so we can objectively deal with the facts. We are  
told by the 'big blue book' that,

(1134:3)

**"THE MIND OF EVOLUTIONARY MAN IS EVER CONFRONTED WITH  
THE INTRICATE PROBLEM OF REFEREEING THE CONTEST BETWEEN  
THE NATURAL EXPANSION OF EMOTIONAL IMPULSES AND THE  
MORAL GROWTH OF UNSELFISH URGES PREDICATED ON SPIRITUAL  
INSIGHT - GENUINE RELIGIOUS REFLECTION." (1134:3)**

... 'refereeing between emotional impulses and moral growth.'  
This is an idea I can relate to, because my emotions often  
seem to be out ahead of my mind - just looking for trouble.  
Please keep in mind that the examples I'll be using here are  
times when I did it right. However, I am human and often  
err in my mortal journey to eternity, and frequently it  
involves my 'emotional impulses'.



Let's look at the words we are considering - worshipful, problem and solving. I love what the book has to say about worshipful, and there is no way I could give a better definition or visualization of it.

(1739:7)

"BELIEVERS MUST INCREASINGLY LEARN HOW TO STEP ASIDE FROM THE RUSH OF LIFE - ESCAPE THE HARASSMENTS OF MATERIAL EXISTENCE - WHILE THEY REFRESH THE SOUL, INSPIRE THE MIND, AND RENEW THE SPIRIT BY WORSHIPFUL COMMUNION." (1739:7)

What a wonderful concept that gives to worship - "escape the harassments of material existence." That's beautiful! When mortal life becomes too much, here's an instant get-away. We're not told to withdraw permanently, just step aside and be refreshed. What an offer.

The second word - problem - is a circumstance that differs from the norm, situations that take consideration to deal with. Problem is defined by Merriam-Webster as "a question raised for consideration or solution." Now this doesn't say it's a bad or traumatic situation, it's neither negative or positive, just something to consider. An interesting comment in 'the book' is that we actually need problems and adversity in our lives to give us growth.

**GROWTH NEEDS THE STIMULATION OF ADVERSITY (1097D);**

The last word is solving, dealing with, actuating a system that will deal with the circumstances. The book says, (2093:L) —

Personal, spiritual religious experience is an efficient solvent for most mortal difficulties,\*

(2093:L)

You deal with problems through your religious experience. I like that; each experience builds on the previous one, eventually giving a foundation of knowledge from which you can solve problems.

If you put these quotes together it makes problem solving circular. You have a problem, you pray, you solve, you grow, you have a problem, you pray, you solve, you grow, and on and on. However, I will talk more about that idea later.

Now let's discuss methods or techniques of solving problems. The book is specific about how to deal with problems. It repeatedly says to worship; over and over again you find the two subjects together. There is another quote similar to the one called the law of the universe, but it has more detail.

(1619:1)



"ASK AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN; SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND;  
KNOCK AND IT SHALL BE OPENED TO YOU. FOR EVERY ONE WHO  
ASKS RECEIVES; AND HE WHO SEEKS FINDS; AND TO HIM WHO  
KNOCKS THE DOOR OF SALVATION WILL BE OPENED." (1619:1)

How can it be more specific?

How can it be more loving?

Jesus clarifies this open invitation to ask and seek and  
knock, by saying that you should avoid praying for yourself  
or for material things. (1639:#9) He goes so far as to  
offer assistance by saying,

"IF ... YOU ARE EVER IN DOUBT AS TO WHAT YOU WOULD ASK  
OF THE FATHER, ASK IN MY NAME, AND I WILL PRESENT YOUR  
PETITION IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR REAL NEEDS AND DESIRES  
AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY FATHER'S WILL." (1639:5)

... 'in accordance with your real needs and desires.' There  
have been times in my life when I have been unable to pray  
and would just say Father. I could also say Jesus or  
Michael.

The last phrase 'in accordance with my Father's will' helps  
you to understand how to pray. For instance, it is the  
Father's will that we develop the potential that we have,  
(remember the ideal mortal career that the TA brought) I've

observed that when I ask for help, if the request involves characteristics of value, the response can be felt immediately. For instance, when in doubt if I ask for faith, or when fearful if I ask for understanding and knowledge, (fear often comes from the unknown), and when confused if I ask for wisdom, then I get this feeling of satisfaction; as though God is saying " Well done, child." These are things of values, things that help us grow. The book says, (999:8)

"DO NOT BE SO SLOTHFUL AS TO ASK GOD TO SOLVE YOUR DIFFICULTIES, BUT NEVER HESITATE TO ASK HIM FOR WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL STRENGTH TO GUIDE AND SUSTAIN YOU WHILE YOU YOURSELF RESOLUTELY AND COURAGEOUSLY ATTACK THE PROBLEMS AT HAND." (999:8)

This idea reminds me of the loving piece called "Footsteps in the Sand." You have to confront your own life and the problems it brings, but you never are alone.

Prayer is a daily event with most URANTIA Book readers that I know. I don't mean down on the knees with a lot of thee's and thou's; rather a conversation with your heavenly Dad, (remember Jesus called God Abba - Papa). A time of quiet reflection on the things that matter or a time set aside for personal growth and spiritual nurturing. For me it has been a growing awareness of the presence of God within. I have



known (it seems forever), that "something spiritual" happened to me when I was 5 or 6 years old. Afterwards God just seemed to be there if I needed him, someone to talk to and share with. I never really thought much about it - it was just part of my life. It didn't make me better or perfect, nor did I feel inclined to be anything other than who I was. I erred as often as anyone else.

The 'big blue book' has some wonderful, moving and inspirational passages about prayer. The book tells you how and when and why to pray. One of my favorites is:

(1002:5)

**"GENUINE PRAYER ADDS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH, MODIFIES ATTITUDES, AND YIELDS THAT SATISFACTION WHICH COMES FROM COMMUNION WITH DIVINITY ... A SPONTANEOUS OUTBURST OF GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS." (1002:5)**

It continues and defines prayer:

(1002:5)

**"PRAYER IS NOT A TECHNIQUE OF ESCAPE FROM CONFLICT BUT RATHER A STIMULUS TO GROWTH IN THE VERY FACE OF CONFLICT. PRAY ONLY FOR VALUES, NOT THINGS; FOR GROWTH, NOT FOR GRATIFICATION." (1002:5)**

Yet a third,,

(997:7)

"NO PRAYER CAN BE ETHICAL WHEN THE PETITIONER SEEKS FOR SELFISH ADVANTAGE OVER HIS FELLOWS. ALL ETHICAL PRAYER IS A STIMULUS TO ACTION OF SUPERSELF-ATTAINMENT."

(997:7)

Ethical prayer stimulates you to act in a manner that causes growth.

One of the most explicit comments about prayer is:

(1002:4)

**"WORDS ARE IRRELEVANT TO PRAYER." (1002:4)**

We are told many times that God knows our needs before we ask. Yet as mortal creatures - will creatures - it is necessary to ask God to be involved in our life, we must actually choose God with knowledge and intent. There was an occasion in my life when I called God's name - thankfully that's all that was necessary. I was driving my children home from a church pool party, and suddenly realized a car approaching from the opposite direction was angled in such a way that we were destined for a head-on-collision. The driver wasn't watching the road and was unaware of what he was doing. All I said was 'Father God'. (I'm not sure why I used that name for God, but it worked.) The children were immediately silent, my voice must have indicated trouble or maybe panic.



The events that followed were instantaneous and yet seem to be isolated in slow-motion within my mind as individual happenings. — My high school physics was somehow mentally resurrected to work out the best angle to take the 'hit' from the other car so that we wouldn't be thrown into the water filled ditch on the side of the road; my daughters settled back and prepared for the obvious outcome of the situation, (thankfully all seatbelts were on); all other traffic seemed to fade away, as the other drivers became aware of the potential accident and put on their brakes. Everything was set to have an accident - an accident that never happened. The point in this story is that God knows what we need, all that is left is your permission to be involved. I had a real problem and to this day there is no explanation as to how the accident was prevented. But it was!

Do I believe in worshipful problem solving? You bet. My most precious possessions were in that car with me - my daughters. What happened? I don't know. But I do know that God was involved and my turning to Him was instrumental in the outcome. I don't know why or how, and you know it really doesn't matter.

The URANTIA Book tells us that,

## REPETITIVE EXPERIENCES BECOME HABITS (1777D):

I am accustomed to talking things over with God, I just ramble on about anything. I also have learned to ask when I need help. It doesn't make the problems go away, but it does make it easier to get through it. It is choosing God, and sharing life's experiences that make problems into challenges and opportunities. Then the situations cease being the over-burdening and oppressive calamities of life. It is sharing life with God that accentuates the positive and eliminates the negative (as the song goes.)

"...(THE) NUMBERS OF DECISIONS, FREQUENT REPETITIONS, PERSISTENT REPETITIONS, ARE ALSO ESSENTIAL TO THE HABIT-FORMING CERTAINTY .(OF OUR GROWTH).. "  
(1210:1)

By repeatedly choosing to share our life with God, we become more certain in our choice and the effect it has on our eternal adventure. Remember the certainty, it is very important. I had a traumatic childhood - not much fun at all - but God was a friend and companion that I could always count on to be there for me. I knew for certain that God loved me for he was there, no matter what.

Earlier I mentioned the idea that problem solving was circular - problems, prayer, solving and growth. We have



discussed the first three points, now I want to look at the fourth - growth. We are told that:  
(1791:1)

**DIFFICULTIES MUST BE ENCOUNTERED FOR GROWTH. (1719:1)**

...difficulties, problems, adversity must be encountered.  
And yet on page 1204 it says

**ALL SPIRITUAL GROWTH ... IS A GIFT FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND NOT OUR OWN DOING. (1204:5)**

Okay, now let's look at these two thoughts and consider a question - If our spiritual growth is a gift from our Heavenly Father, why do we have to encounter the difficulties? Why can't he just make it happen? Well, those of you who know the book know the answer, we are will-creatures and we must choose. God could make it all happen, and He could have created us so that it was automatic, but we would lose the aspect of our lives that makes us free-will creatures. When we ask, and by asking choose, he gives us this gift for the work and trials we confront and endure. It is the spiritual growth that makes it all worthwhile, it's kind of a bonus (a Christmas bonus if you will). Our spirituality draws us closer to God and makes us aware of the immense satisfaction we gain in and through and from the relationship we have with God. The

peace that passes all understanding is our awareness of God and our certainty of his presence in our life.

Problems are the food that nurtures spiritual growth. Problems/ challenges/ opportunities/ aggravations/ or whatever name you give it are an essential part of our ascent to the Father.

(381:5)

**EVERY STEP YOU TAKE MUST BE ONE OF WILLINGNESS, INTELLIGENT AND CHEERFUL CO-OPERATION." (381:5)**

...cheerful, did you hear that. And sooner or later...

**(A) PERSON BEGINS TO HUNGER AND YEARN FOR NEW AND GREATER GOALS,..." (1294:C)**

I've talked a lot about the different aspects of this topic - problems, prayer, solving and growth - now let's consider what the URANTIA Book says about how to actually solve problems. It's very specific, it doesn't beat around the bush at all. For instance on page 1773 it says:

**"SUCCESSFUL LIVING .(IS). THE ART OF THE MASTERY OF DEPENDABLE TECHNIQUES FOR SOLVING COMMON PROBLEMS." (1773:4)**

Successful living is dealing with problems. On the same



page it says:

**"THE WISE AND EFFECTIVE SOLUTION OF ANY PROBLEM DEMANDS THAT THE MIND SHALL BE FREE FROM BIAS, PASSION AND ALL OTHER PERSONAL PREJUDICES." (1773:5)**

Solving problems effectively needs a mind that is free from emotional contaminates and mortal opinions. You must remove your personal inclinations from the situations, you must consider only the facts, and do so with an understanding of the long-term goal.

On page 1662:1 Jesus tells Nathaniel that their mission is to help solve people's spiritual problems so that they are better prepared to deal with their material problems. (1662:1) I find that interesting - to better deal with earthly problems, first consider your spiritual ones. If we go back to an earlier quote:

**THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE IS: ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE; SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND." (1838:3)**

That seems to say if you learn to ask God, if you rely on Him for guidance and assistance, it will help you deal with your mortal life, with earthly concerns. If that's true, why do we struggle so hard doing things? When Jesus' message got undermined by the apostles, and they changed to

talking about Jesus instead of teaching what he said, they also diverted the attention away from the solution offered in this way of life. Generations of people who turned to Christianity only got part of the message, and the emphasis was on Jesus rather than his teachings. We are to ask, then have faith that it is being taken care of. A bible study group I was in always said 'Let go and let God.' It sounds so simple doesn't, but it takes practice.

In Rodan's talks he mentions that Jesus had:

**"THE GREATEST OF ALL METHODS OF PROBLEM SOLVING  
(IS)..THE ISOLATION OF WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION." (1774:2)**

In and with this method Jesus would:

survey the problems;

seek wisdom and energy;

stimulate and deepen the purpose of life;

take control of the continuous changes in life;

effect a change in our attitudes essential to  
insight;

and ever be mindful of the Master's favorite prayer

- 'Not my will, but yours be done.' (1774:3)

Towards the end of the URANTIA Book is a statement that ties this together, part of which I used earlier.



"PERSONAL, SPIRITUAL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IS AN EFFICIENT SOLVENT FOR MOST MORTAL DIFFICULTIES; IT IS AN EFFECTIVE SORTER, EVALUATOR AND ADJUSTOR OF ALL HUMAN PROBLEMS. RELIGION DOES NOT REMOVE OR DESTROY HUMAN TROUBLES. BUT IT DOES DISSOLVE, ABSORB, ILLUMINATE, AND TRANSCEND THEM. TRUE RELIGION UNIFIES THE PERSONALITY FOR EFFECTIVE ADJUSTMENT TO ALL MORTAL REQUIREMENTS." (2093:L)

-----

I'd like to take a minute to make sure we are still together on this subject. First I talked about the three words in the topic - worshipful, problem and solving. Next I brought in the idea of growth, because this makes the situation circular and on going, eternal if you will. Most recently I was talking about the 'how to' of problem solving from the URANTIA Book. Are you still with me? Did you understand the circles (wow, what an analogy) and see how problems or challenges or opportunities are an on going part of life, this mortal life and the life to come?

One of the most basic aspects of our life, from a spiritual perspective, is the fact that as will creatures we must choose God, and that by choosing God we need, actually need, adversity and challenges in our lives from which to grow. This does not mean that life is or should be oppressive, in fact just the opposite. Have you ever seen the face of a

God-centered person who is experiencing adversity - their face seems to glow-- actually glow. Remember that lovely piece called "Footsteps in the Sand," as God-centered, God-seeking, God-inspired people we will confront situations that will test us and help us grow, but we're told we need not confront them alone.

There is another great quote in the URANTIA Book that I love and have used repeatedly over the years. It says:

**"GOD ONLY TESTS THOSE WITH POTENTIAL GROWTH" (?)**

(I have been unable to locate this and if anyone knows where this is I would appreciate knowing.)

I like this quote. It seems to answer the question of why good people seem to undergo traumatic situations while other people seem to go through life with no tests or problems.

Another one on 1227 says:

**ONLY RELIGIOUS CONFIDENCE - LIVING FAITH - CAN SUSTAIN  
MAN AMID SUCH DIFFICULT AND PERPLEXING PROBLEMS."  
(1222:7)**

Remember earlier we were told that repetition forms habits which give us certainty. We get the confidence from our religious habits. However, this is a two sided sword. If



you walk with 'religious confidence' you'll be all right, however, note the word ONLY. 'Only religious confidence can sustain man'. This is the ONLY way to survive problems. Have you ever seen a person in an adverse situation who doesn't have a faith to sustain them; it is really sad, they just seem to crumble under the pressure.

Let me give you an example of how opportunities and the application of the Law of the Universe works to sustain us. (REMEMBER THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE: ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE; SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND.) This is an example of when I happened to do it right. I have just recently realized what the alternative could have been. This is a real situation and involves two heart attacks, one happened to my husband and the other to a friend's husband. (Let's call my friends John and Jane - as in Doe)

My husband had a heart attack when he was in his early 40's, just as John did; they were both in the hospital for 10 days, and home for three months of recovery. Without getting technical both heart attacks were mild and would be called in layman's language a 'warner' (the word my husband's doctor used.)

These are the similarities. However, there is a difference in how Jane and I initially handled the situation. While my husband was still in the ER, looking as though he was wired

for sound with an EKG attached, an oxygen mask, a blood-pressure cuff, and I'm not sure what else, I prayed. We had just moved there a few months earlier and so we didn't have a strong support team. I didn't know what to do, so I turned to God for help, what I did was to give it all into God's hands. This is the only difference in how Jane and I dealt with the situation.

My husband's heart attack was many years ago and John's just a couple of years back. Jane just recently discussed her anger at the situation, especially her extreme anger at God for allowing the heart attack to happen, and I was astounded by her comments. I had always considered her to be a spiritual person, and the idea that she would allow the anger to control her to the extent that it did shocked me. We have been friends for several years and in a group together. Jane is very active in her church locally, and on many committees up to and including the national level. Her anger was so extreme that she had to force herself to go to church during this time. The reason for my shock at her confession was because I had walked through the period in peace, and at no time did I feel anger, concern, fear, or apprehension about what was happening. Each day I confronted the reality of life and did whatever needed to be done, and I took care of the house, the bills, the family and Steve in the hospital. I had presumed that Jane's experience had been like mine. In listening closely to her



story I realized that the only difference was the prayer that I said in the ER.

Could a prayer allow one person to walk through a situation with inner peace, while the other was consumed with anger and bitterness at God? That's quite a statement.

This is a real story. The facts are real, only the names have been changed. I changed the names because I didn't know how to ask my friend if I could use her story in this speech. How do you ask someone if you can use them as the negative side of an example?

A quote comes to mind:

**"IN THE TIME OF TESTING, A MAN'S (OR WOMAN'S) SOUL IS REVEALED; TRIAL DISCLOSES WHAT REALLY IS IN THE HEART."**

(1824:5)

I have a problem with what this implies, for it sounds religiously arrogant. Yet, we were each given the same opportunity, we just dealt with it differently. As Christians we both had the same knowledge of:

**"ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE; SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND."**

Let me run through some other examples of asking.

Many years ago I taught Sunday School for my pre-school daughter's class. These were two and three year olds, and there were between 20 and 30 students, with three adult teachers and two teenagers. The teachers rotated two weeks on and one week off. One of my 'on' weeks I suddenly came down with a sinus infection and was put on antibiotics. I was running a fever and was mentally confused and dizzy when I stood up. This all happened on Saturday and by a fluke I couldn't get in touch with either of the other teachers to take over for me. Since I wasn't infectious I decided to go and teach the lesson. My husband drove me up, helped me into the class, and waited to immediately return me home and to bed. When I walked into the room the other teacher told me to go home and she would make do that week without a lesson for the kids. Since I was there I said if she would get the students into place I would teach and then leave. While she, my husband and the teenage assistants got the students seated in front of the little altar in the room, I turned my back and prayed, "FATHER YOU KNOW I CAN'T DO THIS TODAY, YOU HAVE TO DO IT FOR ME. THESE ARE YOUR CHILDREN AND I NEED YOU TO TELL THEM THE STORY.

The story that week was the parable of the Good Shepherd, and I wish I knew what I said because the children were moved by the story like no other that year. Their parents came in for months afterwards and told us about comments



their children had made about that parable. I learned two things that day:

1. That 'ask and you shall receive' was meant to be taken literally in spiritual matters.
2. That there is nothing I can't do with God's help, in fact there is a lot He can do if I get out of the way and let Him.

Another example I would like to share has to do with confronting fear. The 'book' tells us:

**"THE GREAT MISTAKE IS THAT, WHEN LIFE PROBLEMS EXCITE OUR PROFOUND FEARS, WE REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE THEM. ... ONLY A HONEST AND BRAVE PERSON IS WILLING HONESTLY TO ADMIT, AND FEARLESSLY TO FACE, WHAT A SINCERE AND LOGICAL MIND DISCOVERS." (1773:4)**

I have had a fear for many years of New York city. It caused no inconvenience until I was asked to be an Area Coordinator. Then I had to deal with it because NYC is where the training was to take place. When I thought about going to NYC by myself I would get a big knot in my stomach. However, being AC was so important to me that I finally confronted this fear. One day, while the house was quiet, I centered down (a wonderful Quaker phrase meaning to seek the God within) and let my mind go back and remember anything it wanted to about NYC. I started with the story that I had

heard about how my brother and I would go, with my mother, by train to visit her family during the summers when I was very young. Immediately I remembered the great fear I had from the crowds of people in Grand Central Station and my fear that I would be swept away from my Mother and never see her again. I was from farm country in Ohio and was literally terrorized by the crowds - the swarms - of people in NYC. As I prayed I could actually feel the terror that I had experienced when I was a child. It really amazed me how quickly I was able to locate the reason for my fear. Once I had identified the source of the fear, it was just a matter of proceeding with the trip and any time I felt the fear to remember it belonged to a two year old.

The book has a good quote that fits here:

**"MANY PROBLEMS ARE CREATIONS OF EXAGGERATED FEARS..."**

(1611:4)

When you have a fear look at it squarely and try to determine what it comes from. Don't let the fear control you and become an all consuming problem. I have found that often fear comes from the unknown, or something that you aren't aware of knowing. Look at it, evaluate it, and then confront it. And remember to do it with prayer.



I've covered a lot of territory in this talk, so let me do a real quick summary.

Worship is an escape from the harassment of the material world, a retreat to refresh, inspire and renew.

Problems are situations that differ from the norm and that need consideration and/or action on your part.

Solving is to deal with or to act upon the situation.

Together it means letting your spirituality strengthen you while dealing with mortal situations; prayerfully considering unusual events in your life.

Growth was added to these three terms, which made a circular pattern that was the basis of spiritual growth and progress in your life.

There is one last word I want to mention, it is JOY. Our lives are to be joyful. As I have learned and grown it's become apparent that if I seek God's presence I get the bonus of JOY - no matter what the circumstances I don't feel oppressed or overwhelmed. (I wish I had learned this earlier) The URANTIA Book talks about this in many places.

Did you know that:

the principle activity of the secondary seconaphim is to direct a reaction of joy in angelic hosts and lower will creatures (us)? (3120)

sonship is to yield ... supreme joy in the spirit.

(1674:6) - joy is a by-product of sonship.

no matter what the cost of sonship in this life, you will receive manifold more joy. (1537:1)

"Increasing happiness is the experience of all who are certain about God." (1766:5) (Remember certainty comes from habitually seeking God.)

and joy is "a tonic for health, a stimulus for mind and an unending energy for the soul." (2065:7)

I LEAVE YOU WITH

PEACE, LOVE, AND JOY.

THANK YOU ALL.