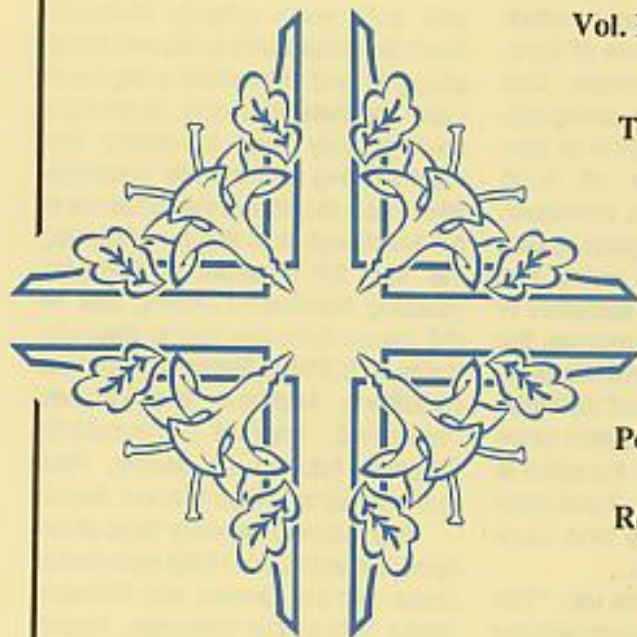


# The Circles ...

## Courage

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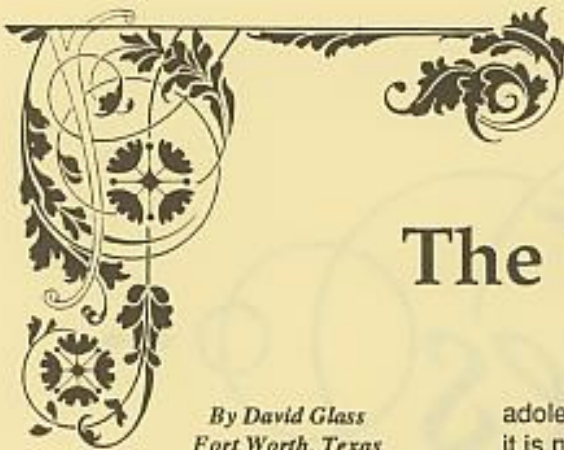
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# The Courage of Jesus

By David Glass  
Fort Worth, Texas

"What [Jesus] aimed at in his life appears to have been a *superb self-respect*. He only advised man to humble himself that he might become truly exalted; what he really aimed at was true humility toward God. He placed great value upon sincerity—a pure heart. Fidelity was a cardinal virtue in his estimate of character, while *courage* was the very heart of his teachings. 'Fear not' was his watchword, and patient endurance his ideal of strength of character. The teachings of Jesus constitute a religion of valor, courage and heroism." (1582:1/140.8.20)

Courage is detectable even in the simpler animal ages of the past. The adjutant mind-spirit of courage makes it possible for this life-attitude to function in a real way. We read that the early pre-civilized era on our world was characterized by recurrently warring primitive men strengthened, perhaps by this adjutant.

There are many ways that different societies attempt to bring forth courage from within their pubescent males. These rites can involve enduring inflicted pain, solitary survival when abandoned in the world, mastery of some martial art, or some other tests of fortitude and manhood. These "rites of passage" represent a technique of attempting to impress upon the younger generation an awareness of the hardships and difficulties of growing up and the serious challenges of adult life. Since all youths must pass through puberty, each society deals with the throes of

adolescence in its own way. Perhaps it is no coincidence that young, daring Amerindians are called "braves."

There has been an evolution of courage on our planet. Beginning with the animal level mentioned above, and after the savage or primitive human stages, mortals develop many desirable virtues which can become inter-woven with their growing sense and awareness of gradually developing courage within themselves—mental courage when seeking to find entrance into a new realm of learning, knowledge, and experience; spiritual courage which can achieve exalted levels of heroism and ultimate selflessness. Cap these levels with the meaning-discerning and freewill choice of personality, which unifies all such phases of a courageous individual, and a strong son or daughter of God becomes unmistakably active and progressive among the societies of the human race. Among mortals, the highest level of personal heroism was reached by Jesus; and, although it is probable that no Urantian since Joshua ben Joseph has acceded to his level of courage, there have been many heroic individuals who have inspired the human race.

A Life Carrier informs us: "The struggles of these early ages [around 500,000 years ago] were characterized by courage, bravery, and even heroism. And we all regret that so many of those sterling and rugged traits of your early ancestors have been lost to the later-day races. While we appreciate the value of many of the refinements of advancing civilization, we miss the magnificent persistency and superb devo-

tion of your early ancestors, which oftentimes bordered on grandeur and sublimity." (729:1/64.7.20)

Two of my favorite modern-day courageous heroes are Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Both sought peace (King winning the Nobel Peace Prize); both became international figures in human society; both opposed violence and counselled civil disobedience (to use Thoreau's term) in the place of riots and physical conflicts. Both reached spiritual ideals of love, service, and selflessness. Each had reverence for God and both were adeptly eloquent. Each promoted and achieved social progress and left behind a legacy of valor and determination. Both were courageously and insistently forward-looking and morally irrepressible. Each expanded the influence of his teachings and life by rendering the "last, full measure of devotion" (quoting Abraham Lincoln), just as did James Zebedee (put to death by the sword); Philip, Peter, and Andrew (crucified); Matthew and Thomas (murdered, method unrevealed); Stephen (stoned to death); Paul (beheaded); and their Master, Jesus.

Back during the early days of the Apostles' activities, Philip reported to Jesus that the Greeks and Romans "make light of our message, saying that such teachings are fit for only weaklings and slaves. They assert that the religion of the heathen is superior to our teaching because it inspires to the acquirement of a strong, robust, and aggressive character. They affirm that we would convert all men into enfeebled specimens of passive non-resisters who

See JESUS on page 7.



# The Harvest of Courage

## Preparing the Ground

Spiritual growth of any kind begins with a willingness to honestly see ourselves. This is true of the growth of courage. We have to be open to looking at our shortcomings in the area of courage. Without a clear vision of where we are and of the ideals we can aspire to, we are unlikely to progress. We all wear blinders that must come off.

Most of us do not realize that we need to take a look at ourselves. I was unaware of any need to change and grow until I faced a crisis. The pain of that crisis made me realize that everything was not going to be fine—that I must grow and change.

Not all people experience such a crisis. For some people, it is a gentle nudging that beckons them to open their eyes and really see themselves. By whatever method, each of us must eventually recognize this need for growth.

Even after becoming aware of a need to grow and change, it is easy to resist change. After all, it is hard to give up comfortable patterns of reaction. Opening yourself up to change is difficult. It takes discipline and a new way of thinking. Sometimes we are stubborn and want to hold on to the safe and familiar. Whatever our resistances are, it is necessary to deal with them and become more flexible sooner or later.

One of the strongest motivations to growth is our desire to be willing to do what it takes to do God's will. Somewhere inside each of us is a call to do God's will, a yearning toward something better, more perfect. Sometimes God can speak to us so strongly through this inner pull. The

Thought Adjuster calls to us, makes us want peace, joy and inner strength. When we have the courage to do the right thing, the beauty of that experience draws us even more strongly to do his will.

And so we are *driven* to change by crises and *called* to change by our yearning for the peace, joy and inner strength we glimpse from time to time.

## Planting the Seed

We plant the seed of courage by taking on those things that we find hard to do—and by doing them again and again. The baby bird is not born knowing how to fly, but that is his destiny. Between the birth and soaring flight comes many small steps—new and uncomfortable steps, but necessary ones. It is not necessary for the baby bird to leap from the safety of the branch into the unknown air all at once. The baby hops, leaps, flutters his wings, makes small trial flights only inches off of the ground. Step by frightening step he grows toward success. Then one day there comes a flight far above the ground from one branch to another.

Our growth in courage can come in just such small steps. Each time we stretch beyond what is comfortable, God can supply us with that small courage we need to do what is hard for us. It is as if God's gift of courage flows through us and on the way through, some of it sticks. Each challenge we meet builds our stock of courage.

Each hard thing we face is actually an opportunity to try our tiny wings of courage. In my life I have often seen the opportunity arise and although my heart is pounding with

By Sharon Lanier  
Austin, Texas

fright, I feel the inner pull. I recognize the opportunity, and from somewhere inside me I am urged to respond.

## Watering the Seed

Any living thing must be nourished—so must courage. God is our supplier and source of courage. Our growing twig of courage is nourished by our intimate connection with our Heavenly Father.

An active prayer life is essential. As we daily talk to God, we keep the channels open by which we receive the courage we need. God can give us courage right in the moment we need it. When we are faced with a decision, we can turn to him silently and instantly for his strength—if we *have kept open the channels of spiritual power by regular prayer and worship.*

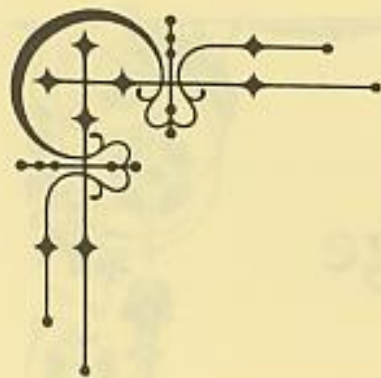
We can also engage in "pre-  
See HARVEST on page 20.

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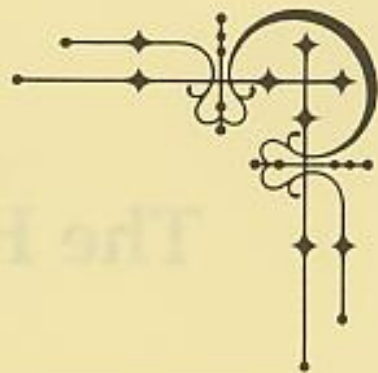
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*All page references to The Urantia Book are as follows: The page number is first, followed by a colon and then the paragraph number. Each indention on a page is counted as a paragraph, even if it is a single line long, as in numbered lists. Paragraph 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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# Seven Lessons in Courage



By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas

I consider myself an infant in courage. But as I began to work on the study notes, it occurred to me that I have learned a few small lessons along the way that have made significant improvement in the quality of my life. I would like to share those.

## A Lesson in Necessity

When I was sixteen, I made my first trip to an allergist. After extensive tests, he concluded that in addition to the usual pollens and molds I was allergic to several foods and instructed me to avoid them for a few years. That might not have been so terrible but for one thing: one of them (wheat) was so common as to make it impossible to avoid without calling attention to myself. At sixteen one does not want to be *different* in any obvious way. Carrying your lunch to school (in order to avoid the forbidden foods) was *different*. Anyone who has ever been a shy sixteen-year-old will realize this as a crisis in courage.

I managed to survive those years of being different. After a while, I even began to recognize the lesson I was learning—a lesson in necessity: **You can do what you have to do.** It sounds easy, but this is something one has to *experience* to really know. When the time comes, you can do whatever it is you must do.

## A Lesson in Procrastination

You might expect a "lesson in procrastination" to teach you not to procrastinate, right? Wrong. This is one case in which procrastination is a great idea.

I am a worrier. Over the years, I have spent plenty of perfectly good mental time chewing over the *bad*

things that are threatening to enter my life. After a good many years of such experiences, a vague impression began to form: what I anticipated virtually never came to pass; when things I was afraid of did happen, they were seldom as bad as I had anticipated.

Then one day this realization came into sharp focus. In the process of making a mammogram, the doctor became concerned about a lump. He recommended that I go to a specialist. My earnest desire was to get in to see the specialist right away and discover the truth so I could deal with it. As is frequently the case, however, it was several days before I could get an appointment. I do not know how other people feel, but cancer is one of those things about which I can develop a high level of worry on a moment's notice.

So there I sat with my insides churning and four days to go before I could get any reassurance (or, heaven forbid, bad news). I had spent maybe 45 minutes in a state of panic, when suddenly my mind spontaneously came out with these words in a very clear inner voice: "I'm going to wait to worry about this until after I see the specialist." My body relaxed, my mind quit churning, and I went back to life as usual. Four days later the specialist gave me the good news that there was no need to be concerned. I was elated to think of all the worry I had avoided!

It dawned on me that through the years I had been wasting all that worry (and making myself miserable) on things that never came to pass.

And so it was that I learned the lesson on procrastination: **Put off worrying until the problem actually occurs.** This has become a habitual reaction for me. At the first sign of worry, I think, "I'll wait until I'm sure I *need* to worry." All that worry is nothing but *fear* which saps my courage to face the uncertain future.

## A Lesson in Focus

Back when I was a young mother staying at home with a new baby all day, lots of things became intimidating. One of them was going to parties where I did not know many people. What does one talk about? I was no longer working. The only thing I was doing was cleaning house and taking care of a baby. Nobody wants to talk about house cleaning (especially me), and you can only talk about babies for a limited time—even less if your conversational partner is a man. I felt unimportant, uninteresting and tongue-tied.

Then it occurred to me to ask questions. I found out all sorts of interesting things about people. I really began to enjoy them. And as they talked about themselves, I loosened up and was able to contribute to the conversation (I was not quite as uninteresting as I had thought!).

That was the beginning of my lesson on focus: **Concentrating on self immobilizes; concentrating on others frees.** This lesson has deepened through the years. It is a profound truth.

Recently I have observed two sisters face widowhood. One turned inward worrying about her finances (which were adequate), limiting her social contacts to single women from

fear of socializing with couples, indulging at every opportunity in "poor little me" thoughts and conversation. The other sister was determined not to be a burden on others. Quite the opposite, she immediately made changes to her home to create an apartment for a third sister, relieving financial strain on the sister and providing companionship for them both. She has maintained her friendships and has deliberately directed her mind toward new projects and happy memories, instead of self-pity.

The first sister lives in fear and unhappiness. The second courageously faces each day trying to bring the best from it. The contrast in focus between the two widows has resulted in very different levels of happiness for them.

#### **A Lesson in Perception**

It is easy to recognize courage in someone who braves physical injury or even in someone who defies tradition and finds himself ridiculed. But there is hidden courage in each of us—if we are facing our fears and growing out of them. You might not recognize it as courage to see someone reaching out to help another person simply through companionship and counsel. But for those who are immobilized by shyness, such an action requires great courage. Giving a speech is a daunting prospect for most of us. But for someone who has had a devastatingly embarrassing speaking failure early in life, giving a speech becomes an intense act of courage.

It was by getting to know people well and discovering their personal fears and failures that I learned a lesson in perspective: *Courage is not in the eye of the beholder.* What is easy to one person may require consummate courage from another. So long as we are discovering our own fears and surmounting them, we are growing in courage.

I also learned to appreciate people more as individuals and to realize that courage may flash from someone at the least expected moments, because of who that per-

son is and what he has faced.

#### **A Lesson in Economics**

About the time my son began to walk, we moved into our first home. I was staying home all day for the first time in my life. I knew no one in the neighborhood except for the lady next door who was two generations my senior. I began to grow weary of no one to talk to and the same four walls day after day. I yearned for someone my age who could relate to my life challenges. Occasionally I would see someone who fit that description drive down our street with her little girl. I knew she must live not too far away since the houses ended at the end of our block.

At that time I was not the outgoing person I have since become. I was a little shy and certainly cautious about exposing myself to social rejection. But desperation is an excel-


lent stimulus. One day my son and I were in the front yard when the woman and her child drove by. My yearning for a friend surged in my throat and a bold idea leaped into my head. I would follow her home and introduce myself—definitely not a typical action for me! To my own amazement I started charging along the sidewalk in her direction, son in tow. Sure enough she pulled into a driveway toward the end of the block. Standing in front of her house, I felt a lump of fear rise as I thought of knocking on her front door. But I ignored my fear and did it anyway. I discovered that she had yearned to meet me just as I had her.

Thus began a friendship that filled a tremendous need for the two of us and our children as well. And I learned a lesson in the economics of

*See SEVEN on page 17.*



## *Seven Lessons in Courage*



#### **A Lesson in Necessity:**

*You can do what you have to do.*

#### **A Lesson in Procrastination:**

*Put off worrying until the problem actually occurs.*

#### **A Lesson in Focus:**

*Concentrating on self immobilizes; concentrating on others frees.*

#### **A Lesson in Perception:**

*Courage is not in the eye of the beholder.*

#### **A Lesson in Economics:**



*Nothing ventured, nothing gained.*

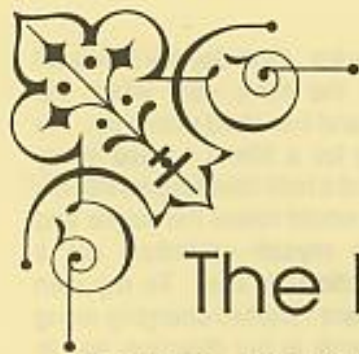
#### **A Lesson in Power:**

*Fear empowers the "monsters;" courage empowers me.*

#### **A Lesson in Sources:**

*Courage is a gift from God.*





By Mary Huggins  
Round Rock, Texas



## The Beginnings of Courage

*Is courage—strength of character—desirable? Then must man be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments. (51:5/3.5.6)*

"Jason, come on down, it's almost time to go home." Jason loved it when he and Mom went to visit Aunt Suzie. She had the neatest house, full of surprises in every room, all sorts of things to delight a five-year-old's curiosity, and she really didn't seem to mind when he went exploring. "You can look all you want, just don't bother anything," she always told him.

Aunt Suzie must be really old—at least 200. She has gray hair and no children to play with, just pictures of a boy on the walls and on her dresser, but she does have these old toys on some shelves. Here in this room. Oh, yeah... There's that old fire engine with rust on the ladder. I bet it was fun to play with in the sand. Briinnnggg!!! And that stuffed kangaroo. Some boy must have really liked him. His ears are almost worn off. Oh, look. He has a pocket in front.

Oh, my, superneat!!! Wow!!! Look at those colors!! I've never seen a marble that big, that colored, that beautiful! Oh, I want it!!! Aunt Suzie will never know. I'll put it in my pocket. There, and nobody will think I have anything.

"Jason, let's go now." Oh, no. Aunt Suzie is so nice. She'll never know. Something about an accident, a long time ago. Her little boy. Oh, I don't remember. I just know I want this marble! My Mommy would put it back. "Just don't bother anything."

She cried for weeks. Daddy would scold me if he found out, but he won't. It's so colored and sparkly and shiny. But it's his—her little boy's—or it was his. But it's not mine. "Jesus, I know you see me. I'm putting it back for you, for you and Mommy and Daddy and Aunt Suzie, and that other little boy."

"I'm coming."

Jason does not know the meaning of the words "strength of character" or much about courage, but he knows that he just grappled with hardship. The hardship of knowing he probably would not get caught. He will be disappointed every time he thinks about *not* having that beautiful marble. But deep inside he knows

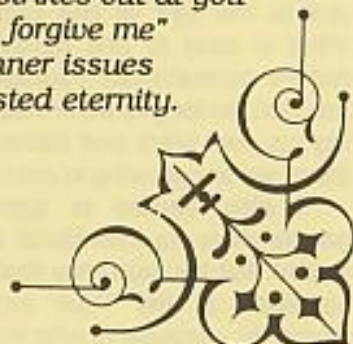
about courage and about character. He is on his way. He has made his first step toward perfection. Jason has made his first installment on character. He is building his "treasure in heaven."

Jason's courage brought him a Thought Adjuster. Our courage to make decisions brings us the accomplishments of circles. Jason does not know he has a Thought Adjuster. We do not know consciously when we attain circles, but our Father does. Our ignorance does not change the facts. It takes courage to make moral decisions; it takes courage to have faith when others are doubting; it takes courage to move unknown steps closer to an unseen God.

### COURAGE is...

*the strength to do what you fear the most  
the wisdom to say the right words at just the right moment  
the power to let go of your favorite pains and problems  
the patience to wait  
the faith to leap blindly into God's invisible arms  
the desire to love the unloveable  
the urge to be like God our Father  
the eye of calm surrounded by the howling storm of chaos  
the instant prayer-thought in the urgency of the moment  
the insight to see others from an eternal perspective  
the ability to love the person as he strikes out at you  
the humility to say "I'm sorry, forgive me"  
the guts to face those deep inner issues  
the trust to say yes to an untested eternity.*

by Mary Huggins  
Round Rock, Texas



*JESUS from page 2.*

would soon perish from the face of the earth." (1607:4/143.1.2)

After Jesus had heard similar objections to the gospel of the kingdom presented by Thomas, Nathaniel, Simon Zelotes, and Matthew, he said to the twelve: "Because my Father is a God of love and delights in the practice of mercy, do not imbibe the idea that the service of the kingdom is to be one of monotonous ease. The Paradise ascent is the supreme adventure of all time, the rugged achievement of eternity. The service of the kingdom on earth will call for all the courageous manhood that you and your co-workers can muster. Many of you will be put to death for your loyalty to the gospel of this kingdom. It is easy to die in the line of physical battle when your courage is strengthened by the presence of your fighting comrades, but it requires a higher and more profound form of human courage and devotion calmly and all alone to lay down your life for the love of a truth enshrined in your mortal heart.

"Today, the unbelievers may taunt you with preaching a gospel of non-resistance and with living lives of nonviolence, but you are the first volunteers of a long line of sincere believers in the gospel of this kingdom who will astonish all mankind by their heroic devotion to these teachings....The courage of the flesh is the lowest form of bravery. Mind bravery is a higher type of human courage, but the highest and supreme is uncompromising loyalty to the enlightened convictions of profound spiritual realities. And such courage constitutes the heroism of the God-knowing man. And you are all God-knowing men; you are in very truth the personal associates of the Son of Man." (1608:3-4/143.1. 6-7)

We are familiar with the physical type of bravery. Now let's consider these words of Jesus regarding another level or kind of courage which one might regard as moral and spiritual bravery:

*See JESUS on page 16.*

## MY MISSION STATEMENT

The Great Goal of my life is to attune to the divinity of the Fragment of God that dwells within my soul.

### MY GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1.

I will learn the relaxation of daily worship and spiritual communion to relieve tension, remove conflict, augment the total resources of my personality.

2.

I will learn to let go of God that he may spring forth to the refreshment of my soul while in transit outward, and then serve the purpose of enlightening, uplifting and blessing countless other souls.

3.

I will recall that the communion with my Father within is best facilitated by wholehearted and loving service in unselfish ministry to my fellow creatures.

4.

Having been given the gift of a guiding light within my soul, I will ever seek to live up to it each day by making courageous decisions and wholeheartedly and fearlessly completing them through appropriate actions.

*References: pp. 1206, 1774, 1777, 1000, 1567, 1211*

By Larry Mullins  
Boulder, Colorado



# Courage: 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.]

All evolutionary creature life is beset by certain inevitabilities. Consider the following:

1. Is courage—strength of character—desirable? Then must man be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments. (51:4/3.5.5)

Personality is unchangeable, but there is an element of ourselves which does grow and change with time and experience. Character is that aspect of ourselves which we build through our reaction to the circumstances and events of life. Our experiences with hardship and disappointment give us opportunities to develop reaction patterns. Hopefully, these patterns are based on higher and higher values as we mature. Courage is here defined as strength of character.

It is courageous, then, when challenged by a new hardship or disappointment, to be strong—to refuse to fall back to a lower value and pattern of reaction.

(Adjutant mind-spirits.) *The spirit of courage—the fidelity endowment—in personal beings, the basis of character acquirement and the intellectual root of moral stamina and spiritual bravery.* (402:5/36.5.8)

In addition to strength of character, courage involves fidelity—loyalty to ideals.

*The spirit of knowledge—the*

*curiosity-mother of adventure and discovery, the scientific spirit; the guide and faithful associate of the spirits of courage and counsel; the urge to direct the endowments of courage into useful and progressive paths of growth.* (402:6/36.5.9)

Courage—especially physical courage—can find expression in counterproductive, even destructive avenues. The child who will not refuse a dare, the teenager who tries every mind-altering substance he can find for thrills, the adult who pursues needlessly dangerous hobbies—all may well be misdirecting their courage. Oddly enough, it is curiosity which works to direct courage into "useful and progressive paths of growth."

*Fidelity was a cardinal virtue in his [Jesus'] estimate of character, while courage was the very heart of his teachings. "Fear not" was his watchword, and patient endurance his ideal of strength of character.* (1582:1/140.8.20)

How eye-opening to hear that "patient endurance" was Jesus' ideal of strength of character (a term used elsewhere as an apposite for courage). In our culture the images of physical action-oriented courage are abundant. Patient endurance does not usually spring to mind when we hear the word "courage."

Let's look first to Jesus for an example. The most dramatic example must surely be his courageous endurance of disrespect and cruelty leading up to and during his crucifixion. He patiently endured the viciousness of the men who knew what they were doing, as well as the thoughtless cruelty of those who were unaware of the import of their acts. He did this for a very specific reason—to give a living picture of the unwillingness of the Heavenly Father

to harm his children, even to save himself great anguish. No one who understands this demonstration could possibly fear our Father. I cannot imagine having the courage it took for Jesus to face that situation with patient endurance.

I can recognize some lesser forms of patient endurance even in our own lives. Most parents get opportunities for patient endurance. Children often do things that parents must live with because the child is not yet mature enough to behave differently. Being a parent is not fair. Parents lose sleep and energy taking care of the children. The rewards their hard-earned money could bring them often go to feed, clothe, and straighten the teeth of their children. Yet parents endure patiently out of love. They courageously and freely give these gifts of love.

The teenage years frequently bring the child's rejection of various values, opinions, or behavior which are important to his or her parents. Yet the parents' love for the child provides the courage needed to face the pain of rejection and still be there for their child.

Patient endurance is required in a marriage partnership too. There are often behaviors your spouse will not be able to change until he or she matures—and that may take years. In the meantime, you live with the behavior—because you love your mate. And later in life, any couple who has experienced mid-life crises will testify that patient endurance is the watchword!

The concept of patient endurance as the ideal of courage is an eye-opener because it reveals courage in places we never might have recognized it.

*The courage of the flesh is the lowest form of bravery. Mind bravery*





is a higher type of human courage, but the highest and supreme is uncompromising loyalty to the enlightened convictions of profound spiritual realities. And such courage constitutes the heroism of the God-knowing man. (1608:4/143.1.7 )

I have expended considerable mental effort in an attempt to find examples of these types of bravery to make this passage more concrete. It is not as simple as I thought. It would seem to me that bravery of the flesh would include a willingness to put yourself in physical danger to win a battle or to prove that you were unafraid. At some levels of humanity, these examples of bravery are the highest conceivable. But what about the soldier who puts himself or herself in danger to protect loved ones and a way of life. Is that also courage of the flesh?

Mind bravery might include the astronomers who had, through their observations and calculations, become convinced that the earth was not the center of the Universe. They braved persecution by religious authorities to proclaim this newly discovered fact. Researchers who are unwilling to allow their findings to be distorted in order to serve a commercial sponsor's purposes might display mind bravery in refusing to cooperate. But I am unsure where the line blurs into the spiritual. Is the researcher who refuses to allow his research into the results of smoking to be distorted by tobacco companies exhibiting mind courage or spiritual courage when his motive is to do good to the potential smokers who may get lung cancer?

The child who refuses to join in cruel taunting of a classmate out of a deeply felt sympathy for his suffering is exhibiting spiritual courage. So is the businessman who will not carry a product that degrades the values he holds as his own. The price of such bravery may be ridicule or financial loss, but in the past spiritual bravery has resulted in mortal death—and may do so again.

...Jesus discoursed on the dan-

gers of courage and faith, how they sometimes lead unthinking souls on to recklessness and presumption. He also showed how prudence and discretion, when carried too far, lead to cowardice and failure. (1673:3/149.4.2)

We are faced with an act of balance between courage/faith on one hand and prudence/discretion on the other. Those of us who were endowed by inheritance with more willingness to take risks may need to take care to avoid recklessness and presumption.

An example of a presumptuous prayer might be the apostles' attempt to heal the epileptic boy while Jesus was on the mountain during the transfiguration. (paper 158) What they attempted was not impossible, but they had not gone about it in God's way. They expected God to fit himself to their way.

On the other hand those of us who were born more cautious have to learn to be more bold in order to avoid transforming prudence and discretion into cowardice and failure.

Anyone who thinks this balancing act between recklessness and cowardice is insignificant or easy is mistaken. It is one of life's greater challenges.

Rodan: *My philosophy tells me that there are times when I must fight, if need be, for the defense of my concept of righteousness, but I doubt not that the Master, with a more mature type of personality, would easily and gracefully gain an equal victory by his superior and winsome technique of tact and tolerance.... Too often we engage in a fight more to convince ourselves that we are not afraid. (1778:2/160.3.4)*

In the struggle to avoid recklessness in our enthusiastic faith, it is surely helpful to keep in mind the importance of "tact and tolerance" and the example of the apostle James. Jesus knew he was likely to be tactless and cut short his useful life as an apostle. He warned James, but James was unable to make the

necessary adjustments. Perhaps it would be very wise of each of us to evaluate where our own tendencies lie and seek to offset our recklessness or caution. Then when crises of courage arise, we may be able to achieve the balance needed.

*The struggles of these early ages were characterized by courage, bravery, and even heroism. And we all regret that so many of those sterling and rugged traits of your early ancestors have been lost to the later-day races. While we appreciate the value of many of the refinements of advancing civilization, we miss the magnificent persistency and superb devotion of your early ancestors, which oftentimes bordered on grandeur and sublimity. (729:1/64.7.20)*


Apparently the refinements of advancing civilization have conflicted with the nurturing of courage—presumably because we have fewer clear opportunities to display "magnificent persistency and superb devotion."

Jesus could well have been speaking of our present days when he said, *"Under the soon-coming persecutions by those who hate this gospel of joy and liberty, you will thrive and the kingdom will prosper. But you will stand in grave danger in subsequent times when most men will speak well of kingdom believers and many in high places nominally accept the gospel of the heavenly kingdom. Learn to be faithful to the kingdom even in times of peace and prosperity. Tempt not the angels of your supervision to lead you in troublous ways as a loving discipline designed to save your ease-drifting souls."*(1931:1/178.1.10)

Our angels would lead us into "troublous ways" in order to provide us opportunities to develop cour-

See NOTES on page 17.





# Potpourri

## Do You Believe in Dreams?

By Satu Sihvo  
Espoo, Finland

In the sixth century B.C. the Melchizedek teachings were well-nigh extinct in Persia, when Zoroaster, because of a dream that he saw while he was in Ur, returned to his home in the north and set upon remodelling the religion of his people. *The Urantia Book* tells us (1049:5/95.6.2) about the partly traditional elements that were incorporated in his teaching, but the content of the dream that so animated this virile and adventurous youth are not revealed to us. The dream was nothing insignificant for Zoroaster—it made him act. It is hardly possible that it was an accident that the author of this Paper has chosen to report this detail in Zoroaster's career. Dreams are intriguing.

### EXTRAORDINARY

In the past ages the attitude towards dreams used to be one of awe, and the dreams have had their proper influence in the guesswork concerning man's life after death. About the Hebrews there is a statement that they truly believed God spoke to them in dreams, despite the injunctions of Moses against this idea. "And Moses was right, for ordinary dreams are not the methods employed by the personalities of the spiritual world when they seek to communicate with material beings." (954:10/86.5.11) After reading this quotation, I pay attention to two things: On one hand, it refers to ordinary dreams; on the other hand, it mentions the methods employed by personalities.

The extraordinary dreams that we are told about in *The Urantia Book* are the dream of Zacharias pending John the Baptist's birth as well as

Joseph's dream in which a celestial messenger appeared to him. These two men had been quite suspicious about the visions that their spouses had seen, but a dream made Zacharias completely convinced, and neither did Joseph ever again wholly doubt Mary's story of Gabriel's visit. (1346:0/122.2.5 & 1347:3/122.4.1) Among these unusual dreams may be reckoned also that dream about the "light of life" appearing on earth among the Jews which a religious teacher told to the three priests who subsequently, after an arduous search, found their way to Bethlehem. So the legend of the star of Bethlehem has been replaced by a religious dream! (1352:2/122.8.6)

It is plausible that the purpose of these dreams was not that of nurturing our predilection to superstitious mysticism, but rather to cure that. The book makes this terse statement: "In times past, divine beings have revealed themselves to certain God-knowing persons, not because of their mystic trances or morbid visions, but in spite of all these phenomena." (1099:4/100.5.6) The likelihood of our receiving a celestial visitor in our dreams may be really small. Our dreams can be meaningful in spite of the fact that the Thought Adjuster is not a personality, who would try to assert himself in our dreams.

### ORDINARY

"Jesus slept very little that night. His rest was greatly disturbed by revolting dreams of slaughter and suffering. His mind was distraught and his heart torn by the inconsistencies and absurdities of the theology of the whole Jewish ceremonial sys-

tem. His parents likewise slept little." (1379:5/125.2.4) Towards the end of this passage, it is stated that Mary and Joseph feared to talk frankly with Jesus about these problems, though Jesus would gladly have talked about them had his parent dared to encourage him. Maybe some of our nightmares could be avoided should we endeavor to discuss our problems—or to use a nightmare as a discussion opener?

Pilate's wife did not keep silent but sent a written note to her husband at a critical moment: "I pray you have nothing to do with this innocent and just man whom they call Jesus. I have suffered many things in a dream this night because of him." (1994:2/185.5.8) Claudia's message greatly upset Pilate, and he delayed the adjudication of the case. Unfortunately, Jesus' enemies made full use of this delay and encouraged people to call for the release of Barabbas.

"While their mortal hosts are asleep, the Adjusters try to register their creations in the higher levels of the material mind, and some of your grotesque dreams indicate their failure to make efficient contact. The absurdities of dream life not only testify to pressure of unexpressed emotions but also bear witness to the horrible distortion of the representations of the spiritual concepts presented by the Adjusters. Your own passions, urges, and other innate tendencies translate themselves into the picture and substitute their unexpressed desires for the divine messages which the indwellers are endeavoring to put into the psychic

See DREAMS on page 21.

## Tidbits

### PRAYER FOR MATERIAL NEEDS

In response to a [survey] question asking about praying for material things that the respondent may need, "respondents often said they would ask God only to help them to do the things they needed to do in order to secure what they wanted....Others insisted that praying for material needs was selfish and childish."

Margaret Poloma and George Gallup, Jr., *Varieties of Prayer: A Survey Report*, p.32.

*The Urantia Book*, 999:8/91.6.5. Do not be so slothful as to ask God to solve your difficulties, but never hesitate to ask him for wisdom and spiritual strength to guide and sustain you while you yourself resolutely and courageously attack the problems at hand.

1639:5/146.2.10. "Avoid materialistic praying..."

1640:5/146.2.16. "Be not constantly overanxious about your common needs. Be not apprehensive concerning the problems of your earthly existence, but in all these things by prayer and supplication, with the spirit of sincere thanksgiving, let your needs be spread out before your Father who is in heaven."

### THE OBJECT OF PRAYER

The immediate person thinks and imagines that when he prays, the important thing, the thing he must concentrate upon, is that God should hear what he is praying for. And yet in the true, eternal sense, it is just the reverse; the true relation in prayer is not when God hears what is prayed for, but when the person praying continues to pray until he is the one who hears, who hears what God wills.

Soren Kierkegaard, *Journal* (1846)

*The Urantia Book*, 1946:2/180.2.4. How long will it take the world of believers to understand that prayer is not a process of getting your way but rather a program of taking God's way, an experience of learning how to recognize and execute the Father's will?

1641:1/146.2.17. Jesus taught his followers that, when they had made their prayers to the Father, they should remain for a time in silent receptivity to afford the indwelling spirit the better opportunity to speak to the listening soul.

### MEDICAL SCIENCE EXPLORES THE BENEFITS OF PRAYER

Herbert Benson's journey toward the study of prayer began in 1968 when he started researching the physical effects of meditation....Benson became convinced of the benefits of the particular kind of meditation produced by the recitation of a mantra....Despite the physical benefits of using meaningless words in meditation, there was some difficulty in keeping people involved in the program. The villain was boredom....It was at this point that Benson began to study persons who prayed, finding that they were less likely to succumb to boredom and were more likely to stick with the program (Kiesling and Harris, 1989)

Benson introduced the notion of the faith factor, suggesting that the benefits of faith may interact with the direct physiological benefits of the relaxation response. He summarized his conclusions based on years of research as follows:

My study in this field has convinced me that, for whatever reason, faith does make a difference in enhancing the power of the mind over health and disease. In other words, the Faith Factor—or combination of the relaxation response with a profound set of personal convictions—can provide at least two benefits not available through ordinary relaxation or meditative techniques: (1) it can encourage a person to be more persistent in following a regular Relaxation-Response program; and (2) it can combine the beneficial effects of the Relaxation Response with those of the placebo effect. (Benson, 1984:146) (pp.10-11)

Poloma, Margaret and George H. Gallup, Jr. *Varieties of Prayer: A Survey Report*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press international. © 1991 Trinity Press International

*The Urantia Book*, 999:4-5/91.6.1-2. "While there is a very definite limit to the province of the petitions of prayer, such limits do not equally apply to faith of those who pray.

Prayer is not a technique for curing real and organic diseases, but it has contributed enormously to the enjoyment of abundant health and to the cure of numerous mental, emotional, and nervous ailments.

# Who'll Save Us From Ourselves?

By David Jaquith  
Newberg, Oregon

Everything is dangerous these days.

We'll all be killed. Panic is the only way out. The only decent, responsible thing to do is for everyone to go directly to pieces. Do not pass go. Do not collect your wits.

This is not a drill. This is not a test. This is for real. We are about to be consumed by consumer protection.

Yes. Everything edible is either carcinogenic, HIV positive or produces incipient rust in laboratory rats.

Makes you wonder. How could humankind have survived to the present date, what with all this danger going on? Well, the answer is clear: It couldn't have. Scientific studies show conclusively that humankind cannot possibly have survived beyond Oct. 12, 1848.

We all know about scientific studies. They are used to prove conclusively that what other scientific studies have proved conclusively cannot be true.

Formerly it was done with mirrors and smoke. In these latter days it is done with a hot new research technique called creative data.

If financiers can do creative bookkeeping, and junior high kids can write creative excuses from their parents, why should scientific research be restricted to dry fact?

We fret over foreign dangers. But it's all this domestic protection that is doing us in. Conservatives in Congress fear a backlash, resulting in a grass roots uprising. Indeed, consumers are already demanding a war on safety. There are leaky rumors within the Beltway that a Safety czar/czarina appointment is in the

offing.

When it comes to protecting the planet it seems that the only humane thing to do is for the human population to commit omnicide so the environment can have a little peace and quiet. Omnicide...as in, Alright, everybody, today it's bungee jumping without a harness. Or perhaps (for those who fear heights) a kinder, gentler way. Like say, a massive, global village jump-in-the-lake. John the Baptist would be impressed. Now I feel a poem creeping over me

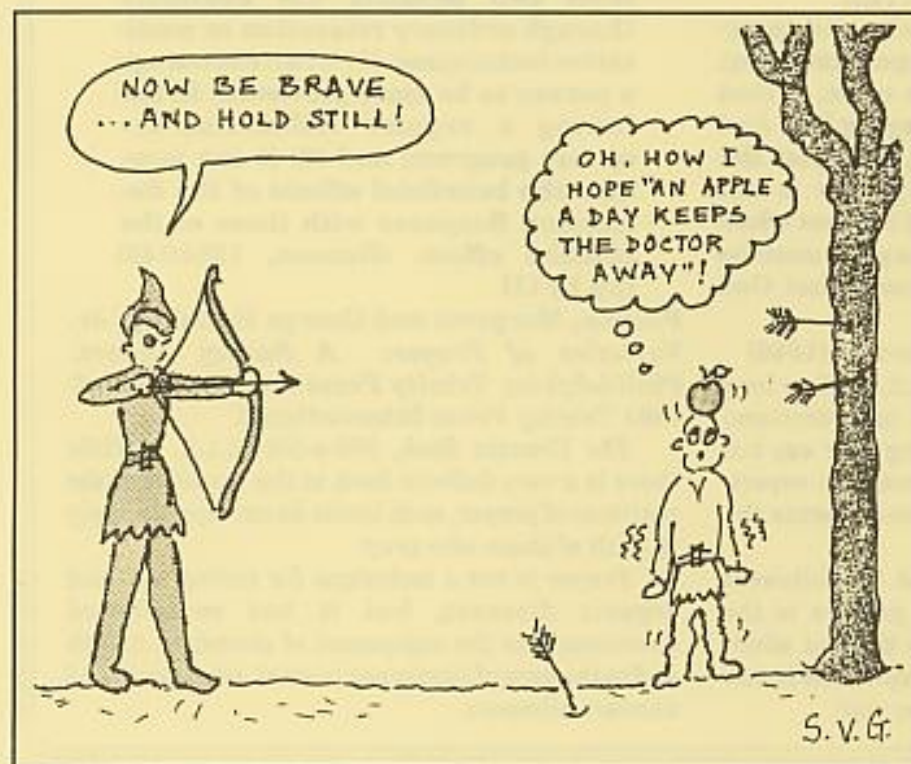
If all the impossible folks in creation  
Were to suddenly jump in the lake,  
There's only one comment for such an occasion:  
"What a wonderful splash it would make!"  
But one thing could cause me to rue it.  
And that is the feeling that maybe there might  
Be nary a soul left to view it.

And just think. No more oil spills, meltdowns or clear-cutting. Lightning could set fire to any old forest it wants to. Spotted owls would be free to become extinct unmolested. Indeed, with people gone, if any species of plant or animal life wanted to die out, it could do so with dignity.

I received in the mail recently a packet of information from a fellow who asserts that things are going to get so bad here on earth that the angels will flock here in droves to evacuate all true believers to another planet 'til earth becomes inhabitable again.

I do not presume to know all things so I won't close my mind, lest it stick shut. Which it has a tendency to do, especially in damp weather. I do, however have a clear sense that

## Taking a Courageous Stance?



## Lighten Up



if I were to take color from every doomsday alarm that comes down the pike, I'd be in a perpetual tizzy. I'm waging my own private war on the Tizzies.

Somewhere between being mothered a la femme and a "macho" demolition derby mentality, there surely must be a mind-style that is not dead set on self-destruct.

Just listen to the local news. "Rain today. Be sure and take your umbrella...Roads are icy. Drive carefully...Don't eat too much ...Take your vitamins...Keep unexploded napalm bombs out of the reach of children."

Of course, a little caution is good. An old adage says, "Dangerous is the man who is fearful of everything, or who fears nothing at all." So be careful when throwing caution to the winds. «

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## Janitorial Service

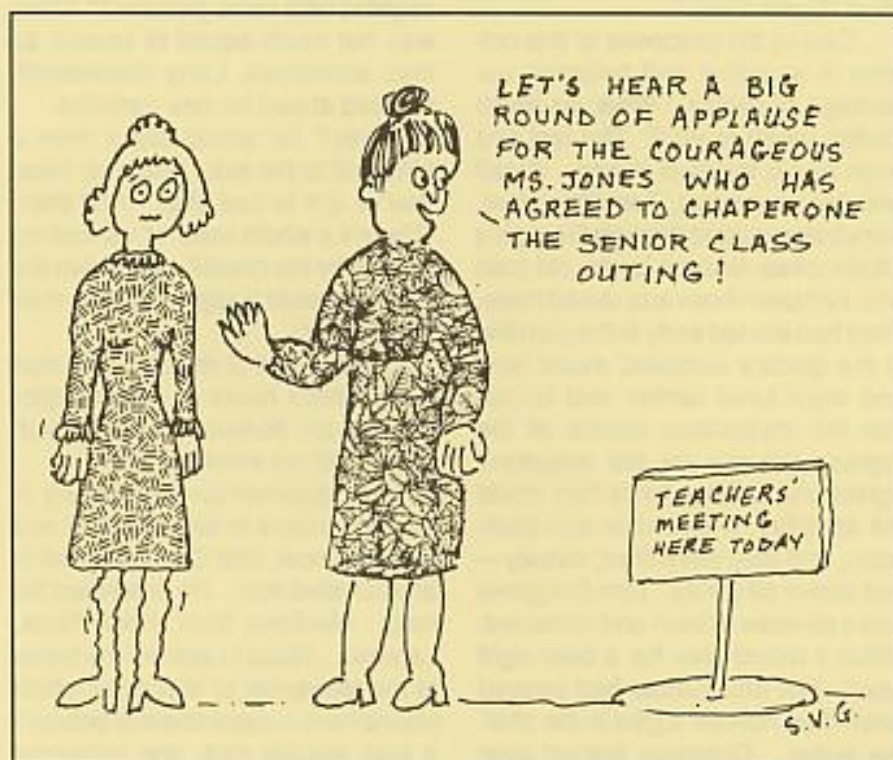
By *Tommie Clendening*  
Allen, Texas

So the Midwayers are the custodians of the planet since they never get to leave. I guess that would be one good thing about being invisible—no physical body to get old and break down, no death. At least we don't have to worry about the shape of the planet. I don't understand why everybody's getting so hyper about litter, air quality, toxic waste, pollution in general, lately—after all, we're leaving!! I used to worry about it, too, till my reading enlightened me. What a relief to find out the Midwayers are the custodians, and they're staying here! When it gets bad enough, they'll clean it up. Parents, do you run around after your kids all day picking up everything they leave out? No...me neither. You wait till they're in bed. Then at least, it stays clean for a while.

But you know, those Midwayers are probably laughing. Sure we're making a mess of the planet, but they know where we're headed (obviously, since they helped put this book together). I was really shocked to read the ending, weren't you? We have this really long, exciting journey traversing our local universe, the superuniverse, the billion worlds of Havona, then finally the big moment comes and we are...mustard. Hey, wait a minute?? Is this it?? What is this Corps of Finality, anyway—the ultimate diner? OK, if Urantians are gonna be mustard, is someone else the ketchup?...onions?...pickles? Could be worse, I guess, we could have been buns!

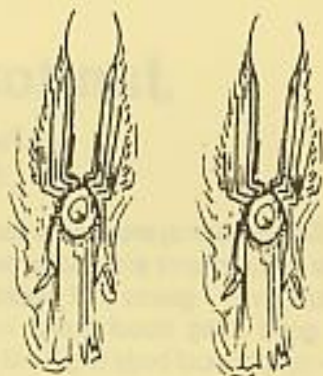
But, you know I'm not so dumb! I remember reading about one point  
*See JANITORIAL on page 16.*

## A True Act of Courage!



# 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)

Here is a cascade...

glancing this way and that,  
filled with bounce and dance  
and joyous hurrah, yet  
earnest as a tempest,  
and singing like  
angels loose on a frolic from heaven.

John Muir

Here is another chain of serendipitous circumstances which apparently defy the ordinary laws of chance. These examples appeared in the book, *A Life on the Road*, by Charles Kuralt. The chapter is entitled "Dumb Luck."

One of the purposes of this column is to refine and heighten our concept of reality. What do these stories mean to you? The first one even has a touch of humor. Kuralt and his soundman, Tom Cosgrove, were being guided through Georgia's Okefenokee Swamp by an old man who had been born and raised there. They had started early in the morning in the guide's outboard motor boat and were lured farther and farther into the mysterious depths of the cypress thickets by the alligators, egrets and strange birds they could not identify. It was now mid-afternoon, and they were tired, sweaty—and above all thirsty. Tom Cosgrove was a devotee of beer and remarked, "What I would give for a beer right now!" Not one minute had passed when they noticed a glint in the shallow water. Cosgrove leaned over

and fished out a six-pack of beer. He proceeded to pop the top of one can; and after several long, slow swallows, he looked at the can thoughtfully and remarked, "Could have been a little colder."

On another occasion to escape the monotony of the freeways Kuralt and his crew were traveling on a back road to Cheyenne. Almost immediately they began to notice the wildflowers: clumps of daisies and wild geraniums, stands of mountain columbine at the foot of the hills and Indian paintbrush blanketing the slopes. The farther they went the more spectacular the show became.

Finally Izzy, the cameraman remarked, "Do you supposed we ought to take some pictures?" There was not much sound to record, so their soundman, Larry Gianneschi, scouted ahead for new varieties.

"Hey!" he would shout from a hilltop off to the side, "come up here. You've got to see this." And then, "There's a whole mass of iris-looking flowers by the creek!" And down the hill they would trudge, carrying their heavy gear.

By the end of the day they had two or three hours of splendid pictures of the flowers, most of which they could not even name.

An education consists largely in knowing where to look up what you need to know, and Charles Kuralt is an educated man. He examined his map: Medicine Bow, Rock River, Laramie... Wasn't Laramie the home of the University of Wyoming which should have a department of botany? It was already dark and tomorrow

was the 4th of July when the University would be closed. But Kuralt, ever the man for recognizing opportunity, went to sleep certain that somewhere in the city a wildflower expert was waiting to be discovered.

His name turned out to be Dennis Knight and early the following morning their van, "On the Road," turned into his driveway to find him grilling hamburgers for a 4th of July picnic.

Quickly Kuralt explained their need. "You see, we have these pictures of wildflowers, and we don't even know their names. Could you view the tape and see what they are?"

"When?" he asked.

"Well—right now," was the reply.

So this PhD, chairman of the botany department of the University of Wyoming, heaved a sigh, left his party, and spent the rest of the day on board the van sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of the flowers.

Kuralt would display a frame on the monitor. "This one looks like a violet."

"Blue flax," the expert noted. "*Linium Lewisii*. It was named for Captain Meriwether Lewis who found it out here and took a sample to President Jefferson. The Indians used it to make fishing lines."

On the next frame Kuralt hazarded, "Daisies?"

"Balsam root. Bighorn sheep eat them in the spring." And so it went for the rest of the day. That night Kuralt was able to compose a beautiful, scholarly script about the wildflowers.

Kuralt asked himself, "What on earth led us to take that particular back road to Cheyenne and then delivered Dennis Knight so providentially in answer to our need? I'd say the Almighty if I didn't believe he has better things to do with his time."

Actually, if only Kuralt had been more familiar with such beings as guardian seraphim and their assistant cherubim, he might have phrased his answer differently and

See ANGELS on page 15.



## Functional Families

There is a great deal of discussion these days about "dysfunctional families." In my entire life I can only remember nine families which I would classify as functional—not a very large percentage. As a matter of fact, this leaves about 95% of present-day people who came from dysfunctional backgrounds. But let us not lose perspective. At some point each of us must assume the responsibility for our own growth and cease to blame our origins and our environment.

One of the most successful families I have known worked its way from dysfunctional to the top of my list judged by the children it produced. When I first met them, they had two children, closely followed by two more—so rapidly, in fact, that the mother's superlatively beautiful red hair lost all its sparkle and she developed serious problems with her teeth. The eldest child was the only boy, and he and his sister were both rather unattractive, whiney, runny-nosed blondes who had to be bribed to go outside to play. Shortly after the fourth baby was born the husband finally decided to grow up. In addition to earning a bountiful living, he joined with his wife, Mary, by enriching the greater part of the children's childhood with camping, rafting trips,

Europe, places like the Alamo and Williamsburg, as well as sponsoring numerous other activities and coaching all their sports teams. The crucial test, of course, is how did the children turn out. Of these four, the three girls are all married, happily and suitably so far as I know, and the son is still single—possibly because his job constantly takes him on extended trips all over the world.

Another of these functional families was the second marriage for both—does this even qualify? I would say it does as each partner considers that they got the best deal. They also did a great job of raising her son by her first marriage and his two children who lived with their mixed-up, immature mother. There was never any jealousy between the three children.

Two of the families were single parents, divorced women who managed to raise five children (one and four respectively) who all became outstanding examples of successful, happy adults.

One was the family of a college friend of mine who had only good memories of her childhood. She was unusually well-adjusted and had been chosen by my sorority to help iron out some problems at my chapter. She did a magnificent job and everyone loved and admired her even though it was her job to bring all our faults to our attention.

Two of these families were high average normal parents, each couple with three children, all of whom are under 14. All six children

are charming, active, individuals. They relate well to their peers, adults and each other—the sort of children you would enjoy having in your home. I often go to their various performances and recitals.

The eighth I add because I have just finished reading Katharine Hepburn's new autobiography entitled *Me*, and she certainly considered her family highly functional. And look what it produced!

The last family I include because even though the couple have no children themselves, they are the center of the wife's family. All the big family get-togethers are at their home. Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthday dinners as well as other holiday events. Both she and her husband spend much of their time and effort fostering the development of their nephew. The wife, incidentally is the daughter of one of the single parents mentioned above.

Naturally, there are several factors which contribute a great deal to the creation of a functional family. I would rate a strong religious orientation with high meanings and values, a certain level of maturity for the parent or parents and good genes as the most important prerequisites. For the large majority of people who were raised in dysfunctional families, it is vital that they recognize and accept the responsibility to make the best use of what they have to work with. I call this awakening, "digging up to ground level." In my own case, I was in my early forties before I managed to make a little sense out of life and achieve sufficient self-respect to have some energy left over to give to others.

Also important are a sense of humor, courage to face disciplinary problems as soon as they raise their ugly heads, patience, and of course, the most essential of all—love, with the wisdom to use it constructively. Even though life is not easy, it can be very rewarding as each generation passes on the best of what they have learned to their children."

*ANGELS from page 14.*

given them the credit. Although we must make our own plans, "these angels then act to make the best possible use of the course you have chosen."

# SPHERES of INFLUENCE



## Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway

By Kaye Cooper  
Houston, Texas

*Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway.*  
By Susan Jeffers. © 1987. Published by Fawcett Columbine, Ballantine Books. Softbound, 228 pages. \$7.95.

Jesus' religion is a religion of courage and action. He expects you to "fear not" and to go "the second mile." Often the very best thing you can do to overcome fears and live courageously is to defy your fears—to take action in spite of them. *Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway* is filled with techniques to help you do just that.

Ms. Jeffers begins by proposing five truths about fear that convey a sense of her approach:

1. The fear will never go away as long as I continue to grow.

2. The only way to get rid of the fear of doing something is to go out...and do it.

3. The only way to feel better about myself is to go out...and do it.

4. Not only am I going to experience fear whenever I'm on unfamiliar territory, but so is everyone else.

5. Pushing through fear is less frightening than living with the underlying fear that comes from a feeling of helplessness. (Chapter 2)

The author provides techniques for gaining power over your own life

through accepting responsibility and refusing to be helpless. She deals with lack of support from friends and family, making decisions, and the importance of a giving attitude.

The book is moderate in length, easy to read, and well worth the effort. It generates enthusiasm for the ever-present challenges of life and makes the reader feel more capable of handling whatever comes his way."

*JESUS from page 7.*

"No man is at any time disturbed by his neighbor's attitude when he has perfect confidence in the truth of that which he wholeheartedly believes. Courage is the confidence of thoroughgoing honesty about those things which one professes to believe. Sincere men are unafraid of the critical examination of their true convictions and noble ideals." (1641:4/146.3.2)

Physical, emotional, mindal, intellectual, soul, spiritual, personal, volitional, and combined human-and-divine courages all focused during the progress of the last year of Jesus' public ministry as the inevitability of the crucifixion drew on, was endured by Jesus, and finished. Jesus' last hours of life did encourage "tens of trillions" of mortals on Urantia and on the other over three million planets in Nebadon and beyond. Perhaps, it requires or produces God-consciousness to perceive true and divine patience, heroism, and triumph in Jesus' encounter with the cross. Perhaps it is because it represents two experiences which most mortals hope and seek to avoid:

torture and death. The supremacy of Jesus' victory was, however, immediately revealed when the tomb was discovered empty and the morontia Jesus appeared to and addressed the apostles and some of his followers and believers in the kingdom. The Spirit of Truth was poured out and all mortals received the capacity to see the spiritual glory of Jesus' life, teachings and ultimate deed. And Jesus' nobly lived-out death served to convey complete love and support to those apostles and other believers who likewise were to surrender their lives for the sake of the progress of the kingdom in the fulfillment of the Father's will. New and unprecedented JOY erupted in Peter and the other apostles as they began their new ministries of proclaiming truth to all whom they encountered.

We are not likely, ourselves, to be assassinated for our devotion to the teachings of Jesus, but it may occur in future generations. We readers of *The Urantia Book* have not yet, as a group, experienced significant opposition by those who are reluctant or opposed to considering the information and truth the new

Please...  
Avoid missing issues:  
Send us your  
change of address.

*JANITORIAL from page 13.*

you get to in this journey where they ask you if there is anything you didn't get to do that you still want to do...and you get to do it! Remember? Well...don't you get it? It's a trick question! Of course, I'll tell them I want to be a Janitor!!

Yep, this book's certainly changed my viewpoint. I'd have never believed anything could convince me I should be a janitor when I grow up."



revelation contains. If such events approach, it is to be prayed that Michael's soldiers of the circles will be "valiant in the defense of righteousness, mighty in the promulgation of truth, and aggressive in the preaching of this gospel of the kingdom, even to the ends of the earth....The revelation I have made to you is a *living revelation*, and I desire that it shall bear appropriate fruits in each individual and in each generation in accordance with the laws of spiritual growth, increase, and adaptative development. From generation to generation this gospel must show increasing vitality and exhibit greater depth of spiritual power." (1931:5-6/178.1.14-15)

Courage is already a factor in the progressive pursuit and proclamation of the truths of the Master's gospel and in many persons' demonstrations of his love for us and for all his children everywhere. May we discern and develop new missions for Michael's truth of sonship with God—the essence of Jesus' teaching—around our world, Urantia, the least of Nebadon, which was lovingly singled-out to become the planet for Michael's seventh and final bestowal in the forms of his creature children. "No armies of the world have ever displayed more courage and bravery than will be portrayed by you and your loyal successors who shall go forth to all the world proclaiming the good news—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men." (1608:4/143.1.7)«

*SEVEN from page 5.*

courage: **Nothing ventured, nothing gained.** Giving in to my fear might have saved me from the possible embarrassment of being snubbed by the woman I followed home, but I would never have found the friendship. The benefits of the possible friendship far outweighed the benefit of not being hurt by rejection. I cannot count the times in my life since then that I have weighted the economics of courage and realized that the benefits of action in the

face of fear were worth the cost.

#### **A Lesson in Power**

At one point in my life my allergies became quite a problem. I began to have allergic reactions to chemical fumes such as dyes, exhaust and perfumes. I needed to stay away from these chemicals as much as possible. Obviously that was difficult to do. Virtually any public building or roadway was a source of problems for me. I ended up staying at home most of the time. It got to the point that when I began to smell fumes, my fear would rise in anticipation of the reactions I would have. It was a very frightening and confusing time of my life.

One day it dawned on me that my fear of the fumes might be causing my reactions to be worse. I determined right then to refuse to be afraid any more. When I could not avoid the things that I was allergic to, I would not get frightened. My opportunity came quickly enough. When I opened the door of a fabric store, chemical fumes engulfed me. Even so, I went about my business without fear. My reactions to the chemicals were still there, but they were not as bad. That was the beginning of a recovery—long, but successful.

Out of that illness came many wonderful lessons, including the lesson on power: **Fear empowers the "monsters;" courage empowers me.** My fears were actually making stronger the "monsters" in my life—the things I feared. In the years since, it has become obvious that choosing courage empowers me to do more than I had thought myself capable of.

#### **A Lesson in Sources**

Only recently in my life have I learned this final lesson. I found myself one night in an unavoidable crisis. I was scheduled to speak the following afternoon. Always before I had spoken from a well-written script which I had memorized, a feat which required weeks of preparation. But this time I wanted to be more spontaneous—to speak from the heart. So I had prepared only a few notes, and I had asked God's help. And now,

when there was no chance of preparing the old way, I was gripped by total panic. I tried deep breathing. I tried my customary relaxation techniques. I talked sternly to myself. Finally I appealed to God. "You're going to have to take care of this. I've done all I can do. Help me see it your way." And he did. I saw tomorrow's audience the way he would see them—as people with spiritual needs. I realized what God would want to do: he would want to help. I had things to share, things that might help.

All of a sudden my fear left, my body relaxed, my mind cleared of its panic. I felt empowered with the courage I needed to step onto the stage with only three small sheets of notes. And I realized the seventh lesson in courage: **Courage is a gift from God.**

Although I may be only an infant in courage with infinitely more lessons to learn, I have faith that God's gifts of courage will continue, that when I need his courage, I will have it.«

*NOTES from page 9.*

age—to strengthen character, to elicit persistence and devotion.

*You are so devoid of courageous decisions and consecrated cooperation that your indwelling Adjusters find it next to impossible to communicate directly with the human mind. (1207:5/110.4.5)*

One of the results of courageous decisions and consecrated cooperation is the facilitation of Thought Adjuster communication.

*In executing those decisions which deliver you from the fetters of fear, you literally supply the psychic fulcrum on which the Adjuster may subsequently apply a spiritual lever of uplifting and advancing illumination. (1192:3/108.5.8)*

Here we have an expansion on "courageous decisions." They are very likely decisions which deliver us "from the fetters of fear." How can a decision deliver us from fear? It makes sense to my human mind to

*See NOTES on page 18.*

NOTES from page 17.

say we make decisions in spite of fear but how can a decision deliver us from fear? One way is through experience. When we have faced a situation we fear and handled it, we gain the experience of surviving. Think back to when you learned to ride a bike. It is pretty frightening to sit on that constantly shifting sliver of metal balanced only by your own momentum. Yet once you learned to ride, it ceased to be a frightening experience. You were delivered from the fetters of fear.

Fear may be involved in seemingly non-threatening spiritual activities, too. Prayer is a good example. To truly pray in faith, one needs to expect an answer. A common prayer fear is this: "What if I pray expecting an answer and God doesn't answer. What then? Won't my faith be crushed? No, better to expect nothing and take no chances that I stop believing in God." The only way to

overcome this fear is to pray and expect answers. And to keep praying and expecting answers when it looks as if your fears have come true. It takes courage to pray and keep trying through the confusion of these early experiences with prayer. But as you keep praying, and you open yourself to answers other than the one you expected and to surprising ways of receiving those answers, you will begin to recognize through experience that God is there, answering your prayers—and the fear fades away.

Releasing ourselves from the fear that God will not answer our prayers, gives the Adjuster a psychic fulcrum by which he becomes more powerful to uplift us.

*There must be perfection hunger in man's heart to insure capacity for comprehending the faith paths to supreme attainment. If any man chooses to do the divine will, he shall know the way of truth. It is literally*

*true. "Human things must be known in order to be loved, but divine things must be loved in order to be known." (1118:4/102.1.1)*

It takes courage to want to do God's will and further to choose to do God's will *before you know what it is*. But I am convinced that is what is required. Your faith choice (to do his will whatever it may be) enables you to perceive what that will is. The best way to find God's will for you is to be willing to do whatever is his will.

Rodan: *But the true badge of social maturity is the willingness of a people to surrender the right to live peaceably and contentedly under the ease-promoting standards of the lure of established beliefs and conventional ideas for the disquieting and energy-requiring lure of the pursuit of the unexplored possibilities of the attainment of undiscovered goals of idealistic spiritual realities. (1773:1/160.1.4)*

It takes courage to intentionally cooperate with the spiritual, to be willing to seek within for answers and for God's guidance. It is much easier to leave all that messy confusion alone and depend on an external set of established beliefs. Even we who read *The Urantia Book* have our established beliefs and conventional ideas on which we may choose to depend rather than to seek and follow our inner leading.

It takes courage to delve into the spiritual in this day and age, particularly because we live in a society which respects science and the scientific attitude that everything must be proved to be real. The unexplainable and the mysterious are held up to ridicule.

*So few mortals are real thinkers; you do not spiritually develop and discipline your minds to the point of favorable liaison with the divine Adjusters. (1213:1/110.7.6)*

It requires courage to practice non-violence and non-resistance to evil. Returning good for evil is not the way of this world. Reaching for liaison with the will of the Adjuster is guaranteed to draw us away from the

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way of the world. If we spiritually develop our minds, our actions will become less and less what the world expects.

What does it mean to spiritually develop and discipline our minds? Perhaps these are examples:

- to consecrate your will to doing the Father's will—regardless of what it is or what it costs.

- to make a spiritual habit of seeing with God's eyes.

- to follow the pattern given—try to understand your neighbor so you can forgive and come to love.

- to make decisions as you believe God wants you to regardless of the cost; to accept the cost of such situations with equanimity, because it is God's will (as best you can discern it).

- to be willing to see situations and yourself more clearly, even though you may discover that your behavior, motives, etc. were less than your ideals.

Rodan: *Successful living is nothing more or less than the art of the mastery of dependable techniques for solving common problems. The first step in the solution of any problem is to locate the difficulty, to isolate the problem and frankly to recognize its nature and gravity. The great mistake is that, when life problems excite our profound fears, we refuse to recognize them. Likewise, when the acknowledgment of our difficulties entails the reduction of our long-cherished conceit, the admission of envy, or the abandonment of deep-seated prejudices, the average person prefers to cling to the old illusions of safety and to the long-cherished false feelings of security. Only a brave person is willing honestly to admit, and fearlessly to face, what a sincere and logical mind discovers. (1773:4/160.1.7)*

It takes courage to be willing to see the truth. People often avoid looking at the truth so they will not be obligated to act on it.

It takes courage to give up so much of our mental furniture (illusions, false feelings of security, con-

ceit, envy, prejudices) in order to follow where truth leads.

...this young Greek, Anaxand, said: "If the Gods are interested in me, then why do they not remove the cruel and unjust foreman of this workshop?" He was startled when Jesus replied. "Since you know the ways of kindness and value justice, perhaps the Gods have brought this erring man near that you may lead him into this better way.... Surely you are not the coward who could stand by on the seashore and watch a fellow man who could not swim perish? How much more of value is this man's soul floundering in darkness compared to his body drowning in water! (1430:2/130.2.4)

Here we have an example of spiritual encouragement. Jesus inspired Anaxand to have the courage to approach his cruel and unjust foreman and lead him to a new spiritual life. What was Anaxand risking? What was the danger he faced? Increased cruelty and injustice perhaps, or ridicule. How many of us are inhibited by much less? We may have similar opportunities in our lives and fail to recognize that we need the courage to act. There may be many people in our lives who can be led to God if we are courageous enough to speak to them.

It is interesting to me that we frequently make the assumption Anaxand does when he expected the gods to prove their reality and their interest in him by making his life easier. We may no longer equate prosperity with the favor of God, but we are still inclined somewhat to expect God to reward his diligent and earnest children (i.e. us) with an easier life. Unfortunately, we do not develop courage and other desirable attributes in an easy life.

Jesus dared to take women along as teachers of the gospel in connection with his third tour of Galilee. And he had the consummate courage to do this in the face of the rabbinic teaching which declared that it was "better that the words of the law should be burned than deliv-

ered to women."...it is the one shameful thing about the religion that presumed to take Jesus' name that it lacked the moral courage to follow this noble example in its subsequent attitude toward women. (1671:3-4/149.2.8-9)

Jesus' choice to take women teachers on his third tour of Galilee is described as "consummate" courage. In this day of the great accomplishments of women's liberation, we may not realize the magnitude of courage required for that act. What was he risking? No one is more vehement in defending himself than someone caught in an act of injustice. And of all the authorities in our world—political, parental, societal—none has more self-righteous rigor to enforce its mandates than religious authority. When Jesus took women as teachers, he was adding explosive fuel to the religious leaders' vicious hatred of him. It would have been so easy to say, "This is not important enough to endanger my mission and the success of my followers after I leave." But he did not. The truth he lived in that act was too important: my religion is for all. Courage is loyalty to an ideal.

*The Paradise ascent is the supreme adventure of all time, the rugged achievement of eternity. The service of the kingdom on earth will call for all the courageous manhood that you and your coworkers can muster. Many of you will be put to death for your loyalty to the gospel of this kingdom. It is easy to die in the line of physical battle when your courage is strengthened by the presence of your fighting comrades, but it requires a higher and more profound form of human courage and devotion calmly and all alone to lay down your life for the love of a truth enshrined in your mortal heart. (1608:3/143.1.6)*

And this is the ultimate example of courage—the demonstration of Jesus' courage throughout his trial and crucifixion. He held true to the truth he was living for us—the utterly dependable love of the Father for his

See NOTES on page 20.

NOTES from page 19.

children, the Father who always returns good for evil. Jesus portrayed the depth of his willingness to live unselfishly—regardless of what it cost him. He gave up his life in a horrible way rather than act to defend himself and thus judge and punish even one of his children.

*...permit the valiant Adjuster to fight with you and for you....allow the Adjuster constantly to bring forth the pictures of the real motive, the final aim, the eternal purpose of all this difficult, uphill struggle with the commonplace problems of your present material world. (1223:4/111.7.2)*

One thing we can do to contribute to the growth of our capacity for courage is to allow the Adjuster to fight with us and for us. If we allow the Adjuster to show us the purpose of our difficulties and struggles, we will find ourselves inspired and uplifted. On a physical plane we have heard of people whose bodies were able to achieve amazing and ordinarily impossible feats of strength—when properly motivated. These people were faced with a drastic situation—for example, a loved one pinned under a car and in danger of dying. Their love combined with the emergency enabled them to do what was necessary to save the loved one.

Perhaps the Adjuster can supply the necessary motivation. Perhaps being inspired by seeing the purpose of our efforts—the end of our struggles—will give us the courage we need when it is needed.

*...aid the Adjuster in the task of showing you the spiritual counterpart of all these strenuous material efforts....allow the Adjuster to strengthen you with the spiritual truths of cosmic power... (1223:5/111.7.3)*

Apparently the Adjuster can strengthen us with "the spiritual truths of cosmic power." Now, I'm not quite sure just what those truths are or what kind of effect this action would have, but cosmic power sure sounds like something that would reinforce one's courage.

*...allow the Adjuster to spiritualize your thinking... (1223:5/111.7.3)*

The Adjuster can "spiritualize our thinking" if we allow him to. Spiritualizing one's thinking would certainly result in stronger courage. This says we do not have to do this spiritualizing all by ourselves. The Adjuster will do it for us if we allow it. Courageous decisions which release us from the fetters of fear are an important part of allowing this process.

Rodan: *the effort toward maturity necessitates work, and work requires energy. Whence the power to accomplish all this?...Granted the possession of a normal body and reasonably good health, we must next look for those lures which will act as a stimulus to call forth man's slumbering spiritual forces....One thing I am sure of: Emotional excitement is not the ideal spiritual stimulus.... The secret of all this problem is wrapped up in spiritual communion, in worship. From the human standpoint it is a question of combined meditation and relaxation. Meditation makes the contact of mind with spirit; relaxation determines the capacity for spiritual receptivity. And this interchange of strength for weakness, courage for fear, the will of God for the mind of self, constitutes worship. (1777:2/160.3.1 emphasis mine)*

Here we have another clue to enhancing our courage. In spiritual communion we "interchange ...courage for fear." This is not a mental process, based on thinking about being courageous, forcing away doubts and fears, taking hold of ourselves and stiffening our backs. No—this interchange of courage for fear is truly an allowing, a relaxing, an accepting, a placing of oneself in the hands of God. To worship is to accept all that we understand God to be, to invite that "all" into our innermost citadel, and to pay any price necessary to achieve and continue that joining of ourselves with God.

It cannot be done blindly. To act courageously sometimes results in physical and emotional pain, or even death. Interchanging courage for

fear involves accepting the possibility of painful results.

Rodan: *When these experiences are frequently repeated, they crystallize into habits, strength-giving and worshipful habits, and such habits eventually formulate themselves into a spiritual character, and such a character is finally recognized by one's fellows as a mature personality. The practices are difficult and time-consuming at first, but when they become habitual, they are at once restful and time-saving. The more complex society becomes, and the more the lures of civilization multiply, the more urgent will become the necessity for God-knowing individuals to form such protective habitual practices designed to conserve and augment their spiritual energies. (1777:3/160.3.2)*

Once we have placed ourselves in God's hands and allowed him into our innermost selves, the next step is to make a habit of the experience—to worship regularly, to repeatedly turn ourselves over to God without reservations. Over time we change in a profound way. Courage will be a part of our emerging selves."

HARVEST from page 3.

prayer"—prayer beforehand to prepare us for a challenging situation. Sometimes as we pray about a situation, we may get insights and understanding about what we need to do. Suddenly we see the situation in a different way, and it becomes less fearful.

Sometimes in preprayer there comes a time when something wonderful happens, and I am inexplicably assured and calmed. It is as if God is with me assuring me that I am doing the right thing and that he will be with me. I am filled with peace and power and when the moment comes I have that same peace and power. I am emboldened and empowered.

Keeping the long term, on-going intimate and open relationship with God enables us to receive the courage. When we need it, we will have our harvest of courage."

DREAMS from page 10.

records during unconscious sleep." (1208:3/110.5.4)

#### DO YOU KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET?

Dreams can be quite an upsurge of material from the unconscious. No wonder then that Jesus doubted the dream interpretations of his day: "The interpretation of dreams is largely a superstitious and groundless system of ignorant and fantastic speculation. The gospel of the kingdom must have nothing in common with the soothsayer priests of primitive religion." (1681:4/150.3.9)

The Adjusters are active during our sleep, but according to the teachings of the book, our ordinary dream experiences are purely physiological and psychological in nature, and they must not be accredited to the Adjusters. Even in the case of an unusual dream, it is evidently advisable to be a conservative interpreter. I do not consider it to be idle talk when a Solitary Messenger makes this statement: "It is extremely dangerous to postulate as to the Adjuster content of the dream life." Is it that we are warned against our taking up, in the name of God, all sorts of subconscious follies, not to speak about persecutions and wars? It is interesting to note that it is considered equally dangerous to attempt to make a distinction between conscience and the view of the Adjuster. "These are problems which will have to be solved through individual discrimination and personal decision." Also in this context, it is stated that it is better to regard the Adjuster's expression as a product of one's own mind rather than glorify the functions of one's mind as divine. "Remember, the influence of a Thought Adjuster is for the most part, though not wholly, a superconscious experience." (1208:4/110.5.5)

The longest discussion is given to the dream Peter experienced in a boat. We are told how, after Jesus had gone off to be alone, the apostles rowed in darkness against a strong adverse wind. Peter fell into a deep

sleep of exhaustion and saw Jesus come to them walking on the sea. "When the Master seemed to walk on by the boat, Peter cried out, 'Save us, Master, save us.' And those who were in the rear of the boat heard him say some of these words. As this apparition of the night season continued in Peter's mind, he dreamed that he heard Jesus say: 'Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.' This was like the balm of Gilead to Peter's disturbed soul; it soothed his troubled spirit, so that (in his dream) he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' And many of the twelve heard him utter this cry. Then Peter dreamed that Jesus came to the rescue and, stretching forth his hand, took hold and lifted him up, saying: 'O, you of little faith, wherefore did you doubt?'" (1703:2/152.4.2)

The story goes on, telling us how Peter towards the end of his dream stepped overboard and how other apostles pulled him back into the boat. Peter himself believed that Jesus had walked on the water to come to the boat, but he failed to convince Luke, and John Mark incorporated only a part of Peter's story in his gospel.

The reason why this much accuracy is given to a description of Peter's dream may be that it is a way to dismiss the false information on Jesus' life that we read in the Gospels. A belief in somebody walking on the water is a superstition that has some bearing even today. Anyway, I myself, think that Peter's dream is interesting also as a dream. It was a consolation and an encouragement to him ("Be of good cheer,"

"be not afraid," Jesus rescuing Peter). Moreover the dream brought up in a "Petrine" way the issue of belief and disbelief. This is the extent that I presume to interpret, although I admonish everybody not to interpret someone else's dreams. Dream phantasies are, in my understanding, parables that are in harmony with the mind at each person's disposal. They carry individual meanings, and it is my belief that each of us is the best interpreter of his or her own dreams—should he or she feel a need to do so.

It is difficult to get rid of beliefs that relate to one's religion, as everyone who is honest with himself knows by experience. Peter's burden consisted of the many forbidden things of the Jewish religion, e.g., visitation with foreigners, which of course hampered the dissemination of the gospel. Only an unusual dream was able to liberate Peter from his fear to preach to the unholy. Peter's vivid dream is not described in detail in *The Urantia Book*, but one may find it in the Bible as a vision seen by an ecstatic Peter (Acts 10:9-35).

Our dream experiences show that the Adjusters in general cannot, without interruption, harmonize and associate human and divine thinking in our lifetime. "When they do, as they sometimes have, such souls are translated directly to the mansion worlds without the necessity of passing through the experience of death." (1208:1/110.5.2) And that is something to contemplate for those who think that they are able to interpret all their dreams.

Lively dreams to all of you!«

#### 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

# Getting to Know God

\*\*\*\*\* God is like the very best father in the whole world. He is always there. He always listens. He always loves you.

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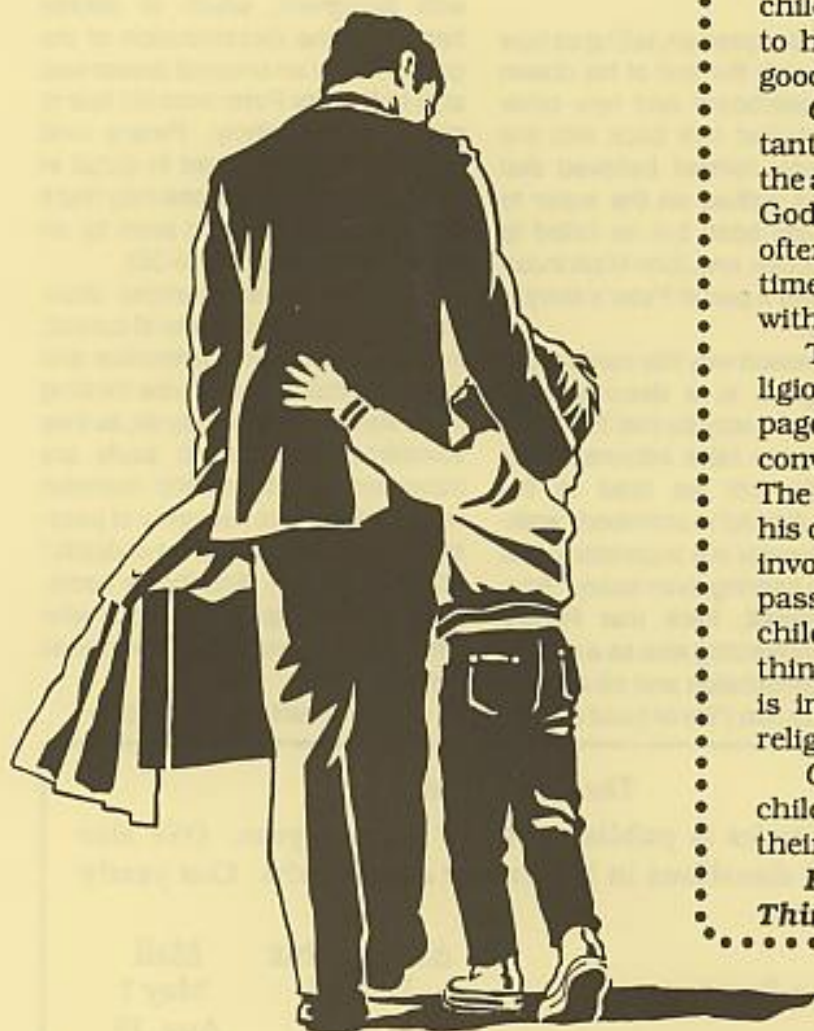
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*Getting to Know God* is not just for children, it is for parents to *enjoy* with their children.

**For ordering information, see Things to Share on page 23.**



# THINGS TO SHARE

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The Cincinnati Urantia Study Group is going to have, for the first time, a combined conference on *The Urantia Book* and *A Course in Miracles* to be held in Cincinnati, May 22-24, 1992. The location is Grailville, in Loveland, Ohio (10 miles east of Cincinnati). Cost: \$85 per person for registration, meals and lodging. \$55 per person for registration and meals for commuters. Contact:

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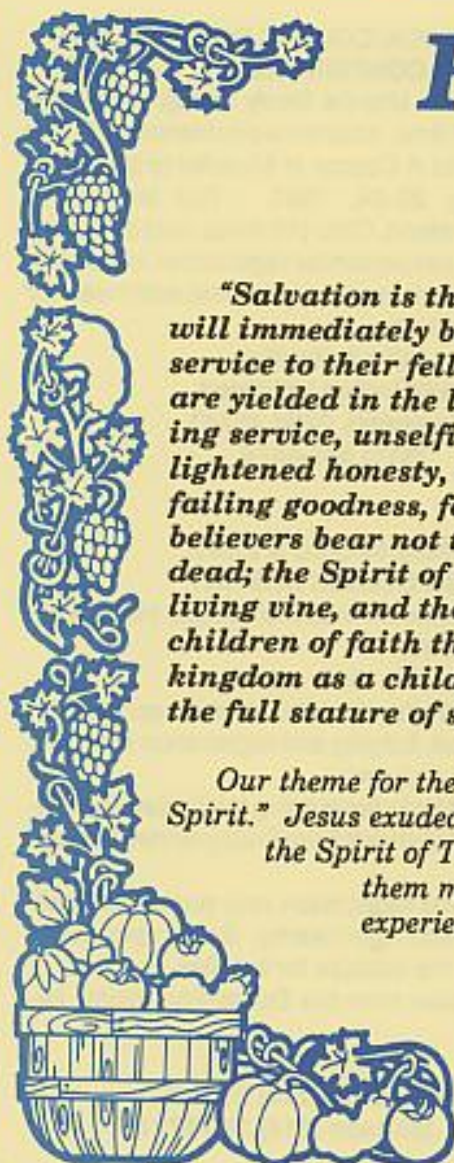
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*Friendship with God*—a book on prayer by Bill and Kaye Cooper—is now available from Adventures in Spiritual Living. Feedback from those who have read the book is very exciting. People are finding great help for their own prayer lives and are sharing the book with people around them. It has been used very successfully in several Sunday School classes, including those for both adults and teenagers.

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# Fruits of the Spirit

*"Salvation is the free gift of God, but those who are born of the spirit will immediately begin to show forth the fruits of the spirit in loving service to their fellow creatures. And the fruits of the divine spirit which are yielded in the lives of spirit-born and God-knowing mortals are: loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, un-failing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace. If professed believers bear not these fruits of the divine spirit in their lives, they are dead; the Spirit of Truth is not in them; they are useless branches on the living vine, and they soon will be taken away. My Father requires of the children of faith that they bear much spirit fruit....You may enter the kingdom as a child, but the Father requires that you grow up, by grace, to the full stature of spiritual adulthood." (2054:3/193.2.2)*

*Our theme for the Winter 1992 issue of The Circles will be "Fruits of the Spirit." Jesus exuded these fruits and we are told that we will also display them if the Spirit of Truth is in us. What do they mean to you? Can you make them more real by describing living examples of them? Share your experience and insights. Send articles, poetry, drawings or humor by August 1, 1992 to:*

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