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INSPIRATIONS

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Greetings to all of you, sons and daughters of the Universal Father! Thank you very much for the time you may dedicate to learning what this issue holds as we pursue the adventure of finding truths which help us make progress toward our goal of beholding and embracing the Paradise Father at the center of all things.

This issue, like another I once wrote, is a double issue consisting of reports from July and August, 1991. This has been an active time, I would report, for book readers here in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, area. A new study group has formed consisting of virtually all new readers with but a pair of seasoned readers to answer questions and suggest approaches to the material. All of these new readers are former Pentecostals, a sect known for its spiritual excitement and dramatic and emotive worship. I have not visited this group yet, but am passing on what one of the leaders in the group shared with me. As I plan to visit soon, perhaps I will be able to expand on this report in the next issue.

This year we celebrated the most successful commemoration of Jesus' Birthday in the history of our area. Seventy mailed invitations were perhaps a key in attracting readers some of whom we had not seen for a considerable length of time. It was wonderful to renew acquaintances and friendships and to catch up somewhat on what had transpired in our lives in recent times while we enjoyed a pot luck dinner.

Several study groups were represented and our celebration was as much a social as a spiritual occasion. With a suggestion that we may have "taken ourselves too seriously" at times, the group is developing a sense of spiritual humor which was demonstrated in a fifteen minute "stand up" comic routine prepared by one of our celebrants. Of course, high spirits and contagious laughter are always a part of all our gatherings.

Moving "from the ridiculous to the sublime", we allowed a time of conversation to go on freely until we were ready to observe Jesus' Birthday with a Remembrance Supper during which the relevant passage was read from The Urantia Book as we received the bread and wine. This was followed by a "remembrance period" in which, in no particular order, individuals shared aspects of Jesus' life and teachings which hold some special meaning or value for them or which contain some special portent for the present and/or future conditions on our home-sphere, Urantia. Much of this sharing was, indeed, personal, and our group gained beneficial insight into the values of the souls of our friends and acquaintances as we listened to the various reports of the effects Jesus, personally and as the Spirit of Truth, had realized in their individual lives, future spiritual expectations and sublime hopes.

Continuing Report on the
Fellowship 1991 Intensive Summer Seminar

An engaging speech was delivered to the congregated group in the chapel by Carolyn Kendall. Recalling previous speeches she has delivered, I have recognized that she is always able to present the optimistic side of current events within the "Urantia movement" and the world. She commented on the title of her speech, "Building the Foundation of Spirit Fellowship", noting that it was a phrase which includes both the words "Foundation" and "Fellowship". Actually, this phrase was the theme for the entire morning's activities which Carolyn was introducing. She invariably expresses both admonitions for and confidence in the abilities of the readers and their developing wisdom as all of us gain experience in dealing with the most recent epochal revelation. She can perceive and describe some of the great tasks which lie ahead for current and future readers of the revelation, referring sometimes to passages in the book which can guide us as we seek to find the best and most appropriate ways to promote the mission of this epochal revelation.

This confidence springs, I believe, most directly from relying on the insight and reasoning which Jesus employed in the inauguration of Urantia's fourth planetary epoch. Inasmuch as the Master's plan for the proclamation of the true gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man was somewhat pushed aside by the earlier heralds of the kingdom, so does that gospel, as I believe Carolyn emphasizes, along with all the teachings of Jesus, stand as the basis for the inauguration of the fifth epoch.

As the book emphasizes, a major turning point in the life and mission of Jesus and the apostles took place when the Master powerfully asked them, "Who do you say that I am?" All the apostles concurred enthusiastically with Peter who exclaimed that Jesus was "the Deliverer, the Son of the living God." (1746:2-1747:3/157.3.5-4.5) This (literally) epoch-making question and response was the first and critical recognition by mortals of Jesus' divinity. Jesus said that it was the spirit within them which revealed this truth to their inmost souls.

This mortal recognition of Jesus as a "stand-in", says Carolyn, for the Father forms the basis of the foundation for our spiritual fellowship. The religion of the divinity of Jesus was a part of the fourth epoch's emphasis, but it was not the gospel. Likewise, the writing and publishing of The Urantia Book is not the gospel of the fifth epoch. The gospel is still God's fatherhood and man's brotherhood. This proclamation of Jesus was startling in that he totally expanded the basis for sonship in the kingdom--one need have only a rational mind and faith, but it was even more startling, Carolyn points out, when it became clear that Jesus intended to include the gentiles, Samaritans, Greeks, and even Romans, not forgetting womankind, in the kingdom. God was no longer the deity of the Hebrews; he became the international Father of all personalities.

Carolyn discusses the ramifications and implications of this message on the personal, group, and world levels. On the personal level, she emphasized that "your actual achievement today is not as important as the direction in which you are going. ... Are you striving to be like God?" In the Family, Workplace, Neighborhood, Social and Religious groups, Carolyn points out, selfishness counteracts the intention to socialize. She notes that isolation is unhealthy. Spiritualizing socialization begins "when we find God in our own souls [because, thereafter] we will find him in the souls of others." (1733:1/155.6.13)

In the mission of "promoting spiritual truth in the world", Carolyn quotes Jesus: "It is only through the appeal to the Adjuster that mankind will ever attain unity and brotherhood." (1672:6-1673:0/149.3.3) In public ministry, the individual is meant to develop his or her own personal interpretation of the Master's teachings.

Jesus provided the apostles with what turned out to be several disappointing missions in low-scale ministry as a preparation for the fickleness of loyalty of the King-demanding populace in later more public preaching. Jesus kept the gospel message simple and, like the parables, it has a special meaning for each individual.

Carolyn advises by paraphrasing: We can't come along now, tear down the foundation laid by Adam or Melchizedek, and try to replace it with either neo-Christianity or the Urantia Book. We must build on what already exists, first, by emphasizing the truths which are held in common, and second, by enlarging on the idea of the Fatherhood of God. (1670:5-6/149:2.4-5) In world ministry, the appeal should be to individuals, rather than to religious adherents as a whole. Having little "God talks" with one's associates helps to shift the idea of religion away from authority and back to God.

Carolyn concludes: "And now, in 1991, as we reappraise our Fellowship, debate matters of representation, fine-tune our Constitution, and plan our next events, we might wonder if the same Revelator, as well as Michael of Nebadon, are still shaking the equivalent of their heads. Do they wonder when we will become more enthusiastic and more dedicated about the real mission entrusted to our hands--building the foundation of spirit fellowship among the world's people?"

An amazing speech was delivered by Dan Massey on the morning of the final day of the intensive. It swirled around the ancient Middle East and nearby regions describing many religious, philosophical, mythological, mystery-religious, governmental, cultural and historical influences which had some direct bearing on the world in the times of Michael's bestowal on Urantia. The speech was hailed by an extended standing ovation.

Alison Gardner and others conducted the closing worship session which included prayer, music, and meditation, bringing us to a most inspiring conclusion of the intensive group experience.

THE ECSTASY OF FORGIVENESS

In this discussion of the nature of forgiveness, I will write so as to alternate between quotations from The Urantia Book and my own comments. I would like to solicit a courtesy of those of you who are kind enough to read this newsletter, that being that you will be favorably inclined toward reading this article which is somewhat longer than those usually written by me. I hope that it will become apparent that there is a very significant effect I hope to be able to convey through the juxtaposition of many quotations from the revelation dealing with the topic of forgiveness in its many forms. My comments will be within brackets: [].

[38:1-5/2.4.1-5] [A Divine Counselor describes God's mercy and then quotes from the Bible:] Mercy is simply justice tempered by that wisdom which grows out of perfection of knowledge and the full recognition of the natural weaknesses and environmental handicaps of finite creatures. "Our God is full of compassion, gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy." Therefore, "whosoever calls upon the Lord shall be saved," "for he will abundantly pardon." "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting"; yes, "his mercy endures forever." "I am the Lord who executes loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight." "I do not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men," for I am "the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort."

God is inherently kind, naturally compassionate, and everlastingly merciful. And never is it necessary that any influence be brought to bear upon the Father to call for his loving-kindness. The creature's need is wholly sufficient to insure the full flow of the Father's tender mercies and his saving grace. Since God knows all about his children, it is easy for him to forgive. The better man understands his neighbor, the easier it will be to forgive him, even to love him.

Only the discernment of infinite wisdom enables a righteous God to minister justice and mercy at the same time and in any given universe situation. The heavenly Father is never torn by conflicting attitudes towards his universe children; God is never a victim of attitudinal antagonisms. God's all-knowingness unflinchingly directs his free will in the choosing of that universe conduct which perfectly, simultaneously, and equally satisfies the demands of all his divine attributes and the infinite qualities of his eternal nature. [In a parabolic way, I might relate these perfect abilities of God to the functioning of a computer. When properly programmed, it becomes possible for some computers to perform three or even more functions "perfectly" (correctly), simultaneously, and with the capability of ending up the entire procedure with margins properly justified on both sides and the cursor ready for the next directive signal.] [my italics]

Mercy is the natural and inevitable offspring of goodness and love. The good nature of a loving Father could not possibly withhold the wise ministry of mercy to each member of every group of his universe children. Eternal justice and divine mercy together constitute what in human experience would be called fairness.

Divine mercy represents a fairness technique of adjustment between the universe levels of perfection and imperfection. Mercy is the justice of Supremacy adapted to the situations of the evolving finite, the righteousness of eternity modified to meet the highest interests and universe welfare of the children of time. Mercy is not a contravention of justice as it is fairly applied to the subordinate spiritual beings and to the material creatures of the evolving universes. Mercy is the justice of the Paradise Trinity wisely and lovingly visited upon the manifold intelligences of the creations of time and space as it is formulated by divine wisdom and determined by the all-knowing mind and the sovereign free will of the Universal Father and all his associated Creators.

[38:6-39:4/2.5.1-5] [Mercy and forgiveness are features of the infinite love of our Heavenly Father.] "God is love"; therefore his ONLY personal attitude towards the affairs of the universe is ALWAYS a reaction of divine affection. [my capitals] [It seems to me that, technically speaking, the Father never has to forgive because he never takes anything as an offense. The Father never stops loving or attempting to save even a being who is headed directly toward iniquity. The unchanging Father's "forgiveness" is a creature-experienced aspect his unfailing love. Guilt or "distance" from God is a creature's self-imposed attitude which, through repentance and the forgiving of one's fellows, is cancelled. The uninterrupted love of the Heavenly Father, then becomes experiencable again by his children when they destroy any barriers they may think they have erected between themselves and the omnipresent Deity. (Again: The Father reacts to any creature's thinking or doing only with love.) [Opposition to God's infinite and omni-dimensional affection is a lost cause, unless one is willing to become a lost cause oneself. No matter what your current spiritual status or soulful attitude, God knows how to make you happy, even ecstatic, once again and forever.]

The Father loves us sufficiently to bestow his life upon us. "He makes his sun to rise upon the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."

It is wrong to think of God as being coaxed into loving his children because of the sacrifices of his Sons or the intercession of his subordinate creatures, "for the Father himself loves you." It is in response to this paternal affection that God sends the marvelous Adjusters to indwell the minds of men. God's love is universal; "whosoever will may come." He would "have all men be saved by coming into the knowledge of the truth." He is "not willing that any should perish."

The Creators are the very first to attempt to save man from the disastrous results of his foolish transgression of the divine laws. God's love is by nature a fatherly affection; therefore does he sometimes "chasten us for our own profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness." Even during your fiery trials remember that "in all our afflictions he is afflicted with us." [The peoples of Urantia are destined to be delivered from any beliefs in God which portray him as a bookkeeper of the sins and erroneous judgments of all persons.]

[The above paragraph states that the extreme opposite is the case; that when a personality may begin to veer from the better way, they are one's creators, supervisors, and guardians, not one's error-tabulating judges, who set out first to retrieve the straying son or daughter, the lost sheep, the prodigal son, or the wayward planet.]

God is divinely kind to sinners. When rebels return to righteousness, they are mercifully received, "for our God will abundantly pardon." "I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins." "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." [What noteworthy and remarkable statements! God's unchanging love and kindness are always in the process of being increasingly expressed to his children. God is plenteous in mercy. What God "blots out" is certainly and absolutely nullified. Can God choose not to remember? Perhaps only survival value events attain his consciousness which cannot personally and directly experience evil. "What manner of love" indeed shall summon us, the children of space, to the glory of eternal Paradise there to meet God and be embraced by his infinite goodness and love. And such an experience is just the beginning of the cosmic adventure and the sharing of God's love.]

[God never punishes vindictively, but allows life experiences to alert each individual to his need for superhuman assistance and partnership. God does better than that: He calls each man, "My son!" The gospel is not simply one of co-operation with God, but one of sonship with God in which each personality progresses toward the development of inherent or acquirable qualities which render him increasingly more Godlike, more divine. Indeed, planetary personalities shall one day become perfected spirits, and that is only one of the cosmos-wide enterprises of the present universe age.]

After all, the greatest evidence of the goodness of God and the supreme reason for loving him is the indwelling gift of the Father--the Adjuster who so patiently awaits the hour when you both shall be eternally made one. Though you cannot find God by searching, if you will submit to the leading of the indwelling spirit, you will be unerringly guided, step by step, life by life, through universe upon universe, and age by age, until you finally stand in the presence of the Paradise personality of the Universal Father.

[1898:1-5/174.1.1-5] [Said Jesus, in response to a contention between Peter and James about divine forgiveness:] "My brethren, you err in you opinions because you do not comprehend the nature of those intimate and loving relations between the creature and the Creator, between man and God. You fail to grasp that understanding sympathy which the wise parent entertains for his immature and sometimes erring child. It is indeed doubtful whether intelligent and affectionate parents are ever called upon to forgive an average and normal child. Understanding relations associated with attitudes of love effectively prevent all those estrangements which later necessitate the readjustment of repentance by the child with forgiveness by the parent. [My italics here and below]

"A part of every father lives in the child. The father enjoys priority and superiority of understanding in all matters connected with the child-parent relationship. The parent is able to view the immaturity of the child in the light of the more advanced parental maturity, the riper experience and older partner. With the earthly child and the heavenly Father, the divine parent possesses infinity and divinity of sympathy and capacity for loving understanding. Divine justice is so eternally fair that it unfailingly embodies understanding mercy.

"When a wise man understands the inner impulses of his fellows, he will love them. And when you love your brother, you have already forgiven him. This capacity to understand man's nature and forgive his apparent wrongdoing is Godlike. If you are wise parents, this is the way you will love and understand your children, even forgive them when transient misunderstanding has apparently separated you. The child, being immature and lacking in the fuller understanding of the depth of the child-father relationship, must frequently feel a sense of guilty separation from a father's full approval, but the true father is never conscious of any such separation. Sin is an experience of creature consciousness; it is not a part of God's consciousness.

"Your inability or unwillingness to forgive your fellows is the measure of your immaturity, your failure to attain adult sympathy, understanding, and love. You hold grudges and nurse vengefulness in direct proportion to your ignorance of the inner nature and true longings of your children and your fellow beings. Love is the outworking of the divine and inner urge of life. It is founded on understanding, nurtured by unselfish service, and perfected in wisdom." [my bold]

[1736:3-4/156.2.6-7] The theme of Jesus instructions during the sojourn at Sidon was spiritual progression. ... He admonished them to "forget those things which are in the past while you push forward to embrace the greater realities of the kingdom." / Said Jesus: "My disciples must not only cease to do evil but learn to do well; you must not only be cleansed from all conscious sin, but you must refuse even to harbor even the feelings of guilt. If you confess your sins, they are forgiven; therefore must you maintain a conscience void of offense." [my italics]

[1638:1,4/146.2.1,4] Nathaniel was confused in his mind about the Master's teachings concerning prayer, thanksgiving, and worship, and in response to Nathaniel's question, Jesus spoke at length on the subject. His remarks included the following:

"The Father in heaven has forgiven you even before you thought to ask him, but such forgiveness is not available in your personal religious experience until such a time as you have forgiven your fellow men. God's forgiveness in fact is not conditioned upon your forgiving your fellows, but in experience it is exactly so conditioned. And this fact of the synchrony of divine and human forgiveness was thus recognized and linked together in the prayer which Jesus taught the apostles. ["Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."] [my italics]

[2017:9-20182/188.5.1-3] The cross of Jesus portrays the full measure of the supreme devotion of the true shepherd for even the unworthy members of his flock. It forever places all relations between God and man upon the family basis. God is the Father; man is his son. Love, the love of a father for his son, becomes the central truth in the universe relations of Creator and creature-- not the justice of a king which seeks satisfaction in the sufferings and punishment of the evil-doing subject.

The cross forever shows that the attitude of Jesus toward sinners was neither condemnation nor condonation, but rather eternal and loving salvation. Jesus is truly a savior in the sense that his life and death do win men over to goodness and righteous survival. Jesus loves men so much that his love awakens the response of love in the human heart. Love is truly contagious and eternally creative. Jesus' death on the cross exemplifies a love which is sufficiently strong and divine to forgive sin and swallow up all evil-doing. Jesus disclosed to this world a higher quality of righteousness than justice--mere technical right and wrong. Divine love does not merely forgive wrongs; it absorbs and actually destroys them. The forgiveness of love utterly transcends the forgiveness of mercy. Mercy sets the guilt of evil-doing to one side; but love destroys forever the sin and all weakness resulting therefrom. Jesus brought a new method of living to Urantia. He taught us not to resist evil but to find through him a goodness which effectually destroys evil. The forgiveness of Jesus is not condonation; it is salvation from condemnation. Salvation does not slight wrongs; it makes them right. [original italics] True love does not compromise nor condone hate; it destroys it. The love of Jesus is never satisfied with mere forgiveness. The Master's love implies rehabilitation, eternal survival. [my italics] It is altogether proper to speak of salvation as redemption if you mean this eternal rehabilitation.

Jesus, by the power of his personal love for men, could break the hold of sin and evil. He thereby set men free to choose better ways of living. Jesus portrayed a deliverance from the past which in itself promised a triumph for the future. Forgiveness thus provided salvation. The beauty of divine love, once fully admitted to the human heart, forever destroys the charm of sin and the power of evil.

[984:5-985:1/89.10.2-6] Sin must be redefined as deliberate disloyalty to Deity. [original italics] ...

The sense or feeling of guilt is the consciousness of the violation of the mores; it is not necessarily sin. There is no real sin in the absence of conscious disloyalty to Deity.

The possibility of the recognition of the sense of guilt is a badge of transcendent distinction for mankind. It does not mark man as mean but rather sets him apart as a creature of potential greatness and ever-ascending glory. Such a sense of unworthiness is the initial stimulus that should lead quickly and surely to those faith conquests which translate the mortal mind to the superb levels of moral nobility, cosmic insight, and spiritual living.

The confession of sin is a manful repudiation of disloyalty, but it in no wise mitigates the time-space consequences of such disloyalty. But confession--sincere recognition of the nature of sin--is essential to religious growth and spiritual progress. ["The act is ours; the consequences, God's." 556:13/48.7.13]

The forgiveness of sin by Deity is the renewal of loyalty relations following a period of the human consciousness of the lapse of such relations as the consequence of conscious rebellion. Forgiveness does not have to be sought, only received as the consciousness of re-establishment of loyalty relations between the creature and the Creator. And all the loyal sons of God are happy, service-loving, and ever-progressive in the Paradise ascent.

Jesus presented a parable on the subject of forgiveness which affords insight into how he used commonplace experiences as illustrations of sublime spiritual values and personality connections. [1762:4-5/159.1.2-3] "If a kindhearted man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, does he not immediately leave the ninety and nine and go out in search of the one that has gone astray? And if he is a good shepberd, will he not keep up his quest for the lost sheep until he finds it? And then, when the shepherd has found his lost sheep, he lays it over his shoulder and, going home rejoicing, calls to his friends and neighbors, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' I declare that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety and nine righteous persons who need no repentance. Even so, it is not the will of my Father in heaven that one of these little ones should go astray, much less that they should perish. In your religion God may receive repentant sinners; in the gospel of the kingdom the Father goes forth to find them even before they have seriously thought of repentance.

The Father in heaven loves his children, and therefore should you learn to love one another; the Father in heaven forgives you your sins; therefore should you learn to forgive one another."

[41:4/2.6.6] The affectionate heavenly Father, whose spirit indwells his children on earth, is not a divided personality--one of justice and one of mercy--neither does it require a mediator to secure the Father's favor or forgiveness. Divine righteousness is not dominated by strict retributive justice; God as a father transcends God as a judge.

[1861:10-1862:4/170.3.3-7] It is in the consideration of the technique of receiving God's forgiveness that the attainment of the righteousness of the kingdom is revealed. Faith is the price you pay for entrance into the family of God; but forgiveness is the act of God which accepts your faith as the price of admission. ["receiving"--original italics; "forgiveness" and "forgiveness ... admission"--my italics] And the reception of the forgiveness of God by a kingdom believer involves A DEFINITE AND ACTUAL EXPERIENCE [my capitals] and consists in the following four steps, the kingdom steps of inner righteousness:

1. God's forgiveness is made actually available and is personally experienced by man just in so far as he forgives his fellows.

2. Man will not truly forgive his fellows unless he loves them as himself.

3. To thus love your neighbor as yourself is the highest ethics. [original italics]

4. Moral conduct, true righteousness, becomes, then, the natural result of such love.

The key here is experience; a simple intellectual statement to oneself or to God to the effect that the individual forgives all those who have in any way, so he may consider, offended him in some manner, is not a true forgiveness experience. There is an actual and sweeping personal event which can be overwhelming as an individual struggles to release all grudges, deracinate any long-standing offense memories and sever them from oneself, perceive that those who have affected him negatively must be forgiven and prayed for, while all consequences of wrong-doing in any direction--by oneself to another or by another to the individual--have to be given over to the eternally forgiving Father of all.

As in the case of primary salvation, the initial release of an unforgiving attitude requires great inner strength and is a considerable and unmistakable experience. Thereafter, any registering unforgiving incidents are dealt with summarily and right away so as to avoid a build-up of forgivelessness. [I decided hopefully to enrich our language with a new word.] In the same fashion, any errors or partial evil is cut off right away. And all of this is a prelude to inner peace and communion with the inirascible Father.

It may require effort to forgive everybody and to do so thoroughly, but resentments can be chipped away at until they are actually and ultimately dislodged. Time may be required for this gradual release of disaffection to be achieved. Energies may possibly be better and more productively expended in thinking kindly of any supposed offender and, to use Jesus' method, pray for them. It is usually much stronger and effective to pray for something than to think or pray against something or someone.

To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, Newton wrote; and this is experientially true in the spiritual realm wherein one's forgiveness of others results in a reciprocal reception of God's forgiveness. And this is one of the purposes of forgiveness, that it be followed by rehabilitation and engagement in active progress in pursuit of wisdom goals and the satisfactions of forgiving and being forgiven, loving and being loved.

We remember that Jesus insists that we "maintain a conscience void of offense". We can recall the incident with the woman taken in adultery. (We never hear of the misdoing of the male partner. Of course, this is not uncommon for the period of history.) After Jesus effectively and wonderfully scattered the crowd of people who were determined to stone her to death in accordance with the law of Moses, he said, "Where are your accusers? Neither do I condemn you." Peace among humans and forgiveness between God and man was complete--total. And Jesus ever says to the repentant soul, "Where are your accusers?" They, like the evil involved, exist no more.

John the Baptist had preached, "Repent!" But he was quite uncertain as to the nature of the kingdom of heaven, of Jesus' mission, and of his relationship with Jesus. Jesus, on the other hand, regarded forgiveness as something which an individual is morally obliged to accept when it is requested. It is no longer permitted or encouraged that an individual continue to lament over past mistakes. It is the will of God that we accept his forgiveness and then begin a positive life of love and service.

[1545:9/138.8.8] Jesus made plain to his apostles the difference between the repentance of so-called good works as taught by the Jews and the change of mind by faith--the new birth--which he required as the price of admission to the kingdom. He taught his apostles that faith was the only requisite to entering the Father's kingdom. John had taught them "repentance--to flee from the wrath to come." Jesus taught, "Faith is the open door for entering into the present, perfect, and eternal love of God."

Jesus often delegated the forgiveness-ministry to his apostles, almost as if it were something secondary or preliminary to going on with the real spiritual issues of bearing the fruits of the spirit, seeking divine direction for one's life, serving men and women as individuals and promoting the progress of the kingdom.

The ultimate crisis of Jesus' life career on our world was a forgiveness event. As the Roman soldiers nailed his hands to the crossbeam, Jesus prayed, "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do." That prayer has opened the truth-cherishing hearts and the understanding minds of religionists throughout our world as well as countless universe citizens as they consider the teaching that we are to forgive our fellows "seven times seventy".

[1763:1/159.1.4] Jesus' love and his prayers even for his enemies were contagious. Local universe, indeed, superuniverse citizens have been tremendously benefitted and overwhelmed in their attempts to discover and understand the attitude of the Father toward his erring, evil, and even sinfully iniquitous children. Jesus' acceptance of the cross death reveals a love that can dispel anyone's misgivings or spiritual confusion about the way God relates to his wayward children. Jesus' forgiving love can establish whoever reads an account of such an occurrence in the kingdom of mercifully pardoned, but servicefully active, personalities, our cosmic Father's far-flung Family.

[1955:6-1956:0/181.2.5] Said Jesus to the apostle John: "You will learn to love your brethren more when you first learn to love their Father in heaven more, and after you have become truly more interested in their welfare in time and in eternity. And all such human interest is fostered by understanding sympathy, unselfish service, and unstinted forgiveness." [my italics]

Beyond all other aspects of relationships with all personalities, love for the Father is primal while Jesus' second commandment was that we love and serve the human, even the cosmic, family. The brotherhood of all personalities is still the gospel of the kingdom. The keys to the solutions of all universe problems, difficulties and challenges are within the cosmic actualization of the kingdom of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The ascending sons of God move ever forward with an impulse to serve as actively and creatively as their celestial overseers and well-wishers have lovingly served them. This gospel is one in which final and eternal values are achieved even in time through the consecration of the will, creative service to humanity, and maintenance of a direct and continually renewed righteous (post-forgiven) relationship first with our Father and consequentially with all our Family.

When we ultimately forgive everyone, we sense our total deliverance from past error or evil by the experience of our being completely forgiven by God and by the assurance that if not now then certainly in the limitless future all personalities will understand each other much better than now and that universal forgiveness shall through love be accomplished. We can see how forgiveness creates or re-enstates our relationship of mutual and unconditional, limitless love with the Infinite Father. Just as the fusion of a planetary mortal leaves nothing of his life form, so does each forgiving and forgiven mortal experience an ecstasy of love and eternal sonship in which the past literally no longer exists.