

# The Circles

## The Joy Of Service

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# Faith and Service



By Byron T. Weeks  
Big Spring, Texas

Except for a few years during my twenties, when I thought that I was an atheist, I had always been curious about faith, but did not know how to find it.

I had studied philosophy at the university and took a few courses in religion, but nowhere did I find the answers to my questions, neither in the writings of the ancient philosophers, nor in the words of the "wise" men who taught the courses.

Then one day, I picked up a Bible and ran across Paul's words, "Faith is the gift of God..." Next, in my researches, I found that Jesus had said faith may be had for the asking if the petitioner is sincerely searching for the Universal Father and is humbly seeking for truth.

The actual experience of receiving the gift of faith was the most vivid, intense, and impressive event of my entire life. It was the beginning of the personal, experiential and actual verification of the presence of the divine spirit that dwells within all of us.

Eventually, I found *The Urantia Book* and its teaching of the original, undistorted gospel of Jesus. For the first time, I really began to formulate the personal concepts of faith and service which I shall try to summarize here.

All sincere truth seekers shall find faith, for while God cannot be revealed to one who does not seek him, faith is the gift of God to all those who do sincerely try to find him.

What, then, is faith, and how does it differ from belief? Belief is

passive. It is mere acquiescence to the hypothesis that God exists. It contains no commitment, entails no promise, and derives no benefits. On the other hand, faith is both active and creative, for with it comes the passionate, burning desire to know the Universal Father and to try to do his will—to be of loving service to our brothers and sisters.

Since it comes as a gift from God, faith may be received through humble and sincere prayer, just as a little child may petition a parent for something greatly desired. With this petition must come a moral choice, a consecration, a promise to the Father that if you may know of his existence, you are willing to try to serve him and to change your life in accordance with his will. In other words, you will be determined to strive in your daily life to substitute his will for your own.

What are the blessings that may accrue to those who have faith? Faith in God leads us to love and trust in him. It allows us to begin to perceive and actually to experience the indwelling of the divine spirit in our minds and to detect a glimmering of the great love that the Father has for us. Little by little, we begin to draw closer to him as we come to recognize him as a companion and as a friend.

By faith comes the promise of salvation and of divine forgiveness. When the question is asked, "How can I find salvation?", the answer must be that you should pray for faith and then be willing to do his will, to

accept divine truth as you receive it, to accept his forgiveness, and most of all, to learn to forgive yourself. For unless you can forgive yourself, you cannot fully forgive those who have trespassed against you, and it will be much more difficult to learn to befriend and serve his children. Only through faith can we be filled with that divine love that enables us to be loving—even to the unlovable.

Then comes the inevitable question, "How can I know the will of God in my own life?" While there are many ramifications, the answer has been clearly articulated by Jesus and the prophets: "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you." This, I think, best describes the concept of what is meant by loving service.

The indwelling spirit will guide us in the many moral and spiritual decisions we must make in learning to treat others as we would like to be treated. With the growing awareness of the presence of, and the communication with, the spirit within us comes an increasing desire to serve God by serving our fellow man. This should not be pictured as service to some vague, generic concept of "mankind," but rather as the serving of each individual as we encounter him or her in our daily lives.

In service to our fellows we must be kind and gentle but not overly indulgent. We should never be trapped into condoning weakness or acts of self-destruction. While always patient and forbearing, neither

See FAITH on page 18.

# A Wealth of Opportunities

By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas



Life is filled with opportunities for the joy of service. One of the easiest and most plentiful is the chance to give attention. Sales clerks, cashiers, waiters and waitresses—so many of these people whom I see frequently in my errand running have been relegated to robots in people's minds. They are so often viewed as non-persons to be used and ignored. Sometimes they even take the brunt of a customer's frustration and anger. It takes only a moment to look them in the eye, smile, and drop some brief word which indicates that you see them as a person. I can tell from the looks on their faces that it gives them a little pleasure to have that moment of real person-to-person contact. I go from errand to errand enjoying the simple act of giving a little pleasure, adding a small bit to people's self-respect. I find my spirits rising; I hum; I chuckle.

Listening is another frequent opportunity to serve. I'm not referring to that all-too-frequent substitute in which you listen with part of your mind and plan your afternoon with the other. I'm talking about full attention with an easy, relaxed acceptance.

I know what it feels like to be listened to with acceptance. I feel validated as a person. I feel able to get my emotions and thoughts out where I can see them better. I can express my frustration, anger or sorrow, clearing these murky emotions out of my inner life. Then I can begin to see and think more clearly. I compose myself and begin to plan

the future. I know from experience the gift I am giving when I give my full, accepting attention.

As the listener, I revel in the process. There is a true relaxation that comes from forgetting self, the day's schedule, even everything else in the room, to concentrate on a friend. During listening I habitually open the door to God so that he will help me to help my friend. As a result I am frequently aware of a subtle but extraordinary flow through me from my Father to my friend, an energy that purifies and revitalizes as it comes through me. And somehow help does come in an almost magical way—sometimes just through the listening, often through a shared word or two, and always through a warm, supportive hug.

Prayer is another time of joyful service. There is a rich satisfaction that comes from asking aid for a friend. At times I simply hold my friend up to God's healing, sustaining light. I feel the spiritual sunshine pour down on them. At other times, I am more specific, telling my Father of the needs of my friend or visualizing them receiving the aid, accomplishing their goals, and growing spiritually. This too is service, and it fills a need in me to contribute to the lives of others in this way.

I love to enable someone else to accomplish his or her worthy goals. Sometimes it is just helping them find a source of information. Because writing is easy for me, I frequently am able to help friends put into words what they are trying to express. I take

great joy from my friends' successes. My mind and emotions make no distinction between others and myself in this regard. I enjoy their successes and achievements in the same way I enjoy my own. I feel joy touched with an appropriate humility because I realize that none of us accomplishes anything alone. It is always teamwork.

Emergencies and tragedies provide chances for service. I have just recently spent time in an Intensive Care Unit waiting room while a beloved family member fought for life. My family and I greatly appreciated all of the people who came to offer their support and love. I discovered an interesting thing: the service that stands out most in my mind during that time are the times when people figured out what they could do and

See WEALTH on page 18.

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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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By Tom Maringer  
Springdale, Arkansas

# Service Freely Given

Service is, indeed, the cornerstone of the fruits of God consciousness in people; the will to serve can become a powerful urge. The benefits of service go to both the giver and receiver, but a problem arises when we begin to consciously think of ourselves as service-minded. This intrusion of the ego can begin to turn joyful service into duty and bring into play the possibility of resentment.

I know a woman who for many years was an active community volunteer, working in a local history museum, a senior citizen's center, and a hospital among other places, all without compensation. At first these services were joyfully given, but a time came when she began to feel duty-bound to perform these functions. This joyful and soul-expanding service then turned to drudgery and resentment at being taken advantage of by the paid staff. Perhaps had she been able to say "no" sometimes to requests and limit her community service to that which could be joyously given, the spiritual benefits of such service would still be available. Resentment seems to have the power to negate previously accrued soul benefits of service. As such, resentment is the greatest hazard we face in service activities.

Spontaneous service for strangers is perhaps one of the most fulfilling forms of service for both parties. Service for a personal friend can be enjoyable, but often a sense of indebtedness comes to the recipient. I will never forget the time I was living in Michigan's upper peninsula in winter. My car had a weak battery and I stalled out late one night at a

lonely rural intersection with the temperature well below zero. An old man in a battered pickup rolled up and offered assistance. With the help of some jumper cables, we soon got my car running again. I was struck by the man's friendly manner. He didn't seem to resent at all that I was keeping him from his business. When he prepared to leave, I was so grateful that I offered to pay him for his help. A sad expression came over his face then, and he said, "Just do the same for somebody else sometime."

I have often thought about that incident and have been true to my

obligation to pass on the favor. It occurs to me that such a favor, done as a friend but for a stranger has much greater power than a favor done for a personal friend who may have the opportunity to repay you in kind. If the service is passed on rather than repaid, it can cascade throughout the world, creating a never-ending cycle of service with unlimited potential for reaching every person on Earth.

Perhaps one of the most meaningful ways that we can be of service is simply to be prepared at all times to serve spontaneously. This prepara-

See *SERVICE* on page 11.



## Friendship and Friends

By Ann Bendall  
Nambour, Australia

Does being a friend mean having friends? My belief is, most emphatically, "Yes," but not necessarily in the seen world.

Did Jesus have friends? Prior to Joseph's death, he had sadly accepted the high probability that he would not experience true friendship with another human being, that there was going to be no one with whom he could talk out his problems and worries. As a result, many times during his short life, he suffered incredible loneliness on the human level. As he sat down by the boat, personally sad at the lack of understanding of his family, what did the apostles ask him? "Have we upset you?"

And yet, Jesus called his

apostles friends in his farewell discourse, but he demanded one requirement: "And you are my friends; you will continue to be my friends if you are but willing to do what I have taught you." (1944:6/180.1.3)

Does this same requirement apply to us? This is answered, "It is forever true that all who may think they are misunderstood or not appreciated have in Jesus a sympathizing friend and an understanding counselor." (1722:5/154.6.9)

I cannot answer for any of my brothers and sisters, but as for me: there is nothing I can do to ensure friendship from any human being. At the end of my time on Urantia, I may

See *FRIEND* on page 19.

# Gently Leading Children to Service



By Andrea Barnes  
Poway, California

How can we best help our children develop that spontaneous, natural love for others that manifests itself as service? We must first realize that all the spiritual forces of the universe are leading them, at their own pace, in that direction. "There are present in all normal mortals certain innate drives toward growth and self-realization which function if they are not specifically inhibited." (1095:1/100.1.6) "Give every developing child a chance to grow his own religious experience; do not force a ready made adult experience upon him." (1094:8/100.1.3)

We well know that a child's early years of life determine the rest of his life—even his afterlife. "And the entire religious experience of such a child is largely dependent on whether fear or love has dominated the parent-child relationship." (1013:6/92.7.11) As we train our children, we must look for that balance that will allow a well-unified personality to unfold. Being too permissive or over-authoritarian creates a dependent child: the one always looking for something or someone to make him happy, the other always searching for direction and esteem. Dependency is the basis of emotional problems, including addictions and compulsions.

According to W. Hugh Missildine from his book *Your Inner Child of the Past*, "The most common pathogenic parental attitude in our culture is overcoercion." The endless stream of anxious reminders we give our children. An overcoercive parent constantly directs, supervises, and redirects the child. This short-circuits

the child's need for autonomy, and he learns to lean on foreign management. There are other dangerous parental attitudes that tend to hamper the child's natural unfoldment: perfectionism, punitiveness, overindulgence, and neglect.

Did you ever hear your parents say things like... "Just who do you think you are?" or "Don't you ever think of anyone besides yourself?" or how about, "Don't be selfish!" Telling this to a child is like telling an oak tree, "Don't be an oak!" The egoistic nature develops before altruism appears. "But before a child has developed sufficiently to acquire moral capacity and therefore to be able to choose altruistic service, he has already developed a strong and well-unified egoistic nature." (1131:8/103.2.9) As we mature into adults our ultimate mental health means transcending the ego. But you can't transcend the ego unless you have a healthy one.

We all think mostly about ourselves. That is normal and natural. When we do this without guilt, we automatically go on to think of others. But most of us are afraid this is selfish. We fear our children will think too much of themselves and not enough about the interests of others. Rather than trust our children to care for themselves and then go on to care about others, we try to reverse the natural order. We ask them to put others first and themselves last. It's like putting the cart before the horse.

We need to help our children achieve a balance of interests. "The Thought Adjuster does not disregard the personality values of the egoistic

motive but does operate to place a slight preference upon the altruistic impulse as leading to the goal of human happiness and to the joys of the kingdom of heaven." (1131:6/103.2.7) "When the growing child fails of personality unification, the altruistic drive may become so overdeveloped as to work serious injury to the welfare of the self. A misguided conscience can become responsible for much conflict, worry, sorrow and no end of human unhappiness." (1132:0/103.2.10)

What we can teach our kids is a healthy respect and love for themselves, helping them honor their feelings by accepting and validating them. Acceptance is like the fertile soil that permits a tiny seed to develop into the lovely flower it is capable of becoming. Parental acceptance is such a significant, positive influence, but most parents believe that if you accept a child, he will remain just the way he is, that the best way to help a child become something better in the future is to tell him what you don't accept about him now.

Therefore, most parents rely heavily on the language of unacceptance in rearing children, heavy with evaluation, judgment, criticism, preaching, moralizing, admonishing, and commanding. Jesus, on the other hand, invariably employed the positive form of exhortation, electing not to place emphasis on evil by forbidding it. The communication tools taught by Parent Effectiveness Training are very helpful for this.

We need to model for our chil-

See GENTLY on page 19.



# Reflecting God's Love

By Kate Gentry  
Dallas, Texas

My life is an act of service. Every waking moment I am privileged to serve by sharing the Father's love with my fellowman. As I go about my daily activities, my life is polished and burnished until it takes on the shimmering glitter of a mirror, reflecting the love of God toward all I meet. Don't get me wrong, there are still the ups and downs of ordinary life, but there is no greater joy in life than to work in partnership with God to reveal his loving nature to mankind.

How did all this come about? I am not sure of the origin. Over the course of my life I have been dedicating and rededicating my life to God. Even when I was very young and had little knowledge about the nature of God, I offered myself to that power, unseen yet felt. As I faced the challenge of young adulthood, through the trials and hardships of divorce and single parenthood, I never lost the conviction that I would make it through, that there was some power out there guiding and protecting me.

As I matured and my life began to assume more balance, I again dedicated my life not just to finding God's will for me, but to following that perfect plan for my life. As those of you who have attempted this know, it isn't easy. God speaks not with a booming shout of conviction, but with a tiny whisper of suggestion. I am sure that along the way I have disappointed him many times by misinterpreting the signals, missing opportunities out of ineptitude. But there was never fear. At least not enough to keep me from trying. Always I have been able

to take a deep breath and jump, knowing he would be there to catch me.

My hearing has become more acute in the last few years (it is easier to hear the signals), and the challenges have become greater (each time I am asked to change my course it seems there is more to give up). But, true to his part of the bargain, so have the rewards become greater. Each step of the way overlying the pain of loss has been the exquisite joy of service. And that joy has the power to wash away the pain.

So, in analysis, this all seems to have come about for two reasons: One—I asked for it. Two—I had the faith to act on my guidance. I desired the privilege and when it was proffered, I grabbed it. I didn't really know what I was asking for. All I ever asked was to be able to walk in God's will for my life. But, as is God's nature, prayers are answered more richly, more abundantly than we mortals have the imagination to dream. We ask for a ride on the merry-go-round, and he hands us the brass ring.

It has been my experience that we seldom know what the consequences will be when we follow guidance. I have just completed a circle that began 24 years ago in a small private hospital in Dallas. I worked there for three months before deciding that I could not tolerate working with cancer patients. I gave up all plans for becoming a nurse. Fifteen years later I lost my job and the only job open in the town where I was living entailed working in the cancer

clinic part time. After a few months, I realized that I had changed. I followed my guidance to go to nursing school. I made oncology my specialty and found myself working with cancer patients again, this time as a nurse. Once more I was pulled away to learn new lessons. Now, 24 years later, I am working one block from that original hospital for the same doctors I worked with when I decided to go to nursing school. The circle has been completed.

Now I am fortunate to be able to share my Father's love with people who really need it. I have opportunities as I go about my job as a cancer nurse to show strangers and new friends how happy God has made me. I get to portray his loving kindness, his mercy, his concern for each of his children. I get to see their faces light up when they recognize him and reach out for him in their hearts. I share their pain, their laughter, their tears. I share in their struggles, their conflicts, and their accomplishments.

Because I love and serve God, I can be a mirror for him, reflecting his love to the people he brings in contact with me. As they accept his love, they radiate it back to me, and I feel the joy of having been God's instrument. Yes, I share their pain, their confusion, their fear, but I also am privileged to share their joy, their peace, their love. This is a way of life that is open to any and all of you, and it is one that I recommend highly. There is no greater joy than to be of service in whatever way you can. "



# The Joy of Service: Study Notes

By Kaye and Bill Cooper  
Houston, Texas

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

After a few moments of informal conversation, Jesus stood up and said: "When I enacted for you a parable indicating how you should be willing to serve one another, I said that I desired to give you a new commandment; and I would do this now as I am about to leave you. You well know the commandment which directs that you love one another; that you love your neighbor even as yourself. But I am not wholly satisfied with even that sincere devotion on the part of my children. I would have you perform still greater acts of love in the kingdom of the believing brotherhood. And so I give you this new commandment: That you love one another even as I have loved you. (All quotes are from page 1944-5, paper 180, section 1)

Jesus is setting a new goal for his followers to aspire to. He has commanded them to love their neighbor as themselves, but now he sets a new standard of relationships among believers. He directs them to love each other in the same manner that Jesus loved his apostles. So how did Jesus love his apostles? He loved them more than he loved his own comfort, his ambitions, or even his own safety and survival. He was willing to spend his life teaching them. He was even willing to submit himself to an ignominious and painful death in order to demonstrate the depth of his love.

Love is service. It is friendship. It is the desire to do good. It is an attitude which makes its practitioners always ready to lend assistance. Love is encouragement, verification, forgiveness, and joy in another person's real achievements. Love is unselfishness. This is easily recognizable as a gift, as service.

*"And by this will all men know that you are my disciples if you thus love one another."*

This new standard of love among believers will be obvious not only to the believers themselves, but also to anyone who observes those relationships. All men will recognize a follower of Jesus by the love which he bestows on his fellow believers. That gives us an idea of the quality of this love: it makes such a change in the way we treat each other that other people will notice.

*"When I give you this new commandment, I do not place any new burden upon your souls; rather do I bring you new joy and make it possible for you to experience new pleasure in knowing the delights of the bestowal of your heart's affection upon your fellow men."*

And here is where the joy comes in. The result of bestowing our heart's affection on our fellow men is **joy, new pleasure, delight.**

*"I am about to experience the supreme joy, even though enduring outward sorrow, in the bestowal of my affection upon you and your fellow mortals."*


This next statement makes the one just above a truly amazing con-

cept. Knowing as we do what Jesus was about to endure in his trial, punishment and death, it seems incredible to us that he could speak of that coming ordeal as an experience of supreme joy. Our idea of joy must be different from his. In discussions of this topic, the suggestion has arisen that joy needs to be distinguished from enjoyment. One could not say that Jesus *enjoyed* the crucifixion, yet it gave him *joy* to give us the unselfish gift of his demonstration of love. Jesus went through the entire ordeal without once giving in to self-centered thinking. During the time he spent with the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate, he spoke not to defend himself, but only so that someone within his hearing could benefit. When there was no one who could benefit, he kept silent. When his hands were being nailed to the cross, he prayed for the soldiers who were unaware of the atrocity which they were committing. These acts constitute a depiction of the depth of God's love for us which leaves us with no doubt that we are secure in his love. And it gave Jesus joy to be able to do us this service.

*"When I invite you to love one another, even as I have loved you, I hold up before you the supreme measure of true affection, for greater love can no man have than this: that he will lay down his life for his friends."*

He told them so that there would be no doubt in their minds: I am going to give my life for you and for all those

See NOTES on page 21.



# Potpourri

## Science and The Urantia Book\* part 2

By Dr. Ken T. Glasziou  
Maleny, Australia

*Summary of Scientific and Historic Material That Appears To Have Required Access to Certain Knowledge." Presented at the South Pacific Regional Meeting of Readers of The Urantia Book.*

*The Urantia Papers were received in 1934 and published in book form in 1955. There are many items of a scientific or historic nature about which definite statements are made in The Urantia Book, and about which mankind had no certain knowledge during the pre-publication period. Many of these items have since been found to be either correct or to now coincide with current scientific opinion. This paper summarizes some of these items.*

### Stable Elements

*The Urantia Book tells us that atoms with more than 100 orbital electrons are unstable and quickly decay. Element 101 (Mendelium) was discovered in the products of nuclear fission in 1952, and was found to have a half-life of about 30 minutes. All elements above 100 have since been found to be highly unstable. There was no adequate theoretical basis to make such a prediction at the time of receipt or publication of The Urantia Book.*

*Reference: The Urantia Book, 478:1-2/42.7.7-8.*

### Planetary Atmospheres

*The Urantia Book tells us that Venus has a dense atmosphere and that the atmosphere of Mars is of low density. The Russian Venera 7 space probe measured the atmospheric pressure of Venus in 1970 at about 90 times the Earth's atmos-*

*phere, and the U.S. Mariner probe gave the atmosphere of Mars as 1/100 of the Earth's atmosphere. There was no way to predict or to measure atmospheric pressure on these planets before the advent of the space probes.*

*Reference: The Urantia Book, 561:12/49.2.13.*

### Motion of the Moon

*The Urantia Book tells us that the moon is presently moving away from the Earth. This has been confirmed by highly accurate radar measurements. The rate of movement is about one inch per year.*

*References: The Urantia Book, 657:5/57.6.2. Scientific American 249 (6), 71.*

### Tycho Brahe's Nova of 1572

*The explosion of a supernova in 1572 was a brilliant spectacle visible in broad daylight and became known as Tycho Brahe's nova. The Urantia Book states that this nova was due to the explosion of a double star.*

*The first serious theoretical description of novae and supernovae was presented in the early 1950's by Hoyle and associates. This theory is still being modified and expanded. Nova and supernova occur due to the explosion of both single and double stars. The remnant of Tycho Brahe's supernova was rediscovered in 1952 by use of the recently invented radio-telescope, but could not be shown to be due to a double star explosion until it was extensively mapped by the orbiting Einstein X-ray observatory in 1967.*

*References: The Urantia Book, 458:5/41.3/5. Urantia Brotherhood Bulletin, "Nova of 1572 Explained."*

### Crab Nebula

*The Urantia Book tells us that there is a lone star at the centre of the Crab Nebula which is the mother sphere and had its origin in a nova explosion occurring 900 years ago. The existence of a mother sphere for this nebula was demonstrated in 1967 with the detection of a pulsar now known to be a neutron star.*

*References: The Urantia Book, 464:4/41.8.4. Kaufmann, "The Universe."*

### What Makes Stars Shine

*The Urantia paper commenting on this subject was received in 1934. It states that the most common source of energy generated in the stars comes from the hydrogen-carbon-helium reaction in which carbon is the catalyst for the conversion of hydrogen to helium.*

*The theory proposing that energy can be generated in this way was worked out independently by Hans Bethe and von Weizsacker in 1938, published by Bethe in 1939, and now is accepted theory.*

*References: The Urantia Book, 464:3/41.8.1. Kaufmann, "The Universe." Hoyle and Noliaker, "The Physics Astronomy Frontier."*

### Age of the Solar System

*The Urantia Book tells us that the events triggering the formation of the solar system occurred 4.5 billion years ago. Up to the 1950's, and based on the work of Edwin Hubble, the generally accepted age of the universe was just 2 billion years. Then Baade's work at Mt. Wilson revealed an error in Hubble's methodology effectively doubling the age of the universe and causing great*



hilarity in the American press in the 1950's. Most astronomers now put the age of the universe at about 15-18 billion years, and radio-isotope dating of meteoric material puts the age of the solar system at about 4.6 billion years, which is virtually the same age as told by *The Urantia Book*.

References: *The Urantia Book*, 655:9/57.5.4. Kaufmann, "The Universe."

#### Black Holes and Neutron Stars

A thimblefull of matter from a neutron star would weigh about 100 million tons. For a black hole, the weight would be infinitely greater. It is not surprising that astronomers regarded such objects as the play toys of theoretical physicists. Then, in the mid 1960's, the discovery of pulsars and quasars completely changed the picture. The name "black holes" was coined in 1968. Prior to that, these theoretical objects were simply known as dark bodies from which light could not escape. Current theory has it that the source of novas and supernovas is the gravitational collapse of spent stars. For stars near the mass of our sun the final result is the formation of a white dwarf. For stars more than about five times the mass of the sun, the result is a neutron star. For stars 25 times the mass of the sun, the result is a black hole. In the final blast initiating neutron star formation, vast quantities of tiny uncharged particles, the neutrinos, are released.

The formation of a neutron star is clearly being described in *The Urantia Book* (p. 474) where it is stated that the gravity collapse of massive stars is accompanied by release of vast numbers of tiny uncharged particles. Such particles are not released in the formation of white dwarfs or black holes. The existence of these particles (the neutrinos) was not demonstrated until 1956. The first identification of a neutron star was made in 1967.

*The Urantia Book* (p. 173) also tells us that some "dark islands of space" are the remains of dead suns,

devoid of light and heat and that their density is "well nigh unbelievable." This is a description of a black hole. There are many references to black holes in *The Urantia Book* as these are used by the Power Directors to ensure gravitational stability of many different systems and in the control of energy flow. In one interesting reference concerning the formation of our solar system, the book (p. 655) describes the centre of the Angona system as a "dark giant of space, solid, highly charged, and possessing enormous gravity pull," clearly a 'charged' black hole. The theory of

charged black holes was developed in the 1960's by Kerr and Newman. The concept of highly charged black holes (10 to 20th volts) has recently come of age in attempts to account for the power output of quasars. (See Scientific American reference below.)

References: *The Urantia Book*, 173:1/5.6.11; 474:5/42.5.1; 655:9/57.5.4. Hoyle and Norliker, "The Physics-Astronomy Frontier" (1980), p. 205 (Freeman & Co.). *Scientific American* (1988) 258 (4), 45. K. T. Glasziou, to be published in 6-0-6

See SCIENCE on page 22.

September 11, 1990

Dear Brothers and Sisters of My Community,

Over the last few years, I have struggled and at times despaired over the gross treatment which I have seen people in our *Urantia Book* reading community deal out to one another. I know volatile issues such as these can bring out some of the worst in people, and like many of us, I am saddened and sickened at what I see and hear.

But I also see a great potential for hope, healing, and the rejuvenation of the life of our community in the breath of the spirit through prayer. If we will access this resource of eternal spiritual nourishment and apply it at the community level, where it is so desperately needed, we have the direct assurance from Jesus through many statements in *The Urantia Book* that we will receive the strength, support, and guidance we need to move forward toward healing, growth, and spiritual flourishing. How can we refuse?

Let us first and foremost remember that as a community, we are a **people of faith**. Our personal, loving Father is also the living spirit God of all creation, and this living spirit God not only nurtures and guides us each as a beloved child, but also our living spirit **God can and will guide us as a community**. Yes, we are each one of God's own beloved children, and this shall always be the foundation of our own personal spirituality, but let us not ever forget that we are also a community of God's own people. Our needs, trials, suffering and woundedness **as a community will not be forsaken**.

I strongly urge all of us that we continue to pray as individual children of a loving Heavenly Father, but that we also join together **often** in our various groups and segments of the larger community to pray together **as a people of God**, seeking his guidance, strength, and wisdom for us as a community, especially during these times of transition and acrimonious debate.

Please feel free to copy and share this at will.

Yours in Sisterly Love,  
Francyl S. Gawryn  
Bothell, Washington

THE STATE OF TEXAS

County of ... State of Texas

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the County of ... State of Texas, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the County of ... State of Texas.

Witness my hand and the seal of the County of ... State of Texas, this ... day of ... 19...

Attest my hand and the seal of the County of ... State of Texas, this ... day of ... 19...

Notary Public for the County of ... State of Texas

My commission expires on ...

... of the County of ... State of Texas, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the County of ... State of Texas.

Witness my hand and the seal of the County of ... State of Texas, this ... day of ... 19...

Attest my hand and the seal of the County of ... State of Texas, this ... day of ... 19...

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grandchildren? What have you done to provide for their happiness, good fortune, well-being and prosperity?

#### Love and Mercy

a. Do you freely forgive your children and exercise compassion; are you sympathetic toward their distress and do you desire to alleviate it?

b. Do you hold vengeful memories against your children for any length of time?

c. Do you judge your children; are you an enemy to any of them at any time, in their eyes?

d. Do you act like a creditor? Under what circumstances?

e. Can you give an example of a time recently when you were real with your children and exercised tolerance, patience, forgiveness?

#### Provisions for the Future

a. Describe your sons' inheritances, your daughters' inheritances, your grandchildren's inheritance.

b. Describe your plans and projections for your family's continuity after your death as parents.

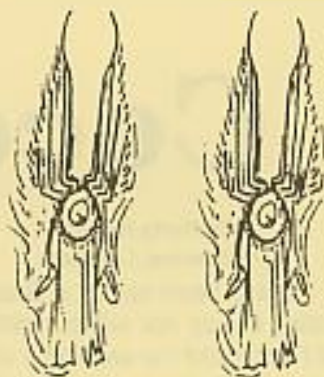
c. Do your children believe and trust that you will be there for them in all of this life, that your loyalty and love is ever true?

This was our Master's model of our paradise Father's actual living relationship with all of us as his unique and individual children. As Jesus discussed this with his apostles, we parents can discuss the applications of these same features of family life with our children. We can make very clear to each other our specific goals, objectives and plans to develop a strong foundation for our family life.

Parents can bring these Seven Facts of Family up for discussion at monthly family meetings and do some consensus planning. As a family you could also discuss the application of these features of a true family to each of your relationships with God. Jesus promised that if we try, and if we really want to, we can attain perfection as God's sons and

## 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)

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plain,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains...

The following story is a firsthand account by Michelle Michael of an event involving her daughter, Renee Lizotte. She related it to me at the recent Fifth Epochal Fellowship International Conference at Snowmass.

It seems Renee, twenty-two, had been to a dance and had had too much to drink. Still somewhat intoxi-

cated, she was driving home alone and accidentally took a wrong turn, ending up on a gravel road. Losing control of the car, she swerved off the road and headed toward three trees in someone's front yard. There was no space between the trees for the car to pass, and yet the tracks of the wheels clearly appeared leading up to the trees and continuing on the other side where the car stopped with Renee inside, uninjured.

Someone notified the police who called Michelle. When she arrived to pick up her daughter, she saw with her own eyes the inexplicable tracks of the car on both sides of the trees.

As told by Michelle Michael  
Pueblo, Colorado

daughters, even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

We leave you with one last rephrased question, which Jesus asked his apostles: "How do you teach each of your children to listen with the ear of their spirit so they grow up in spirit perception?"

Love and peace in your family. «

*SERVICE from page 4.*

tion can be as simple as keeping cables in your trunk, or making sure that there are times of day during which you can be reached. Probably the most important way, though, is to keep mentally and physically fit enough that you can be of service

when the need arises. It can be argued that the greatest negative effect of alcohol and drug use is that they take us out of the cycle of service. One can hardly offer a ride to a stranded friend when drunk, provide emotional support when coked up, or help with homework problems when high on pot.

Sometimes the greatest service can be a simple smile. I know that I have received such understanding from strangers in moments of my life when my friends would not speak to me. Those people probably have no idea how their simple action helped me at a critical moment. All it takes is being willing and able to both give and receive—simple right? «

# Cocoon Contents

By Harry Hebert  
W. Monroe, Louisiana

*Having been raised a Southern Baptist, it was not without difficulty that I accepted the credibility of The Urantia Book. The verses I cite in this article became the proof that I needed. Jesus' good news and the Pauline doctrines seemed to conflict. Even before finding The Urantia Book, I had noted that Jesus had dispatched a number of disciples to go spread the good news of the kingdom. He had not died; he had not been raised from the dead; no atonement had taken place—what then was the good news of the kingdom of God that they were preaching? What was so exciting about it that they abandoned their professions in order to do it? No one had been able to answer these questions for me. Through a series of events, which were quite remarkable, I came to conclusions on my own (I now know with the aid of my Thought Adjuster) which were verified by the good news as stated in The Urantia Book. Prior to having The Urantia Book, I was beginning to grant credibility to conclusions arrived at experientially and was delighted as The Urantia Book applauded such personal experiences. For me the book became an expansion of the expressions which were already manifesting themselves in my own consciousness and thinking. It seemed to me to be more of the same. Therefore I was able to accept The Urantia Book as valid. I recognized the tone and message of the author, for I knew him already.*

**"Thus does the so-called Christian church become the cocoon in which the kingdom of Jesus' concept now slumbers."** (1866:4/170.5.21)

All Christian churches utilize the

Holy Bible as their primary text. Each member has a copy in their home. It does indeed contain vital truths which are amplified in *The Urantia Book*.

One such truth I discovered one day in the gospel according to John: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24. None other than Jesus of Nazareth was the party speaking. He made no reference to believing in himself personally, no reference to an atonement brought about by his forthcoming death, or any such thing. He simply stated that if one believed in his Father, eternal life was a present-day possession of one who so believes.

This seems pretty simple. This verse, through what it *doesn't* say is powerful. It is uncluttered with conditions, qualifications or other such trappings. This verse even clears the air about forthcoming judgments for wrongs done: "...he shall not come into condemnation." In the passage "believeth on him," the word "on" should be commented on. This is the Greek word "en." It is a primary preposition denoting (fixed) position in place, time or state and by implication, instrumentality, i.e. a relation of rest. It may mean "in," "at," "on," "by," etc. From this we understand that this passage means a belief that we are in him and by him, as well as simply believing "about" him. In other words, if after hearing Jesus, you believe that God the Father is your Father, and you accept a Father-child relationship as existing, it does. All the rest follows as a result of that relationship.

Another powerful cocoon content is found in Luke 6:35-36: "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." Wow! Jesus has just said something which openly contradicts a large portion of the Old Testament record of the Father's conduct. Large portions of olden records are careful documentation of the Old Testament God commanding and authorizing punishment and slaughter because of his intolerance of unthankful and evil people. Even accounts of God personally bringing punishment about in those records.

This one verse along with its preceding scriptures enabled me to begin a personal search for expanded truth which resulted in my eventually having *The Urantia Book* in my possession.

In Luke 6:27-35, the verses preceding the one just mentioned, Jesus outlines a mode of behavior which men still find unusual. He would have men: love their enemies, do good to those who hate them, bless those who curse them, pray for those who spitefully use them, turn cheeks when slapped, give to him that asks, and lend without hope of repayment. Christians today are somewhat embarrassed and baffled by these admonitions because they do not understand why this mode of behavior is encouraged.

Jesus himself gives the answer in verse 35, "...and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

See COCOON on page 22.

# A Reincarnation Explanation

By Carol Davidson  
Suitland, Maryland

*The Urantia Book* states that human beings do not reincarnate, yet many religions teach reincarnation. There are also many books about reincarnation, many of which include personal accounts of earlier lives remembered.

Before I became acquainted with *The Urantia Book*, I read many books on Eastern and Western religions, mysticism, and materials which are now labeled "New Age." When I found *The Urantia Book*, I lost interest in them for the bits and pieces of truth that I found in them could not compare to the feast that I found in *The Urantia Book*. I have never questioned the book's truth, and I have enjoyed matching our expanding knowledge of geology, science, space, and even my own religious experience with *The Urantia Book*. When human knowledge does not comply with the book, I normally await further expansion of human knowledge.

I have, however, been perplexed at the beliefs and writings about reincarnation, in contrast to the book's flat statement that there is no reincarnation. *The Urantia Book* does state that many things had been left unexplained about what really happens at death.

After I learned to communicate with my angel, I eventually asked about this discrepancy. I was told that mind intellect systems are used over and over, but have no vitality outside of human beings. The way I understand it, I am using a mind intellect system which was used by individuals who lived prior to me. I am using this mind system. I am in possession of it now, but when I die, it will be used by another. The Father has endowed me with personality, and in partnership with

my Adjuster and with the help of my angel, I am using this temporary intellect system to create an eternal soul.

I found this concept hard to grasp. To leave "myself" behind upon death, yet be far away and totally uninterested in the "self" left behind! And furthermore, this same "left behind self" would be used by another man or woman to create another soul—whom I could meet on my eternal career, even as I could meet glorified mortals whose earthly "mind" I had used.

Naturally I was interested in my "previous lives." I questioned my angel about several of them and felt humble when I learned something of their spiritual accomplishments and courage. As I learned about my "heritage," I began to understand why, even as a child, I had quested for spirituality, and why, as a young person, I felt that there should be more to religion than what I experienced myself or saw in the established church. I also understood why newly selected Adjusters spend the time between selection and actual indwelling studying the subject of their indwelling.

One night during the period that I was researching the subject, I awoke with a profound conviction that the mind intellect system used by my father had become the possession of a new human being. The vision and knowledge of this new-

born child was so vivid that I immediately accepted it as a fact and have never doubted it since. I recently queried my angel about the child's status, but she simply informed me that he was a healthy toddler.

I have never read the explanation for reincarnation which I have just given you. Certainly reincarnation, as it is usually taught, is not an attractive existence. What good is it to have lived before if one doesn't remember it? Descriptions of existence "between lives," as described in channeling, automatic writing, and other means are hazy, ambiguous, and inconsistent. If we view temporary intellect systems as being a part of the Divine Minister and/or a part of the evolving Supreme, we can accept their resuscitation without fanfare. As I became used to the idea, I realized more intensely that this earthly life was my life, that I am a unique human being living for the first time, and that life on the next level is a continuation of this life, not an infantile beginning. I found that I was not interested in learning more about the individuals who used the temporary intellect system which I am using, nor was I interested in what happens to the intellect system between lives. I simply accepted the fact that the temporary mind system that I am using has its own evolution, and I can never be a part of it after I leave it behind.◀

## *The Circles* Calendar

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

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

# An Epidemic of Environs

By David Jaquith,  
Newberg, Oregon

Everybody has environs these days. It's an epidemic. Is there a cure?

Some people try to hide their environs. Or pretend that they don't have any. But environs are like circumstances. They can happen to anyone, and without advance notice. Personally, I find that having environs is like eating oatmeal. It's the right thing to do.

Environs are related to surroundings which can most often be found adjacent to one's proximity, or at least in the neighborhood.

Cautious people like to stay close to the center of their environs. They build fall-out shelters and bunker in their bunkers. The more adventurous types hang around the extreme outer limits, and that is where all the trouble starts.

People on the borders peek through the fence and say to themselves, "Those environs over there are greener!" Next thing you know, wham, they've shinned over the fence, ignoring no trespassing signs.

You can see the problem. Enough people do this, and what have you got? A whole bunch of empty environs in one part of the country and overcrowded environs in the other. Some say that's what caused the earth to tilt.

When this happens, right away you've got the natives saying, "Hey, I was here first." And the invaders reply, "Stow it. I hereby claim your environs mine by divine right. Besides, I'm bigger than you."

Environs can be sneaky. One minute you're sitting on your couch eating potato chips and watching TV. It's Dec. 31, 1999. Next minute, pow, you're in the year 2000. A whole 'nother century, and you haven't budged an inch.

Other times, you have to jump

into your car and drive like a mad person to get into the next environ. Like the time I drove from L.A. through the South with a bunch of friends, en route to Washington, D.C. It took us three days hard driving to get out of Texas. That place is one humongous environ.

All this raises more critical questions. Such as, which came first, you or your environs? Are they really YOUR environs until you get there?

Decency dictates that a person and his surrounding should agree to always appear simultaneously, if only to avoid confusing local authorities.

There is also the question of whether one's environs should, upon death, be passed on to one's heirs. If not, what becomes of these disembodied environs? Do they float around aimlessly and forever in the atmosphere, like non-biodegradable, cosmic detergent bubbles?

There is a petition going around Newberg advocating a law that would have all vacated environs collected and returned to that Great Environ Pool in the Sky, where they can be reassigned to people in some other galaxy. It's one way to teach litterers a lesson as well as getting rid of hazardous waste.

And here we hit upon another gnarly question. Is it possible, given the laws of biogenetics and astrophysics, for anyone to possess more than one environ at a time?

Gregarian Reformists have compiled evidence to support their theory that registered voters are happiest when mooshed together in a lump of overlapping surroundings. Like a Dagwood sandwich, maybe.

We can handle living in Yamhill County, the state of Oregon, the U.S. and the Western Hemisphere all at the same time, without overload. Not

## Lighten Up



so calmly, though, do we handle a vast array of psychological environs—what could be called communities of beliefs and values.

Still, superimposed environs are all the rage. The layered look. What is life if not one giant photo montage? A multimedia event. Star-studded holographs, cast of billions. Continuous showing. We never close.

You'll have noticed. There are dominant environs and recessive ones, intuitive ones and pragmatic ones. Some are clearly defined; others are as convoluted as an adolescent's excuse.

It is interesting to note that certain officials on the planet are saying to others, "My government hereby returns your environs which it tried to hog for itself. We have decided that to push you into the sea is not in our national interest, after all. Besides, we can't make your environs work, and it's costing us a bundle."

Humankind has for centuries disputed over whose environs belong to whom. It will be a notable day when we learn to leave one another's environs alone.

Meanwhile, in the very soil beneath our feet, the lowly earth worm happily carries on, indifferent to the furor raging overhead.

Earthworms have their own ideas about who the land belongs to. «

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

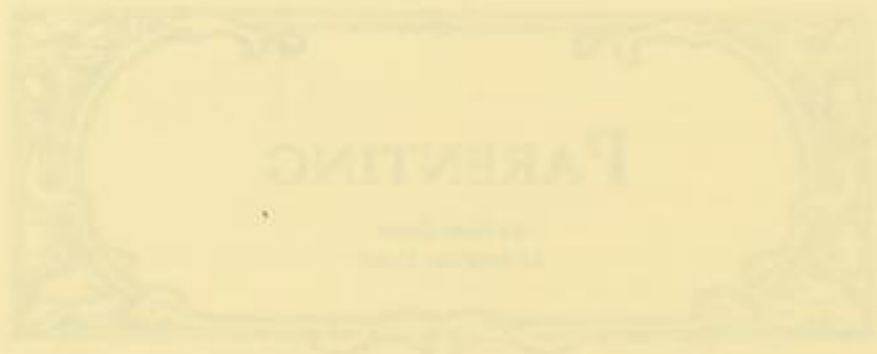
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# Friends Enjoy a Conversation

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...

...the first of the year...



...the first of the year...



# PARENTING

By Gene Joyce  
Richardson, Texas

## Friends Enjoy a Conversation

In my last column I talked about making friends with our adult children. Not having an idea for this column, I decided to call my daughter, Lisa, and ask if she had any ideas—what to do, what not to do, etc. She suggested the same theme—becoming friends.

We continued with a most rewarding conversation, ranging from politics, to violence, to the importance of the teaching profession. She bemoaned the fact that teachers are so poorly paid that only the truly dedicated remained in the system. Suddenly, she sounded so like me, and I wondered how this had happened.

She spoke of the importance of reading as a source of joy for a lifetime. This she has always had as we

did a lot of reading together when she was little. *Winnie the Pooh* was the book she read and reread, as I did *The Secret Garden*.

I was also surprised to hear she had recently thoroughly enjoyed *Beyond Co-Dependency* by Melody Beattie. Heretofore she had always avoided such books saying, "None of those self-help books for me," when I would venture to recommend them. It seems one day she had nothing to read and dipped into the Beattie book which a friend had sent her. "I highlighted something on virtually every page," she added.

We ended our conversation agreeing that it took almost a lifetime to recover from one's childhood, learn who one really is, and be that person to the limit of one's potential.

August, 15, 1990

Re: *Adventures in Spiritual Living Retreat and Walking with God Conference in Snowmass, Colorado*

Dear Editors:

My heart is still full and running



Letters

over with the incredible experience of *Snowmass*! I wish I had the time to write or call every single person who was there—especially those who worked so hard to make it a grand success! Will you pass on my recognition and gratitude?

Each person who attended the conference contributed to the exhilarating energy and electrifying stimulation which the rest of us experienced! Just being among the large numbers of readers gathered in one place was fantastic. Finding that there was no need to break the ice and that I could just start talking about our fabulous revelation with anybody was an incredible experience! That week of living in fellowship with the brotherhood of readers and in service to the fatherhood of God was unquestionably a glimpse of our destiny. Oh! If only

we could live this way every day of our lives—WOW!

Thank you for everything you did to contribute to the potency and accomplishment of this international gathering and celebration of readers by sponsoring the *Adventures in Spiritual Living Retreat*. The whole week was an informative, entertaining, affirming, motivating and inspiring party for us all. My goal was to talk to everyone who was at the retreat and conference—which I think I accomplished. However, I still want to get to know you all. For me, it is a thrilling experience to recognize names and faces in newsletters and videos.

I will be forever thankful that I participated in this historical event—a memory I shall never forget. Again, thank you!

Sincerely with love,  
Patije Mills  
Sarasota, Florida

Dear Readers of *The Urantia Book*,

*Spiritual springtime is here on Urantia!* What better time to plant *Machiventa's* garden and to prepare a place for him! Are there others who see this opportunity?

Winnie and I desire to find a suitable site to share the planting of this garden with our brothers and sisters in the spirit. We are in the midst of our lives and have two children, a girl eight and a boy four. We have some dollars to put into this faith adventure and hope there are others to share and contribute.

If you have knowledge of a suitable site or wish to join us in a community dedicated to preparing "the garden," please write or call.

In the Kinship of the Spirit,  
Ernest Gibson and Winnie Hunt  
72 James St.  
Kingston, Ontario  
Canada K7K 1Z3  
(613) 546-7502

Avoid missing issues:  
send us your  
change of address



## ***A Christmas Remembrance December 1989***

*A long time ago in Bethlehem,  
a King to us was born.  
His mother, Mary, cradled him  
in clothes so clean, yet worn.*

*In the manger where he lay at first,  
the cattle lowed and stirred.  
Mary bowed her head in prayer,  
her lips formed silent words.*

*The night was cold, the stars so bright,  
baby Jesus did not wake.  
A good child he is, thought Mary then,  
No crying does he make.*

*As baby Jesus slept that night,  
many eyes were turned toward heaven.  
"Is this child King to be our answer?  
Has he come to save our brethren?"*

*So young a King, this Son of God,  
a helpless little child.  
Without riches and title to his name,  
could he free the world of guile?*

*As man stood by in silent awe,  
afraid to hope for peace,  
They could not know this Son of God  
had come to set them free!*

*They spread the news with shouts of joy  
as angels watched over his bed.  
His parents prayed that he'd endure  
the tasks he faced ahead.*

*At Christmas time, with thanks to God,  
we men who surely love him,  
Remember Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
the King among all men!*

*By Diane Holland  
Richardson, Texas*



*FAITH from page 2.*

must we seem to project an image of uncompromising rectitude. On the other hand, we must strive to be a beacon for the lost as they venture to cross the fearful night of spiritual darkness, yet be always approachable as a friend, a brother in the common struggle. It is more important to be good than to do good.

We will come to feel the passionate desire to serve our true brothers and sisters because of our yearning to please our Father. Service will become a natural thing to us, and we will come to have a fervent desire, a genuine need, to serve our brothers because of our love of the Father rather than out of a sense of duty. Because the Father loves us, we are filled with love.

A man of faith will learn how to be good and to serve his fellows because of the increasing conviction that all men who are Adjuster indwelt really are brothers. As we are sustained by the spirit, and with a little experience, we are progressively enabled to detect those who actually, or potentially, belong to the community of the faith sons and daughters of God. I have often found that one who is not my brother quickly becomes inappropriately antagonistic to the message of truth and suspicious of my attempts to be a friend. With these it seems inadvisable to waste much time.

As we attempt to serve our fellows and to proclaim to them the gospel of Jesus, we will often be forced to deal with failure. The times of incredible joy will be mixed with interludes of exquisite pain. It should come as no surprise that not everyone will be open to us. Many will scorn the message of truth, and some may even try to harm the messenger. In this, only our faith can sustain us.

By our faith, then, we are assured of the actual fatherhood of God. Because we really are his special beloved children, we come to realize what is meant by "the brotherhood of man." We begin to realize

that we are, indeed, his sons and daughters. Consequently, as we minister to our fellows, we are assured of progressive personality growth, eternal life, and increasing spiritual attainment. We receive the supreme assurance that our destiny is in his hands. And what a destiny it is!

Faith sweeps aside all doubts and fears and gives us the courage to go on in the face of repeated failure and discouragement, whereas mere belief is easily crushed by the endless assaults and vicissitudes of daily life on this dark planet. The knowledge of sonship with the Father gives us the strength to weather all disappointment and to bear all sorrow.

As we become secure in the knowledge of God's great love and his almost infinite reservoir of mercy for his struggling, but still imperfect children, we will increasingly find deep fulfillment in loving them. We begin to comprehend what is meant by eternal joy—the joy of service to the brotherhood of man.

As we serve, we slowly begin to grow into the person that God has always meant us to be, and to feel more and more complete as the deep well of joy begins, at last, to fill. As we draw ever closer to the indwelling divine spirit, we shall one day come to hear the voice of revelation and to attain the ever-increasing wisdom of spiritual understanding.

Faith is the open door to actual companionship with the Creator in service to his children. With faith comes the certain knowledge that one day we shall actually stand before him, be personally greeted and embraced by him, and be involved in partnership with him in the eternal progression of an infinite universe.

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

Therein, men will find the answers that they have always sought and the peace for which they have always yearned. And only therein shall be found true and lasting happiness."

*WEALTH from page 3.*

did it. They were active, even aggressive in their desire to help: the lady who brought food to the house, the couple who offered needed transportation, the employees who volunteered to take over the office work. Jesus urged his followers to be aggressive in doing good. It seems to me that these are examples of being aggressive.

Figuring out ways to aggressively do good is a joy in itself. It is like a game to see what you can come up with that will truly do good. There is fun involved. It is something like the fun of planning a surprise birthday party. There's a satisfaction in actually doing something to help.

Being aggressive in doing good is important to the most fulfilling service of all—helping others to come closer to God. Experience has taught me that I have to be a little assertive in taking advantage of opportunities for service of this nature. I have to be willing to drop comments that lead to discussions about God. I have to be open enough to share my own relevant personal experience. I have to ask questions that can lead into spiritual topics.

It is a bit frightening to stick my neck out and initiate a conversation about personal religious experience, but I am reassured from my own experience that I am not alone in the situation. I don't have to know the right thing to say. The Spirit of Truth is there with me, and somehow he provides what is needed.

It is an exhilarating experience to be in partnership with God in this way, expecting the spirit to lead as I wade right in to share the wonders of friendship with God. There is intense joy in sharing the spiritual reality which gives meaning to my life. Surely, this is the most joyous service of all."

*GENTLY* from page 5.

dren the care and respect we show ourselves and others. "Children are permanently impressed by the loyalties of their adult associates; precept or even example are not lastingly influential." (1094:6/100.1.4) Let children know about their "best self," the Adjuster. Encourage them to be quiet and listen to that part of them that knows what they really need. "It lifts man out of himself and beyond himself when he once fully realizes that there lives and strives within him something which is eternal and divine. And so it is that a living faith in the superhuman origin of our ideals validate our belief that we are the sons of God and makes real our altruistic convictions, the feelings of the brotherhood of man." (1134:7/103.5.9)

Getting in touch with our "best self" is like giving ourselves a perfect hug. When you haven't hugged yourself enough, can anyone hug you often enough or warm enough or ...? Taking care of ourselves is the key to healthy relationships. The most important relationship we have is the one we have with ourselves. The greatest gift you can give your kids is to finish your own unfinished business.

We can show our children we love and care for others in many ways: a friendly smile or casual conversation, helping others "as we pass by," caring for our environment and sharing our participation with them, helping a neighbor or elderly person. The list is endless. If you have a sincere desire to serve, I believe you will be led to the project that is right for you.

Let your kids be kids! Pure acceptance is the way to change and growth. Let them concentrate on themselves so that they can become unified and whole, fully capable of directing their God-given potential into channels of loving service—service that will eventually heal our planet and bring us into light and life. "Such a God-knowing person is inwardly illuminated by worship and

outwardly devoted to the wholehearted service of the universal brotherhood of all personalities, a service ministry which is filled with mercy and motivated by love, while all these life qualities are united in the evolving personality on ever-ascending levels of cosmic wisdom, self-realization, God-finding, and Father worship." (1175:1/106.9.12) =

*FRIEND* from page 4.

not count one single friend, but I know that I am surrounded and have within me friendship, as long as I fulfill the necessary requirement of Jesus. I have my friendship with God, through my Thought Adjuster; I have the incredibly rewarding and potent friendship with Michael, through his Spirit of Truth. He is a staunch friend, who has promised, "Forget not that I will stop at nothing to restore self-respect to those who have lost it, and who truly desire to regain it." (1765:5/159.3.3) What a wondrous and powerful friend, whose word is his bond! Then I have my seraphim, all these are my very, very personal friends.

Friendship stands so high on our list of aspirations, and no matter what culture we originate from, we Urantians have a common definition of friendship, which is held to be a relationship where two people trust and confide in each other, respect each other's privacy, volunteer help in time of need and are not jealous or critical of other relationships.

Further, I observe five characteristics which distinguish between friendships of a low and high quality: (1) to stand up for other persons in their absence, (2) to share news of success, (3) to give emotional support, (4) not to be judgmental, (5) to make friends happy when you are with them.

Friendships depend on who the person is, not on the social position the person holds. Within the relationship the participants are equal. They care a lot about each other, and should they change jobs or become distanced physically, the friendship will still continue.

As students of *The Urantia Book*, we all know the factual history of the last 2000 years. Most of us have had some association with the Bible and perhaps have discovered a modicum of ambiguity in Jesus' life and words, which *The Urantia Book* explained. And now, as recipients of truth, we are left with no doubt as to what Jesus attempted on his bestowal mission and what he requires of us.

We cannot misconstrue his words, as he used very simple, precise language, and the midwayers are quoting exactly what he said. Consequently, when Jesus said he was giving a commandment, he was not saying he thought it might not be a bad idea, if we had the time, inclination and interest—he was COMMANDING. If we want to enter the kingdom, this is what we are to do!

It appears to me that, not only are we to be friends, but more than friends, for we are commanded to "love one another even as I have loved you." Consequently, we are to love with the affection, not of a brother or sister, but as God would love, as a father!

The concepts of sacrifice, work, drudgery have no place within the expression of love. Should we have feelings similar to these in undertaking any task which we believe is God-directed, then whatever we are attempting is not loving as our Father loves. It is some emotional involvement where we are currently experiencing disappointed expectations and must therefore pose the question, "Am I doing this as a friend for a friend?" Are we doing it for Michael, as our friend, and for the other person as a friend would for a friend? Or are we doing it in the hope of that other person becoming our friend, being friendly back, or, at the very least, recognizing our motive as friendly. What amount of self-interest has crept in to reduce the "wholehearted affection" to a half-hearted state wherein we anticipate some gain or reward, materially, from a human emotion point of view?

See *FRIEND* on page 20.

FRIEND from page 19.

To experience the supreme joy in doing service requires total loyalty to God and Michael, loyalty to explicitly carry out our instructions as a messenger, loyalty to the rules of cosmic morality, and love for the other person as Jesus would and as God does.

*The Urantia Book* spells it out clearly: "These high levels of human living are attained in the supreme love of God and in the unselfish love of man. If you love your fellow men, you must have discovered their values. Jesus loved men so much because he placed such a high value upon them. You can best discover values in your associates by discovering their motivation. If someone irritates you, causes feelings of resentment, you should sympathetically seek to discern his viewpoint, his reasons for such objectionable conduct. If once you understand your neighbor, you will become tolerant, and this tolerance will grow into friendship and ripen into love." (1098:1/100.4.4) The book goes on to give an example, by way of elaboration, but note that in the example the "objectionable" person is not approached and asked why he is behaving as he is. It is up to us to stand back and with sympathy view the person and the scene. Many people could not tell you why they feel and behave as they do, but God knows and Michael knows. If we are truly being good messengers, we will be given all the information necessary to help us understand and therefore love that person. If self-interest, curiosity and self-aggrandizement is the game we are playing, we have stepped out of the "ambassador of Michael" role!

In reality, it is easy to be friends by our genuine attitude to all our brothers and sisters, but no one in the universe can force them to be friends with us. That is their freewill decision. All we can do is provide the fertile ground for friendship to occur.

And so, in fulfilling Jesus' commandment, we are guaranteed God

and his friendship, and what better friends could we ever have? All human friendship must be relegated to a poor second in comparison, for there can be dangers attendant upon torn loyalties in certain situations. Being so blessed as to have *The Urantia Book*, we have the benefit of Jesus having walked the pathway before us, even with regard to this situation. When Peter cried out against Jesus' prediction of his own death at the hands of their enemies, Jesus "detected the danger of permitting the suggestions of even his affectionate and loyal friends to dissuade him..." from doing his Father's will, and he delivered a stinging rebuke to Peter and his other apostles. (1760:1/158.7.4)

I will close with a brief example of the joy of service which I have personally experienced. A few years ago I arrived at Brisbane airport and went to get a cup of coffee and have a cigarette before my flight. There were no empty tables, and I could not see anyone smoking. I went up to a dear, little lady in her sixties and asked if I could sit at her table and have a cigarette. She smiled and said I most certainly could, but I must have one of hers, and pulled out cigarettes and lighter from her handbag.

We shared a few minutes, just chatting, and then my boarding call was announced. I entered the aircraft, went to my seat, and shortly afterward the lady I had been speaking to was escorted to the seat beside me. The hostess examined her ticket and then explained that there was a lady already sitting in her allocated seat beside me. The seated lady was in error, but rather than disturb her, the air hostess said my newly acquired friend could sit in a seat in front of me. I looked at my dear elderly friend, and I saw sadness as she agreed, so I stepped in and politely approached the hostess. I told her that although the lady appeared not to want to disagree with this change in allocations, I would be extremely disappointed. She had been given

that seat, and I wanted her to sit there.

That beautiful little lady had tears in her eyes, and I will always recall her words: "I felt so sad, as I thought you were going to reject me!" I smiled and said something to the effect that it looked as if God had thought it a good idea for us to be traveling companions, and who were we to alter his plans. We laughed and then she talked and talked all the way: where she was going and why, about her husband and the night he had died six years before, how much they had loved each other, her children, and her current life. For those few hours we were so close. As we parted at Melbourne, she did not want to let go and asked for my name and address. I gave it, as it made her feel so good.

Her words often ring in my ear, as a constant reminder to "do good as you pass by." The impact of a friendly smile, a gesture of caring and recognition to a stranger can have a far greater impact than we realize.

And how did I feel? I felt joy. I felt honored that the lady opened her heart to me, talked of things so very sad to her, things she had spoken to no others about (so she said). I recognized that the air hostess and the lady comfortably entrenched in the wrong seat were a little miffed at my insistence, but that lady was calling to me from her heart. I felt pleased with myself that I had listened. That episode created a treasured memory for me.

That was an example of joy experienced by me and the other person involved. Numerous are the experiences where I feel joy, but outwardly I am sad. A friend's acceptance of my messenger role is not appreciated, the message causes a violent reaction, and yet there is a joy in a deep knowledge that I said what I was told to say, with no creative touches by me. It is a joy born of a big spiritual hug being given by God and Michael at the correct delivery of a message under rather adverse conditions!\*

NOTES from page 7.

who love me.

*"And you are my friends; you will continue to be my friends if you are but willing to do what I have taught you. You have called me Master, but I do not call you servants. If you will only love one another as I am loving you, you shall be my friends, and I will ever speak to you of that which the Father reveals to me."*

Now Jesus introduces a new element in his depiction of service—friendship. He calls his apostles friends and he offers them his eternal friendship and guidance—continuous, personal revelation from him. The only requirement to be Jesus' friend is that they love one another as he loved them. And that offer is made to all who will hear and follow Jesus' commandment to love one another.

He taught his apostles to pray, worship and commune. In this light, remaining his friend by doing as he taught is no more mysterious than promising that you will not get dehydrated if you drink plenty of water.

*"You have not merely chosen me, but I have also chosen you, and I have ordained you to go forth into the world to yield the fruit of loving service to your fellows even as I have lived among you and revealed the Father to you."*

Jesus desires that his apostles yield the fruit of loving service to their fellows—the service of revealing the Father. All service basically comes down to this one essential: reveal the love of the Father by our own loving acts!

*"The Father and I will both work with you, and you shall experience the divine fullness of joy if you will only obey my command to love one another, even as I have loved you."*

Once again the promise is made: we will experience joy if we will love one another as Jesus loved us. "Love one another" is the key to experiencing divine fullness. Jesus promised that we will *experience* joy, not just know about it.

Another promise is added. Jesus promises that both he and the

Father will work with us in our service. Loving one another opens a door to the spirit to come in and work with us, give us the wisdom, the strength, the spiritual power to serve in ways we never imagined ourselves capable. There is a magic at work here.

*If you would share the Master's joy, you must share his love. And to share his love means that you have shared his service.*

In case you missed it the first time, here it is again. Jesus' love is expressed as service. If you share his service, you will find that the result is joy—an internal rightness and completeness, a fulfillment unattainable by material means, a soul satisfaction.

Love is the key, not the price, to sharing Jesus' joy. Jesus lived his life unselfishly. He lived to validate, support, encourage, and restore the lives of all others. This is the way we must live our lives if we want to share his joy. He told us this not to put a price on sharing his joy. He told us this as the mystical secret to his highly successful life. Love intentionally pursued is the secret cause of Jesus' joy. This obeys a spiritual law of antecedent causation: the only way to the joy of Jesus is by love like Jesus' love.

*Such an experience of love does not deliver you from the difficulties of this world; it does not create a new world, but it most certainly does make the old world new.*

Another promise: experiencing Jesus' love and service will transform your world. There will still be difficulties. All the old problems will be there. Yet you and your relationship

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to the world will be different. You will see the world differently; you will experience the world differently; as far as you are concerned the world will be new. There will be a power added to your own which enables you to serve and love in ways you know are beyond you. You will begin to find a mastery over self which eluded you previously. You will find yourself possessing heretofore unattainable qualities, such as patience, forbearance, faith, assurance, tolerance. And these are achieved not by following a set of rules, nor by forcing yourself to spend a requisite time in ministry to the less fortunate, nor even by diligent prayer in and of itself. This change in your life and your world comes about because you love as Jesus loved.

*Keep in mind: It is loyalty, not sacrifice, that Jesus demands. The consciousness of sacrifice implies the absence of that wholehearted affection which would have made such a loving service a supreme joy. The idea of duty signifies that you are servant-minded and hence are missing the mighty thrill of doing your service as a friend and for a friend. The impulse of friendship transcends all convictions of duty, and the service of a friend for a friend can never be called a sacrifice.*

Jesus loved as a Father, yes, but he also loved as a friend. Now, that puts a very different slant on things. To think of Jesus as my friend puts me at ease. A friend is not condescending nor judging. A friend loves me as I am, while seeing what I can be. A friend trusts that I am growing and learning.

To think of our service for our fellows as the act of a friend gives me a much better understanding of what it should be like when I am serving. It is not awkward, not something formal, not a condescending act of grace from the lord of the manor. Service is simply doing something to help a friend because I love that friend and want to help. No wonder service brings joy—it is a pleasure indeed to be able to help a friend.◀

### Dinosaurs

*The Urantia Book* states that the remains of the largest monster dinosaur are buried in North America, Europe, Africa, and India, but not Australia. Although dinosaur fossils have been found in Australia, to date (1988), no monster dinosaur fossils have yet been found.

Reference: *The Urantia Book*, 697:1/61.3.6.

### Marsupials

The January issue of *Scientific American* (1985), p. 60 discusses whether marsupials originated in Australia and radiated via Antarctica to the Americas, thence Europe or the reverse. It is stated that the marsupials flourished about 50 million years ago and comments that proponents of continental drift think that Australia was connected to South America about that time. *The Urantia Book* tells us that the ancestors of the kangaroos roamed Australia 45 million years ago and that 35 million years ago the southern land bridge was extensive, reconnecting the then enormous Antarctic continent with South America, South Africa and Australia.

Recently marsupial fossils have been found on Seymour Island in Antarctica. None of this is too surprising in 1988, but remember that when *The Urantia Book* was published, virtually nobody believed in the concept of continental drift.

References: *The Urantia Book*, 694-5:1-10/61.1-2. *Scientific American* 1985, January issue, p. 60.

### The Red Man to the Americas

*The Urantia Book* tells us that the red man crossed from Asia to America 85,000 years ago. Until recently, most anthropologists believed that the Americas had been inhabited by humans for no more than 12,000 years. This date has been pushed back to 30-40,000 years.

Reference: *Scientific American*, 249 (6), 1985. *Ibid*, 258 (6), 22, 1988.

### Addendum: Continental Drift and Land Elevation

*The Urantia Book* account of the geological history of our planet tells us that following the breakup of the supercontinent about 700 million years ago, there have been repeated cycles of land elevation and submergence. Between approximately 400 and 200 million years ago, the periodicity appears to average very roughly 25 million years, with periods of much more frequent cycling during the Carboniferous and Cretaceous periods.

Changes in sea level have often been attributed to advance and retreat of the polar ice caps, but this would not appear to account for the movements described in *The Urantia Book*. More recently a mechanism has been proposed involving the accumulation of heat beneath the great land masses that is thought to cause the elevation, doming, and breakup of continents and their subsequent rejoining. Although the concept has been put forward dominantly to account for transverse movement, it also provides a physical mechanism that could explain the vertical movement described in the *Urantia Book* account.

The mechanism proposed indicates a relatively slow buildup of heat, but the subsequent blow-off can occur in a number of ways, hence considerable deviation from sine wave periodicity would be expected. This new theory will be of interest to *Urantia Book* readers who have been puzzled by its account of the alternate elevation and depression of continents on such a large scale. (The million year cycles referred to on p. 691 may refer only to the Cretaceous. There were up to 75 inundations during the Carboniferous. Alternatively, it may be a transcriptional error.)

Reference: "The Supercontinent Cycle." R.D. Nance, et al. *Scientific American* 259 (1), 44-51 (1988). *The Urantia Book*, 691:4/60.4.1\*

*COCOON* from page 12.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." In present-day language we would say, "Boy, you come from good stock. Act like your Daddy."

Because the olden records bind some Christians, they seem struck with a necessity of believing that God the Father has a dark side, a fierce temper, and a delight in judging and remembering faults. They little imagine that Luke 6:27-35 is a simple recital of the nature of the Father which we are to imitate so that men will know that we are sons of God. Offspring resemble parents and can become like the parent if they so desire. We can become like our Father, if we choose, but in order to do so, we must be "kind to the unthankful and to the evil," just like he is. It grieved Jesus in his day that men were so ignorant of the loving and non-judgmental nature of his Father, that nothing short of miracles would cause them to recognize him as God's son. It should have been that his nature and personality alone caused them to remark, "Truly this is a son of God. We know so because he acts just like his Father."

One final cocoon content is found in the first epistle of John 1:5, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." One day men will understand and accept this as the cocoon opens. There are many more cocoon contents which the Christian church will one day deal with. \*

### GOOD CHEER PRESS CATALOG From JESUSONIAN FOUNDATION

The Winter/Spring 1990-1991 catalog is an excellent source of secondary works. To request a catalog, contact:

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## ADVENTURES IN SPIRITUAL LIVING AUSTIN, TEXAS

The Adventures in Spiritual Living Team will present a one-day intensive in Austin, Texas at Unity in the Oaks on March 9, 1991. The program will include many of the dynamic techniques for spiritual living taught at the Adventures in Spiritual Living Preconference Retreat at the Fifth Epochal Fellowship International Conference at Snowmass last summer: Help in the Moment, Seeing with God's Eyes, Healing Circle, Hot Pen, Listening from the Heart, Feeling the Presence, Journal Writing, Letter to God, and Spiritual Support Group.

The program will run from 9AM to 9PM. Lunch and dinner will be taken at a nearby Furr's cafeteria and paid for separately. Registration fee is \$10 per person in advance and \$15 at the door. Checks should be made out to Adventures in Spiritual Living. To register, send fee, name, address and phone number to: **Adventures in Spiritual Living, c/o Sharon and Ted Lanier, 1000 Minturn Lane, Austin, TX 78748, (512) 443-6794 days, (512) 280-5713 evenings**

## THE SPIRITUAL FELLOWSHIP JOURNAL

Sometime after Easter, 1991, The Christian Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book* plans to publish the first issue of a journal which will interface with mainline clergy. Subscriptions in the United States will be \$5.00 and for those in other countries \$7.00.

Various people in the Fifth Epochal Fellowship have asked to be notified concerning the publication of *The Spiritual Fellowship Journal*. Those wishing to receive the journal, please send your subscription to: **The Christian Fellowship, 4109 Plaza Dr., Fort Wayne, IN 46806**

## LATIN AMERICAN NEWSLETTER

A new newsletter has been initiated for readers who live in Latin America, speak Spanish, or share an interest in helping to introduce *El Libro Urantia*. The first issue was completed in September 1990. To send items of interest or to add your name to the mailing list, contact Audrey Ayers at the addresses below.

From the U.S. use the following address exactly as given and use regular U.S. postage of 25¢. (Do not add the words "Florida" or "Guatemala" and do not spend 45¢ on postage). **Audrey Ayers, USMILGP, APO Miami 34024**

From countries other than the U.S. use the following address: **Audrey Ayers, Apdo Postal 315, Antigua, Sacatepequez, Guatemala, Centro America**

## ADVENTURES IN SPIRITUAL LIVING MO RANCH

The Adventures in Spiritual Living Team will be returning to Mo Ranch near Kerrville, Texas (outside San Antonio) for a retreat October 18-20, 1991. This beautiful hill country location hosted the original Adventures in Spiritual Living Retreat in 1989. More information will be available in the next issue of *The Circles*, but if you would like to receive advance registration materials as soon as they become available, send an addressed and stamped envelope (4 1/4 by 9 1/2 inches) to: **Carol Weatherford, P.O. Box 1058, Spring, TX 77383, (713) 363-1652 evenings.**



# Forgiveness

***"Divine forgiveness is inevitable; it is inherent and inalienable in God's infinite understanding, in his perfect knowledge of all that concerns the mistaken judgment and erroneous choosing of the child."*** (1898:3/174.1.3)

***"When a wise man understands the inner impulses of his fellows, he will love them. And when you love your brother, you have already forgiven him."*** (1898:4/174.1.4)

The Fall 1991 issue of *The Circles* will focus on Forgiveness. We will explore this essential topic from two viewpoints: as recipients of God's forgiveness and as givers of forgiveness to our fellows. Questions to stimulate your thinking:

*When God looks at our errors, how does he feel toward us?*

*How can we experience God's forgiveness?*

*How can we be reassured that he has forgiven us?*

*Why is it important for us to experience his forgiveness?*

*What can we do to reduce the offense we take at the behavior of others?*

*Does forgiveness mean passive acceptance of malicious wrongdoing?*

*How can we forgive those small daily insults and injuries which are a part of everyone's life?*

*How can we deal with those truly grave hurts that are so hard to forgive?*

Join us in this exploration. Send your articles, poetry or art work by April 15, 1991 to:

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