

# The Circles

## The Power of Prayer

Vol. XII, No. 1&2

CONTENTS

Sp./Sum. 1989

### Theme Articles

A Conversation with My Best Friend .....	2
Thanksgiving .....	2
Asking for Help in the Moment .....	3
Musical Prayer .....	4
A Wonderful Way to Start the Day .....	5
A Prayer Theory of Management .....	6
What a Friend. . . ..	6
The Gift Has Already Been Given .....	7
Prayerful Problem Solving .....	7
Do You have a Spiritual Exercise Program? .....	8
Group Worship .....	9
A Urantia Worship .....	9
Prayer in a Crisis .....	10
A Prayer of Faith .....	12
An Answered Prayer .....	12
A Walk With God .....	14
Study Notes .....	15
Prayer—a poem .....	10
Affirmation—a poem .....	11
Open Your Heart—a poem .....	13
Potpourri .....	16

### Regular Features

About Angels .....	22
Letters .....	20
Parenting .....	19
Spheres of Influence .....	23
Things to Share .....	27

Published by The Dallas Fellowship, Inc.





## A Conversation with My Best Friend

By Kate Gentry  
Portland, Maine

I was surprised that I had a difficult time deciding what to say about prayer. Perhaps the reason is that I have a lofty concept of what prayer is and a very different reality.

There seems to be a difference in what I think prayer is and how I practice it. When asked for a definition of prayer, I would call it a petition to the Heavenly Father about some specific need or situation. This conjures up images of very serious, effort-filled attempts to communicate with divinity. I see a person sitting in church or some other special place, eyes closed, attention focused on the current topic of prayer.

When faced with this image, I have to admit that I don't pray very often, nor feel that I know very much about prayer. When I was very young, I was taught to pray in that manner. God was a distant, unavailable entity, not likely to be interested in what I felt about anything. Prayer was a stylized activity and followed certain patterns depending on the situation. One prayed a certain way in church, another way at bedtime. One had to be careful to make only reasonable requests, and striking some bargain was seen as helpful. That led to the belief that God would grant my requests only if I gave him something in return. Since I had very low self-esteem at the time, I felt I had nothing to offer, so made few requests.

Now I feel very differently about prayer, but I still cannot say with any

certainty that I know what I am talking about. I only know that my new attitude feels very right. I have come a long way from that young girl sitting in the First Baptist Church trying to think of something with which to bargain. My present-day prayers resemble nothing more than a conversation with my best friend. I have taken a long, circuitous route to learn this. Several years ago I was very curious about meditation. A wonderful woman I met at a study group explained it to me very simply. She said that prayer is when we talk to God and meditation is when we shut up and listen to him. I must have

been listening to only part of what she said, because I understood what she said about meditation, but the other half evaded me for several more years. Now I understand. Prayer is talking to God.

I talk to him all the time, wherever I happen to be, when I think of something to say. Sometimes I tell him how beautiful the sky is, or a sunset, or a tree. Sometimes I tell him how much I love him. Sometimes I ask for understanding about some trial in my life. Sometimes I just discuss my plans and aspirations. Sometimes I just comment on how close I feel to

See CONVERSATION on page 13.

## Thanksgiving

By Mary Virginia Brill  
Kenton, Ohio



Sometimes I wonder if I have the right idea of what prayer is. For me, at my present place in my life, it is simply talking to God, thanking him for each new day and for keeping me safe through the night. I thank him for answering my request for protection when he has kept me from falling completely asleep as I travel back from *URANTIA Book* meetings in Columbus.

I can't remember ever doubting God's love for me. In the past I don't think I prayed directly to him except in the "Our Father" and mass prayers. I had a strong devotion to Mary and found praying through the Rosary

very helpful, especially at the distressful times in my life. (Of course, now after reading about Mary in *The URANTIA Book*, I have even greater respect for her even though I seldom say the Rosary.)

I am lonely at times since the children all have flown the nest and have their own lives to live and my former husband has remarried, but I feel God's love in me and around me. I thank him for giving me the chance to help others in their homes. I feel that he many times answers even my unspoken requests or needs. I am aware each day of so much to be thankful for."



By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas



## Asking for Help in the Moment

*In the process of planning next October's Adventures in Spiritual Living Weekend Retreat our planning group selected and tried many techniques for enriching our relationship with our Father. But when we came to "asking for help in the moment of need," we finally concluded that it might just be the most important technique we had considered.*

The most common image of prayer is that of the individual in the privacy of his room in consultation with his maker, silently seeking help with the problems of life. But asking for help in the moment of need is another type of prayer. It is praying when you are facing a situation in which you need help right then. Perhaps you feel anger rising in the midst of a confrontation with your teenager, or as you listen to your boss' criticisms. Perhaps you face the temptation to be insincere or dishonest. Perhaps a friend has confided his confusion and asks your advice. It is possible to ask for spiritual help in that very moment and to receive aid as you deal with the situation.

Asking for help in the moment is a type of prayer which involves you solidly in the present. It requires you first to remember *in the heat or the emotion of the moment* that you have spiritual help available and then to choose to seek that help. You may be angry, fearful, disdainful, horrified, indifferent—no matter what your current state of mind and body, you can choose to ask for God's help in the situation.

Asking for God's help can take a

self-deceptive and selfish form. You can selfishly ask for God's help to become the winner in a situation, regardless of the needs of the other people involved. Such a selfish desire is not what I'm suggesting.

If you want true success, asking for God's help needs to involve turning your will over to God. It requires, in a way, a blind faith, because you must agree to let go of any selfish interests you have in the situation and pledge your will to doing God's will. In one small moment, you put yourself in God's hands and strike out into the unknown, assuming that he is somehow going to help you to do his will.

Although there might be occasions when you would sit and wait for the small still voice to give you instructions, more often the necessary approach is to proceed in faith with the situation you are in. As a result of your prayer, your antenna is now clearly pointed Godward. You see the situation more from his point of view. Your selfish side is no longer exerting its magnetism on you. Solutions occur and true needs are met.

I once was the moderator for a group of 25 to 30 people who were having a great deal of trouble getting along together. To cut into one argument, I announced a short break. During the recess I only half listened to the conversation around me. Most of my attention was on my rather desperate prayer: "God help me know what to do with these argumentative people!"

When it came time to resume, no ideas had popped into my head. I called everyone to order, sent up one

last prayer for God to give me the words. Then, with no idea what I would say, I opened my mouth and started talking. What came out was something I'd never have thought of and probably would not have had the courage to do if I'd had time to think about it. I sent them out in pairs to pray. It worked to still the troubled waters.

Asking for help in the moment can produce some outstanding results, but a further understanding is important to avoid weakening your faith when you experience apparent failure.

First of all, receiving God's help is dependent on establishing and  
*See ASKING on page 24.*

---

*Thanks to Vince Ventola  
for the drawing on our  
front cover.*

---

*\*Quotations used in this magazine (unless otherwise indicated) are from The URANTIA Book, Copyright © 1955 by URANTIA Foundation, all rights reserved, and are used by permission. Interpretations and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of URANTIA Foundation.*

*All page references to The URANTIA Book are as follows: The page number is first, followed by a colon and then the paragraph number. Each indentation on a page is counted as a paragraph, even if it is a single line long, as in numbered lists. Paragraph 0 on the page is the one which began on the previous page. The international citation which follows the slash refers to paper, section, and paragraph within the section.*

---





# Musical Prayer



By Bert Cobb  
Jerome, Idaho

The musical prayer I would like to talk about is altogether different from singing in a church choir or struggling through a hymnal with a congregation. My idea is about *personal* musical prayer. The words are your own and describe your individual religious experience. If you play any kind of musical instrument, you can design the most basic rhythm, melodies, and lyrics which can help express the deepest desires or greatest gratitudes of your heart. These songs are to be enjoyed when you are alone. If you don't play any

musical instrument, this same technique can be used by creating lyrics and verbalizing them in rhythmic poetry or chants.

Thankful and worshipful feelings well up within us, more or less spontaneously. If we learn to recognize these feelings for what they are, we can respond to them by verbalizing, or singing aloud, our personal prayer-songs. If this is done with a sincere and childlike countenance, you will feel immediate repercussions of spiritual joy.

At times when I play upon my

strings, I feel an affinity with the young harp player from Nazareth, who surely induced worshipful feelings into his music, playing for his Father in Heaven.

If you haven't stumbled onto this idea already, I urge you to use some of your creative energy to create personal, individual lyrics to a chant, poem or song, and then take this gift as a child musician to your Father. Take time to thank him for his gifts.

Dedicate a prayer-song to the angels. They are so appreciative of

See *MUSICAL* on page 5.

I can't just be reading that URANTIA Book,  
I'm going to spend some time with you.  
I can't just make it to the study groups,  
I'm going to spend some time with you.  
I'm gonna bare my soul to the universe,  
and spend some time with you. . .  
Talking with you, Father, makes me feel so good,  
and it keeps me feeling young.  
I'm getting some religion down in my heart,  
and not just on my tongue.  
Satisfaction lies within,  
the Source it's coming from.  
Rodan spoke on relaxation,  
"Take in energy," he did say,  
Yogananda taught about meditation,  
each and every day.  
I'm coming to you, Father,  
like a little, young child,  
I'm going to turn aside and pray.  
Jesus set examples, mighty fine.  
He spent a lot of time with you.  
Many great teachers throughout time  
have been telling us what to do.  
I'm coming to you, Father, like a universe child,  
I'm going to spend some time with you.  
Sitting in the sunshine. . .  
just calming my mind.

By Bert Cobb  
Jerome, Idaho

## I'm Going To Spend Some Time With You



By Myrna Cobb  
Jerome, Idaho



# A Wonderful Way to Start the Day

By Sharon Porter  
Austin, Texas



*"Prayer induces the human ego to look both ways for help: for material aid to the subconscious reservoir of mortal experience, for inspiration and guidance to the superconscious borders of the contact of the material with the spiritual, with the Mystery Monitor." 997:3/91.3.5*

Prayer is a mighty force for change in anyone's life if they will use it. It certainly has been so in mine. Not long back I found myself in a situation that turned my life upside down. All of my career goals and plans were completely altered, and I watched helplessly as my life unravelled before my very eyes. Prayer was not something I often did in those days. One evening after much ruminating about my situation, I picked up paper and pencil and proceeded to pour out my feelings and anger onto the paper. Boy! Was I surprised to learn how much better I felt after that!

As time went on, I wrote when I

needed to vent my emotions and soon started a journal. Eventually I found that insights and answers to my questions came into my mind as I wrote. My journal was my source of security and therapy.

But more was happening and I knew it! Having been a *URANTIA Book* reader for many years, I knew of the presence of our Thought Adjusters and other spiritual agencies that are here to specifically help us in our paths. I became aware that at times my writings contained a certain slant. They were specifically directed to practical ways to help me see how to walk through any situation.

I soon felt a need to start a daily morning prayer time. And I continued to do my journal writing as part of it. I would hold my journal on my lap and get very quiet and still, then proceed

into my prayer/communication with God. Often as I talked with God, thoughts would come into my head that seemed very beneficial and helpful. I immediately wrote them down. Writing down my spiritual goals and aspirations would often bring more insights to me. All this was still done as part of my communicating with God.

At certain times after I had been very still and quiet, a gush of information would just pour through my thoughts. I found I was coming up with ideas that I didn't think I had known. Some of them could easily be from my "subconscious reservoir of mortal experience," while other ideas seemed more likely to be "inspiration and guidance" from my superconscious.

Writing in my journal as a part of my prayer time is still very important to me. Prayer has taken on new dimensions. As thoughts and then understandings about certain situations become apparent, I write them down. And this, in turn, leads to more understanding about my prayers.

To those who are inclined to write and find it easy to put words on paper, writing as part of the prayer time is a wonderful way to start the day. "

The back cover tells about our next theme. But we are most happy to have articles on other topics too.

*MUSICAL from page 4.*

the simplest gestures in their behalf. Thank them for the revelation that has been such a catalyst to the growth of your personal spiritual insights. The angels are interested in and appreciate our simple poetry and music. And of course no harm can come from our attempts to get to know the angels better. Don't be surprised if you feel more of them hanging around, just beyond your physical vision, when you start trying to verbally express your worshipful tendencies and growing awareness of the morontia reality.

There was a time in my life when, even though I had been reading *The URANTIA Book* for years and was an

active study group member, it slowly dawned on me that something was incomplete in my personal religion. I soon discovered that I had been overlooking the fundamental message of the *URANTIA* teachings and all religions: To enter more fully into the cosmic sociology, devote time each day to worship, meditation, prayer and attempted communion with the unseen powers.

When I realized what was lacking in my daily routine, I created my first prayer-song. I would like to share it with you and hope that you discover for yourself that improvisations of musical expression applied to prayer life can be exhilarating. "





# Prayer in

## A Prayer Theory of Management

*By Bill Cooper  
Houston, Texas*

My career has thrown me some interesting curves in the last few years. To start with, I have been promoted into management responsibilities which far exceed my experience. Additionally, my subordinates and I have had to work under the stress of knowing that the large bank we worked for was failing and that our jobs were in jeopardy. Consequently, I have had to exercise some ingenuity to cope with having to learn so much so quickly for my new responsibilities, as well as to deal with the fear and helplessness of myself and my fellow employees. Because these circumstances called for more knowledge and wisdom than I possessed, I was willing to take an unusual approach to management of myself and my subordinates.

The solution which came to mind is a prayer technique. I pray brief silent prayers for assistance whenever ignorance or doubt seems about to overtake me. Then I attend to matters without worry or dither about the subject of my prayer. Sometimes within minutes, but always before embarrassment, I get a useful idea. Sometimes what I get is a whole prioritized plan of action. So far these idea materializations have always performed excellently.

Over the past three years there have been 50 to 100 events where my prayers for help were answered by the sudden occurrence of a fresh approach or the realization of whom

I might ask for help. In most of the early instances, I had pretty much been stumped before I prayed. So a new approach or a new source of assistance was remarkable. Now it is less remarkable because I no longer wait until I am stumped before I engage the spiritual assistance in my work responsibilities. Now I try to

remember to ask for this assistance as soon as I recognize the need for a better quality approach or decision than I have in my mind. This is now several times per day. And I am never disappointed.

This is a technique of finding what I believe is God's help in my

*See THEORY on page 21.*



## What a Friend...

*By Carol Weatherford  
Spring, Texas*

"What a friend we have in Jesus" is a line from a hymn we sang in church when I was growing up. It continued, "What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer." When I was very young, my mother taught me to say my prayers at night: "Now I lay me down to sleep. . . God bless Mommy, God bless Daddy. . . etc." As I grew, I abandoned this nightly ritual. I prayed only when I needed something—mostly material requests. Problems were things for me to struggle and wrestle with on my own. Needless to say, most of the material requests were never granted, and the problems were very difficult to solve.

This pattern continued until a few years ago when our family was faced with a crisis. I struggled and worried with this problem for weeks. I read

books and consulted with experienced people trying to find a solution. Finally, in desperation, I turned to God and said, "Father, I've done everything I know to do. Now I am turning it over to you completely." Immediately I knew the solution and was overcome with the feeling of God's love. I began asking myself, "Why did I wait so long to ask God? Surely if I had sincerely turned it over to him sooner, I would never have become so distraught."

Since this experience I have begun to practice going to God first to ask for his guidance before I tackle my problems. I haven't always remembered to do this, but with time it is becoming the natural thing to do.

Last year I received a transfer to another department at work. It was a

*See FRIEND on page 24.*



---

---

# the Workplace



## *The Gift Has Already*

*By Jeannine Izquierdo  
Houston, Texas*

## *Been Given*

I pray when my eyes first open, thankful for this great day ahead and for my children to be guarded and guided through this day. For my day at the office I bless my co-workers. I also pray for my moment-by-moment dealings with my employer who I, at one time, considered to be difficult to work for. Through my prayers I have come to understand that he is, despite his limitations and shortcomings, the best he can be. I am at his service, which is also God's service. I am always willing to make his day easier. Sometimes I succeed, sometimes I do not, and sometimes I do not have any part of it. No matter, I always keep in mind that he is in his

right place at all times. In my prayer I am thankful that through my boss, God gave me the opportunity to express myself, to experience and to learn.

As I go through my day, I have the ability to perform naturally and effortlessly, I have made my day flow easily without any struggle. I am not stopped by obstacles but rather I go around them and know there is a lesson to learn. I accept the challenge and know God is always in charge, guiding me in how to deal with them successfully. I am in perfect harmony with my employer. I know he is understanding, kind and supportive in his dealings with me as

he is with everyone else.

With prayer, I have changed *me*. With God as my partner, I have accomplished more than all earthly power and might. I now rely upon the Inner Presence for strength, confidence and joy. I firmly believe that there is no such thing as a *perfect* employment, a *perfect* relationship or *perfect* anything. Not only do I have a choice but also a desire for my day-to-day dealings to flow with ease, effortlessly and in harmony with everyone I encounter and everything I do. With the will and the desire to grow, and with prayer, it is possible to reach that perfect place within each and every one of us, in spite of the pitfalls we encounter in our daily lives.

At the end of the day, I close my eyes thanking God for all the blessings he has bestowed upon me. I had a great day!

Prayer is something we do every

*See GIFT on page 11.*

---

---

## Prayerful Problem Solving

*By Skip Weatherford  
Spring, Texas*

Prayer in the workplace is indeed a useful practice when one faces the social and technical challenges of a gulf coast chemical plant. In my attempt to cultivate an unbroken communion with our Father, I find myself putting a "spiritual spin" on a stressful situation by thinking a short prayer, such as, "Father, may your will be done," as I undertake solving the many and varied problems.

One instance where this practice worked for me involved a person

transferred into our workgroup who was resented by another for being so aggressive. This personality clash made it very uncomfortable for all of us, since they even quit speaking to one another. The new fellow was sincere in wanting to get along with everyone, but he didn't want to be the only one to do so. He was amenable to the suggestion to pray about this situation.

As the days passed and our prayers seemed to go unanswered, I

was able to mention to the resentful fellow in a diplomatic way, "I sure wish you two could get along better." He apparently didn't realize how ridiculous this feud was. The next morning he broke the ice with his adversary, and all is well now. The prayers were answered.

To carry our beliefs to the workplace is an excellent way for our fellows to see the Father in us and for us to practice our unbroken communion with our Father. «



# Do You Have a Spiritual Exercise Program?



By Roxy Alessandro Ventola  
Venice, California

Suppose you were a doctor, and you knew all about how the human body works. You knew about the blood system, the heart, the nervous system, the brain, the musculature, the digestive system—you knew everything. And even though you knew everything, you continued to study it. But all this knowledge would not help you maintain your own body's health unless you did something to safeguard it. You could eat a balanced diet, or exercise, or reduce your stress levels, or do biofeedback, or meditate, or play baseball, or stop smoking cigarettes, or cut down on cholesterol, or a million combinations of these things. There is no one program that is right for everyone. The right program for you is the one you will actually do every day. And even then, we are all different. Some people could exercise once a week and stay in great shape, while others may have to exercise once a day.

What I'm getting at is this: do you have a spiritual program that you follow on a daily basis? Or do you think just studying *The URANTIA Book* individually or at study group is enough? If all that you do is study, then you're like that doctor. You are not doing anything to maintain your spiritual health and foster your spiri-

tual growth.

I can't tell you what to do because I don't know what will work for you. But I can say that prayer—just simply talking to God, who loves you, personally, so much that he misses you—should be done as often and as regularly as possible. An attitude of thankfulness for your blessings, which leads to worship, should be a regular part of your spiritual workout. And silent receptivity—listening for the leadings of your Adjuster—should be done every day.

And allow the Spirit of Truth also to indwell you. Have as many remembrance suppers as you can. Remember, the Spirit of Truth is a powerful spiritual tool. Don't forget to use it.

Do you make the efforts required to help your Adjuster master your human mind and animal physical nature? Have you made a conscious survey of your character and discovered what your flaws are, or do you act as if you are perfect? Do you know how you are driven by fear or anger or any one of a number of negative emotions: Is there a pattern in your life? Why not review your life and character and try to change yourself? Sit down and write your life's story on paper. You'd be surprised at what you learn. Actively aid your Adjuster in the inevitable, because you will change—whether it's here or on the Mansion worlds—or you will not survive.

Have you actively practiced forgiveness in your life so that you yourself can receive divine forgiveness? How have you done it? Have you carefully thought back over your life and forgiven everyone and let go of

the resentments and hurts and angers that have built up? Or are you still carrying them around and impeding your own spiritual progress? Have you asked for the forgiveness of people you yourself might have harmed? Give your brothers and sisters the opportunity to forgive you.

Are you a cheerful person? Every day? Consciously work on feeling joy. Start each day with a mental review of all the ways God is good to you, and end each day with a prayer of thanks. Be thankful for the tests, the disappointments, the despairs, all the inevitabilities that develop character.

Do you see God in the people you come into contact with? What about that person who just rubs you the wrong way or may even have hurt you? It's not good enough just to do nothing bad to others; we must actively love our fellows—including that person with whom we'd rather not spend even ten minutes. Do you leave room in your relationships and your life for Adjuster expression?

Do you seek to do service, to be out in the world among your fellows? And do you balance this with times of solitude, times spent with your Paradise Father?

It's a tall order, but keep in mind, God asks only spiritual progress from us, not spiritual perfection. Don't be discouraged when your actions don't live up to your ideals. Be comforted that someday they will.

"The Creator Son, in the flesh, revealed God to men; the Spirit of Truth, in the heart, reveals the Creator Son to men. When man yields the 'fruits of the spirit' in his life, he is

See EXERCISE on page 17.





# Group Worship

By Vince Ventola  
Venice, California



I would like to share with you my purely personal observations and some of the comments newer readers have made through the years, and also note some interesting reactions of those who have been reading *The URANTIA Book* for ten years or longer.

Only to give you a time line: I found the book in 1970. Our movement has been public since 1955. Study groups and conferences and organizational meetings have been taking place for some 30 years, give or take a few.

When one considers the amount

of time spent studying the book, socializing, and dealing with organizational matters, the time we spend together growing and developing in our practice of group worship is seriously imbalanced. I am happy that many readers have satisfying group worship experience in the church or temple of their choosing, but the absence of it in our movement's structure is almost as severe as the separation of church and state.

We pride ourselves in not being a church or religion. We boast that we have no priesthoods lording ecclesiastical authority over our heads. We have been set free. But what have we done with this new and liberating freedom?

Personally, I find the obligatory moments of silence we take before study groups or monthly meetings or conferences, much less than satisfying. Is our fear of ritual so great that we avoid the responsibility of developing new forms?

We are taught spiritual unity and not uniformity. We know the Master tells us we will not think alike. And since action usually follows thought, our action will not be alike either.

Is our agreement that *The URANTIA Book* is the fifth epochal revelation our only bonding glue? We all seem to agree on what it is, and we spend an enormous amount of time trying to figure out what to do with it. But what about the spiritual glue of our movement? The unifying

See *WORSHIP* on page 24.

## A Urantia Worship

*Thanksgiving leads us up into worship. This expression of thanks is offered in that vein. It is designed in the manner of the ancient North Americans.*

Oh Father, we wish to thank you for this glorious and gorgeous creation you have made for us, and for this life in the flesh to experience emotions and thoughts filled with free choice and spirit potential. We are truly thankful for your Son, Jesus Christ, the greatest expression of your love, gentleness and spiritual maturity. May we be your instruments of expression, reflecting your divine spirit of truth, beauty and goodness. And in our social service with our fellow man, may we come equipped with tact, wisdom of mind, tolerance, and the charm of personality. With this grace, presented to our companions, may we also remember to be gracious to ourselves. In our memories may we hold fast a sacred trust, the strength-giving and worthwhile episodes of life, building a reserve of galleries of beauty, goodness and artistic grandeur. The most noble of these treasured memories are recollections of superb friendships—the most precious of these being the relationship with you in spiritual worship. May this give us strength and courage in our daily living and in our solving the problems of an ever-changing existence. Through our hands may your will be done.

By Kathy Beckett  
Fort Wayne, Indiana





# Prayer in a Crisis

By Adrienne Jarnagin  
Houston, Texas

I was away from home at my lake house where there was no phone. It was night, and my guests and I were asleep when I awoke to the sound of someone pounding on the door. There stood a uniformed officer. He carried a message taken by the dispatcher.

"Your daughter, her husband and child were in a car wreck. But don't worry," he said as he saw my shock, "they're alive. The husband and child weren't seriously injured. But your daughter has a broken leg.

"They don't want you to travel at night to be with her," he continued. "It's too far and the weather is very bad. Wait until tomorrow morning to come."

After I was reassured by the officer that it wasn't really very bad, I went back to bed. I prayed that God

would begin healing my daughter, Katie, and that she would be in good hands until I got there. I tried to go back to sleep feeling the assurance that all would be well.

The next morning I explained the situation to my guests. After breakfast I went next door to borrow a phone to call Katie and reassure myself. The hospital connected me directly to her room.

"Oh, Momma," she moaned, "My foot is broken. My arm is broken. My ribs are broken, and they think I have a ruptured spleen."

That's when I really became worried. The adrenaline hit my stomach with a jolt. I had to face the fact that there might be serious internal injuries. I tried to calm Katie and reassure her, doing my best to be calm myself.

After the phone call, I told my guests the seriousness of the situation and asked them to take a walk and let me have time to meditate. I could feel the animal fear rising in me. I lay down and asked God to assist me in handling my fears. I wanted him to ease the fear I could hear in my daughter's voice and to relieve her pain.

I concentrated on the miracle that her small baby was unharmed and her husband was able to get out and help the other motorists. Then I returned to prayer for my fears, so I could calm down and be the strength Katie needed.

What came to me as I relaxed and concentrated was the vision in my mind of a door. I was behind the closed front door of a house. I could see out the windows in the door. All

## Prayer

*Prayer is and prayer does many wonderful things.*

*Prayer is and prayer does a dance to the tune my heart sings.*

*Prayer prays in various ways for self and others, too.*

*Prayer is love to the Father above and benefits me and you.*

*Pray without ceasing, ever increasing our praise to the Lord on high.*

*Pray, then with cheer, and he will draw near, causing our troubles to fly.*

*Pray for your enemies, brothers and friends, that they may learn to love.*

*Pray for all things in the Spirit of Truth, and give thanks to the Lord above.*



By Bill Lloyd  
Moscow, Idaho



my fears were outside trying to get in to me. I turned and walked into the interior of the house. It was a peaceful, warm room, brightly lit. There was a figure who looked like Jesus, dressed in white robes.

He beckoned for me to come and sit by him. It was like a dream but I was awake. He was telling me that I would be safe here. He would keep those fears from my heart and mind. I felt that this was a place in my soul—perhaps it was in my mind—where I could retreat when fears threatened. I was pleading with Jesus to help Katie and heal her.

All through the trial of closing the lake house and driving the 150 miles to the hospital, I could look out the windows of that house in my mind and know that I was safe. It was as if Jesus were there telling me that I was safe from those fears, secure with him. I believe that he was also healing Katie.

I was able to be a strength for Katie, staying in her hospital room even as they worked to drain her collapsed lung. I knew that the situation was bad, but I was still calm and unfrightened. I held her hand through the pain and transferred my strength to her. I didn't have to force my optimism—it was simply there. I was living in faith that all would be well.

It was many difficult days before she could go home, but Katie is recovering very well now."

*GIFT from page 7.*

day. It is the way we think. In essence true prayer is thinking. God is within each and every one of us. God is all there is; you and I are part of him. God works through us, for us.

To be alive, alert and aware is prayer at its highest and most glorious form of expression. It is up to us to choose our thoughts, how we desire our own lives to be. We choose how to live.

There cannot be a God who is kindly disposed one moment and the next cruel. There cannot be a God who created us with impulses and tendencies we can hardly understand and who then punishes us when we make mistakes. God is a universal presence, a divine, and an impartial giver forever pouring himself into his creation.

It is utterly impossible for me to believe in a God who cares more for one person than another. God always answers our prayers. God always says, "Yes." His presence is sufficient for all our needs. God provides for and blesses us abundantly. Every day, every

*See GIFT on page 26.*

## Affirmation

Lord Jesus Christ Almighty  
Won't you hear my humble plea  
I need your blessed spirit  
to control the beast in me

Help me through the seven circles  
To the spheres that lie above  
And help me conquer anger  
With your everlasting love

Let me be an inspiration  
To my brothers in the flesh  
Let me learn to do the will of God  
Through self-forgetfulness

Enlighten my eyes unto the law  
Let me see thy Father's will  
Cleave the commandments onto my heart  
Then let me test my skill

For I now see and recognize  
The Sonship gift of God above  
And volunteer repentance  
In the gospel of his love

And now I am here to spread the word  
Thy Earthly kingdom come  
To all the true believers  
In the Father and the Son

By J. Bauer  
Houston, Texas

© 1988 by J. Bauer







## A Prayer of Faith

By Harry Hebert  
West Monroe, Louisiana

Under the section entitled "The Adjuster's Mission," I read, "They are not interested in making the mortal career easy; rather are they concerned in making your life reasonably difficult and rugged, so that decisions will be stimulated and multiplied." (1192:0/108.5.5)

This one sentence caused me more consternation than any other I have found in *The URANTIA Book*. What a dilemma! After being told that I am most fortunate to be indwelt by a fragment of the Universal Fa-

ther, it is announced that my Thought Adjuster is concerned in making my life difficult. I refused to grow further until this passage could be reconciled with the personality of my Father as I knew him.

In time, I saw it. One who tries to do the will of the Father sees opportunities for doing good and for improving which elude the attention of one not concerned with his will. Decisions which are simple for the carnal minded become complex to him. One determines not to be a

partner to evil in hopes of good outcomes. One finds oneself becoming disassociated with practices and teachings heralded as noble and holy by others. Even the most simple of decisions becomes troubled waters. To wear or not to wear a T-shirt with certain emblems, logos, or messages can become an issue. As issues of all sorts become fully illuminated, their flaws and failings become apparent, and it becomes difficult to be a sponsor or co-partner to many endeavors. One suffers being misunderstood. One strives for a level of self-mastery transcending the goals set by religious groups. One becomes the possessor of knowledge which cannot be transmitted because of the absence of receptivity among one's peers. Indeed, as one struggles to discover and implement the will of God, life can become more difficult and rugged; and indeed, decisions become more numerous and demanding. This is because one determines to sponsor undaunted truth, only symmetrical and unblemished beauty and art, and only the purest of emotions.

Our material world dilemmas are not caused by our Heavenly Father personally amplifying difficulty in order to give us a good workout. Rather our Adjuster would have us maintain a nobility of purpose regardless of our circumstances, and believe me, that can make the inner life difficult and rugged. Fortunately, we know that we are never alone as we appear to stand alone on any issue.

Prayer may involve decision making with God as our witness. Recently I discovered from reading



## An Answered Prayer

By David Glass  
Fort Worth, Texas



Many times I have felt the helping hand of the Father or one of his loving children hereabouts as definite and specific answers to prayer. I would like to share one of those.

Having graduated from Eckerd College after four years of an existentialist study, lectures on alienation, and an insufficient presentation of an integrated realm of reality in which to live, I realized I needed assistance to make sense of life and to give direction to my own. The first answer to a prayer for spiritual assurance came with my finding *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda. Yogananda helped me to sense God in an individualized and personal way. But what was I to do next? Yogananda left for higher worlds in 1952.

There went out from me what I would call an "ALL POINTS ALERT BULLETIN" that more sustaining

truth would be found. This prayer was urgently in my mind and thoughts for about a year and a half as I looked here and there for meanings and values. I followed virtually any leads I learned of. In brief, a friend of mine mentioned *The URANTIA Book*, and I searched from Florida to California before I found it in a metaphysical bookstore in California.

After I had truly and accurately comprehended the significance of this book's being the "Fifth Epochal Revelation to Urantia," I was utterly overwhelmed with discovery and gratitude and the incredible fulfillment of Jesus' universal invitation: "Ask and you will receive." This special gratitude had several elements, among them: thanks that I had found the *Epochal* revelation; thanks that it was published during

See ANSWERED on page 21.



The URANTIA Book that I could call the shots regarding the matter of living beyond this lifetime. Innumerable circumstances evaluated negatively made me ponder the desirability of struggling forever. The knowledge that my meanings and values would not be lost if I defaulted was beginning to cause me to desire to become a defector. I would let my Adjuster keep them forever since they were his handiwork. Then after this lifetime I could simply retire and cease to exist. It sounded inviting.

But wait—if I knew anything, it was that my track record in decision making was a recital of errors. I had made poor judgments regarding college, job opportunities, health habits and in scores of other areas. Perhaps once again I was going to throw out the baby with the bath water. Perhaps just this once, I should yield my will in an important matter to my Adjuster. He sees things from an eternal point of view. My view is finite and my glasses have scratches on them. After searching my heart for several days, while driving to work I prayed the following:

*CONVERSATION from Page 2.*

him. It doesn't matter. The thing is that I feel I can take anything to him.

He is no longer some distant being even though he is so much larger and more powerful than my childhood image. He is very near me, very interested in what I do and how I feel.

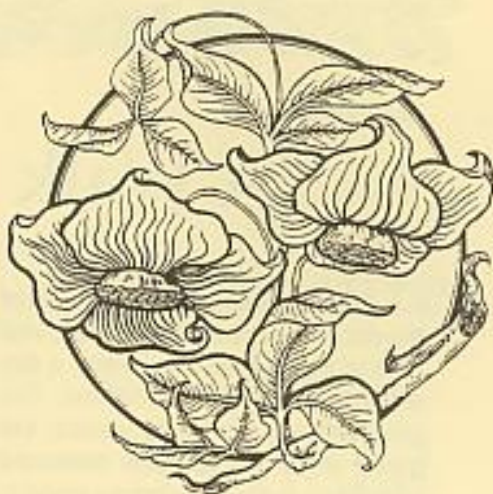
I know that he is interested because he answers my prayers. He talks to me, too. He probably had been talking to me all my life, but I had not been listening. Now I listen. Answers come in different ways. That is fair—requests are different and require different types of answers. For instance, if I am feeling very lonely or isolated, I tell my Father. Then I wait. Usually the answer to this is just a feeling of peace and love, a reminder that he is near and that I am never really alone. This type of answer does not require words. If I am praying for guidance on some issue, the answer might be words or

"For 50 years you have struggled to create a God-consciousness in me. You have enabled me to develop a desire to do the will of God. In pattern with this developed ability, I now make this decision. Insofar as my personally living beyond this lifetime, I am not at all certain that I have found it so delightful that I desire an eternity of it. However, the love of Christ constrains me. I cannot make a decision to default without my Adjuster being deprived of personalization with me; and my default in some small measure would affect the speed of progress of eternal good. Therefore, it is my will that the will of my Adjuster be honored in the matter of my eternal existence. Since he desires to become one with me, I will not deprive him of his wish. For his sake I will agree to a continuity of existence, trusting his judgments and not trusting my own. I have faith that his desire to have me as an eternal co-entity is based on his knowledge of the worth of such a union. I will agree to the forthcoming marriage and trust God with the outcome."\*

images that come into my mind, the answer might come from someone sent into my life to bring me certain information. Answers can be very creative.

It helps to have an open mind and no preconceived notions of what the answer should be. I solve that problem by trusting his judgment to give me what I need as opposed to what I want or think I want. I thought in the past that giving up control was a cop out. Now I merely perceive it to be letting the one who is best qualified to make decisions, make them.

So, these are my feelings about prayer. The Father Fragment is ever near, ever desirous of holding communion with me. I can share every emotion, every need with him. I can trust him to be my friend, my companion, and my counselor. I have immediate access to the infinite knowledge and experience of the Eternal Father, and all of this costs only the love and acceptance I give him.\*



## Open Your Heart

*Open your heart  
And see what can happen  
When you feel the touch  
Of an intimate Friend.  
Open your eyes  
A clear sky is waiting  
Come soar with the wind  
To the spirit's home.*

*See the green valleys  
The pure running waters  
Behind are the shadows  
I'll follow the sun;  
Sorrow and tears  
Are only a memory  
This is the day  
That I will be free.*

*Open your heart  
A treasure is waiting  
But far too precious  
For money to buy;  
Open your heart  
And find what you're seeking  
You'll find the way  
To make dreams come true.*

*Joel Bjorling  
Gilson, Illinois*





## A Walk With God

By Ted Lanier  
Austin, Texas

As I looked out the windshield of the car, I was drawn to the deep, vital blue of the late fall sky. It was a day of bright, shimmering sunshine. The gold and red of turning leaves, the green of juniper and the bleached white of peeled poplar trunks stood in sharp contrast against the translucent sky.

My mind and spirit merged with the beauty and the source of beauty, a growing link which intensified as we neared the new place where we would be meeting our friends: Mo Ranch near Kerrville, Texas. Around a bend and suddenly another crystal depth—wet, green and rippling down a rock river bed. No crags or white-water makers these, but stately shelves of smooth rocks dropping slowly to the river, flanked by the angular shapes of Texas river cypress. Was this the "promised land?"

As we reached Mo Ranch and gathered with our friends—Skip and Carol, Bill and Kaye, and Adrienne—our glances at each others' eyes told the tale: indeed, this was the promised land! We deeply desired to find a place whose beauty and spiritual intent would match our vision and extend it—a vision of our lives in spiritual growth and communion, as Jesus led his. It was a vision to be shared.

The next morning we walked with God—a nature walk and meditation. Down and up the easy foot paths, through the rocks and green cedars, we walked and talked, joked and jounced, and looked at everything. Jays called and quail cooed, and the path crunched beneath our feet.

Then it happened. We didn't plan it really, but we worshiped God

in the natural beauty that surrounded us. We were following along a stream bed that was mostly dry, but with a few pools of cold, clear water. We came to a small clearing with a broad expanse of smooth gray rocks for sitting. We sat and spoke. Thoughts of God and life came and flowed as easily and gently as the wind in the trees, just as clear as the cold water and warmer than the sun.

Then we were silent for a while, lost in worship.

*We hope our experience is a foretaste of the spiritual treats in store for us all when we gather for Adventures in Spiritual Living this October. Come join us at Mo Ranch. It really is as pretty as the brochure enclosed in this issue of The Circles.*

### Let Us Join In Prayer\*

*"When a group engages in community prayer for moral enhancement and spiritual uplift, such devotions are reactive upon the individuals composing the group; they are all made better because of participation . . . Confession, repentance, and prayer have led individuals, cities, nations, and whole races to mighty efforts of reform and courageous deeds of valorous achievement." (999:5/91.5.2)*

We invite you to join us for the next few months to pray daily or weekly, as you prefer, on the following topic. (We would be happy to have your suggestions for future topics.)

### Prayer

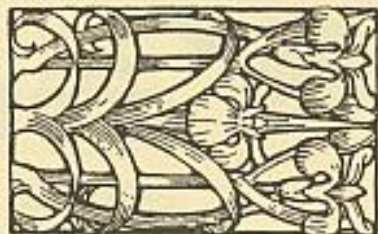
*Let us pray for new adventures in our prayer lives: deeper insights, fresh approaches, and a closer relationship with our Father and our Father-Brother Michael.*





# The Power of Prayer: Study Notes

By Kaye and Bill Cooper—Houston, Texas



[In the following notes, the quoted material appears in italics. Our comments about the reference follow in regular type]

*Prayer, even as a purely human practice, a dialogue with one's alter ego, constitutes a technique of the most efficient approach to the realization of those reserve powers of human nature which are stored and conserved in the unconscious realms of the human mind. Prayer is a sound psychologic practice, aside from its religious implications and its spiritual significance. (999:7/91.6.4)*

We are told to avoid materialistic praying, to pray for "values, not things." (1002:5/91.8.13) On the other hand, Jesus also advised his followers to lay their common needs before our Father in prayer. I spent quite a bit of time in discussion, contemplation and reflection on my own and other people's experience in an attempt to understand just what is the correct province of prayer. I have come to this conclusion for my own life: I give God the opportunity to have input into all phases of my life, including the material. If he doesn't have a will in the matter, that is all right. I have still given him the opportunity.

I don't think such an attitude comes under the heading of materialistic praying, since I don't ask for help to obtain material things for the sake of having luxuries. When material things enter into my prayers, it is because the lack of them is hampering my ability to serve. I pray for what is needed. God has provided various psychological powers within us which are activated by our prayers (some of those "reserve powers of human nature").

As a result of including God in all

my life decisions, I find that life flows more smoothly, that I am calmer, stronger.

*Although the Father is no respecter of persons, in the bestowal of spiritual gifts he is limited by man's faith and by his willingness always to abide by the Father's will. (1831:2/166.4.11)*

This statement is an indicator of some things that influence the power of our prayers. The person prayed for (whether we are praying for ourselves or for others) determines in part how much spiritual benefit he receives. The stronger his faith and the more dedicated his will to doing the Father's will, the more receptive he will be to the spiritual gifts which come his way as a result of the prayer.

*... never forget that the sincere prayer of faith is a mighty force for the promotion of personal happiness, individual self-control, social harmony, moral progress, and spiritual attainment. (999:6/91.6.3)*

Not just any prayer will have these great benefits. It seems important, therefore, to know what is "the sincere prayer of faith." Sincere implies a lack of concealment, an honesty with ourselves and God. We cannot express to God only those things which are "appropriate" or "worthy." We need to make a habit of realizing that God is present in our inner lives every moment of every day. We need to realize that we are sharing our inner thoughts with him even when we are being small or angry. Only then will we be able to begin to ask God to uplift us in those moments.

A "prayer of faith" implies several things: (1) We truly view God as a real person who is present, will hear

our prayers and take action—perhaps right then. We expect answers and are watchful for them. (2) We recognize that we are carefully watched over by our Father. He will give us what we need spiritually. He will support us as we face life. He will supply us the strength needed. He will answer our prayers with the best possible gifts. (3) We have such confidence in the superiority of God's will over any alternative and such dedication to doing his will that we can honestly pray, "Father, if I make a mistake and my choice in this matter is not your will, see to it that I don't succeed. Let your will prevail."

*The earnest and longing repetition of any petition, when such a prayer is the sincere expression of a child of God and is uttered in faith, no matter how ill-advised or impossible of direct answer, never fails to expand the soul's capacity for spiritual receptivity. (1621:1/144.4.2)*

This statement adds to the idea of the "sincere prayer of faith" the element of repetition. The need to repeat a prayer puzzled me for a long time. Surely God catches it the first time around! Experience has shown me that as I pray repeatedly for the same concern, these things happen: (1) new insights arise, (2) new perspectives occur, (3) possible actions enter my mind, (4) the situation is clarified, (5) there are repeated opportunities for my Adjuster to adjust my perspective, and (6) I am more likely to think of ways I can contribute to the answering of my prayer.

*Prayer. . . is the most potent spiritual-growth stimulus. (1002:3/91.8.11)*

This is a powerful statement. For those who are committed to whole-  
*See STUDY NOTES on page 25.*





# Potpourri

By Stephen Finlan  
San Francisco, California

## To Van and Back

Lake Van and the city of Van are located in eastern Turkey. I spent four days there in September, 1988, and a total of three weeks in Turkey.

To a *URANTIA* Bookreader, Van represents an oasis of truth in a darkened world. While this metaphor is no longer true spiritually, it does have a certain material validity: Van is a circle of fertility in a mostly barren and mountainous region near the borders of four of Turkey's not-very-friendly neighbors.

There are farms and towns all around Lake Van. The largest town or city is called Van and is on the eastern shore. Between the city and the lake is the "Rock of Van," an easy-to-defend sharp ridge where the artifacts of many ages have been found: remains of the early Hurrians; fortifications and religious objects from the great kingdom of Urartu (9th-7th century B.C.); and buildings and treasures of the Armenians and the later Turkic invaders. All occupiers of the region used the Rock of Van. If Van (the man) set up any military headquarters on this side of the lake, this would be the logical place for it (but scientists don't date any remains *that far back*).

To refresh your memory of the great deeds of Van and Amadon, who refused to join the system rebellion and remained on Urantia in the flesh for over 150,000 years, read pages 755-762, 821-831, and 860 in *The URANTIA Book*.

All of this is very cerebral. I haven't told you anything about the city. Van today is a dusty, very busy and very Turkish city. The alleys are full of carts where the working people sell melons, grapes, bread, tea,

shoelaces, jackets. One must ever be ready to dodge out of the way of a merchant driving one of these bicycle-carts or a horse-drawn cart. Turks are always in a hurry when they drive, and never in a hurry once they get where they're going. They are a charming people; diligent, loyal, curious, inventive. Some of their traits which used to irritate westerners are being slowly eliminated, like begging. I saw far less begging in Turkey than I see in America.

Travel in Turkey is much like traveling in Europe. You usually

don't have to look very far to find someone who speaks English. The food is decent and the hygiene acceptable. Hotel rates vary immensely. Van is definitely more rural than the main tourist spots in Turkey, yet it *is* a tourist spot (mainly for Turks and Germans). If you get away from the city of Van, you're in the outback, and there are not many English speakers. The lake is blue and clean, and buoyant because of its high salt content.

One of the things that most moved me was something I did *not*

### God is My Cause

God is my Cause, and I am his effect  
God thought of me, and thus I came to be.  
I live in him, in him I have my being  
All else is superficial dross: In him but gain  
all else is loss.

But hark beloved brother, what of you?  
And you, my sister, you are a Thought of God.

Together we comprise his earth-born creatures  
Let's be each other's students  
And be each other's teachers.

And since we are, dear Father, forever your effect  
Through us your glory here in earth  
You will perfect.

By Conrad Sommer  
St. Louis, Missouri



see—an Armenian, even though this is the heart of traditional Armenian territory. The Armenians probably carry more of the blended Amadonite and Adamsonite strains than any other race. They are descended from the Vanites whose religious and racial importance is mentioned. (1021:6/93.7.2 and 895:2/80.7.2) But in the waning days of the Ottoman empire, the Turks began to inflict pogroms upon them, finally driving them out of Van. Ironically, today's Vanites can live in atheistic USSR or materialistic America, but not in Van.

The Turks are making great strides in many areas of civilization, but tolerance for other races comes slow to them. They have difficulty understanding other peoples. They consider westerners decadent and strange, an attitude I considered childish until I saw the German TV programming they receive.

But now Turkey has progressed enough so that, rather than carrying out pogroms, she has to receive and treat the refugees from pogroms in neighboring states. While I was there, Kurds were fleeing into Turkey in the region just south of Van, bearing the burns of chemical weapons rained on them by the Iraqis. Not far from where the Turks committed massacres, they now have set up refugee camps and hospitals to treat Kurds fleeing massacre.

Although rather "macho" today, Turkey has more important mother-worship sites than any country in the world. There is the eerie Cybele cult-site at Midas Sehri: under its strangely-shaped rock outcrops, the Phrygians carried out Cybele's "degrading, bloody...ceremonies." (1081:10/98.4.7) At temples in Aezani and Ephesus the Greeks absorbed the practices and symbols of Cybele, though calling her "Artemis" or "Aphrodite." And the Roman walls of Nicea still stand. This is where the Nicene creed was formulated, and where Mary was certified divine, thus incorporating mother-worship into Christianity. (895:7/

80.7.7, 1080:7/98.3.5 and 1084:6/98.7.7)

*Anyone who would like more details about travel in Turkey, about the sites of the ancient Hittite capital, or of Troy, are welcome to write to me: Stephen Finlan, 2017 San Antonio, #6, Alameda, CA 94501.*

Remember:  
send us any change  
of address to avoid  
missing issues of  
The Circles.

## Tidbits

### INTERESTING QUOTES

#### WASHINGTON PRAYER GROUPS

"... Washington may boast more Christian prayer groups per square block than any other town outside the Bible Belt. What makes D.C.'s prayer groups special is not only their growing numbers but also the prominent political figures... who are among the active members... At one time, the movement was male-oriented, but now there are sessions for couples... and congressional wives... the movement crosses partisan lines and remains rigorously non-political."

Time Magazine, February 6, 1989

#### EVOLUTION

*The New Dinosaurs* by Dougal Dixon is an imaginary field guide "based on the premise that... the 'terrible lizards' survived to continue their domination of the earth to modern times... Dixon... wrought his beasts in strict accordance with scientific principles of evolution. His book reflects a rapidly growing body of knowledge on the many factors that guide and shape the development of life on earth—'the rules God uses to put together animals,' as biologist Michael LaBarbera of the University of Chicago puts it."

US News and World Report  
November 21, 1988

*EXERCISE from page 8.*

simply showing forth the traits which the Master manifested in his own earthly life. When Jesus was on earth, he lived his life as one personality—Jesus of Nazareth. As the indwelling spirit of the 'new teacher,' the Master has, since Pentecost, been able to live his life anew in the experience of every truth-taught believer." (2062:10/194.3.1)

Are you living your life with the heartfelt knowledge that Jesus is living it with you? Are you giving to the Master the best you can? Doesn't our Creator Son—the God of love and mercy—deserve the best life you can live?«



## The Pursuit of Excellence—a story

By Tommie Clendening  
McKinney, Texas

It was early when he determinedly left the porch with his net in hand. He headed quietly out into the field across the road, to patiently wait and watch amid the wildflowers. Suddenly, there it was! A beautiful Monarch butterfly gracefully visiting the flowers. Stealthily he crept up and brought the net down with a gentle swoop! Carefully he checked the folds of netting—only to catch a glimpse of his eluding prey, floating on through the flowers a few feet away. So beautiful! He savored the slight a moment. . . Then, off again. Throughout the morning he continued the pursuit. Sometimes slowly and stealthily, or sometimes breathlessly, his feet barely skimming the ground, occasionally daring and dangerous as he climbed into a tall tree or down a rocky ravine. But always the prize

remained just out of reach.

Finally, late in the day, he rounded a corner and there it sat on the end of a rake handle just inside the old shed. He crept slowly and silently inside and gently closed the old screen door. Now it was his captive! He attempted to net it, but even here it eluded him. Then, as he was about to give up, it came to light right on his shoulder. Such a beautiful, gentle sight! What a moment to treasure! They were friends, he imagined, just for this moment of wonderful ecstasy.

Soon, away it flitted and out the broken pane of the side window. He raced out the door to watch its graceful flight. Then there appeared at the other end of the garden a gorgeous Blue Swallow-tail, completely shadowing the thought of the simple Monarch. Such a prize! Just as

he was ready to dart off in hot pursuit, his mother stepped out of the back door to call him to dinner. As he dropped off to sleep that night, happily exhausted, he remembered the excitement and thrills of the day of pursuit, as well as the moments of frustration, determination, near giving up and, of course, the final ecstasy and treasure of the moment they had shared. Then he contemplated the dream of tomorrow's pursuit of the fairy-like Blue Swallow-tail. Ah, tomorrow. . .

Such is the pursuit of excellence. The goal is ever elusive, changing and expanding, but our persistent pursuit of its elusive character gives the very meaning to life. "Be ye perfect, even as my Father in heaven is perfect." The continual striving for this goal set forth by God's beloved Son is life. . . Ah yes, the pursuit.\*

## Computation of the Distance Between Uversa and the Central Universe

By Terence Elliott  
Dallas, Texas

1. Number of seconds of time in one year .....	31,557,600 seconds.
2. Velocity of light .....	186,280 miles/second.
3. Distance of one light year .....	5.878 trillion miles.
4. Velocity of a Solitary Messenger .....	841.621 billion miles/second.
5. Computed time elapse for a Solitary Messenger to traverse one light year .....	6984 seconds = 1.94 hours.
6. Distance across Orvonton (p. 359/360) .....	500,000 light years.
7. Computed elapsed time for the traversal of Orvonton by a Solitary Messenger .....	110.65 years.
8. Elapsed time for the mission of a Solitary Messenger from Uversa to the Central Universe (p. 259) 1,000,000 years of standard time** = .....	5 million Urantia years.
9. Computed distance from Uversa to the Central Universe .....	11.5 billion light years.

\*\*Standard time relates to Urantia time at a ratio of 1:5 as referred to on pages 1309 and 1310. The distance is computed by dividing the one-way (2.5 million years) journey of the Solitary Messenger to the Central Universe by the amount of time required for the traversal of Orvonton (110.65 years), which yields a result of 22,600. This is the number of times greater that the distance is than that across Orvonton = 11.5 billion light years, or 65 billion, trillion miles.

If one considers that 1 billion of our seconds of time takes almost 32 years to elapse, and 1 trillion seconds takes almost 32,000 years to elapse, then if 65 billion, trillion miles is to be contemplated, it would involve a number equivalent to the number of seconds in 2,080 years, each second of which would span 32,000 years, for a total number of seconds equal to miles.

Of no small degree of comfort to us is that the Adjusters are able to travel to Paradise in a few moments.



# PARENTING

By Gene Joyce  
Richardson, Texas

## The Parent as Mediator

Our heavenly Father is the parent of all men, adult as well as child, and the human parent is in a sense the mediator or go-between. As parenthood becomes more voluntary—a matter of conscious choice—it behooves the mortal parent to become increasingly aware of the awesome responsibility of bringing a child into the world. And so long as we call God our "Father" in heaven, then the human father will fortuitously discover that he stands in the place of God in the eyes of his children. At least this is true in the early years of childhood. Such a concept merits a pause to think.

God in his wisdom set up a universe of cause and effect so that man would begin to notice how his choices of action, his decisions, brought about certain results. Being a thinking animal, he starts to separate good results from bad results; and even though he does not always assign the true reasons for the results in his mind, he does try to placate the powers that be in order to influence the outcome. So it is with the child. At the bottom level of experience it is necessary that the parent wield some control over the actions of the child in order that he does not come to harm or even destroy himself.

Here is where wisdom, discretion and clear thinking are vitally important. Luring a child toward higher behavior brings better results

than threats or fear. Jesus refused to advertise evil by saying, "Don't do." Rather did he exhort his disciples to follow him, saying, "Come, I will show you the way."

What is the purpose of punishment? For the loving parent, the only reason for punishment is to get the attention of the child sufficiently to make him aware that he has done something potentially harmful to himself or others. Modern sociology has long reached the conclusion that punishment, to be effective, must be swift and sure—not necessarily severe. Blessed are both the child and the parent when sufficient opportunities arrive early in the child's life when punishment can be almost instantaneous and virtually identical to the crime.

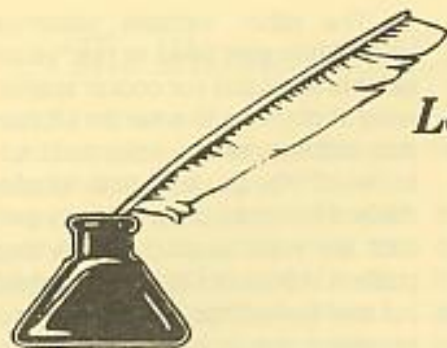
Two examples come to mind involving my son and me. Chris was not quite one year old when I was holding him in my arms one day and the phone rang. I don't remember how long the conversation was, but evidently it was longer than a baby's patience could tolerate. So he leaned over and bit me. Instinctively and without conscious thought, I instantly bit him back on his shoulder. He cried, but he never bit another person to my knowledge. Actually I was rather appalled at what I had done. Luckily my bite was through his T-shirt and didn't break the skin, but it did leave a bruise plainly showing my teeth.

The other incident occurred when Chris was three or four years old. He and I and our cocker spaniel were all planning to enter the kitchen door at the same time. I stepped back to let Chris go first and Mocha dashed in ahead of us as dogs and cats are wont to do. As the dog pushed in front of Chris, he reached out and kicked her. This time, as I remember the incident, I did have a second of conscious thought. Any mistreatment of animals fills me with violent antipathy, and so I managed to kick Chris as he was still just ahead of me. As before, the lesson was learned the first time around.

As a result, life was easier for both Chris and me. We ended up with a much better relationship than existed between my daughter and me, because I always punished Chris the instant he did something I considered reprehensible. As a child I had grown up without much respect for men in general and always told myself, "I won't be responsible for raising another worthless man." Granted, this was a terrible attitude, but my motives were good. Now I can see how the Father's mercy turned my instant discipline for Chris into a blessing for both of us. Even though I was not wise enough to do the right thing for the right reasons, it still turned out all right because I was sincerely doing the best I knew how—and I loved him dearly."







## Letters to the Editor

**We'd like to hear your opinion too. Write to us. Everyone enjoys reader's letters.**

Dec. 25, 1988

Dear John,

Thank you very much for your thoughtful remarks published in *The Circles*, Winter 1988 edition, entitled, "A Better Direction." It was indeed refreshing and heartwarming to read such a constructive point of view that is inclusive of the URANTIA movement, the stance of the world at large, as well as being a long range view in the perspective of time.

As a URANTIA Book student I find myself in two arenas of concern: first, I am on a personal quest for spiritual growth, intellectual grasp, and creative ways of living as a mortal son of God and as a cooperative member of the brotherhood of humankind. Secondly, I am seeking to apply what I gain in my personal quest as a participant in the URANTIA movement.

We who have begun the study of the Fifth Epochal Revelation have no corner on the spiritual market. We do not represent the spiritual elite nor do we hold a place in the avant garde of spiritual souls on earth. The Mother Theresas of the world, the humble and pure souls who serve their fellows with no thought other than to do God's work on Earth, for the most part are not readers of *The URANTIA Book* but religionists who have found God in the religions of the Fourth Epoch and whose quest for God has led them into personal spiritual experience that *The URANTIA Book* tells us about.

Many of us readers of the URANTIA papers are refugees from churches and synagogues where we could not find living truth or spiritual experience and through *The URANTIA Book* are learn-

ing that spirituality is first and foremost a personal experience which, once found, can be had anywhere.

It is no surprise that our movement is floundering in confusion and is fraught with political woes. This is an inevitable circumstance. Even the chosen apostles of Jesus had to go through a period of mind attunement and spiritual growth that long exceeded their short tenure with the human Jesus. We are all well schooled as to their tendency to bicker and argue over their places in the kingdom. Without this all-important personal, living, and dynamic experience of God, not only does our spiritual development stagnate but no amount of revelation or teaching will help us. All one need do is cite the example of the apostle Judas Iscariot who could not break through his preconceptions of the expected messiah and who experienced only disappointment and disillusionment in the face of the greatest living revelation ever given to humankind, even to the entire local universe. Only by his failure to surrender pride was he blocked from the personal experience of the spirit of God and this in the very presence of the Living Truth!

We cannot expect our movement, which is only in its infancy, to automatically possess spiritual resources that only come in personal, actual experience and in attunement with the spiritual agency of the Father, Son and Spirit and with each other through loving service. We should expect to make many errors of judgment and be able to learn from them. We should expect to be disappointed and disillusioned and learn from it. We should anticipate many important les-

sons about love and forgiveness, trust and openness, being able to change and adjust our understanding as dynamic changes occur in our world. If we are willing to take the first steps in faith... all else is assured.

Martin Greenhut

Great Barrington, Massachusetts

January 7, 1989

Dear John,

Recently I read your article entitled "A Better Direction?" I thought it was well written and the content was excellent. Thank you for writing it. Is attraction better than promotion? What role do our unseen friends play in an individual's discovery of *The URANTIA Book*? What is the difference between fostering and spreading? What are our true motives in these sometimes perplexing situations when faced with sharing truth in an original way or turning someone on to the book?

Certainly sincere prayer, coupled with living faith, will help us greatly in answering these and other similar questions in a living and dynamic way which remembers that Jesus was (and is) interested in the individual; his or her relationship with the Father in heaven.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Johnson

Renton, Washington

January 1989

Dear John,

Your article on "A Better Direction?" gave rise to my imagination, as your articles always do. But this time, due to my successful experiences in sharing *The URANTIA Book*, I am moved to comment.

Remember the last time someone tried to sell you on brand X religion? If you were actually shopping around for truth, you would have in mind why other religions had not worked for you, and you would also know what you believe.

Now if someone took the time, first, to find out those things about you, and then told you that the new revelation substantiates your disbeliefs and reinforces your basic beliefs, he would have your attention. If he told you how right



*THEORY from page 6.*

daily life. These are prayers for insight and guidance. They may be prayers for help in doing something well, but they are never prayers for God to do my will—and that is important to the dependability of the answers I get. I am never looking for any specific answer. I am always asking for the best approach to the circumstances I face. I intentionally invite any response. What I get is an application of God's ways to my work situation. If I have the audacity to make God my partner, then he deserves to be my senior partner.

When I had to calm fears and peculiar interpersonal problems in our office the week my bank failed, I had no idea what to do. So I prayed and it came to me that I should proceed thoughtfully to address each person's hurt feelings and fears. I had no concept of specifically what to say or do for any of the several employees who needed reassurance, but I launched immediately into dealing first and at greatest length with the persons whose behavior was most objectionable and erratic. The technique was to proceed patiently, step-by-step, expecting to discover solutions as I proceeded. I relied on feelings and insights as much as words since part of the process was to allow spiritual guidance to participate, and it did at the very moment when it was most useful and meaningful.

There was nothing miraculous or even impressive about the answers I got except that I got ideas I had not had before, and when I pursued them patiently and thoroughly,

---

*you were, you would want to see this new revelation for yourself! Thus The URANTIA Book was presented to me.*

*My point is simply this: If you are considering the prospects of sharing the knowledge you have found in The URANTIA Book, you might first ask your prospective reader to share his religion.*

*Donna Stiegemeier  
Dallas, Texas*

they worked. That was a miracle so far as I was concerned. This technique of management results in the application of lots of listening, understanding, motive-seeking, communicating, patience, forgiveness, etc. When you ask for spiritual help, you can expect to get spiritually progressive approaches as your answers.

I don't know where the answers to my prayers come from. Nor do I care. It might be that answers arise from some knowing area of my own mind. Since mind itself is a spiritual ministry and mysterious in how it even functions, I would not be the least bit disappointed if I learned that my prayers and answers were merely a creative thinking process rather than a dispatched answer. The miracle is not the source of the answers to my prayers. The miracle is that they come and they are high quality and can be counted on, and that my faith in God and myself increases because the answers are reliable.

Working in association and consultation with the spiritual realm is exciting, invigorating and joyous. And if you are wise in not being sanctimonious in the process, no one is going to resent you for using God as your management consultant. This way of living is more fun for everyone involved. I even like to think the spirit beings involved in this service to us enjoy it also. «

---

*ANSWERED from page 12.*

my lifetime; thanks that among the very few bookstores in America that had the book, I had found my way to one of them; thanks that my past values were confirmed; thanks for the confirmation that I would eternally survive; thanks that I could let go of friends and family who precede me to the mansion worlds confident that everything would be wonderful for them; thanks that the revelation was bestowed in English; thanks that the headquarters was in America and easily accessible; thanks that I found the URANTIA leadership in time to have met Christy; thanks for

the realization that being a host to an Adjuster was a guarantee of my indomitability regardless of the circumstances I might encounter on earth; thanks that I learned so much more about my Heavenly Father.

And I would continue to pray today that all readers would not hesitate to mention and introduce the book to people who show any interest at all in the desire for greater knowledge and wisdom and sonship, even to those who might not show such interest until *after* they have examined the book. Let us simply ask a person if he is interested. Bear in mind, all he can say is "No," and that makes it possible to share the book with minimal disappointment. I have learned never to prejudge that another person doesn't want to know more about his Heavenly Father and his eternal spiritual destiny. Everyone is interested in love, understanding, friendship, and eternal survival. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Let us meaningfully continue to pray for more harvesters to work in the Father's vineyard. The emphasis should be on meeting the spiritual needs of the individual and not on finding people to whom one can give the entire revelation. The priority should be on ministering to a fellow child of God, not on escalating the propagation of the readership of the entire book. Thereby can we participate in answering *the prayers of others.* «

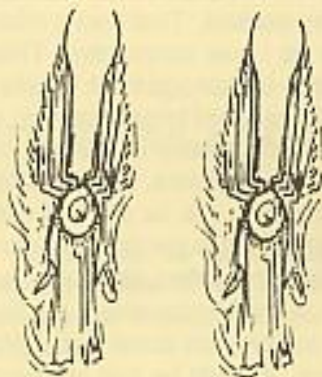
Share The Circles  
with friends.  
Send us their  
names and  
addresses.

Subscriptions:  
See back cover.



# about angels

By Gene Joyce  
Richardson, Texas



**The angels "love human beings and only good can result from your efforts to understand and love them." (419:1/38.2.1)**

When we reach the third circle of spiritual advancement, an individual guardian angel (a pair, really) is assigned to us. *The URANTIA Book* says very little about how she works with us while we live in the material realm, but it states that she will be our teacher and open consort throughout our ascension to the Universal Father. Do we have the ability to establish real communication with her while we live in the flesh, or must we wait until we awaken on the mansion worlds? If our angel is so intimately involved with us, what is to prevent us from communicating with her here? While we may safely assume that she is aware of our words, and even our thoughts, is it possible for us to grow spiritually and/or train our minds to receive her communications?

I always assumed that the voice I occasionally heard in my mind was my Adjuster's. As I developed spiritually, it became clearer and spoke more frequently. I asked questions and did my best to listen for the answers. Eventually I reached the point that

I could separate the answers from the internal workings of my mind. Then I learned, to my great surprise, that it was my personal seraphim who were counseling and advising me. Yes, the Adjuster was there too, but he communicated on a deeper level than articulation.

After I adjusted to the fact that I was talking to my angels instead of my Adjuster, I asked a great many questions. Nothing was too trivial or too exalted to ask. I asked their names. I asked their history. I asked about my Adjuster's history. I asked about their past and present work with me. I asked everything I could think of. I even (and still do) played "Can you top this" humor contests with them. (I never won, and their humor is very hard to understand or even to remember.)

Last Spring I had emergency surgery and was placed in the observation room next to the nurses' station. Gradually, I became aware of the fact that my angels were trying to get my mental attention, but I was drowsy and didn't really comprehend it. Suddenly, I felt a tug on the tube coming out of my nose. I said, "Is that you, J\_\_\_\_\_?" The answer came immediately, "Yes,

we thought we'd have some fun." Because my seraphim had made a special effort to let me know they were nearby, my hospital stay was much more endurable.

My angels have become a part of my life in a way I never dreamed possible. To be able to talk to my seraphic guardians about my spiritual progress and to ask their advice on various activities is moving beyond words. I am aware of my spiritual immaturity and of the fact that I am undergoing a definite course of training at the hands of master teachers. Knowing that I will always have their companionship and guidance makes my lifelong search for spiritual truth well worth the confusion and mental adaptation which I go through with each new truth.

My angels answer innumerable questions. I simply ask the question and wait for the answer. When I ask questions, the answers may come immediately in the form of a short sentence. If an answer is more complex, my mind sometimes catches their thought and puts it into words, but generally, complicated answers come in the form of mind images.

I communicate best when my mind is quiet, but I am not beyond asking for advice during hectic or upsetting times. One day my husband called me at work and asked me to come home because he had severe abdominal pain. I was undecided whether or not I should call an ambulance, so I asked my angels. The answer came immediately, "Yes, as soon as possible." My husband had emergency surgery that evening.



# SPHERES of INFLUENCE



## Bryon Art Prints

By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas

"Master Universe" and "Journey to Paradise" by John Byron. Published by Jesusonian Foundation, 1790 30th St. #400, Boulder, Colorado 80301. \$6.95 each.

Paradise, Havona and the seven superuniverses lie against the midnight blue of space. The softly glowing universe spirals give one a sense of the beauty of God's creation, not

My seraphim never order or otherwise pressure me to do something; I have to make all decisions. Generally they give indications of which way they want me to go, but the decision is always mine. Answers to questions involving a decision sound something like this: "It would please us very much if you did," or "There is no reason to." In some situations they give no indication of their preference, but simply inform me that I must make the decision. In all cases, I have to seek information or advice before it is given.

In general, my angels provide wise counsel, insights into daily life situations or information about whatever mystery I'm currently pondering over. My life is stable, so I seldom ask for day-to-day guidance, but I do ask for insights into situations which bother me, and I often ask questions about things *The URANTIA Book* does not discuss. I do not receive answers for questions

as we usually see it—in the natural details of our one small planet—but as the vast star clouds of our Master Universe.

This view of the universe is available in two posters published by Jesusonian Foundation: "The Master Universe" and "Journey to Paradise." Both are approximately 18 by 24 inches and are bordered by com-

plementary colors which give the prints a matted look. They are very professionally printed with rich colors and a glossy finish. They were reproduced in reduced size on page 17 and the back cover of the "Life After Death" issue of *The Jesusonian*. (For ordering information, see "Art Prints" in the "Things to Share" section of this issue.)

when I am unable to accept the answer, or for questions which are "none of my business." Yet, even now, angelic communication is not completely easy. My mind loves to take over and answer questions. It is often difficult for me to silence it long enough to listen for the angel's voice. I have been deceived at times, so I cannot over-emphasize the ease with which the mind can produce a voice which approximates that of angels.

I have found nothing in *The URANTIA Book* entirely precludes our being able to communicate with our guardian angels during the material life. I spent

long years in lonely spiritual search before I even became aware of an inner voice and it was several more years before I communicated at will with my angels. Communication is hard to establish, and the mind is adroit in leading one astray. Yet, for the mortal who places a high priority on communication with his guardian angel, this road can be haltingly traveled. It is a hard path, a path full of disappointments and waiting, but if a mind strives to communicate, eventually, communication will come.

By Carol J. Davidson  
Clovis, New Mexico

### *The Circles* Calendar

*The Circles* is published three times a year. (We also solicit donations in November and March.) Our yearly calendar:

	Articles Due	Mail
Spring-Summer	Dec. 15	May 1
Fall	April 15	Aug. 15
Winter	Aug. 1	Dec. 1



*FRIEND from page 6.*

good move for me. However, I was quick to discover that there were a lot of bad feelings left by the person I replaced. It didn't seem to matter that I was not the last person. I was in her position so I must be the same. Determined not to let this continue, I began right away to invite Michael to all meetings with me. I asked him to help me see the situation with God's eyes and to let God flow through my responses. As a result, these meetings were and still are very successful. The working environment is cooperative and friendly.

As problems arise in my life, I immediately take a quick second to ask for God's help "in the moment." Things always work out better than if I tried to do it alone. It is comforting and reassuring to know I have a wise and loving friend who will always be there with me.

Inviting Jesus to always be with me and learning to turn everything over to God in prayer has been the greatest joy of my life. Today the words from that old hymn are very special to me . . . "What a friend we have in Jesus. . . What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer."

---

*WORSHIP from page 9.*

times of group prayer, thanksgiving, and worship—when the intellect shuts down and all conflicts are put aside? When, as a group, we seek God's will and grow together in silent receptivity and worship.

Consider the thousands of hours spent at organizational meetings. Consider the time spent studying, socializing. Why, after 30 years, is so little time spent in group worship?

"Jesus did not require of his followers that they should periodically assemble and recite a form of words indicative of their common beliefs. He only ordained that they should gather together to actually *do something*—partake of the communal supper of the remembrance of his bestowal life on Urantia." (1091:9/99.5.10)

Study groups are autonomous,

but I do find it disturbing that some groups never experience or allow time for group worship or remembrance suppers. It simply is not present, or rarely present, or maybe once a year on August 21st. . .

Many readers, new and old, have stated that study groups have become dry. They love the book, but study sessions never seem to deal with the personal problems of day-to-day living. There is never room or time to get personal and to share these individual concerns with the group and seek group wisdom.

I recently attended a study group where there was no discussion at all. The main goal seemed to be to storm through the reading and attain the goal of finishing the entire paper.

We are missing a great opportunity. The very light we can shine could be illuminated a hundred times. And by our fruits, others would want to join us. We may all have the intellects which feast on *The URANTIA Book*, but I pray we nourish our hearts and souls as a group.

I would like to leave you with this quote: "There is a real purpose in the socialization of religion. It is the purpose of group religious activities to dramatize the loyalties of religion; to magnify the lures of truth, beauty, and goodness; to foster the attractions of supreme values; to enhance the service of unselfish fellowship; to glorify the potentials of family life; to promote religious education; to provide wise counsel and spiritual guidance; and to encourage group worship." [Emphasis mine.] (1092:2/99.6.2)

I pray we all grow in guidance and wisdom."

---

*ASKING from page 3.*

keeping open the spiritual channels of receptivity. These channels are created and enlarged by praying—praying sincerely and in faith. "In faith" implies two things: (1) you expect God to help you in a wise and loving way, and (2) you are persistent in continuing to pray and expect help, even though at times you see no

results. Especially at first, you may not see how God is helping you, but he is. Persistence will eventually be rewarded as you begin to receive his help and to recognize that you have been answered.

I once shared this technique of asking in the moment of need with a group which included a woman who was quite new to the idea of a personal, interactive relationship with God. She later commented to me that she'd asked God to tell her what to say while in the midst of an argument with her teenage daughter but got no help. In this woman's case, she had not established her channels beforehand. Praying and being taught and led by God in private, quiet moments makes it easier to receive his subtle influence in the more stressful moments of conflict or need.

Another reason for apparent failure is expecting some sort of conscious reception of God's leading. It is entirely possible for you to be consciously aware of God's response to your prayer in the moment of need. It is far more likely, however, that you will not experience a distinguishable answer before you must act. You will usually need to go on with your situation in *expectant faith* that God will help in some way.

One of the things that helps you to proceed in faith is looking at the larger picture. You may need to try many times before you are able to recognize that God has given you help (all the time digging out the channels of your receptivity with prayer). You may have to wait some time after an event before your hindsight enables you to recognize his help. As you become wiser in discerning what was needed in a situation, you will begin to realize that what happened was what was needed. When my son was younger and going through his teenage years, he and I had many verbal conflicts. When I asked God for help in the midst of these conflicts, I would have preferred that he magically change my son's behavior immediately.



That, however, was not what either one of us needed. I needed to learn to see the situation in such a way that it did not make me angry. As I learned to remain calm and without anger, my son learned that two people can actually talk through a situation and come to a solution rather than give up in fury. We both got what we needed.

Asking for help in the moment of need works wonders for parents and children, for spouses, for employees and bosses. It can be used when you must make a decision and where you need strength, self-discipline, courage, patience. It can be used at any time and any place. In fact, it is most surely one of the steps along the road to that mysterious goal: constant communion.

Asking for help in the moment brings God into those moments and into partnership with you. Each time you choose to turn the situation over to God and trust his guidance, that choice is an act of your will choosing God's will. That choice reinforces your desire to do God's will and enhances your attunement with him. Because you ask and then go on with your actions assuming his help, you have given permission for God to uplift your will to harmonize with his. "Such a creature choice is not a surrender of will. It is a consecration of will, an expansion of will, a glorification of will, a perfecting of will. . . ." (1221:6/111.5.5)«

---

*STUDY NOTES from page 15.*

hearted pursuit of divine ideals, it is like a giant neon arrow, saying, "This is the way."

How does this statement fit with that on page 1000 indicating that "wholehearted and loving service in unselfish ministry" is the more frequent facilitator of contact with the Adjuster than meditation (and prayer—by inference from the next paragraph)? (1000:2/91.7.1) After much thought and some experience, I have some ideas. Meditation implies time set aside to be alone. Prayer, on the other hand, often

accompanies the act of serving others. One of my first actions when recognizing that someone in my presence has a need, is to open a receptive channel to the spirit's guidance—I include my Father in the encounter.

The active, growing religionist will eventually come to experience many kinds of prayer—including group prayer, private prayers of the heart, and prayers in the moment of need when serving. Prayer in the narrow sense of private devotions may not facilitate Thought Adjuster communication more than service, but prayer in the broadest sense includes those times of service and is indeed the "most potent spiritual-growth stimulus."

*But prayer need not always be individual. Group or congregational praying is very effective in that it is highly socializing in its repercussions. When a group engages in community prayer for moral enhancement and spiritual uplift, such devotions are reactive upon the individuals composing the group; they are all made better because of participation. (998:5/91.5.2)*

As a result of having participated in many group prayers, I am convinced of the benefit of sharing our spiritual lives in this manner. While not intruding on the realm of private prayers of the heart, the group prayer is a place where each individual may bring his or her concerns and know that caring friends will join in praying for them—often with noticeable results. In our group we habitually spend as much time or more in prayers of thanksgiving as in petitions. Participants have found that thanksgiving is particularly uplifting and expands the joy in their lives. Through the years, I have noticed that the higher spiritual prayer of one individual influences all in the group to raise their own sights to a higher spiritual level. Sharing prayer together builds friendship bonds of great strength.

*Jesus. . . did exhort his believers to employ prayer as a means of*

*leading up through thanksgiving to true worship. Jesus deplored that so little of the spirit of thanksgiving was to be found in the prayers and worship of his followers. (1640:4/146.2.15)*

Jesus was concerned that there was so little thanksgiving in his followers' prayers and worship not because it is something they should be doing, but because it is an important element of prayer and worship. We may begin our prayers thinking of ourselves and our problems, then move on to prayers for others, but we have shortchanged ourselves if we don't include thanksgiving somewhere. Thanksgiving lightens the heart. I have found several times that prayers of thanksgiving will lift those occasional times of depression that most of us experience.

Thanksgiving is important to expand our initially circumscribed view of prayer into the full experience of a genuine relationship with another person—our Father. A child who speaks to his parent only to ask for something is immature and self-centered. The healthy child grows into a more mature communication which includes just talking things over and expressing appreciation and love, as well as asking for help and advice. And as the parent of a child who is becoming an adult, I can assure you that the parent rejoices to share this more mature relationship.

Thanksgiving also has the power to lift us up into worship. Knowing that gives us an excellent technique to facilitate our entry into worship.

*Jesus taught his followers that, when they had made their prayers to the Father, they should remain for a time in silent receptivity to afford the indwelling spirit the better opportunity to speak to the listening soul. The spirit of the Father speaks best to man when the human mind is in an attitude of true worship. . . . Worship, taught Jesus, makes one increasingly like the being who is worshiped. (1641:1/146.2.17)*

One of the purposes of prayer is

*See STUDY NOTES on page 26.*



*STUDY NOTES from page 25.*

to prepare us for and lead us to worship. In a sense we could say that this function is one of prayer's greatest powers since worship is an experience which transforms us, making us more and more like our Father."

*GIFT from page 11.*

hour, we must meet the realities of life and cooperate with these realities with joy, peace, understanding and harmony. We believe, we receive, we are blessed. Our prayer is answered before it is expressed.

When spirit brings its gift by pouring itself through us, it can give us only what we are willing to accept:

(1) Prayers are effective, no matter whose they may be, because they embody certain universal principles. When these principles are understood, they can be consciously used. There is a place within us which is perfect, untouched and unclaimed by day-to-day living or appearances.

(2) Prayer is an acceptance of the spiritual law that is there and an alignment of ourselves with it. The better we flow with spiritual law, the less friction there is going to be.

(3) Prayer is constructive because we are able to establish closer contact with the Divine Presence. We are less influenced by the appearances surrounding us. We judge less according to the outer world.

(4) Prayer is essential to the conscious well-being of the soul. There is a joy in our communion with the Infinite. We get in touch with our oneness with God. All beliefs and limitations disappear.

(5) Prayer is necessary to the nature and intellect of man, as food is necessary for the well-being of the physical body.

(6) Prayer has power by belief and acceptance.

The gift has already been given. Be willing to accept it, willing to let go and let God take care of it. All there is to do is spend a few mental coins. It isn't much to ask, is it? God does

not put a challenge in front of us which we cannot handle. From time to time, due to our own limitation, difficulties come up. With prayer they can be handled. When the task seems too gigantic, there is a magic word: HELP! It does work.

Prayer stimulates countless millions of people to higher thoughts and nobler deeds. Those who work for attunement with God, as known to us in Christ, accomplish more through prayer than all of earthly power and might. When we believe in him and his promises, our desires are answered. To give thanks daily is to build greater spiritual awakening. The physical consciousness becomes attuned to the consciousness of the creator, either collectively or individually. We experience uncon-

ditioned faith, reliance upon the Inner Presence, strength, confidence and joy. The conscious blend of our thought with spirit is essential to the well-being of every part of us.

*The URANTIA Book* states: "Remember, even if prayer does not change God, it very often effects great and lasting changes in the one who prays in faith and confident expectation. Prayer has been the ancestor of much peace of mind, cheerfulness, calmness, courage, self-mastery and fair mindedness in the men and women of the evolving races." "But the truest prayer is in reality a communion between man and his maker." (998:3/91.4.5 and 998:1/91.2.3)

Thank you, Father, for the gift. Thank you, Father, for the healing."

## SOURCES OF MATERIALS

Jesusonian Foundation  
1790 30th St., Suite 400  
Boulder, CO 80301

### Books and Magazines

Concordex .....	\$9.95
Paramony .....	\$9.95
Life After Death .....	\$3.95
\$2.95 each for 10-99	
\$1.95 each for 100 or more	
Family Meeting Handbook.....	\$7.95
The URANTIA Book .....	\$24.95

### Pamphlets

Introduction to The URANTIA Book 10 brochures .....	\$7.50
100 brochures .....	\$60.00
Pamphlets by Dr. Sprunger ( 7 different titles) .....	\$1.25
Origin of The URANTIA Book (Dr. Sprunger) .....	\$0.20

### Art Prints by John Byron

"The Master Universe" 18X24 .....	\$6.95
"The Journey to Paradise" 19X24 .....	\$6.95

Center for URANTIA Book Synergy  
P.O.Box 3915  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130

Concordex .....	\$10.00
Concordex/URANTIA Book set .....	\$27.50



# Things to Share

## **SOUTHWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Theme:** The Family: Our Path to Paradise  
**Where:** Northern Arizona University  
Flagstaff, Arizona (cool in August!)  
**When:** August 11-13, 1989  
**Contact:** Larry Bowman  
7777 E. Heatherbrae Ave., #115  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
(602) 947-8507

## **FORT WORDEN SUMMER CONFERENCE**

**Theme:** The Artistry of Balance  
**Where:** Fort Worden State Park  
near Port Townsend, Washington  
**When:** August 27-31, 1989  
**Contact:** Pilot Light URANTIA Society  
of Seattle  
P.O. Box 1312  
Bothell, Wa 98041-1312

## **PEN PAL PROJECT**

I'm trying to put together a pen pal project, connecting readers from all over the world, for the purpose of sharing ideas, projects, questions, concerns, etc., with general support for the work we're all trying to accomplish. I feel that newsletters have their place but that more can be done on a one-to-one basis to foster understanding and good will among readers from different countries and hopefully to help those readers who may be unable to attend a study group.

Anyone interested in participating can write to me for more information. I'll respond to anyone who writes but for readers in the U.S., a SASE would really help me out a lot.

Sharen Bonebrake  
770 9th Avenue #43  
Redwood City, CA 94063

## **SECOND INTERNATIONAL ENCOUNTER IN FRANCE**

**Theme:** Service  
"More service, increased service,  
difficult service, adventurous service,  
and at last divine and perfect service"  
**Where:** Chateau de Montvillargenne  
60270 Couvieux-Chantilly, France  
**When:** July 30-August 6, 1989  
Reservation deadline: June 15, 1989  
**Language:** French and English  
**Contact:** Monsieur le Secretaire du C.E.R.D.H.  
3 bis rue Grande  
77940 BLENNES  
FRANCE

## **ADVENTURES IN SPIRITUAL LIVING WEEKEND RETREAT**

**Theme:** Techniques for Spiritual Growth  
**Where:** Mo Ranch Conference Center  
Hunt, Texas  
**When:** October 12-15, 1989  
For information, see brochure  
in centerfold of this issue.

## **JESUSONIAN TO INSTALL AN 800 PHONE LINE**

The Jesusonian Foundation will be installing an experimental 800 phone number line. The purpose of this line will be to help new potential readers or current readers find and more fully understand The URANTIA Book. Those working on the 800 line will be trained in diverting crisis counseling to the proper non-Jesusonian channels as well as how to serve readers most effectively. The phone line will also be used to connect Jesusonian's volunteer teams together as well as bring new people into volunteer services.

The number: 1-800-767-LOVE.





## What is the Gospel?

*"... perhaps the most important message in the entire book is also the least understood, or at any rate certainly not being explored adequately within the URANTIA movement. What is "the gospel?" Could you discourse on the gospel for, say, twenty minutes? Could you do so authoritatively, by sharing conclusions you had reached as a result of personal experiences with our Paradise Father and the practical application of such divine enlightenment in your day-to-day life? Yes, truly, what we ought to be emphasizing during formative, foundation-laying stages of the URANTIA movement is the gospel of Jesus. . ."*

*(John Hyde in "A Better Direction?" Winter 1988 Circles)*

*The Winter 1989 issue of The Circles will have as its theme:*

### *"What Is the Gospel?"*

*Please share your understanding and experience. Send articles, poems and artwork by August 1, 1989 to:*

*The Dallas Fellowship, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1203  
Arlington, Texas 76004-1203*

#### STAFF

Tommie Clendening	Adrienne Jarnagin
Bill Cooper	Gene Joyce
Kaye Cooper	Beth McLeod
David Glass	Sarah Nachtweh
John Hyde	Kittie Norwood

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Circles is published quarterly and distributed on a donation basis. Send your name and address (and donation if you can) to:

The Circles  
P.O. Box 1203  
Arlington, Texas 76004-1203

The Dallas Fellowship, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1203  
Arlington, Texas 76004-1203

Address Correction  
Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ARLINGTON, TEX.  
PERMIT NO. 308



**October 12-15**  
**It's Happening in**  
**Texas!**



***The Circles***

*presents. . .*

**Adventures**  
**in**  
**Spiritual**  
**Living**

A weekend retreat  
October 12-15, 1989  
Mo Ranch  
Conference Center  
Hunt, Texas  
(near San Antonio)

Our topic:

***Techniques for***  
***Spiritual***  
***Growth***

Including:  
Seeing with God's Eyes  
Progressive Group Visualization  
Asking for Help in the Moment  
Contemplating the God Message  
Dealing with Fear  
Listening from the Heart  
Letters from God  
Hot Pen Technique  
Prayer  
Thanksgiving  
Communion  
Worship



# Fur

## Essentials

**Where:** Mo Ranch Conference  
Hunt, Texas

**When:** October 12-15, 1989  
Check in after 4 PM, Thu  
October 12  
Check out 1 PM, Sunday  
October 15

**Deadline:** August 1, 1989  
All registrations and pay-  
ment must be in by this date.

**Cost:** \$125 per person (double  
occupancy only) food, lodging  
registration included.

This amount includes lodging  
on Friday, and Saturday nights and  
breakfast through Sunday.

Our facilities are limited to adults  
and children this time, please.

Registration form included in this brochure.  
For any additional information contact:  
Carol Weatherford  
215 Woodway Ct.  
Spring, TX 77386  
(713) 363-1652



## Registration Form

List each person separately, please.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be your roommate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you need us to select a roommate

for you? yes  no \_\_\_\_\_

if yes, circle one: Male Female

Do you smoke? yes  no \_\_\_\_\_

Cost (food, lodging, registration): \$125

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Who will be your roommate?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you need us to select a roommate

for you? yes  no \_\_\_\_\_

if yes, circle one: Male Female

Do you smoke? yes  no \_\_\_\_\_

Cost (food, lodging, registration): \$125

Make check payable to  
the Dallas Fellowship, Inc.  
Send registration form and check to:

Carol Weatherford  
215 Woodway Ct.  
Spring, Texas 77386  
(713) 363-1652

Total enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Rooms contain two beds. Cost is based on 2 persons per room. Our facilities are adults only.  
If given enough advance notice, we may be able to arrange for additional rooms for single  
occupancy at \$40 additional charge. We will check into this, if requested.



# *The Circles*

*presents. . .*

*Dear Friends,*

*Our objective for this retreat is to provide a setting and the processes to stimulate each participant's spiritual life. We think you will find this retreat to be unique. It will be very small, limited to 34 participants. We will be sharing our inner selves and our spiritual lives. Experience, more than discussion or study, will be the major approach.*

*Jesus taught and demonstrated an incomparable and seldom tried religion of establishing and maintaining a personal friendship with God. We believe the techniques for spiritual growth we will be using demonstrate methods for achieving a personal spiritual relationship with God. These are techniques for finding and living cooperatively with the will of God. We will be exploring how to ask for and interpret guidance, what types of things to ask for God's help on, what to expect as a response, how to build faith, how to discern God's presence in everything. We will also explore the joy, the fun of living the religion of Jesus.*

*Each activity has been tested by our planners as a group, and we have each experienced accelerated growth as a result of this spiritual adventure. Our faith in the effectiveness of God's ministering spirits leads us to expect that your spiritual growth will enjoy enrichment and acceleration through your participation in this retreat.*

*Join us,*

*Kaye and Bill Cooper  
Adrienne Jarnagin  
Ted Lanier and Sharon Porter  
Skip and Carol Weatherford*

*Detailed information on the back.*

*Registration Deadline: August 1*

## **Adventures in Spiritual Living**

A weekend retreat  
October 12-15, 1989  
Mo Ranch  
Conference Center  
Hunt, Texas  
(near San Antonio)

Our topic:

### ***Techniques for Spiritual Growth***

Including:  
Seeing with God's Eyes  
Progressive Group Visualization  
Asking for Help in the Moment  
Contemplating the God Message  
Dealing with Fear  
Listening from the Heart  
Letters from God  
Hot Pen Technique  
Prayer  
Thanksgiving  
Communion  
Worship



# Further Information

## Essentials

**Where:** Mo Ranch Conference Center  
Hunt, Texas

**When:** October 12-15, 1989  
Check in after 4 PM, Thursday,  
October 12  
Check out 1 PM, Sunday,  
October 15

**Deadline:** August 1, 1989  
All registrations and payments  
must be in by this date.

**Cost:** \$125 per person (double occu-  
pancy only) food, lodging and  
registration included.

This amount includes lodging for Thurs-  
day, Friday, and Saturday nights and all meals  
from Friday breakfast through Sunday lunch.

Our facilities are limited to adults only so no  
children this time, please.

Registration form included in this brochure.

For any additional information contact:

Carol Weatherford  
215 Woodway Ct.  
Spring, TX 77386  
(713) 363-1652

## Vacation

Mo Ranch is a lovely place for a vacation. If you  
wish to reserve food and lodging for additional  
days, contact Mo Ranch directly. (See the bro-  
chure.)

## Transportation

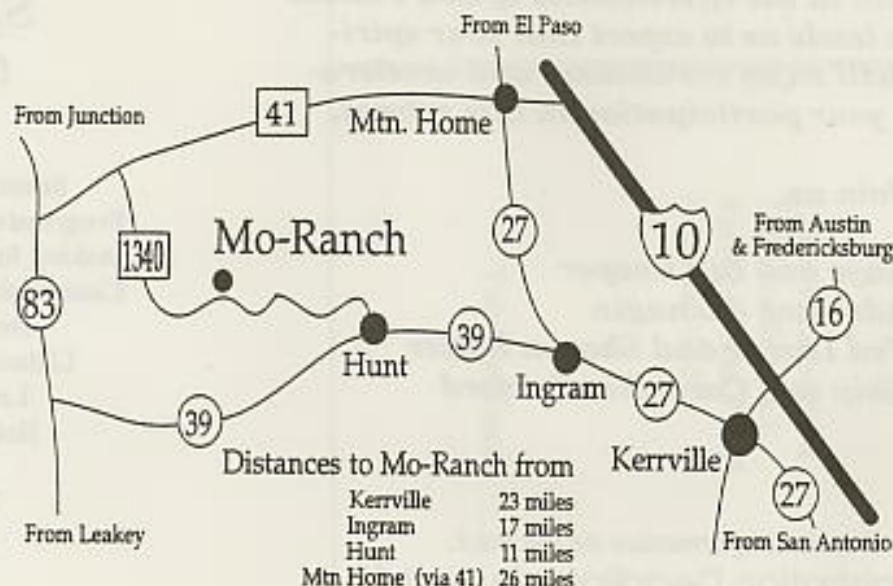
Transportation from the San Antonio Interna-  
tional Airport is available on a request basis only at  
a cost of approximately \$18 each way. Please  
arrange for this service well in advance by calling  
Mo Ranch (512) 238-4455.

## Clothing

We can expect warm days and chilly nights.  
Bring casual clothes and comfortable walking  
shoes. You will be walking quite a bit. Please bring  
an old blanket or something similar in case we  
want to sit on the ground outside. Bring an um-  
brella in case.

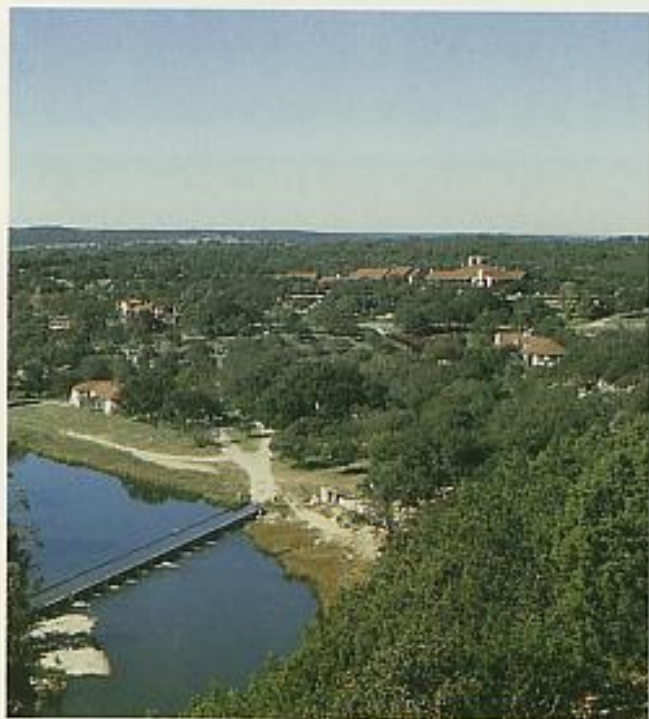
## Relaxation

There will be plenty of free time too. We will  
play, enjoy each other's company, and relax in the  
wonderful natural setting of the Texas Hill Country.





**Welcome to**  
**Mo-Ranch**  
**Conference Center**



**in the heart of the**  
**Texas hill country**

**Hunt, Texas 78024**  
**(512) 238-4455**





Mo-Ranch is easy to get to, just 90 miles northwest of San Antonio, it is a short drive on I-10 through Kerrville. From Austin, it is a pleasant drive through the historic towns of Johnson City and Fredericksburg on Highways 290 and 16.

Pre-arranged transportation is available for a nominal fee to and from the San Antonio International Airport or Kerrville's Schreiner Airport (charter and private service only; 5,300-foot runway) and bus station.

Mo-Ranch offers numerous recreational possibilities. The crystal-clear waters of the Guadalupe River invite guests to swim, canoe, fish, wade or splash (from the 35-foot-high river slide).

There are also three tennis courts, a large outdoor swimming pool, a nature trail, a hiking trail, volleyball courts, pool tables, pingpong tables, and a softball diamond. Two golf courses are available in nearby Kerrville.

And, since Mo-Ranch is in the country, deer and other wildlife are frequent visitors on the grounds.



For your next meeting, workshop, training session, sales meeting, staff development session, board meeting, or family vacation consider a getaway to the hill country. You won't regret it and neither will your employees, co-workers or family.

For more information on prices and reservations, contact the **Mo-Ranch Registrar, Mo-Ranch, Hunt, TX 78024** or call (512) 238-4455.

## Call us today!

Mo-Ranch is owned and operated by the Presbyterian Church (USA), Synod of the Sun.





At Mo-Ranch, groups of up to 500 can meet amidst the beauty and serenity of the Texas hill country. Accommodations include private rooms for up to 200 persons (double occupancy), from the new Flato and Wynne Lodges to the original Manor House once owned by Conoco President Dan Moran. There are also the picturesque Guest Lodge built by Moran and additional dormitory-style accommodations.



Meeting space at Mo-Ranch fits any size group from 10 to 500 persons. For large groups, there is the Auditorium, which holds up to 500. It has a raised stage with podiums and audio/visual and sound systems.

Smaller groups may use either the new 190-seat conference room in the Mabee Building or Grace Hall, a 90-seat meeting room between Flato and Wynne Lodges. The latter connects directly to the lodges and a comfortable lobby.

Some Mo-Ranch meeting areas have fireplaces and hill country views, adding to the "get away from it all" flavor of the conference center.





The new King Dining Hall at Mo-Ranch serves up to 500 persons in a single sitting, or provides meals for smaller groups in one of three dining rooms. All feature fireplaces, beamed ceilings, comfortable round-table seating and views of the hill country.

The Cantina on the lower level of the dining hall features snacks and beverages.

Many groups also have a barbecue dinner served on the banks of the Guadalupe River.