

# The Circles

## What Is the Gospel?

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## Why Do We Care

### What the Gospel Is?\*

By Bill Cooper  
Houston, Texas

I had a short but spirited discussion last night with an old and dear friend on the issue of "What difference does it make whether we have an accurate understanding of Jesus' gospel?" My friend's point was that Jesus did not interfere with the strange preacher who claimed to be teaching the gospel. The conclusion I understood him to be drawing from this example was that we should not presume to judge the validity of someone else's understanding of the gospel. I can agree with that and still say that it *does* make a difference what Jesus' gospel message is.

*The URANTIA Book* tells us that our world is ready to hear the gospel of Jesus, that there is spiritual power in Jesus' gospel which will transform individuals from within, that spiritual transformation of individuals is the only way to effect a lasting transformation of our world, and that thousands of otherwise indifferent youth will rush to enlist in the religion of Jesus. There are a lot of other promises in the book related to the teaching and acceptance of the gospel of Jesus. It seems to me that the continued existence of these still unrealized potentials proves that the gospel of Jesus is special and that it is important to get it right.

I look at the vigor with which Christian missionaries have taught that God is our Father, that we should love each other as brothers, that service to our fellows is service to God, that faith is the price of entry into the family of God, etc. These are all

correct elements of Jesus' gospel. Christianity has had a tremendous effect on our world, yet *The URANTIA Book* tells us that there is still great potential unused power in the *uncompromised* teachings of Jesus—his gospel. (2070:8/195.0.12)

There is something about the accurate gospel of Jesus which will transmit a spiritual power as yet untapped. What is it about the gospel in *The URANTIA Book* which is more powerful than traditional Christian teaching? I examined almost 60 *URANTIA Book* gospel statements for preparation of study notes for this issue of *The Circles* and discovered what I think is the source of the spiritual power of Jesus' gospel.

On different occasions Jesus stated the gospel in different terms. At times he focused on faith, at times on God as our Father, at times on

brotherhood, at times on love, at times on truth, at times on the indwelling spirit, at times on eternal life, at times on God's guidance, at times on doing the will of God, at times on salvation as the gift of our loving Father God, at times on friendship with God, at times on the love between Father and child, at times on the liberty of discovering the truth of God's love, at times on the communion experience, etc. Consequently, one must conclude that all of these expressions are statements of Jesus' gospel and that there is something in each of them which leads to the source of transformation.

There are common themes which bind all of these together and which go overlooked in almost everyone's statement of the gospel. I think the heart and spiritual power of

See *WHY* on page 4.



## A Need for Clarification

By John Hyde  
Richardson, Texas

I believe that the gospel is the most important message to be studied, emphasized, and promoted within and by the movement at this stage of the game. Yet, there is so little attention being given to this. It is difficult to promote that which one has given little or no thought to clarifying within one's own mind. How can we begin promoting the gospel, if we're not sure ourselves, even as individuals, what it is! I doubt that it is possible or even desirable for the movement to come to a consensus on "What is the Gospel," but I do feel it is each individual's responsibility to settle in his or her own mind what the gospel is for them. «



# Realizing the Gospel\*



By Bruce Wenger  
Phoenix, Arizona

How well do we really know the gospel? Beyond that, how often do we *realize* it in our daily living?

"The gospel of the kingdom is: the fact of the fatherhood of God, coupled with the resultant truth of the sonship-brotherhood of men." (2059:4/194.0.4) "God is *your* Father, and religion—my gospel—is nothing more nor less than the believing recognition of the truth that you are his son." (1590:5/141.4.2.)

There it is: "**nothing more or less**"! In any moment which we actually dare to experience this truth, we elevate our thinking and feeling about ourselves and others to a divine level. The gospel goes beyond the static level of the intellectual fact of the fatherhood of God; it embraces the dynamic truth of our sonship. The gospel, when and as we truly accept it, has a profound affect upon our thoughts, feelings and actions.

It appears that the act of realizing the gospel involves a four-fold perception: (1) remembering the fact of our Heavenly Father's presence, (2) recognizing our divine relationship with him, (3) acknowledging the divine relationship of others with him, and (4) being alert to the possibility of spiritual learning and expression in any moment, considering these points.

It is incredible how different we feel and act when we shift our thinking from the common human level to our highest perception of our relationship with the Universal Father and any of his children, our brethren, we may happen to be dealing with at the time! Why do we waste precious, irreplaceable moments that could be eternalized, by polluting our feelings and actions with thoughts which are

less than divine? We may have this divine level of existence in any moment, so why blunder ahead, only occasionally recognizing the reality of the ultimate goal of human progress?

Why?! I often wonder. Am I really so dense as to be unable to remember, with any consistency, four simple, glorious and energizing facts simultaneously?

"...Simon Zelotes asked, 'But, Master, are all men the sons of God?' And Jesus answered: 'Yes, Simon, all men are the sons of God, and that is the good news you are going to proclaim.'" (1585:5/140.10.7)

Again and again throughout *The URANTIA Book* we are instructed about the importance of the gospel. Jesus, talking to some fifty trusted followers just hours before the last supper said, "Remember that you are commissioned to preach this gospel of the kingdom...and you must not allow anything to divert your devotion to this one duty." (1931:2/178.1.11) He instructed them not to let even spiritual ministry and social service *combined* take the place of proclaiming the gospel.

In the papers on the Melchizedek missionaries, we are told of the tragic mistake the missionaries made of letting the teaching of morals interfere with their *primary* task of preaching the gospel. The apostles and the early church almost immediately let the teaching about the divinity of Jesus take precedence over the preaching of the gospel. The tragic and profound truth today is that, "This world has never seriously or sincerely or honestly tried out these dynamic ideas and divine ideals of Jesus' doctrine of the kingdom of

heaven." (1863:12/170.4.14)

We are clearly told in many ways that the power inherent in the gospel will transform each individual, even the entire planet. Why is it that we are so slow to comprehend that morals, ethics, goodness—all worthwhile characteristics—are a natural result of our *true* acceptance of the gospel? "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all else shall be added unto you." Why do we insist upon trying to push ourselves and others with the gruesome force of human willpower to

See *REALIZING* on page 20.

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

*Thanks to Vince Ventola for our cover drawing.*

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*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.*

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## Our Gospel

You and I have a gospel. Our gospel is a statement about the experience of love. It begins with our experience of God's love. Jesus told us that God is our Heavenly Father and we are all his sons. Picture the young father with his toddler son. How he loves that child! He enjoys the baby's earnest attempts to walk as his father walks. He takes delight in holding the child's hand as it investigates new territory. He protects that son gently, but firmly from dangers the boy never even recognizes. He speaks lovingly to his son, even though the boy understands only a small part of his daddy's meaning. This is his first child and the young father's pride is obvious.

Imagine the toddler's love for his father. His trust is complete. He knows without question that his daddy loves him and will provide for him and protect him. When his father holds out his arms and says, "Come to Daddy," the child steps out without hesitation to make the perilous trip across the floor to safety. He knows Daddy will catch him if he stumbles. His small body vibrates with his joy as he grabs hold of this father's leg and turns his glowing smile upward.

What an exquisite analogy to use for our relationship with our Father in Heaven—the father with his first child! Although our Father has multitudes of other children, in his relationship with me, it is **as if I were the only child he has**. And so it is with each of his children. We can each experience his undivided attention and love—and we can do it here on this mortal sphere.

Experiencing our Father's love cannot fail to have a transforming

effect on us. Facts and logic tell us that our Father has other children and that they stand in the relationship of brothers and sisters to us. But it is *experience* of our Father's love which changes our attitude toward our brothers and sisters. We begin to see them more as he sees them. We see them as unique individuals. We come to recognize their attempts to do good, even when they are clumsy and awkward. Their motives begin to become clear to us. We love them the more for their spirit strivings and desires. Most of all, we want to reach out and help them. And one day we do just that.

It may begin with holding the door in loving service or with a smile to someone whose job is not easy at the moment—small things but a real beginning in action. Our desire to help our brothers grows. We will begin to find all sorts of ways to help those who normally fill our lives. We listen more lovingly and attentively to

*WHY continued from page 2.*

the Jesus gospel reside in these common themes. All of the *URANTIA Book* statements of the gospel of Jesus either state or are consistent with the following common themes: (1) Our faith that God is real and lovingly involved in our lives enables us to have a spiritual relationship with God. (2) If we have faith and behave as if God is a spiritual reality, we will experience inner assurance of his reality. (3) If we will share our inner lives with God, God and the Spirit of Truth will teach us and lead us eventually into all truth; and this relationship with God and Michael is ours as a constant, actual, here and now

our friends. We inconvenience ourselves to fill the needs of others. We may begin to seek out the ministry of social service—educating the ignorant, feeding the hungry, comforting the sick. Whatever we do, we find an amazing effect on ourselves: we are more joyous, our burdens are lighter, our way clearer. Our Father's love for us makes us happier; our love for our brothers and sisters makes us happier too.

The change in us will become obvious to those around us, and opportunities will occur to share with them the source of our inner strength, peace, and joy. We will tell them of the richness of our Father's love and companionship and of the satisfaction of giving love to our brothers and sisters. And when we do, we will be serving them in the most important way of all. We will be proclaiming the gospel—our gospel, the gospel of each child who realizes through faith his place in our Father's family. «

experience if we will spend time developing our friendship with God. (4) The technique for developing our friendship with God can be called prayer, worship and communion or it can be called talking and listening, sharing our life with God, or even being pals with God. But basically it amounts to spending time in his company.

I think we can distill all of the *URANTIA Book* statements of Jesus' gospel and restate it as follows: **God is with you right now and can be experienced by your spiritual senses and your soul's understanding. God is not a future**

*See WHY on page 13.*

# Sharing the Gospel— Friendship with God\*

By John Hyde  
Richardson, Texas



Jesus once said to his disciples that "in preaching this gospel, you are simply teaching friendship with God." (1766:5/159.3.9) It is the nature of God, however, that makes *this* friendship so uniquely different from all others. It is because God is who he is—that is, it is because God is the type of being that he is—that *this* friendship never fails to have a profound impact upon the person who has befriended God. We can see the evidence of the effects of Jesus' friendship with God throughout his life.

Jesus, as a man, was on fire with a fervent love and devotion for his best friend, his Father. He was so overwhelmed with the goodness of God that he was constrained to share his friend with all of his other friends, old and new. Did he occasionally suffer rejection? Most certainly. But did he let that deter him? Would you?

One thing which appears to have helped him keep his enthusiasm level so high and his approach so genuine was that he did not devote his life to trying to explain a single extraordinary experience that he had had with God; rather, he shared his ongoing friendship, which was always fresh, alive, and therefore also vivid in his memory.

To see the type and the extent of impact that this friendship with God had upon Jesus the man, let's look closely at one episode from his pre-baptismal days: the encounter with Anaxand as they worked together in the shipyard. (1430:2-3/130.2.4-5)

Jesus is embarking upon his first international tour while employed as the translator for a wealthy international merchant as well as tutor for his

son. Although this position is one of some prestige, we note that when a need arises, in this case for semi-skilled laborers, Jesus is there, helping out.

Anaxand, the young man working alongside Jesus, "became much interested in the words which [Jesus] dropped from hour to hour as they toiled in the shipyard." This is the first in a series of intriguing statements in this passage. Just what do you suppose Jesus was saying to this manual laborer working alongside him? I doubt that he was preaching. It is also probably a safe assumption that his words carried the conviction of experience, otherwise he never would have kept the young man's interest as the day passed.

"When Jesus intimated that the Father in heaven was interested in the welfare of his children on earth," Anaxand responded, "If the Gods are interested in me, then why do they not remove the cruel and unjust foreman of this workshop?"

Jesus suddenly found himself confronted with an early version of the modern common disbelieving lament: "If God is so good and so powerful, then why does he allow all the suffering in the world?" As most of us know, this question is especially hard to answer when the questioner is someone who cares deeply about his fellowman, or who has recently witnessed suffering firsthand. All the explanations about the sanctity of free will do nothing to increase the listener's faith in the goodness of God. It just seems so utterly unfair to them and in direct contradiction to what we would all like to believe about God. In reality, though, we are

questioning God's wisdom when we suggest that the way in which he does things might be wrong, unfair, or unjust.

Anaxand had a firsthand example of injustice to refer to. In the cruel foreman he believed that he had an effective and utterly sincere refutation to the concept that God cares about the individual.

Jesus does not answer the man's unbelieving (yet sincere) question. I suspect that the insinuation that God may be at fault almost totally fails to register in Jesus' mind. He probably would focus entirely upon Anaxand, noting his understandable immaturity as well as the potential good resident in Anaxand's attitude. Jesus sees no reason to justify his own observations and experiences. He does, however, see the need for Anaxand to acquire some additional experiences.

We also see here a side of Jesus' personality which is rarely shown, even in *The URANTIA Book*. There is a distinct element of what one might call "masculine one-upmanship" going on here. Anaxand has just ridiculed Jesus' statement, albeit from a motive of at least partial sincerity. He has challenged Jesus and put him on the spot, saying in effect, "Oh yeah, well if you think so, then *prove it!*"

Jesus, remarkably, is up to the challenge. He replies, "Since you know the ways of kindness and value justice, perhaps the Gods have brought this erring man near that you may lead him into this better way. Maybe you are the salt which is to make this brother more agreeable to

*See SHARING on page 24.*



# Go Then Into All the World With the Good News\*

By Julia K. Fenderson  
Culver City, California

"Go, then, into all the world telling this good news to all creatures of every race, tribe, and nation." (2054:0/193.1.2) The morontia Jesus delivered this message to a group of Samaritans at Jacob's well and soon afterwards again gave a similar command to a group at Tyre: "My Father sent me into this world to proclaim this salvation of sonship to all men. And so send I you abroad to preach this salvation of sonship." (2053:4/193.2.2)

Over and over we are told to go into all the world with the good news, the gospel, the message.

What is this good news? What is this good news as expressed in *The URANTIA Book*? How does the definition of "good news" in *The URANTIA Book* differ from that found elsewhere? Certainly the good news includes the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, but these two concepts are more all-embracing and multifaceted than one might think at first consideration. The fluidity and evolving nature of the gospel is highlighted in *The URANTIA Book*. Jesus sent in his place "his Spirit of Truth, who is designed to live in man and, for each new generation, to restate the Jesus message so that every new group of mortals to appear upon the face of the earth shall have a new and up-to-date version of the gospel, just such personal enlightenment and group guidance as will prove to be an effective solvent for man's ever-new and varied spiritual difficulties." (2060:6/194.2.1)

Jesus taught a dynamic and multidimensional gospel because he recognized that, at least initially, one feature of the gospel might appeal to

one personality type, while another aspect would appeal to a different type of personality. We must also recognize that the way in which we teach the gospel of Jesus may vary from group to group for Jesus said: "Go, then, into all the world proclaiming this gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men to all nations and races and ever be wise in your choice of methods for presenting the good news to the different races and tribes of mankind." (2042:1/191.4.4)

So the good news can be proclaimed with or without *The URANTIA Book*. As William S. Sadler, Jr. has said: "the Book itself is not an End—it is a most important means to an End. It is designated to bring God closer to man and to bring man closer to God. We may minister to our spiritually hungry brothers with or without the aid of *The URANTIA Book*. But, if the book ever becomes mandatory in our ministry, then have we truly become sectarian. Our primary objective, as Urantians, is the service of God, and the book is an important Means to that End. Here we should make a vital distinction between that which *is* value and that which *has* value."†

We are told that, "In preaching the gospel of the kingdom, you are simply teaching friendship with God." (1766:5/159.3.9) Also, "In answer to Thomas's question, 'Who is this God of the kingdom?' Jesus replied: 'God is your Father, and religion—my gospel—is nothing more nor less than the believing recognition of the truth that you are his son. And I am here among you in the flesh to make clear both of these ideas in my life

and teachings.'" (1590:5/141.4.2)

The importance of knowing Jesus' life is again pointed out, "One of the most important things in human living is to find out what Jesus believed, to discover his ideals, and to strive for the achievement of his exalted life purpose. Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the religious life of Jesus and how he lived it." (2090:4/196.1.3)

Some of the varied aspects of the gospel are indicated in the following passage: "The gospel of the kingdom has taught you that all men are the sons of God. And this good news concerning the love of the heavenly Father for his children on earth must be carried to all the world. The time has come when you worship God neither on Gerizim nor at Jerusalem, but where you are, as you are, in spirit and in truth. It is your faith that saves your souls. Salvation is the gift of God to all who believe they are his sons. *But be not deceived, while salvation is the free gift of God and is bestowed upon all who accept it by faith, there follows the experience of bearing the fruits of this spirit life as it is lived in the flesh.*" (2053:4/193.1.2) [emphasis mine]

When Jesus gave his last sermon at Pella, he spoke of five points as the cardinal features of the gospel of the kingdom:

1. The pre-eminence of the individual.
2. The will as the determining factor in man's experience.
3. Spiritual fellowship with God the Father.
4. The supreme satisfac-

See GO on page 21.



# What Is Here For Me Now?



By George Van Arsdale  
Louisville, Kentucky

I read *The URANTIA Book* for the first time in 1977. In the next couple of years, I reread it more than once. Initially, I was impressed by the intellectual side of it; then I became profoundly affected by the feelings that I was experiencing while reading the story of Jesus' life and teachings. I felt that I had discovered a real brother. And, for the first time, I had a sense of being appreciated unconditionally. Unconditional love became my main tool for seeing my world anew.

My life, now, is one lesson after another in how to put to use the love principles that Jesus lived for us. It seems so simple to me now that I don't feel that I need authoritative sources of information to guide me. I feel as though I have the spirit guiding me constantly. It is only when I find the "shoulds" and old guilts trying to manipulate me that I have to stop and get myself straight.


Life doesn't have to be hard. We don't have to be constantly on the lookout for ill-will to cross our paths. The knowledge that we have abundance now and at all times as our heritage leads me to the understanding that I am responsible for what I see and the way that I see it. If I choose to exercise my responsibility with God consciousness, then I will choose to use love in all possible ways to pave my way with a solid footing. When I choose to act on fear, I have to stop my progression toward enlightenment to wrestle with the shadows of doubt.

Winter is traditionally a shadowy time for me and many others. Generally, my work is slow and the weather dreary. This is the time of year when I find myself asking the question,


"Why am I wishing for spring to hurry up?" and "What is here for me now?" Being impatient with time can be an omen of wrong thinking that our needs will not be met. When we get impatient with ourselves and with others is the very time when we most need to ask the question, "What is

here for me now?" In asking the question, it is most important to know that the answer is sure to follow; and that, more than likely, it will bring a sense of renewed peace.

Who is it that hears my questions? It is as though I am trying to  
*See WHAT on page 13.*



By Leo Czyzewski  
Nutley, New Jersey



## The Gospel's Oneness with Love

The message of Jesus awaits in the gospel. Each of us has an opportunity, through his or her desire, to initiate will-action. Our desire to be friends with the Spirit of Truth, through the reading of the gospel, energizes our inclinations, strengthens our memory patterns and brings will-choice into liaison with our spirit Adjusters. Such actions set the stage within us, to receive a message from Jesus through the gospel.

In order to prepare ourselves for the fullness of the gospel message, it may be important to reflect on how the love-gift of the Universal God interconnects all of us through the love and service message of Jesus. Though the qualities of mind, spirit and body are multiple gifts of creation, they are unique, personal and individual. The Universal God sends his love through his Son, Jesus, to all intelligent creatures throughout all of creation. Your desire to give love to God intensifies the quality of the love-flow from the central source with your

living experience and manifests through your humanity as a new love-creation in God's plan. In this harmony and attunement with the Spirit of Truth, we offer through our spirit Adjusters, a love-gift to God that is dynamic and new each day, each hour, each moment. This is your personal and unique gift of oneness to the Universal God and to humankind.

No two individuals harmonize the attributes of their existence in an identical way. Since individual growth is increasing, your desire to love God is eternally new. Your choice to take part in the eternal pathway of individual growth gives the Universal God eternal new love and confirms your oneness with the gospel message of Jesus. Each individual must prepare through his or her desire, in a thoughtful way, to receive the love-gift of the Universal God in the message of Jesus. The gospel message awaits; we must choose."



By Nathen Jansen  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

## What Is the Gospel?\*

Jesus in his tenth morontia appearance (at Philadelphia) said, "... there is but one gospel of the kingdom—the good news of the gift of eternal life which men receive by faith." (2041:6/191.4.3)

The gospel as I see it is the *light of living truth* we give to all persons willing to listen so they may have eternal life—to be born again from out of the embryonic or the corporeal state in which we are now living. This light-giving "kerygma," or message, is from the *living waters*, the good news of Jesus' teachings.

The good news, if we remember what Jesus told Nalda at Jacob's well, is about the divine Spirit of Truth which ministers to us. Remember, Nalda, like many persons before and after her, turned the discussion of her own personal salvation to the discussion of theological and philosophical controversy. However, Jesus was able to see within her soul the real desire to know the better way of living. He continued to teach by telling her that the way to rebirth comes from *worshiping the Father in spirit and truth*, and by the good news which he offers our souls through a receiving heart. Jesus then told her, "I who speak to you am he." (1614:1/143.5.7) Interestingly, that was his first earthly statement about his divinity and sonship with God.

The Spirit of Truth will remind us of the gospel of Jesus—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man—and it will deepen our understanding of his teachings if our hearts are open to soul growth. The teachings of Jesus are multifaceted and cover many subjects which will enlighten all persons who may drink from them. The gospel most cer-

tainly begins with personal salvation but also continues with personal social ministry to believers and unbelievers alike. As we learn more about the living waters from our creator brother/Father, sooner or later, with the mind-spirit of wisdom, we begin to teach the gospel. This is where life really gets interesting, as we are told we can surely expect double trouble from those who don't take kindly to the gospel. It's good news to know that Jesus said his spirit will go before us, he will always be with us, and we should not be overly concerned about what to say as his spirit will minister in that hour and place of potential trouble.

Let's not let the roots of living truth dry up. Let's open the flood gates of the living waters, a combination of spiritual fellowship and social service. We will be courageous in defense of goodness, patient in teaching truth to the unwise, and long-suffering under hostility. We have been forewarned to be gentle in our dealings with misdirected persons, as spiritual light can be illuminating or annoying depending upon the condition of the receiving mind. Just as a very bright light in a large, dark outdoor environment is annoying, not so a softer one which will illuminate the darkened environment in a more pleasing manner. However, a bright light in an already well-lit environment is not as great a threat, but it could be using up unnecessary energy. How often we fail to recognize the spiritually blind man could easily stumble as we lead him on the way to truth with our enlightened sight. We should remember all souls will survive if they are willing to co-operate with their inner gift from

God. The willingness to find God and to attain divine perfection, even if the desire is but a faint flicker of hope, will be fully developed in eternity by the Thought Adjuster, that "true light which lights every man who comes into the world."

The Spirit of Truth within the soul will restate Jesus' message every generation. It definitely helps us to remember his life and teachings according to our capacity to understand spiritual reality. The Spirit of Truth also helps to lead us in revealing his life and teachings to sincere truth seekers, albeit only to the extent of their love for truth. Jesus' religion is one of faith, hope and love. The Spirit of Truth teaches us the Father's love and the Son's mercy. This spirit-teacher works through the heart to reach the soul. Capacity for this spirit is determined by our love for the truth, truth being the highest form of human liberty. We should remember that the Master lives in our hearts. He is not knowledge in the mind, but a presence in the soul.

The gospel of Jesus as it was written in the Bible has changed the course of history, and most certainly the future will likewise be significantly changed by the further restatements of his gospel. His gospel claims we should cease our senseless worldly yearning and concerns for that which is apparently evil when there is so much good truth to publish and proclaim. Jesus said in his gospel that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. We can live in this family of God, now, while our feet still walk on this earthly world. The family of God is within each of us. Entrance is by faith-sincerity and truth-hunger. It is by this religious living that the family of



God on earth will be brought about. Consciousness in this world-wide family of God will assist us in becoming ideal citizens. Preaching the gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man must be our supreme desire; however, interested persons must be persuaded by the gospel, not compelled by it. We certainly know most humans rebel at the effort required to establish a valuable and meaningful religious life. And how sorrowfully this world languishes from unfruitful branches. A religious life is a progressive belief/faith struggle toward supreme loyalty to God our Father; it is a creative process and enthusiastic living which eventually brings forth the fruits of the spirit. Belief becomes living faith when one acts out the responsibility of duty toward God and man! Let's water the roots of the living vines for a fruitful spiritual harvest of: "loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace." (2054:3/193.2.2 emphasis mine) As truth-seeking and God-finding sons, within this family of God, we can voluntarily assume another moral responsibility: *service to the worldwide brotherhood of God-knowing believers.*

The gospel of Jesus makes it clear that the Father concept is our highest understanding of the personal Deity activities of God, the First Source and Center, and his Son's son, our brother/Father Michael. The gospel of Jesus makes it clear that the ideal value of the brotherhood of man is our highest understanding for the spiritual family of God, or historically stated as the "kingdom of heaven." In our search for God all effort to *half-heartedly* find our loving Father will be ineffective. The more we love one another, the more we will crave to know the original personality, and knowing divinity there is an unavoidable urge to symbolize our mortal concepts of God. But the

gospel is more—it is spiritual and beyond words of expression. The gospel must be *lived* in order to be known. The gospel of the family of God is a *living* truth; and having chosen to live in this family of God, we must become aggressive in teaching the good news.

On his nineteenth and last appearance on earth as a morontia personality, Jesus prepared to say his last farewell to the apostles before he took leave of Urantia: ". . . I am now about to take leave of you; I am

about to ascend to my Father, and soon, very soon, will we send into this world of my sojourn the Spirit of Truth; and when he has come, you shall begin the new proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom, first in Jerusalem and then to the uttermost parts of the world. Love men with the love wherewith I have loved you and serve your fellow mortals even as I have served you. By the Spirit fruits of your lives impel souls to believe the truth that man is a son of God, and

*See GOSPEL on page 20.*



## The Gospel



I found the gospel in a wondrous book that led me to the door.  
And awakened all the beauty of God's perfect natural laws,  
That taught me how to love myself in all humility,  
To love, laugh, share and be, all my Lord expects of me.  
Hear ye, the gospel opens eyes to see.

It is my will, thy will be done, as shown by thy Son.  
I try to place my feet with care until the day that we are One.  
What matter if I miss a step or fall beside the way,  
With fortitude and courage I can try again today.  
These words the gospel book doth say.

The gospel says so many things that sharpen my awareness  
Of God's eternal presence, power, truth and fairness,  
Which challenge me through strife in life to hold my head up high.  
And do the very best I can until the day I die.  
Indeed the gospel bids me try.

To never waste a moment of the precious life he gave,  
To respect our garden planet, to step out and be brave,  
To live now and forevermore, devoted and with faith,  
And know that I am going home as promised by his grace,  
Finally led by Jesus Christ to meet God face to face.

Beth Hogan  
Durban, Republic of South Africa

By Robert Crickett  
Melbourne, Australia

## On the Gospel of Jesus

The gospel of Jesus is a living spring of love—just as the dancer reveals dance and the musician reveals symphony, the earth, the rain and the sunshine reveal nourishment, and the endless starry night sky reveals wonder in all its eternity. This living spring of love reveals the sovereignty and victory over life and over death and over decision making—all openly yours for the claiming. And of those things which occupy you, none is so real and inspirational as your own sovereignty and victory over life and death and your decision making. And none is so unreal and deflating as the surrender of your sovereignty and your victory and your decision making. The gospel of Jesus and the dynamically residual presence of Jesus the man—the human, he who is one of your own kind—above all things confirm your lingering suspicions about your Father-given rights to sovereignty and victory.

The gospel of Jesus is a timeless monument, belonging neither to the past nor the future but to yourself, not only to yourself alone, but all selves. In order to recognize its place in your life, you must necessarily embrace its spirit in contexts other than on earth alone. How shall you be when you minister to others who are not of your kind, on worlds which are not familiar with your human and Uranian ways? You will not be able to huddle together under the umbrella of being Christian or Uranian or Jesusonian ... for such things are of no substance elsewhere. Truly at such times of ministry and association, the real and essential you shall be openly revealed. Stripped of the illusions and immunity which are inherent within the spiritual strength and provisional sovereignty that at-

tend loyalty to a group belief and more, such as you might once have been familiar with, the real you is naked. What is then called for is your actual command of the gospel of Jesus, not as Jesus lived it and spoke it—these gems are but shadows of the original truth within you—but as you yourself now personally declare it. And what would you declare? Nothing short of the sovereignty and the victory which openly awaits the claiming.

The gospel of Jesus declares that your personal sovereignty and manner of always electing a spiritual victory in your decisions is liberation itself. This sovereignty is not harnessed or crippled by scholarly or legal debate over the meaning of this or that sentence. In a similar way, the nourishment in a banquet is not the least affected by a misprint on the menu. The gospel of Jesus is one person's expression of the spirit of living as a sovereign, as one who is accustomed to spiritual victory. Such sovereignty is at rest within you, and its command comfortably embraces the common thought and word and deed. Should you wish to claim such personal autonomy and liberated sovereignty and command in your own character and life, then you must live at peace with all that the one living source and Father of life has provided for within such an identity.

The gospel of Jesus is not won easily and never by imitation. To think that all you need do is turn the gospel into a technique to which you might adhere and, in the hope of striking it lucky, practice relentlessly so as to conjure your passport into the kingdom of heaven is not the way at all. If you live by the spirit, as did Jesus, then incidental to that you recognize that your behavior and



motivations could be seen to parallel those of Jesus' gospel. But actually, in your own eyes, whether it does or not is utterly beside the point when you live in the spirit of sovereignty. You salute a higher value then, and your attention barely waivers its fixation from sovereignty and victory and spiritual command over your decision making. Those things which were once mortal are somehow transformed into the immortal. Those things which were once impersonal are somehow transformed into the personal. Your identity which once floundered and groaned in its isolation and pettiness is somehow transformed into union and relative absoluteness. The sovereign and the victor needs no beliefs or practices to ward off the emptiness within mortality and the illusions which are within the hints and wild promises that saturate traditional spiritual protocol: such things fade and fall into disuse as easily as have the dreams you had as a child. Decision making becomes elevated to the art of worship and your demand for absolutes and the spiritually real cannot be supported by that which lies outside the precincts of the gospel of Jesus.

The gospel of Jesus does not establish anything outside you to be worshiped and venerated—neither Jesus himself, nor Michael, nor the solitary Father of all life. The spiritual sovereign does not dote on pleasing the Father, nor the Son, nor the Infinite Spirit. How should it be for the child in the potato-sack race if he must give his best performance by constantly checking to give his mum salutations as she stands on the sideline? On the contrary! Mum's jumping up and down and yipping and yahooping for him to get in there

and really go for it and have a ball! Such is her love for him. It is only the child lacking in courage who clambers for approval from the sideline. And it is only the lost child who cannot recognize his own parent cheering him on so faithfully. Certainly there are moments when you can't help but admire your spiritual Father: look at how you applaud the Grand Canyon, and it is made only of dust. And certainly there are times when you will seem in need and you'll confirm with your Father that your need is a true portrayal of those resources and goodies he's about to provide. Worship and prayer are your true body and voice. But your Father, your source—your God if you will—is never so outlandishly human as to

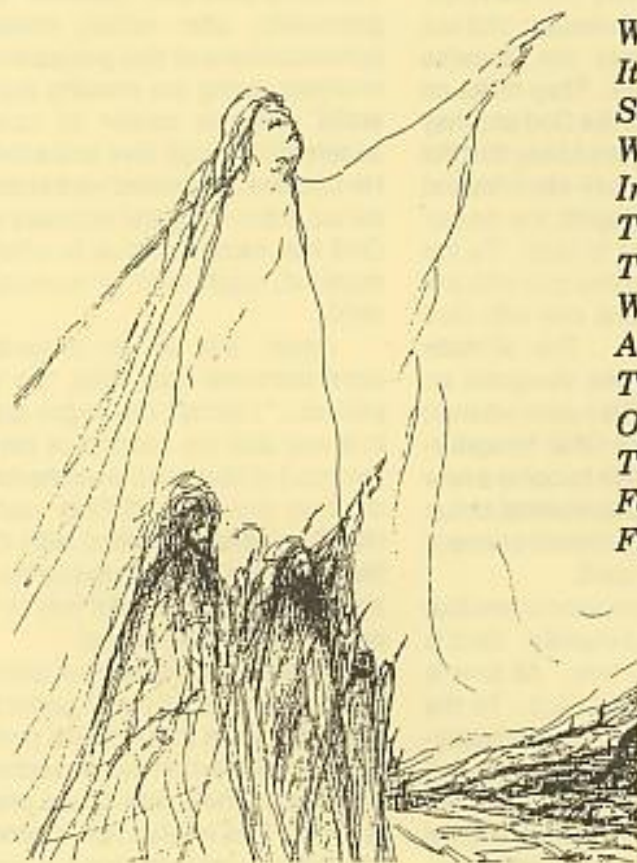
stand aside from you and set himself up as separate from you, yet the worship to which you are accustomed requires such an idea and thought-construed object. Our Father, however, is not an object, and worship is not the worship of a thing. When worship which is spiritually inspired descends upon you, there is an evaporation of all that you are and all that our Father is ... neither of you can be found. Yet the responsibilities are yours, and it is you who is the decision maker, the sovereign, the victor of life and of death and of your mortal origins.

The gospel of Jesus is about life and the living of life as a sovereign. Such a life is only wholeheartedly dedicated to others, one individual at

a time. Don't get lost in the enormity of our family. For the spiritual sovereign, for the one who embodies the gospel of Jesus, at any given moment life is as close, as direct, as immediate, and as intimate as gazing into your own unspoiled child's eyes so as to convey a confirming presence of loving and indissoluble parent-child union. Any separation from or distortion of such nourishing and unabashed truth simply has no life in it; it is simply not made out of the truth which conveys sovereignty, nor the beauty which is the sovereign's victory, nor the goodness which pervades the decision making ... these characteristics which comprise the gospel of Jesus—and the gospel of

*See ON on page 26.*

## *When Spirit Takes Steps*



*When Spirit takes its steps toward Global Love,  
It finds in every single man the same  
Sweet Lover, sent from pristine realms above,  
Which knows its every child by his own name.  
In truth, since all the world are spirit-kin,  
They shall themselves in everyone detect  
That Spirit which exists in all earth's men  
Which here has come to comfort, calm, protect,  
And help us all to better understand  
That life on earth is just the very first  
Of many far-flung universal lands  
That each of us shall visit. Every thirst  
For love and light shall, like a dream come true,  
Find matchless beauty, truth, and goodness too.*

*By David Glass  
Fort Worth, Texas*

*By Vince Ventola  
Venice, California*

# Imperatives of the Gospel\*



By David Glass  
Fort Worth, Texas



Certainly the message and nature of the gospel is one of the central issues of Jesus' earth mission. Jesus says that there is only one law to obey (as a proclaimer of the religion of Jesus) and that is to continue to preach the gospel. During my first reading of *The URANTIA Book*, I was repeatedly struck by the frequent reiteration of the gospel formula: the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. It seems to me that this phrase is indeed extremely catalytic in its effect upon those who give it some consideration. Our struggling and strife-torn world with its international animosities and sporadic violence seems to be a place much in need of the preaching, the presenting and the sharing of faith in this gospel of one God and oneness among mankind (in the spiritual, not in the uniquely personal aspect). Let's look at the phrase analytically.

This phrase, the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, is not a sentence. It is neither an active nor a reflective statement, grammatically; hence within itself, it contains no assignment nor a qualification of something. I think that it is appropriate and correct to refer to the gospel as an existential condition or relation. God exists as a Father; men exist as spiritual brothers. There are no imperatives here. But there is an imperative which has been informally linked with the fatherhood-brotherhood phrase. It is: "Be you perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect." In the two intransitive verbs, "be" and "is," we see no action, but a state of being which is relational: God is related to man as a Father; men are related to each other spiritually as brothers.

But these verbs are not just rela-

tional: they are imperative cases. It is "imperative," intended, that we be perfect. This commandment has been something of a puzzle to me in the past: How can we be perfect? We know so little—today's knowledge explosion notwithstanding. We have had such meager universe and life experience so far, so little interpersonal relations compared to Jesus, so few years with the revelation. Isn't the point of the grand universe progress and growth, and didn't the Father bring into being an evolving universe which must begin on sub-perfect levels?

More recently, however, I have thought of and heard about other interpretations: "Be perfect" can mean, be existentially one with God. He is a being of perfection and our indwelling Adjusters are likewise beings of perfection. They make no mistakes. They are like God and they are God. Thus, we could say that the closer we come to self-identification with the indwelling spirit, the nearer existentially we are to God. To the extent that we become one with our Adjuster, we become one with God and his perfection. The ultimate consummation of this viewpoint on human "perfection" is fusion wherein God IS and man IS ONE henceforward and forever. We become a new order of being. Our existential status is one which entails eternal oneness with pure, perfect spirit.

Another interpretation is one that concerns time and eternity. God is not conditioned by time. All time is eternally present with God. To the extent that we approach Adjuster-likeness and Adjuster-oneness, we can transcend time, send up a periscope above the time-ocean and get a glimpse of the perfect destination.

In our partial time-transcendence, we can BE one with God. The writers of *The URANTIA Book* frequently use all capital letters for specific terms, most often, I believe, when referring to super-temporal reality. For example: "What a *Creator Son* son desires and his Father *wills IS*." (1633:2/145.3.11) This is a new grammatical concept in Western language, and I have referred to it as "existential tense," a truly non-temporal, non-active, non-descriptive verb form. Is there a super-linguistic significance here? I believe there is.

It is in the existential and eternally factual sense that man IS one with God upon the consummation of fusion. The Adjuster has an existential and a factual existence within us, and part of the Father's rationale for originating temporal reality in this way, the revelation informs us, is for experience to become possible for God.

"Be you perfect," then, can mean: Attune to the Adjuster sufficiently that it becomes possible to transcend time and "discover" God personally; after which, maintain consciousness of that perception of oneness during the ensuing experiential universe career of cosmic ascension through love and service. He who has discovered his transcendental, trans-temporal oneness with God has much of value to offer all mankind, each man or woman or child.

Again, this is an imperative commandment from God, "Be you perfect..." Hence it can be pro-active in a way that the concept of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man cannot. "BEing perfect NOW"—self-identification with God the infinite and God the indweller—is a purposeful, meaningful way to live out the truth of the gospel.

I have encountered yet another interpretation of "Be you perfect..." And this idea is simply to BE perfect to the relative extent that perfection is possible in one's time-space planetary life. This is what Jesus accomplished; only in the instance of Jesus,

doing the Father's will achieved absolute obedience, fulfillment, and human-divine expression. Jesus, Michael of Nebadon, was long ago Michael of Paradise. Michael is a perfect, divine and descending being. He carries the commandment for perfection to the lowest level of universe life and there creates such a fervor in man for the doing of the Father's will as to lead unnumbered trillions of mortals toward the Father. Jesus was also a man and demonstrated the planetary way of BEing one with the Father to his planetary brothers, just as we, upon achievement of residential status on Paradise, will be able to share our story of the universe ascent with our newfound Paradise brothers.

Thus, at this point I have three ideas which I believe are forms of interpretation of the meaning of "the gospel." And they are: (1) the existential and relational phrase, the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; (2) the injunction to "BE perfect, even as our Father is perfect;" and (3) doing the Father's will.

Doing the Father's will is proactive and is a "living out" of eternal personality relationships between God and each individual made possible only by the creation of time-space and the bestowal upon imperfect beings of a unique personality and a perfect and existential spirit—all that is necessary to eventually become perfect as is our Father. At some point, all Urantians will adopt and become loyal to "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of beings." But we have a long way to go, first, in the proclamation of the gospel to our planetary brothers and sisters. Jesus told us: "The persistent preaching of this gospel of the kingdom will some day bring to all nations a new and unbelievable liberation, intellectual freedom, and religious liberty." (1930:6/178.1.9) Those who will bring all this to pass will have seen the vast achievements that being a son to God and a brother to man can accomplish; the actuality of "BEing perfect" while simultane-

ously growing, progressing, and BEcoming; and how to do the Father's will even on the nativity world of one's universe career.

These three and many other interpretations of the implications and imperatives of the gospel will make spiritual transformation a possibility and a certainty for the God-craving individual and for our world as a whole: "The experience of dynamic religious living transforms the mediocre individual into a personality of idealistic power." (1094:1/100.0.1) "Religion does need new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings.... The spiritual renaissance [may have to] await the coming of these new teachers of Jesus' religion who will be exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of men [as individuals]. And then will these spirit-born souls quickly supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic and political reorganization of the world." (2082:9/195.9.4) There is power in the truth of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, in the spiritual presence of Michael of Nebadon, and in the revelation of their oneness as a unique unity of God and man. «

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*WHY continued from page 4.*

**experience unless you put him off. It is not the fact that God is your Father-friend which transforms you—it is your experience of his friendship which transforms. You will actually know God if you desire to, and knowing him is vastly different from knowing about him.**

So if you are into spiritual transformation for yourself and our world, let's experience God's friendship, get thrilled, get excited and share the techniques of pursuing awareness of God's presence and of his loving, serving participation in our lives. If we share this gospel that God is real and experienceable, and if the hearer believes it, then the inner power of the Adjuster and the Spirit of Truth is unleashed to transform that

person. It is not important to call this good news "the gospel," but it really does matter that we should know what message carries the spiritual power.

**"I have called upon you to be born again, to be born of the spirit. I have called you out of the darkness of authority and the lethargy of tradition into the transcendent light of the realization of the possibility of making for yourselves the greatest discovery possible for the human soul to make—the supernal experience of finding God for yourself, in yourself, and of yourself, and of doing all this as a fact in your own personal experience." "It is not so important that you should know about the fact of God as that you should increasingly grow in the ability to feel the presence of God." (1731:1/155.6.3; 1733:0/155.6.12)«**

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*WHAT continued from page 7.*

catch up with myself. This listener is connected to me or is a part of me and seems responsive or able to respond in ways that are visible to me. As long as I am willing to play out my life here using the tools at my disposal, I expect the question of who this listener is to be a mystery. I am very pleased that the relationship between my conscious self and the listener is growing.

I see the connections between myself and others as though the timing that brings us together is not so much by chance as by the plan of a wise "activities director." At times I become impatient with my activities director and think that I have to have instant gratification in order to make life worth the effort. I have to laugh at myself even as I see myself struggling along with my lack of faith in my director. The big laugh comes when I see how easy things can come when I stop thinking that my limited viewpoint is going to give me the satisfaction I desire. Yes, now, I am ready to receive the answer to my question, "What is here for me now?" with much appreciation and love. «

# The Gospel: Study Notes\*



By Bill Cooper  
Houston, Texas

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

*"Do you not know that the God of heaven has sent his spirit to live within you, and that this spirit will lead all truth-loving and God-serving mortals out of this life and through the portals of death up to the eternal heights of light where God waits to receive his children? And never forget: You who know God are the sons of God if you truly yearn to be like him."* (1474:4/133.4.4)

The word "gospel" means good news, so the gospel of Jesus is the good news of Jesus. This reference contains several items of good news from Jesus. First, it reveals the fact of God's spiritual indwelling of each of us in order to live our lives with us in partnership. Next, it reveals or promises the indwelling Adjuster will lead us home to our heavenly Father if we are truth-loving and God-serving. Then it reveals that God the Father waits to receive us as his children, not just as travelers, but as family. Finally Jesus says the secret to being a son of God is to know him and to yearn to be like him.

*"The great thing in all human experience is the realization of knowing the God whose spirit lives within you and seeks to lead you forth on that long and almost endless journey of attaining the personal presence of our common Father, the God of all creation, the Lord of universes."* (1474:5/133.4.5)

This reference says that realizing that you know God is the great thing in all human experience. This is another "know God" reference. The indwelling spirit of God seeks to lead

us to attain the personal presence of God. It is good news to know that the Adjuster is active, not passive, in leading us to our spiritual Father. God loves us so much that he not only sent his Son, but he came himself to serve as our teacher and guide.

*"Remember that the Father's spirit ever lives within you and always points your soul-direction heavenward. If you follow the unconscious leadings of this immortal spirit, you are certain to continue on in the uplifted way of finding God. And when you do attain the Father in heaven, it will be because by seeking him you have become more and more like him."* (1475:2/133.4.9)

You can never really lose your way. God is with you and knows your way home to him. The method of appropriation of this help is to follow the Adjuster's leadings.

*Jesus sought to divert their minds from miracle seeking to the finding of a real and personal experience in the satisfaction and assurance of the indwelling of God's spirit of love and saving grace.* (1545:9/138.8.8)

We do not merely have to accept on faith that God exists; Jesus taught that we can *experience* the satisfaction and assurance of the indwelling of the Adjuster. Experience is really knowing, not just knowing about. Additionally, Jesus was teaching that experience, not miracles, was the real method of validating God's presence in our lives.

*"Your message to the world shall be: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and in finding these, all other things essential to eternal survival shall be secured*

*therewith."* (1569:2/140.1.5)

Jesus stated specifically what the goal of our lives should be: Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It is true that he did not state specifically how one is supposed to seek first the kingdom, but it **may not matter how one seeks**. The sincere seeking may be all that is required. God may bridge whatever deficiencies our method may involve. This being the case, the technique for leading the ideal spiritual life is to sincerely and consistently seek the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. So where is the kingdom of God and what is God's righteousness? The kingdom of God is within, and the righteousness of God is his goodness. Once again we are being told to seek an inner experience of God which is reflected in our behavior—our goodness.

*The one thing which John gained from this day's teaching was that the heart of Jesus' religion consisted in the acquirement of a compassionate character coupled with a personality motivated to do the will of the Father in heaven.* (1582:4/140.8.23)

Compassion is a type of love which is forgiving and sympathetic. It is almost certainly a powerful motivator to service. God's will is sometimes defined as God's way and sometimes described as goodness.

*The Master came to create in man a new spirit, a new will—to impart a new capacity for knowing the truth, experiencing compassion, and choosing goodness—the will to be in harmony with God's will, coupled with the eternal urge to become perfect, even as the Father in heaven is perfect.* (1583:6/140.8.32)

This is an amazing reference.

Not only did Michael reveal the Father in his life and reveal the already existing spirit potential in his message, but he also created new spirit potentials on this planet and revealed these new potentials in his teachings. This reference says Michael imparted a new capacity for knowing the truth, experiencing compassion and choosing goodness. The reference seems to say these equate to the will to be in harmony with God's will coupled with the urge to be perfect. Maybe it isn't so important that these were new with Jesus, but it is unquestionably good news to us that the capacity to know truth, experience compassion, and choose goodness are ours to use today. Knowing this, we are released from the fear that these objectives are too lofty for us to achieve. They are not. Michael himself has made these possible for all of us.

*"You are to proclaim the baptism of fellowship with God. Preach repentance to those who stand in need of such teaching, but to those already seeking sincere entrance to the kingdom, open the doors wide and bid them enter into the joyous fellowship of the sons of God." (1584:4/140.10.1)*

"Baptism of fellowship with God," what is that !!! Baptism is a ritual symbolizing induction into God's family of believers. But fellowship with God sounds like another expression of experientially, actively, and frequently relating with God. And that was the message Jesus told his followers to preach. It is also good news to me that the brotherhood of believers is joyous, born of love for God, and for each other.

*"The Kingdom of heaven consists in these three essentials: first, recognition of the fact of the sovereignty of God; second, belief in the truth of sonship with God; and third, faith in the effectiveness of the supreme human desire to do the will of God—to be like God. And this is the good news of the gospel: that by faith every mortal may have all these essentials of salvation." (1585:6/*

140.10.9)

This reference tells what qualities the kingdom of heaven consists of and it says that faith is the technique which assures that every mortal can have these qualities. One

statement in this reference stands out: that we are to have faith in the *effectiveness* of our supreme desire to do God's will. This is a promise that our desire will result in our being

*See STUDY on page 24.*

## Chariots of Fire

There is a distant world of phenomena  
Beyond the bounds of reality,  
In our eternal destiny.

The material mind of mortal man  
Is the cosmic loom of the Gods,  
Weaving the spiritual fabric  
That will endure the antecedent odds.

Though the voice of the Lord is ever within,  
Seldom it's ever heard.  
Our electrical, chemical, physical nature  
Forever demands the last word.

But the kingdom of God is within us.  
And the brotherhood of man  
Is a fellowship of the faithful  
In a scheme that is ever so grand.

The Master has taught of a childlike belief  
As the key to the kingdom of God.  
And faith is the price you have to pay,  
Or you die in the land of Nod.

But when you can forgive as you'd be forgiven,  
You create in your very own soul  
The capacity for the reception  
Of forgiveness from God as your dole.


It's forgiveness, the price of admission,  
Reception the rule of the rod.  
How much you forgive the children of man  
Is how much you're forgiven by God.

Then your soul will merge with the spirit of God  
Spiraling higher and higher,  
To vanish into eternal bliss  
In chariots of fire.

By J. Bauer  
Alaska

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# Potpourri

## A New Way of Reading The Urantia Book\*

As you read all of the Master's warnings and admonitions to the apostles, scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees regarding their systems of teaching, give these words new meaning and value. Pretend he is warning all readers of *The URANTIA Book*. Pretend all of those admonitions are directed to you, as an individual—and to all of us as a group. Pay special attention to the conflict of the Pharisees and Sadducees as they clashed with the Master's teachings—his new and living religion of the spirit and their older religion of ceremony, tradition, and authority.

Consider how these admonitions pertain to the fostering or impeding of your worship, your Thought Adjuster communion, and your born again experience. Here is a good example of one of the Master's teachings and admonitions: (1732:5/155.6.12)

"You must cease to seek for the word of God only on the pages of the olden records of theologic authority. Those who are born of the spirit of God shall henceforth discern the word of God regardless of whence it appears to take origin. Divine truth must not be discounted because the channel of its bestowal is apparently human. Many of your brethren have minds which accept the theory of God while they spiritually fail to realize the presence of God. And that is just the reason why I have so often taught you that the kingdom of heaven can best be realized by acquiring the spiritual attitude of a sincere child. It is not the mental immaturity of the child that I commend to you but rather the *spiritual simplicity*

of such an easy-believing and fully-trusting little one. It is not so important that you should know about the fact of God as that you should increasingly grow in the ability to *feel the presence of God.*"

Allow me to conduct a little experiment and make a few select changes in the previous quote:

"You must cease to seek for the word of God only on the pages of *The URANTIA Book*. Those who are born of the spirit of God shall henceforth discern the word of God regardless of whence it appears to take origin. Divine truth must not be discounted because the channel of its bestowal is apparently human. Many of your brethren have minds which accept the theories of God presented in *The URANTIA Book*, while they spiritually fail to realize the presence of God. And that is just the reason why I have

By Vince Ventola  
Venice, California

so often taught you that the kingdom of heaven can best be realized by acquiring the spiritual attitude of a sincere child. It is not the mental immaturity of the child that I commend to you but rather the *spiritual simplicity* of such an easy-believing and fully-trusting little one. It is not so important that you should know about the facts of God presented in *The URANTIA Book*, as that you should increasingly grow in the ability to *feel the presence of God.*"

When you read and study the many admonitions and warnings in *The URANTIA Book*, apply this technique of substitution and see if the results are not quite jolting. Perhaps this exercise will help us all to reawaken our minds and humble ourselves as we seek to study and *live* these teachings. «

By David Glass  
Fort Worth, Texas

## Who Do We Think We Are?

Charles Allen in his classic little book titled "As a Man Thinketh" emphasized the idea that our behavior depends largely on our self-concepts. The development of the mission of *The URANTIA Book* on earth is strongly influenced by the self-concepts of those who read the book.

I have the opinion that a very common reaction of a person who discovers the book, reads it, and absorbs the effect of such an unexpected encounter is something like: "Are there massive organizations spreading the word of the availability

of this book? Are there armies of missionaries spreading the message to all mankind?" We get the feeling that since the universe is teeming with spiritual ministers and because the need is great here for just such a hopeful message as the book affords, there must exist a vast force in charge of its being shared the world over.

When we learn the facts about the beginning of the outreach of the book's readers, and if we try spreading the news ourselves, we gather a different impression, the impression



that outreach will be a slow and incremental process. But I believe that we are now entering into a new impression of "who we are" and how we can relate to the mission of *The URANTIA Book*.

We are not just readers. We can be, if we wish to be, agents and extensions of the superhuman population of our world to individuals and groups down here. I believe that a valid response to the question, "Who do we think we are?" is: *We are cooperators with the supermortal spiritual administration and service programs of our world or universe.*

Most of the book readers I have met have said that at least once they have felt that they were receiving the assistance of some "unseen friends" as they tried to reach a certain person or group with the message of the book. Perhaps it is more frequently the case that those unseen friends devised the opportunity for someone to find the book *with the assistance of a reader.*

As we become more familiar with the book and the universe it describes, we come to feel secure in the Father's love and thereby challenged to do something for him in response to having been given the revelation. This may be initially envisioned as an uplifting and positive experience. Truly *it is*—once experiential wisdom alerts the reader to the fact that he will not find a universal reception of the book in our generation. But this is not a problem; it is simply a reality. Virtually everything in the finite universe is moving in a positive direction—a process we refer to as evolution. And this non-universal response to the book simply means that we are at the beginning of the evolution of the human response to the book. We should not be discouraged, but rather excited with the realization that we will be having the privilege of seeing the entire process develop from the beginning. And that is an experience later readers will wish they could have had!

I make these statements not to slow down enthusiasts by the chal-

lenge, but rather to emphasize the plethora of opportunity for service before us.

There is a sense of urgency which remains even despite the vision of a lengthy process ahead. I think the sense of what Meredith Sprunger calls "The Imperative of Outreach Ministry" is generally felt throughout the known readership of the book. He says, "The foremost priority of the Urantia movement is outreach ministry. We have the message the world most needs to

hear. Missionaries of the Fifth Epochal Revelation must seriously ask, 'How do we go about this task?' [This pamphlet is obtainable from Jesuronian Foundation, 1790 30th St., Suite 400, Boulder, Co 80301.]

I believe that sense is legitimate and that it can be empowered by love from the Father and from friends. Divine love is *outgoing*. The following are some personal observations on the experience of outreach:

1. Although not every person
- See WHO on page 22.*

## Tidbits

A great-great grandson and his friend ran through the living room. There sat great-great grandmother in her rocking chair, pillow on her lap, reading *The URANTIA Book*.

"What's she doing?" asked the friend.

Reply: "She's studying for her finals."

By Paul Whitmoyer  
Landisburg, Pennsylvania

Remember the turtle: He only makes progress when he sticks his neck out.

By Rich Keeler  
Evanston, Wyoming

### INTERESTING QUOTES

"... scholars at a Bible research center say diners in Christ's era more likely reclined on floor cushions for festive meals, as the Romans did in that day. . . . Relying on Bible verses, ancient Jewish writings and Roman historical works, Fleming and his associates have concluded that the Last Supper probably was served at a low, U-shaped table that the Romans called a 'triclinium.' . . . Fleming agrees with other scholars that Christ's Last Supper may have been a Passover dinner. . . . the Biblical Study Center can cite verses from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John that indicate Judas was very close to Christ, probably to his immediate left."

Houston Post, Thursday, March 23, 1989

## BLACK HOLES AND OTHER FANCY STUFF\*

[This article was originally published in Dick's journal, *Cosmic Reflections*, Winter/Spring 1988. It is used here with his kind permission.]

The heavens are filled with exotic and curious objects, and one of the most curious is the conjectured black hole. This proposed object has captured the fancy of not only astronomers and cosmologists, but also the popular press. The Disney studios produced a fantasy film about a space ship that flies into and through a black hole. A number of people have asked whether the dark gravity bodies and dark islands *The URANTIA Book* mentions are black holes. Before we consider that question, let's look at what our science of astronomy believes black holes and several other very dense celestial bodies are.

One of the dense bodies that has been identified by astronomers is called a white dwarf star. The white dwarf is supposed to be what remains after a large star blows off its outer layers. *The URANTIA Book* mentions dwarf stars, but says that the white ones are young and not very massive. The old dwarfs are

small and massive and shine with a reddish light. This type star is mentioned by the book: "The weight of this hot-cold gaseous-solid is about one ton per cubic inch." (460:1/41.4.4) This means that a cube one inch on a side of the material of this star weighs as much as a small automobile. The material in the center of some of these old stars may weigh up to six tons per cubic inch according to the book. Another massive dwarf proposed by astronomers is termed a black dwarf star. According to them, this is a star that has used up all its fuel and gives off no visible light; it has become a dead and lifeless body.

Something even more massive than a dwarf star was proposed in the 1930's, namely, a neutron star. It is believed that this object consists solely of neutrons, packed together as closely as possible. The existence of these super-dense objects was apparently confirmed in the 1960's when pulsars were discovered. The pulsar gives off short pulses of radio energy that can be detected with a radio telescope. The pulsar is believed to be a rapidly

spinning neutron star that emits radio energy from its polar regions. These pulsars might be thought of as celestial lighthouses. In fact, some astronomers at first thought that these signals might be navigational signals sent by a civilization from some other solar system. Astronomers believe that neutron stars are formed as a result of a supernova explosion in which the outer part of the star is blown off into space, leaving the neutron star behind as a remnant core. These supernovae are rare, but astronomers were fortunate enough to have been able to see one close to the Milky Way galaxy this year (March, 1987.) Harry L. Shipman in *Black Holes, Quasars, and The Universe* gives their density as 18 billion tons per cubic inch. Just think of how many compact cars that is! I haven't found any direct reference in *The URANTIA Book* regarding neutron stars, but nothing I have found says that they cannot exist.

As massive as the dwarf and neutron stars are, they are featherweights compared to the supposed black hole. The neutron star has the basic sub-atomic particles known as neutrons packed as closely as is possible, but the black hole is even denser than a neutron star, so it must be composed of even more fundamental particles than is a neutron star. Scientists call these particles "quarks." They have been theorized, but no one has devised a means to detect these particles directly. *The URANTIA Book* tells of the ultimatons, a particle that is the smallest possible particle. All other sub-atomic particles such as electrons, protons and neutrons are composed of ultimatons. Therefore, the black hole would have to be composed of ultimatons in order to be more massive than a neutron star.

There does not seem to be a

### 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 greater understanding of Jesus' Gospel and for its expression in our lives. Let's ask in each moment as we live with our fellows that Jesus' love flow through us. And let's especially ask for forgiving tolerance and startling affection to be obvious in our relationships with each other.

consensus on the dimensions of the black hole among astronomers and physicists. Some have proposed that at the center of the black hole is a point of no size but of infinite mass. Others have proposed that the object in the black hole may be as much as a mile across.

The mathematics of the black hole suggests some interesting possibilities. Scientists found one solution to the equations that suggested to them another sort of reality connected with the black hole. This was picked up by the popular press and blown out of proportion to the extent that some suggested that we could travel vast distances in an instant by plunging into a black hole. There are two problems with this idea. First, not everything that is predicted by mathematical analysis has to exist.

Second, even if it were possible in theory, the massive gravity associated with the dense object in the center would tear us apart before we even reached the surface.

The black hole is black because the gravity is so intense that even light cannot escape. Yes, light has weight. Both Einstein's theories and *The URANTIA Book* confirm this fact. Anything that would enter the black hole could never leave it; thus a black hole would be like a vacuum cleaner in space, sucking in everything that came too near it.

Since the black hole neither gives off light nor reflects it, it can never be seen; so astronomers have proposed finding the black hole by its effects on things around it. They feel that they have found at least one orbiting a star. Some have also pro-

posed that a massive black hole may lie at the center of many galaxies because of their observations of these areas. Despite the theories and observational evidence however, there may not be such a thing as a black hole.

It was pointed out above that a black hole would have to be composed of ultimatons. In *The URANTIA Book* we are informed that there is a "critical explosion point of ultimatonic condensation." (458:6/41.3.6) This means that if we try to compress the ultimatons together, we get an explosion. This perhaps is the explanation for some of the supernovae that have been recorded throughout history. The activity at the center of galaxies could be due to the effects of the presence of the superuniverse

See *BLACK* on page 23.



## Meanings and Values

Edited by John Hyde Richardson, Texas

This column is to be a new regular feature in *The Circles*. The success of this column depends on you, the reader.

The idea is to discuss in detail some suggestion, incident, conflict, concept, or idea that involves the exercising of our system of meanings and values. Topics could include relationships, ethics, occupations and their considerations, morality, the teaching of values, and so on.

Initially my idea is to present a statement of some type and then invite comments. I would try to publish all the comments I receive, but whether or not that would be possible would depend on several factors. Of course, I will try to remain neutral in most matters.

I would also be very interested in receiving ideas and suggestions for our next topic. Furthermore, if it seems as though a modification of

the format is in order, I will certainly do so and will entertain any suggestions to that effect.

I'll kick things off with a recent experience of my own: As I left the supermarket last week and headed toward my car in the parking lot, I observed a car entering a parking space directly ahead. As it pulled in, it scraped the car adjacent to it (an American made luxury car). The driver, a middle-aged woman, got out of her car after backing out and then reentering the space. She proceeded to walk over to the adjacent car, looked at it, and then looked at me watching her. She then threw back her shoulders and proceeded inside to do her grocery shopping. In this state it is the law that she has to leave a note on the car explaining what happened and include her name, address, phone number, and driver's license number.

As I stood there pondering what to do, a man in his late fifties walked up to the luxury car and got in, without noticing the long black bumper mark and slight indentation in the metal which was on the rear driver's side of the car, just below knee level.

Quite a few possible actions passed through my mind as I witnessed this whole scene, none of which I did. But I won't prejudice you with what I was thinking.

What I want to know is, did I do the right thing? Why or why not? What would Jesus have done? Was this any of my business? How have you handled similar situations and what was the outcome?

Please send any and all comments, including ideas for the next topic, to:

John C. Hyde  
910 Glen Cove  
Richardson, TX 75080

# SPHERES of INFLUENCE



*The Mustard Seed Project from Jesusonian Foundation, Boulder, Colorado. Nine leaflets.*

## The Mustard Seed Project

Ever wish you could share a few quotes from The URANTIA Book with a friend on a topic of interest to her or him, but didn't have the quotes at hand? Jesusonian has created a new tool just for such introductions to the book. These little 8 1/2" X 3 1/2" sheets are called "Mustard Seeds." There are nine offered in Jesusonian's fall catalog and more in preparation. The topics produced so far are:

- The Faith of Jesus
- Marriage and Family Life
- Sin and Evil
- Life After Death
- Suffering, Defeat and Affliction
- How to Pray
- The Compatability of Religion and Science
- The Power of Love
- Obtaining World Peace

The front of each mustard seed presents selected quotations from The URANTIA Book on a topic. The reverse side gives page references in the book for additional information on the topic. Also on the back is a notice indicating that URANTIA Brotherhood is the source of study group information.

These mustard seeds will be handy to have on hand to share with prospective readers and as introductory study materials for new readers. (See Things to Share in this issue for information on how to obtain these materials.)

*By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas*

### The Circles Calendar

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

**Spring-Summer**  
**Fall**  
**Winter**

<u>Articles Due</u>	<u>Mail</u>
Dec. 15	May 1
April 15	Aug. 15
Aug. 1	Dec. 1

*REALIZING continued from page 3.*

reshape our thoughts and behavior? A complete and beautiful character transformation is the natural and inevitable result of living faith in the gospel! We can totally exhaust ourselves with untold human effort to become "good" and never attain our goal. Or, we can simply remember to hold the thought that we, and those around us are children of God, and from that mind set, our "ungodly" behavior is curtailed without any further effort. **Our only battle is the battle of faith!** We cannot help but love one another in any moment in which we are remembering our sonship with God.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand—will we dare to reach out and embrace it?«

*GOSPEL continued from page 9.*

that all men are brethren. Remember all I have taught you and the life I have lived among you. My love overshadows you, my spirit will dwell with you, and my peace shall abide upon you. Farewell." (2057:4/193.5.2)

We have made a beginning towards *unbelievable liberation* since the Spirit of Truth has been poured out on this planet. The old order before Jesus was a state of racial slavery. The enslaved individual slowly emerges from this bondage of ceremonialism and selfishness into the brotherhood of liberated faith sons of God. In spite of the scientific minds and materialistic predilection in this age, we can anticipate the coming epoch to be one of

ever expanding qualitative thinking and increasing *intellectual freedom*. Fear of intellectual expression is the next age-long order of religious enslavement from which we will slowly emerge. In a future cycle, generations will earnestly look forward to a new order of *religious liberty*.

*God is our Father, man our brother. Whole-heartedly believing this is eternal life.* This is the the light-giving message of the gospel as I see it.

Let us pray, with all our heart's desire, to let our *light of living truth* so shine before men that they will be led to glorify our Father in heaven. Let's give worship to our Father in heaven, our first duty and highest joy, as he guides us all in Truth, Beauty and Goodness forever. «

GO continued from page 6.

tions of the loving service of man.

"5. The transcendancy of the spiritual over the material in human personality." (1863:7-11/170.4.9-13)

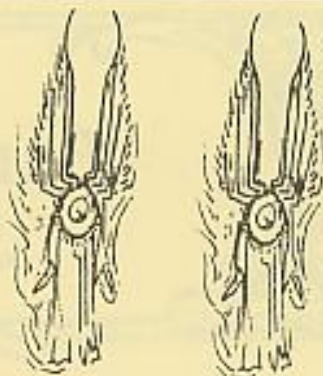
If we are not careful, we can make the same mistake with the Fifth Revelation that the well-meaning leaders of the Fourth Revelation made. They changed the religion of Jesus and the story of his matchless life into a religion *about* Jesus. We are told that, "Already had begun the first steps of changing the gospel of the kingdom—sonship with God and brotherhood with man—into the proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus." (2051:4/192.4.7) And in the next paragraph we are further told that "under the vigorous leadership of Peter and ere the Master ascended to the Father, his well-meaning representatives began that subtle process of gradually and certainly changing the religion of Jesus into a new and modified form of religion *about* Jesus." (2041:5/192.4.8) And we, with the same sincerity and best intentions, can change the religion of Jesus into a religion or gospel *about* The URANTIA Book.

We should continue to work for the dissemination of the book into all the world for those who can and will read it and who will go on to serve as lighthouses in their native lands for those who cannot read. But let us be clear that the instructions given to us are to take the gospel—the good news—to all creatures of every race, tribe and nation. Nearly one-half of the world's 4.7 billion population cannot read and certainly more than that are not able to read *The URANTIA Book*, yet we are admonished to take the message to "all creatures." If we are not able to personally "go into all the world," we can surely support those who are able. We can also support those scholars of the book in various countries who will use many methods to share the gospel of the book with non-readers in their own languages and dialects.

"The common people heard Jesus gladly, and they will again

## 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)***

*"You ...work out the details of your earthly sojourn in connection with the intelligences of the Infinite Spirit operating on your world and throughout your universe." (66:1/5.3.5)*

***Let us imagine a message from our Guardian Seraphim:***

Dear Ones,

See us as your friends who participate with you in all your activities. We are always with you and have as our guide the Mother Spirit; you have the Father Spirit. Our work is blended above as yours is below, as you work together with your opposite polarity. We have much to teach you.

Ask the Father for what you want, and he will hear your plea. Ask and it shall be given. Those of you who never ask are delayed in your growth. As you believe so shall you receive. See others as you want them to be.

A more gentle society is coming of age on your planet. You are the

respond to the presentation of his sincere human life of consecrated religious motivation if such truths shall again be proclaimed to the world." (2090:5/196.1.4) And that is up to us—that is our challenge—to see that those truths are again presented to the world.

†From William S. Sadler, Jr.'s 1957 URANTIA Brotherhood Triennial report.

opens to a new truth—to new hope. Be strong and gentle. Life is but a day at a time. Live it well. Have a designated time to be with your Father to think. Time out for thinking increases creative energy. Think about things which need changing and stay with those thoughts until satisfaction is achieved. Give a problem several sessions if need be. Take your time and let it be a natural process. You are free-will mortals and you are given time to find answers that will help you achieve your dreams and desires. You can depend on us for help in your creative endeavors for the good of the whole.

We have a dual life—working in one realm and living in another. Life has always been this way for us. Imagine a life in which the ones you serve most are often unaware of your service. God also serves in this capacity.

Remember if you feel the need to worry, save it for some other day. Our help will be available to you in your work. Have faith in our love and protection and be full of joy.

We love you,  
Your Guardian Angels

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

Subscriptions:  
See back cover



## Enjoy Your Children

It will be interesting to see the changes wrought by family planning and birth control upon the families of today in twenty years' time. Only yesterday many babies were not wanted at all or they came along at too frequent intervals. No longer will parents be forced to accept and raise undesired babies or children who come too close together. They can choose not only the number but the spacing of their offspring. Even though it is an advantage for the children to be only two to four years apart, ten or eleven months can impose a heavy economic, emotional and physical strain upon a family—especially the mother. In the olden days it was not uncommon for mothers to lose several teeth following pregnancies too close together, and I knew one young mother whose glorious red-gold hair faded away to a dingy blond when she had three children in four years.

Since numerous children are no longer an economic advantage, birth control methods and family planning education appeared serendipitously to help stem the explosion of world population. As so often happens the time was ripe for these new scientific breakthroughs. We can already foresee some results from these recent developments—at least in the western world. Couples with less parental drive are being gradually eliminated from the genetic pool, and most babies will have been planned for by parents who are nurturing and dedi-

cated to providing their children a better chance to reach their highest potential. Parents will have more time and money to devote to their families. By gradually preventing reproduction for those couples who choose not to have children for materialistic and egocentric reasons, the end of this materialistic age will be promoted.

The stage is being set for progress in child rearing enjoyment as more and more parents begin to consider reproduction a privilege and willingly accept the responsibility for giving their offspring the best possible environment to develop their talents. In addition, a new parental mindset is evolving as fathers participate in the birthing process and actually desire involvement in the raising of their children. All of these factors will contribute to the discovery of new ways in which to enhance the satisfactions of having children. This increased enjoyment and acceptance by the parents will in turn foster the well-being of the children and the resulting improvement in their self-image, the ideal of which is that superb self-respect exemplified in the balanced character of Jesus.

One of the regrets I have about my own child-rearing years is that I did not devote enough time to playing with my children and exposing them to all of my own interests and activities. Having been an only child, I thought that playing with other children was a higher good than seeing

that they were exposed to all of my cultural pursuits. This was brought home to me dramatically when my daughter, at the age of 21, answered my question of how did you like the ballet, by answering, "I liked it very much after I got used to the fact that they weren't going to say anything." I had honestly believed that exposing them to all the books I had read and enjoyed as a child and reading to them the newer children's classics would adequately pass on to them the necessary culture of today. It didn't.

In perusing my Cahill and Company summer book catalogue the other day I came across a review of a book that seems to be outstanding. The foreword is written by M. Scott Peck, M.D., the well-known author of *The Road Less Traveled*. It is entitled *Whole Child, Whole Parent* and written by Polly Berends. In his assessment of the book Dr. Peck says, "This is the best book I know on the psychology of child raising...the one and only book about child raising written by a mystic."

In this most important work of finding and doing the will of God on this world of our origin—producing the next generation—may all of you in the child-rearing years find great joy and the ultimate satisfaction of achievement. «

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*WHO continued from page 17.*

we meet will want to read the book, everyone is ready for the next truth in the sequence of truths that he or she has thus far accumulated.

2. Every individual is "ready" for love, support, encouragement, recognition, appreciation, and inspiration.

3. We live on a world of great opportunity for exhilarating service.

4. While we rejoice at the confirmation of our eternal destiny, we shall never serve as a material mortal on a material world again. Hence, we can regard each day as a treasure given by God. Just as Jesus compressed several men's potential achievements in service to mankind

and the revelation of the Father, so can we utilize time here for the furtherment of great goals.

5. Although we may sense ourselves to be a planetary minority, we are, in truth, actually members of the cosmic *majority* of those who seek to perform the Father's will.

6. To give love is to experience God.

7. We should refrain from prejudging that another person would not be interested in the revelation. I have been surprised at great intellects who seem to have saturated themselves with Pauline doctrines but who embrace the truths of the book. I have participated in study groups with readers who were actually only marginally literate.

8. The best way to find out whether a person is interested in any of the fields of knowledge in the book is to ASK them.

9. If you have indicated to God that you are willing to serve as a conduit of the revelation to interested individuals, *be alert*, because you *will* encounter such truth seekers. We should be attentive to recognize such opportunities daily, hourly. Such is my faith and experience.

10. Consider momentarily what your inner spiritual climate would be like were you attempting to relate meaningfully to our world *without* the revelation. Such is the state of mind of the millions.

11. Expect to learn from and be benefited by the experience of sharing truth and by the response of another individual to the truth you shared.

12. It is well to get beyond the stage of feeling embarrassed when prospective readers show disinterest. Recall that about a third of the people who met Jesus and heard him speak thought him to be mad.

13. Wouldn't you rather be turned away by a person uninterested in the book or the gospel than not to have mentioned the book or the gospel to one who actually really needed and desired it?

14. Do you want to encounter

acquaintances of yours or even strangers on the mansion worlds, your contemporaries from Urantia, who ask you why you never told them about the heavenly worlds?

15. Isn't it alright and acceptable to suffer being disbelieved when there is such a great service waiting to be done for those who truly yearn for spiritual enlightenment?

16. Why should we expect someone else to spread the glad tidings? And why should we want to when the experience is so good to participate in first hand? Didn't the Master admonish us, "Freely have you received. Freely give."

17. I believe that our vision of the world should not focus on what may *appear* to be obstacles to the dissemination of the gospel, but rather on the discriminating search to locate those who are looking for truth which makes reality comprehensible.

18. "Who do we think we are?" Are we not goodwill ambassadors of truth; prepared and experientially trained disseminators of glad tidings; participants in the foundational era of the fifth epochal revelation; and the infinitely loved children of an infinite and all-wise Father whose wisdom we can tap? Divine love is outgoing in all its energy. God is love. His love indwells us. His will is that we become one with his irresistible power of unconditional love. Love is inherently and supremely empowered to transform the world by transforming the individual. Do we not rightly think of ourselves as recipients and channels of the Father's love? How much we have to share with our fellows, with our brethren, with the Father's children, even now! And even as we pray for the extension of the kingdom through service to the individual, let us ever keep in mind that *we may be or have the answer to someone else's prayer!*"

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*BLACK continued from page 19.*

headquarters and the energy controlling entities that function there.

So, what are those dark gravity bodies between Havona and the

superuniverses? They seem to have some of the characteristics of black holes, but we are informed that they are unique and not found anywhere else in the master universe. Likely they are not composed of ordinary matter, but some unique material created especially for the function they perform. *The URANTIA Book* also mentions what are called the dark islands of space that control and transform energy. These are aggregations of cold matter and not dying stars. They apparently do not collapse in on themselves as dying stars do and thus would not form black holes. These dark islands give off no light because they are not composed of hydrogen as the stars are. Therefore, they do not fuse hydrogen to helium to liberate energy in the form of light. Our astronomers have also theorized these bodies and called them brown stars. They believe that these brown stars might account for the so-called missing matter of space.

In the last episode of a TV series called "The Day the Universe Changed," the host, James Burke, pointed out that the science of today is sometimes suspect because our scientists first invent theories and then devise experiments to find the evidence that supports their theories. Too often, contrary evidence gets ignored. Perhaps the black hole theory is like this. Let us hope that students of the book do not also look only at evidence that supports their beliefs. As science progresses, it must face the difficult task of rejecting theories that cannot be supported by the evidence and devising new ones. As students of *The URANTIA Book*, we need to recall that the cosmology of the book is relative truth. We are children in the cosmos, and sometimes it is necessary to distort or limit concepts so that children can understand them. As civilization matures we will no doubt need to re-examine the cosmology of the book in light of our advancing understanding. Let us be as honest as we would like our scientists to be. «

*SHARING continued from page 5.*

all other men; that is, if you have not lost your savor. As it is, this man is your master in that his evil ways unfavorably influence you. Why not assert your mastery of evil by virtue of the power of goodness and thus become the master of all relations between the two of you? I predict that the good in you could overcome the evil in him if you gave it a fair and living chance. . . . If you are more blessed with truth than is this man, his need should challenge you. Surely you are not the coward who could stand by on the seashore and watch a fellow man who could not swim perish! How much more of value is this man's soul floundering in darkness compared to his body drowning in water!"

Jesus has just issued Anaxand a counterchallenge! He has even insinuated that only a COWARD could not show kindness in the face of such persecution. Jesus rearranged that man's sense of bravery in a matter of moments, and simply because he so totally KNEW how good God really is. He was utterly devoid of any doubt whatsoever, and he therefore refused to be drawn into some ineffectual intellectual debate that would have led nowhere.

This episode is amazingly demonstrative of Jesus' teaching regarding personal nonresistance to evil, while also showing the concept of aggressively, rather than passively, meeting evil with good. Besides practically calling the man a coward, Jesus also taunts him ("unless, of course, you have lost your savor"), challenges him, and actually promotes his assertiveness ("ought to assert your mastery of evil"). Truly we see here how *all* things can work together for good, how even those character traits, commonly thought of as impediments in the search for God, can in fact be turned toward aiding in that search.

Jesus completely turned the tables on Anaxand. Where initially Jesus had been intellectually and spiritually put on the spot, now Anax-

and suddenly found himself to be less than a real man if he did not himself bravely approach the cruel, unjust foreman with a sincere, open and loving heart.

When you have experienced something good, whether it be a restaurant, a happy marriage, a movie, or anything else, it is natural to want to let others know how they can participate in a similar joy. It is something that is done almost without thought, and with no need to consider the "best way" to make the recommendation. Also, there is no sense of rejection if the suggestion is not taken. If you really care about the individual, there will be a sense of regret that he or she will not have the pleasure of knowing what you know, of experiencing what you have experienced. But this does not deter you, for the next time you see the need, you will again attempt to share your wonderful discovery with someone else—once again, and with joy, sincerity, and conviction every time.

This is the gospel, Jesus' gospel of "friendship with God," and how to spread it.

*STUDY continued from page 15.*

able to do his will—to become more like him.

*"When you are the subjects of this kingdom, you indeed are made to hear the law of the Universe Ruler; but when, because of the gospel of the kingdom which I have come to declare, you faith-discover yourselves as sons, you henceforth look not upon yourselves as law-subject creatures of an all-powerful king but as privileged sons of a loving and divine Father." (1588:5/141.2.2)*

We are supposed to be so sure of our relationship with God that we feel like privileged and much-loved sons and daughters. It is good news that we are God's children, but it is also good news that we can, by exercising faith, feel and experience our sonship.

*Jesus laid great emphasis upon what he called the two truths of first*

*import in the teachings of the kingdom, and they are: the attainment of salvation by faith, and faith alone, associated with the revolutionary teaching of the attainment of human liberty through the sincere recognition of truth, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (1593:7/141.7.6)*

Jesus' two great truths in the teachings of the kingdom were and are that faith saves and that truth, recognition of the loving and merciful way God runs all creation, sets you free to seek God by any and every path you choose. You are free of many things: free from soul-shackling religious forms, free from the grip of selfishness and self-centeredness, free from the fears of material-minded man, free from personality isolation through the warm supportive love of God. You are free of fear because God loves you. You are not only free, but you are safe to pursue a life of spiritual adventure. God loves a child who pushes to the limit as much as he loves his reserved and proper children.

*"... I declare that in the coming kingdom they shall . . . all be concerned with one supreme duty. And this duty of man is expressed in two great privileges: sincere worship of the infinite Creator, the Paradise Father, and loving service bestowed upon one's fellow men. If you love your neighbor as you love yourself, you really know that you are a son of God." (1600:3/142.4.2)*

It is suggestive of techniques that those in the kingdom of God are concerned with worship of God and service to the brotherhood of man. Worship is the God-man relationship which brings the experience of realizing sonship. Service is a technique by which one channels God's love to his other children and is uplifted and ennobled in the process. Both worship and service raise man up bit by bit to a status more like God.

*"Already does the spirit of the Father in heaven indwell you. If you would be led by this spirit from above, very soon would you begin to see*



with the eyes of the spirit, and then by the wholehearted choice of spirit guidance would you be born of the spirit since your only purpose in living would be to do the will of your Father who is in heaven. And so finding yourself born of the spirit and happily in the kingdom of God, you would begin to bear in your daily life the abundant fruits of the spirit." (1602:6/142.6 7)

By choosing to be led by the spirit, we will very soon begin to see with the eyes of the spirit. And then, if that isn't enough experience of God for you, you can make a wholehearted choice of spirit guidance and experience being born of the spirit. These promises are literal, not figurative, and these experiences of God's presence in your life will sweep away any of your doubt that he is real. Your experience of him will grow from a little at first to definitely a lot.

*Nicodemus. . . was refined, egoistic, and altruistic; but he did not know how to submit his will to the will of the divine Father as a little child is willing to submit to the guidance and leading of a wise and loving earthly father, thereby becoming in reality a son of God, a progressive heir of the eternal kingdom.* (1602:7/142.6 8)

Trust is part of the faith that saves. Trust can be learned by frequent association with a truly trustworthy person. Nicodemus overcame his problem with trust. One of Michael's gifts to us in the Spirit of Truth is our right to appropriate the faith of Jesus, if we find our own faith to be insufficient. Consequently we need not fear that we cannot trust sufficiently.

*The theme of Jesus' teaching on Mount Gerizim was: That he wants all men to see God as a Father-friend just as he (Jesus) is a brother-friend.* (1615:5/143.6.4)

A Father-friend is an experience, not just a status to be explored at a later date. There just is no friendship without consciousness of relationship. A friendship relationship with God and with Michael is possible and should be expected and pursued.

## THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS

**Thanks to all of you who sent money to help us with our financial difficulties. We really appreciate your support.**

*"I have come, not to reveal the Father to the children of Israel, but rather to bring this knowledge of God and the revelation of his love and mercy to the individual believer as a genuine personal experience. . . . God loves you—every one of you—as individuals." (1629:5/145.2.4)*

God's love and mercy is a genuine, personal experience... Experience is something you sense, something you perceive. This is not something that simply happens and goes unnoticed. Michael wants us to know God's love and mercy as an experience, not just as a fact. This emphasis on the individual is a very important part of the gospel. God loves each one of us for who we are and cherishes each of us for our individual qualities. This love that I feel from my heavenly Father puts my self-concept in proper perspective: I am his beloved child!

*"The Father has sent me into the world to show how he desires to indwell and direct all men; and I have so lived this life in the flesh as to inspire all men likewise ever to seek to know and do the will of the indwelling heavenly Father." (1712:2/153.3.2)*

Jesus says he came to show us (not tell us) how God desires to indwell and direct all men. And he says his superlative life was achieved by ever seeking to know and do the will of God. There is that word "seek" again. And Jesus lived his life to inspire all men to seek to know and do the will of God. Seeking to know and do the Father's will implies an expectancy of a perceivable and recognizable response. It implies that seeking will be rewarded by experience of recognizing God's will. Over and over, this is experiential religion Jesus is talking about. When

he says he wants us to know God as a friend, he is speaking literally, not figuratively and he is talking experience, not book knowledge.

*In preaching the gospel of the kingdom, you are simply teaching friendship with God.* (1766:5/159.3.9)

Friendship between people is a spiritual relationship, but it is real and perceivable in the feelings of deep affection, loyalty and desire to be together, enjoying life in each other's company. And this is the feeling of the experience of being friends with God. Only the charge, the excitement of being God's pal, finding opportunities to further his kingdom, sharing his affection with his other children is the most astonishing friendship, the most intense experience you will ever have. God and Michael are exciting, thrilling people to be with.

*. . . to his apostles he always taught the kingdom as embracing man's personal experience in relation to his fellows on earth and to the Father in heaven. Concerning the kingdom, his last word always was, "The kingdom is within you." (1859:6/170.1.13)*

The kingdom of God concept is part of the gospel. It is within. Presumably then, if we are to find God as an experience, we must seek him within. So we need to cultivate techniques for going within. The kingdom within includes experience with people and experience with God. Sometimes this sounds so hard and so strange to go within to find the kingdom of God but remember that our seeking is guaranteed success. We do not have to be smart enough to navigate our own way in. We only have to keep seeking, keep exploring and we will be guided."

*ON continued from page 11.*

the spiritual (and real) you.

The gospel of Jesus is simple and uncomplicated. If you are not experiencing your Father-child union, then it can at best be sought out only as another human formula and religious psychology. But when you do in fact turn around to take your own presence in earnest, then the sovereign you—this exquisite blend of Father and child—will find that the gospel reflects truthfully upon your character and reveals itself with unswerving accuracy in your life.

Never will the gospel replace your spiritual sovereignty, for when it's all said and done, there's nothing which can be replaced, although men and women have ever tried to make it do that, selling their very decision making capacity down the tube so as to adhere to the lifeless letter of the gospel. Perhaps they sought the ultimate sacrifice of offering up everything of themselves, forgetting that Jesus' cross had nothing to do with winning the kingdom of heaven, and oblivious to the fact that sovereignty demands a perfect compliment of that which you are rather than a diminished account of it. By neither adding to yourself nor taking away from yourself but by being who you are and simply getting real—realizing the fatherhood of God and the family of all beings within him—all the rest follows.

Attendant upon such realization, your actual self is released from its earthen roots. You are released from the burden of life. You experience a literal liberation from death as your seat of self-identity is unfolded within that of your merging Father. Spiritual fatherhood is tangibly realized and personalized: you instantly become flooded with the sense of being the generous and loving parent to all and sundry without discrimination. And for the first time you taste real sovereignty. For the first time you command real love and real truth as you demand victory, only to find that it is delivered into your hand gift wrapped with an effortless ease. And for the

first time you taste the nobility with which your freewill decision making capacity is universally respected. And for the first time the gospel of Jesus truthfully reveals itself to be within you, as the salt is found within the ocean, rather than how it had always appeared before—you being within the embrace of the gospel.

This gospel of Jesus is both the word about such a literal spiritual rebirth and the expression which spontaneously bubbles forth from that wellspring of life. Each of us will experience it in a manner unique to our individualities and express it by thoughts and words and deeds in equally unique a manner. But the sisterly smiles of your seraphim will beam all aglow at each and everyone who has been born of dust and has claimed his sovereignty and his victory and command over his decision making, for the seraphim admire unity.

When it's all said and done, though, the greatest thrill about the gospel of Jesus is in the living of it. Nothing compares. Not the writing about it, nor the talking about it, nor the studying and philosophizing and meditating about it. Nothing at all—least of all keeping track of the fact that you might be doing it. Life is for the living. Speculation has its place, but it adds little to your experientially claiming increased value in your life ... and distributing that increased value intelligently among the family.

Your relationship with the gospel of Jesus is not what counts; your command of yourself is. Many people tend to try to live out the gospel. Their attention is glued to the words in a book. But books are lifeless, and such people have no faith in the fact that it is their own spiritual intelligence which is providing the meaning they find so very nourishing anyway. Far better to lay down your life for the spiritual presence who silently thunders through your whole being than for pages of ink on paper. No two men or women will ever enter into conflict or argument over the spirit when they are

spiritual sovereigns. That primitive and foreign-to-the-spirit addiction to argument is the occupation of people who are still only window shopping about eternal life. As much as you might want to find rules within the gospel of Jesus to which you can adhere, such adherence has no real mileage in it. Jesus doesn't want you to be Christian, or Jesusonian, or URANTIA Book-onian. He simply wants you to be yourself and in being yourself, to participate in life to the fullest. He knows that scriptures and revelations are but sign posts, fragrantly depicting how life is when you're a sovereign, and that the real meat on the bone is in your daring to always challenge yourself to overthrow those things upon which you depend. And people depend upon almost anything at all, just so long as they can depend! But if you depend on Jesus, or on the Bible, or on *The URANTIA Book* and its authors and authenticity, or upon human organizations and brotherhoods and orders and cult-like huddlings, you must necessarily place your own Father second. You must necessarily trade off the somewhat mystical courage and verity within the Father-child atmosphere of your identity and surrender your own sovereignty, victory and decision making. And for what? Safety? For not rocking the boat? Let's get real here ... it's your life and death that's at stake. The awesome aspect of the gospel of Jesus is just that point. True spiritual victory and true spiritual sovereignty and true spiritual decision making never rocks the boat. Ever! The boat is only rocked by selfishness and confusion and awkwardness and death-seekers like hate and fear and indecisiveness. And it's a good personal guideline to clear up matters, whether you're rocking the boat or being a sovereign. A fellow once was asked about the difference between life and death, to which he replied, "There's no difference." This came as somewhat of a surprise to this student of the spirit and at length he asked again, "So why don't you just kill

## Things to Share

### ADVENTURES IN SPIRITUAL LIVING RETREAT

*The Circles* will be leading a 1 1/2 day spiritual retreat prior to the 1990 International Conference at Snowmass, Colorado (June 28-30). 100 participants will explore techniques for achieving a personal relationship with our Father and share their spiritual lives with each other. Full information in the conference registration packet. Further questions contact: Carol Weatherford  
215 Woodway Ct.  
Spring, Texas 77386  
(713) 363-1652

### PARTICIPATION IN OUTREACH PROJECT SOUGHT

I am currently working on a sequel to the Jesusonian Foundation's magazine *Life After Death*. This sequel, which is on the religion of Jesus, will be distributed by *URANTIA Book* readers to persons with whom they are acquainted, serving as a tool for personal outreach.

My goal is to give the publication a new look that will be subtle and artistically sensitive. I hope that the text and illustrations will work to distinguish the restatement of the religion of Jesus found in *The URANTIA Book* from traditional Christianity.

I am requesting all of you to send me photocopies of photographs or artwork that you think would complement such a presentation. All sources should be considered as we may purchase the right to use copyrighted works where essential. Color and black and white will be used. The size or quality of the copy does not matter at this point as we will be going to the source for what we ultimately decide to use. Be sure to include the source of all works submitted. We need to accumulate as many pictures as possible from which to choose. Even if you can't send pictures, please drop me a line describing illustrations you feel would be appropriate. Send all picture samples and ideas to:

Steve McIntosh  
1124 Montgomery Street  
San Francisco, CA 94133

### MUSTARD SEED PROJECT

Mustard Seeds (See *Spheres of Influence* in this issue for a description of the Mustard Seed leaflets.) may be ordered from Jesusonian Foundation in packages of ten (of the same kind) for \$0.50 each or all nine packages for \$4.50. Order from:  
Jesusonian Foundation  
1790 30th Street #400  
Boulder, CO 80301

### JESUSONIAN CATALOG

Jesusonian Foundation's Winter/Spring 1989-1990 catalog is now available. Good Cheer Press has added 22 new items including *The Call of the Spirit* by Merrit Horn, art prints of John Byron's paintings, post cards, book covers, and the Mustard Seeds. The catalog continues to offer *Concordes*, *Paramonies*, *URANTIA Books*, "Introduction to The URANTIA Book," *Family Meeting Handbooks*, pamphlets by Meredith Sprunger, and *Life After Death*. Contact:

Good Cheer Press  
1790 30th Street #400  
Boulder, CO 80301

### URANTIA BOOK SELECTICOM

A Selecticom is a compilation composite of references to passages in *The URANTIA Book*. It touches on many of the important concepts, issues and events presented in the revelation, giving a new reader a perspective of the narrative.

This Selecticom of selections will be sent to those interested free of charge, but contributions toward printing and distribution of this and other works-in-progress are gratefully accepted. Correspondence is also welcome, especially on the subject of excerptation projects and spiritually oriented poetry. Contact:

Michael Bartolo  
1900 McKinley St.  
Clearwater, FL 34625

yourself?" And the fellow replied, "Because there's no difference." — Such is sovereignty!

The gospel of Jesus is a testament on the sovereign's inner being and code. And a sovereign is a sovereign. It doesn't matter whether

you're engaging your economic interests or your family obligations or playing ball down in the park. When you get real about yourself on an eternal basis and you drop the hype and the bluff and the pure baloney and settle in for the long and fantastic journey, sovereignty is here to stay in

every quarter of your life. If you're ever in need, play a wild card and choose the highest value, even if it scares the pants off you. The gospel of Jesus says to you, each step of the way, "Choose sovereignty, choose victory. Let it be your own lifestyle, this day and forevermore."»

## The Importance of Lightening Up

*"You will learn that you increase your burdens and decrease the likelihood of success by taking yourself too seriously. Nothing can take precedence over the work of your status sphere....but though the work is important, the self is not. When you feel important, you lose energy to the wear and tear of ego dignity so that there is little energy left to do the work. Self-importance, not work-importance, exhausts immature creatures....You can do important work if you do not become self-important; you can do several things as easily as one if you leave yourself out." (555:5/48.6.37)*

*"When we are tempted to magnify our self-importance, if we stop to contemplate the infinity of the greatness and grandeur of our Makers, our own self-glorification becomes sublimely ridiculous, even verging on the humorous. One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego." (549:2/48.4.15)*

The Circles' Fall 1990 issue will have as its theme, "The Importance of Lightening Up." Join us in exploring the importance of a lack of self-importance and the possibilities and joys of humor.

1. How can we improve the humor we share?
2. What are some of the principles of good humor?
3. Share some good humor with us.
4. What other techniques can be used to counteract our tendency to elevate our self importance?
5. How can we give adequate emphasis to the work we have to do on this world? What is our work here?
6. How can we recognize the importance of work we might be doing without feeling self-important?
7. When we succeed, what can we do to help ourselves maintain a well-balanced poise—a stabilized and spiritualized attitude? (555:3/48.6.35)

Send articles, poems and artwork by April 15, 1990 to:

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P.O. Box 1203

Arlington, Texas 76004-1203

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