

Spiritual Fellowship Journal

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The Quest for Spiritual Culture: Toward a Paradigm of Spirituality for the Twenty First Century

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The Spiritual Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book*

A Journal Established to Promote Theological, Philosophical, and Polity Discussions Germane to An Appropriate Symbolism and Socioreligious Expression of the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

Guiding Principles¹

An Appropriate Symbolism and Socioreligious Expression of the Fifth Epochal Revelation Should:

1. Be based on the Fatherhood of God and the brother-sisterhood of humankind.
2. Be the outgrowth of love.
3. Foster sentiment, satisfy emotions, and promote loyalty.
4. Facilitate spiritual progress through cosmic meanings, moral values, social development, and personal living.
5. Provide supreme goals of living that are both temporal and eternal.
6. Be based on the biologic, social, and religious significance of the family.
7. Symbolize the permanent in the midst of unceasing change.
8. Glorify that which respects and unifies the diversities of society.
9. Promote higher meanings, beautiful relationships, and the highest values.
10. Embody some masterful mystery and connote some worthwhile unattainable.
11. Be meaningful and serviceable to both the individual and the group.
12. Serve as the skeletal structure for dynamic personal experience.

The Purpose of Religious Institutions is to:

1. Dramatize the loyalties of spiritual experience.
2. Magnify the lures of truth, beauty, and goodness—supreme values.
3. Enhance the service of unselfish fellowship.
4. Glorify the potentials of family life.
5. Promote religious education.
6. Provide wise counsel and spiritual guidance.
7. Furnish and promote group worship.
8. Encourage friendship, neighborhood welfare, and moral values.
9. Spread the gospel of eternal salvation.

Religious Institutions Should Avoid Dangers, Such As:

1. Fixation of ritual and theology.
2. Developing vested interests and secular involvement.
3. Serving the institution instead of serving God and ministering to people.
4. Forming competitive sects and developing a "chosen people" attitude.
5. Developing authoritarianism, dogmatism, and false ideas of sacredness.
6. Venerating the past while ignoring present needs and timely spiritual interpretations.
7. Failing to hold the interest of youth and grow with the times.
8. Losing sight of spiritual ministry and the saving message of salvation.

Central Objective

The central objective of a group of people interested in initiating a new religious organization based on the teachings of the Fifth Epochal Revelation should be to create a polity with maximum flexibility that would function with small groups or large congregations, utilize lay leadership and/or ordained clergy, have cross-cultural adaptability, and broad theological inclusiveness.

Such an institution would be "a gathering of persons who have accepted a common purpose, and a common discipline to guide the pursuit of that purpose, to the end that each involved person reaches higher fulfillment as a person, through *serving and being served* by the common venture, than would be achieved alone or in a less committed relationship."²

¹ See U. B. p. 966

² Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, Paulist Press, New York, 1977, p. 237.

The Spiritual Fellowship Journal

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Editorials

Preparing for a New Spiritual Paradigm

Ellen T. Charry, Associate Editor of *Theology Today*, observes in the April, 1999 issue that bookstores are brimming with works on spirituality. A new and broader view of spirituality is being established in our culture. "The Christian life," she says, "can no longer be interpreted in exclusively denominational or confessional terms." (p. 2)

In the May, 1999 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Francis Fukuyama's article, "The Great Disruption," describes the deterioration of traditional social values in our post-industrial society. The information age is promoting moral individualism, tolerance, and cultural diversity. Fukuyama believes we are on our way to a new social order. The Most High planetary administrators, in my judgment, are progressively preparing our world for a new and expanded view of spiritual reality.

Marci McDonald, in the May 1, 1999 issue of *U.S. News and World Report*, says that corporate America appears to be in the midst of a spiritual "Damascus conversion" with more than 300 titles on workplace spirituality in bookstores. The American Management Association has conducted a forum on corporate spirituality, and 2000 economists gathered for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland with an agenda to discuss "spiritual anchors for a new millennium" and "the future of meditation in a networked economy." Spirituality seems to be entering the main stream of our secular culture. The ground is being prepared for a new spiritual paradigm.

Robert Wuthnow, in *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950's* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1998), points out that during the last half of the twentieth century in America there has been a detectable shift from a church or synagogue spirituality to one that is detached from denominational allegiance. People are developing a spirituality suited to their own needs. The traditional institutional view of God and spirituality is no longer adequate to minister to the needs of the 21st century. The growing edge of people in our world are seekers. Some day they will discover the Fifth Epochal Revelation!

Creeping Fundamentalism

The fundamentalists among the religions of the world are usually the centers of controversy, antagonism, or

fanaticism. The foundation of the fundamentalist point of view is the belief in the inerrancy of their scripture. With the help of higher criticism of the Bible in the last century, mainline Christian theologians have come to realize that the purpose of revelation is spiritual enlightenment. Although there are many errors of fact in the Bible and its concepts are formulated in outdated science, this does not invalidate its spiritual insight and truth.

Many years ago as I became acquainted with people who were students of *The Urantia Book*, I observed that most were well educated and quite intelligent. I, therefore, assumed that they would be acquainted with mainline Christian theological views of the Bible and there would be little danger of viewing *The Urantia Book* as an inerrant document. Furthermore, the authors of the Urantia Papers repeatedly warn against such an attitude. They point out that the science and cosmology of the book are not inspired, and that all revelation is limited until we meet the Universal Father. None of the authors are of divine-creator status and the revelators clearly tell us that thousands of human sources were used. As Dr. Kenneth Glasziou has repeatedly pointed out, the revelators used the science of the 1930's and 1940's to give us a universe frame of reference for the purpose of enhancing spiritual insight.

There have been various discussions on the Internet under the general heading "Corruptions in the Revelation." Errors of fact (science) and chronology along with contradictions are cited in *The Urantia Book*. Various motives appear to underlie these discussions. But what all students of the Urantia Papers should realize is that these factual imperfections of the Fifth Epochal Revelation do not diminish its spiritual purpose of presenting an enlarged view of spiritual reality and insight. Hopefully, *Urantia Book* fundamentalists will realize that all time-space revelations, of necessity, partake of time-space limitations. But they are the best approach to ultimate truth and reality available to finite beings.

Urantia Movement Growth

A highly acclaimed book, *The Rise of Christianity*, by Rodney Stark (Princeton University Press, 1996) may cast some light on growth in the Urantia movement. Rodney Stark who teaches at the University of Washington is regarded by many scholars as the most significant figure in the sociology of religion today. From the best available data, Dr. Stark estimates that Christianity grew at the rate of 40% per decade. Professor Stark has other observations about the rise of Christianity, some of which refute traditional opinions and may lend insights on growth in the Urantia movement:

- There were no miraculous rates of conversion. Christianity grew in the normal evolutionary manner.

- New religious movements mainly draw their converts from the ranks of the religiously inactive, discontented, and secular communities. The most important influence is that of family and friends.

- Most new religious movements fail because they become closed or semi-closed networks. Successful movements discover techniques for remaining open networks.

- We have assumed that Christianity was a movement of the dispossessed; in actuality, Christianity spread first among the middle class and educated.

- Christianity was first and foremost an urban movement.

- Jews were a significant factor in the rise of Christianity. People are more willing to adopt a new religion to the extent that it retains cultural continuity and works in pre-existing networks.

- Women played a major role in the growth and development of Christianity.

- The ultimate factor in the rise of Christianity was its teaching of the love of God and the love of all people that "prompted and sustained attractive, liberating, and effective social relations and organizations." (p. 211) This new religious paradigm inspired the behavior of the martyrs and resulted in the substantially higher rates of survival in the devastating epidemics of 165 A.D. and 251 A.D. in which a quarter to a third of the Roman Empire population died.

Starting with the estimate that there were around 300 people in the Urantia movement in 1955, a 40% per decade growth rate suggests that there should be around 1152 people in the Urantia movement in 1995. Using this criterion, it appears that we are growing as well as or better than early Christianity.

One of the potentially crippling factors in the Urantia movement is the semi-closed networks of the Fellowship and the IUA where in-group activities predominate. We lack religious organizations primarily devoted to ministry and outreach. A redeeming factor is Urantian Web Sites on the Internet. Hopefully, we are laying foundations for the advent of new religious organizations that will carry the paradigm of the Fifth Epochal Revelation throughout the world.

Science and Theology

The October, 1998 issue of *Theology Today* examines the growing conversation between science and theology. The tone is much different from the conflict waged between religion and science described by Andrew White's classic book *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896). There is an

increasing realization in both disciplines that there is a basic unity of knowledge, that all academic disciplines could learn from each other. This trend is seen in the thinking of Teilhard de Chardin and Alfred North Whitehead where scientific data is a major component of their philosophy and theology.

The conversation between science and theology is taking place on many different levels and in numerous places, such as the Vatican, the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton, and the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences at Berkeley. The lead article in the October issue of *Theology Today* is "The Universe as Theater for God's Action" by Owen Gingerich. It sounds like the broad general theme of *The Urantia Book*. Patrick D. Miller, the editor of *Theology Today*, reports that the Center of Theological Inquiry has decided to follow up the essays in the October issue by "a serious engagement with the subject of eschatology as a topic for the discourse of science and theology." (p. 303)

One can hardly imagine a more appropriate theme on which the Fifth Epochal Revelation has more extensive and appropriate information than on life after death and "ultimate or last things." No other source in religious or theological literature has more extensive and rationally credible information on eschatology. For the last forty years I have been pointing out to mainline Christian leaders that *The Urantia Book* is insightfully contributing to the growing edge of issues in Christianity and is the best hope for a reformation and renaissance of the Christian faith.

It is regrettable that there has not been a serious attempt to examine the book by contemporary theologians. One wonders how long it will be before Christianity is upstepped by the Fifth Epochal Revelation? Historic observation suggests that it will take considerable time.

"Christianity exhibits a history of having originated out of the unintended transformation of the religion of Jesus into a religion about Jesus. It further presents the history of having experienced Hellenization, paganization, secularization, institutionalization, intellectual deterioration, spiritual decadence, moral hibernation, threatened extinction, later rejuvenation, fragmentation, and more recent relative rehabilitation. Such a pedigree is indicative of inherent vitality and the possession of vast recuperative resources." p.2075:2

Interface

In Plain Speech

Jesus was a masterful teacher who was always aware of the teachable moment of his listeners. He realized most of the people who followed him were not always able to grasp the import of his message; even the disciples at times struggled mightily with his words.

He occasionally used terminology which he acknowledged was not the best way to describe the reality he sought to convey, i.e., the "Kingdom of God." It was a necessary compromise, given the mind set of the time. He accepted the compromise, but proclaimed the day would come when the more accurate terminology of "God's family" would rightly be used.

In addition, as his popularity grew and large crowds began to follow him, there were always detractors and enemies on hand who sought to entrap him.

So Jesus taught in parables. By so doing, he said, those who sought the truth would find it, and find it on their own level, while those who were not honest of heart would simply be confounded. To the disciples he said: "In patience have I instructed you all this time. To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to the undiscerning multitudes and to those who seek our destruction, from now on, the mysteries of the kingdom shall be presented in parables. And this we will do so that those who really desire to enter the kingdom may discern the meaning of the teaching and thus find salvation, while those who listen only to ensnare us may be the more confounded in that they will see without seeing and will hear without hearing." (U. B., p. 1689).

However, Jesus added, "Let me tell you that nothing is hid in the kingdom of heaven which shall not be made manifest; neither are there any secrets which shall not ultimately be made known." (U. B., p. 1692).

When he was preparing the disciples for his departure, he said "It was for this purpose that I have been talking so plainly to you from the very beginning.... as one friend to another...." (U.B., p. 1951.)

"Down here I have taught you in proverbs and spoken to you in parables. I did so because you were only children in the spirit; but the time is coming when I will talk to you plainly concerning the Father and his kingdom. And I shall do this because the Father himself loves you and desires to be more fully revealed to you." (U.B., p. 1952.)

God always seeks to reveal as much as we, individually, and as a people, are able and willing to accept. Thus Jesus came "in the fullness of time." The same desire of the Heavenly Father to be ever more fully revealed to his

mortal creatures has led to the Urantia Papers, albeit through a remarkably varied assembly of intelligent beings who do his bidding and share this passion.

It is time for the church, and the world, to grow up. It is time to speak plainly of the realities of the greater family of God on earth, as well as in a vast, almost unlimited, universe.

Recently, I shared *The Urantia Book* with a former parishioner with whom I have kept in touch. Seeking to be patient and wait for the right time, I finally gave him a copy and, with some anxiety, waited to hear his response.

His response was, "It will take me a while to put all this in perspective ... but it's a wonderful book and I thank you for it." After 200 pages of reading, mostly in *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*, he said, "This book has already changed my life so much, I can hardly imagine what it will be like when I've read the whole thing."

It reminded me, even in a moment of caution and chastened enthusiasm, of just how many people are seeking what *The Urantia Book* has to share. A great harvest surely awaits our efforts in the future, because God has prepared the field and given us the task and privilege of sharing the message.

Let us not out of fear or uncertainty fail to seek wisely to share such a gracious gift, because "the Father himself loves you and desires to be more fully revealed to you"—in the plain speech of *The Urantia Book*.

-Merlyn Cox

"Mistake not! there is in the teachings of Jesus an eternal nature which will not permit them forever to remain unfruitful in the hearts of thinking men. The kingdom as Jesus conceived it has to a large extent failed on earth; for the time being, an outward church has taken its place; but you should comprehend that this church is only the larval stage of the thwarted spiritual kingdom.... The kingdom of the divine brotherhood is still alive and will eventually and certainly come forth from this long submergence, just as surely as the butterfly eventually emerges as the beautiful unfolding of its less attractive creature of metamorphic development." (1866:4)

The Quest for Spiritual Culture: Toward a Paradigm of Spirituality for the Twenty First Century

Plenary address given at SpiritQuest 2000,
International Conference, 1999

David A. Kantor

Key quotes from the Urantia Papers:

Religion does need new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings. If Christianity persists in neglecting its spiritual mission while it continues to busy itself with social and material problems, the spiritual renaissance must await the coming of these new teachers of Jesus' religion who will be exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of men. And then will these spirit-born souls quickly supply the leadership and inspiration requisite for the social, moral, economic, and political reorganization of the world. (p. 2082)

The religious challenge of this age is to those farseeing and forward-looking men and women of spiritual insight who will dare to construct a new and appealing philosophy of living out of the enlarged and exquisitely integrated modern concepts of cosmic truth, universe beauty, and divine goodness. Such a new and righteous vision of morality will attract all that is good in the mind of man and challenge that which is best in the human soul. Truth, beauty, and goodness are divine realities, and as man ascends the scale of spiritual living, these supreme qualities of the Eternal become increasingly co-ordinated and unified in God, who is love. (p. 43)

Welcome and Overview

Good Morning. When we gather together like this from the distant regions of our world, it seems appropriate that we consider the state of our planet and ask what we, as bearers of an epochal revelation, are doing about it. The *Urantia Book* describes a paradigm of spirituality which is fundamental to the social development of normal worlds. We're going to explore that paradigm this morning. We'll look at how the Lucifer rebellion has retarded its implementation on our world; and we'll look at how the seraphic planetary government is mobilized in support of it. The result should be a very practical understanding of how we each can support this paradigm, and thus participate cooperatively in the transformative tasks of the fifth epoch.

Religionists often view entanglement in the institutional affairs of government, economics, industry, and civil culture as detracting from more important personal spiritual pursuits. Medieval Christianity taught that the authority of the state and all the institutions of this world were an

ordained punishment for the sin of Adam. Radical Calvinism took the position that true believers had been mandated by God to control sin by means of civil institutions. Conservative Islam seeks to place social and governing institutions under the control of the clergy.

And while good men and women of faith struggle valiantly throughout the world, trying to serve humanity as best they can, the fact remains that the world is desperately short of compelling visions by which a spiritual transformation of its institutions might even be contemplated. We live today in a world where we are struggling to keep the basic human institutions of marriage and family intact. It is not surprising then, that we would find great confusion and difficulty in attempting to achieve meaningful personality integration at higher levels of social complexity.

It is helpful to think of "institutions" as co-ordinating mechanisms. In a world of active, creative personalities there needs to be means for coordinating their activities so they may be mutually sustaining where possible and, hopefully, not mutually destructive. In today's world, the ways in which we affect each other's activities are changing rapidly. When the rate of change exceeds the rate at which coordinating institutions can adapt and remain effective, a threshold is crossed where social breakdown begins to appear.

As the world continues to flirt with this threshold, the magnitude of the potential difficulties seems overwhelming. Global ecological problems, whose solutions will require an unprecedented level of international cooperation, loom on the horizon. Fledgling institutions of world government, developed to prevent catastrophic wars between superpowers, are finding themselves unable to prevent regional civil wars rooted in ethnic conflict. And throughout the developed world, the breakdown of that most basic and fundamental of all human institutions, the family, continues to accelerate.

There has been great success in building military, economic, and industrial systems, but a failure to advance systems which are inherently social and moral. We have utterly failed to match the astonishing accomplishments of our heads and hands with a comparable development of our hearts. In Paper 92 we are told that, "Modern man is confronted with the task of making more readjustments of human values in one generation than have been made in two thousand years." In Paper 99 the revelators describe our time as "psychologically unsettled," characterized by "the economic upheavals, the moral crosscurrents, and the sociologic rip tides of the cyclonic transitions of a scientific era." The popular mentality is again filled with apocalyptic fears and expectations.

Historian Oswald Spengler, in his book *The Decline of the West*, comments on our tendency to equate cultural

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crisis with apocalypse; to become so overwhelmed by the magnitude of change taking place that we lose the ability to rationally process it and end up projecting metaphysical meanings onto events we observe in the world around us. Spengler goes on to point out that "crisis" is the normal state of Western Civilization. Mahatma Ghandi, upon returning to India after his first visit to England, was asked what he thought of Western Civilization. He replied that he thought it would be a good idea.

Over the next half century, human society will undergo yet more profound changes. It will experience a radical demographic transformation, be challenged by unforeseen effects of ecological neglect, experience fundamental shifts in the global balance of economic and political power, and cope with nearly continuous technological change. These transformations are inevitable—the forces which compel them are already in place—but what the outcome will be, no one knows.

It is such a complex system of inter-related factors that no one can reasonably predict its likely state at any point in the future. It is impossible to know whether the twenty-first century will usher in an era of human advancement and global integration, or a period of conflict, environmental degradation, and human tragedy on a scale that overshadows anything which has previously occurred—humanity is literally "quivering on the brink."

Czech President Vaclav Havel has commented that "Nothing short of a new spiritual vision of global dimensions will save human civilization."

Broad social trends, such as rising levels of education, attempts to stabilize an emerging international economy, rapid increases in literacy world-wide, and the growing economic and social liberation of women, are examples of powerful forces with unknown potentials for transformative change. The information revolution, with its ability to profoundly affect public opinion, is spreading globally far more quickly than did the industrial revolution. And it is clear that the majority of the social, economic, and political effects of this revolution have yet to appear.

The underlying forces which determine all these trends, however, are human processes driven by human decisions being made on a daily basis. We may not be able to predict the future, but we certainly are shaping it through the choices we make on a moment by moment basis.

The general consensus of opinion held by individuals who attempt to study these trends and their implications, is that the long-term social and ecological health of our planet will be determined by decisions made in the next 25 years or so—during the lifetime of virtually every person in this room; each of us will participate in determining the

outcome. Czech President Vaclav Havel has commented that "Nothing short of a new spiritual vision of global dimensions will save human civilization."

Personal Spiritual Experience

Most of us would agree that *The Urantia Book* provides such a vision. But how do we go about applying the ideas in this book to the problems of our world? How do we get from ink and paper to an advancing civilization ruled by spiritual wisdom? While the revelators have generously provided us with a comprehensive overview of the cosmic context within which the present planetary struggle is taking place, the challenge of effectively applying this information lies before us today.

The Urantia Book describes religion as "the mighty lever which lifts civilization from chaos." (p. 793) But we are also told that *institutional* religion "cannot afford inspiration and provide leadership in this impending worldwide social reconstruction." (p. 1087) We are told that "Only the real religion of personal spiritual experience can function helpfully and creatively in the present crisis of civilization."

And it is this "real religion of personal spiritual experience" along with *The Urantia Book's* portrayal of the ideals of cosmic citizenship, which holds such great hope for transforming human institutions. With these concepts, *The Urantia Book* profiles a paradigm of spirituality unlike that of any existing religion or philosophy in the world today. It links personal spiritual development to meaningful personality integration resulting in the brotherhood of man.

The grand panorama of a personal cosmos is first laid out in the Foreword of *The Urantia Book*. The revelators make it clear to us that the future of the cosmos involves a discovery and exploration of the new realities which actualize when personalities interact with each other in creative ways. As the revelation unfolds we are told something about the cosmic purpose of all this personality experience—preparation for creative participation in the communities of personalities which comprise the mortal corps of the finality, communities of personalities who have experientially, over the long journey to Paradise, discovered, explored, and developed their potentials for working together creatively for the Father's purposes.

We are told about our ascent through the "psychic circles" which involves *cosmic socialization and the realization of universe citizenship*. Social integration and spiritual growth are inseparable in *The Urantia Book's* paradigm of spirituality. In this paradigm, the locus of spirituality is *in the relationships between personalities*. This revelation describes relationships between persons, from the Paradise Trinity down to those which we sustain with our family members, as the living realities within

which the continuous discovery and exploration of an infinite cosmos takes place.

In Paper 103 a Melchizedek admonishes us to "Remember that in the religion of all ages the experience which is paramount is the feeling regarding moral values and social meanings, not the thinking regarding theologic dogmas or philosophic theories." Just as information about the material world makes impressions on the conscious mind through the eyes and the ears during the process of looking and listening, so do spiritual values make their impressions on the superconscious mind during the process of reflective personality interaction.

In a loving, caring, "authentic" exchange with another personality the superconscious functions of mind are mobilized in a state of dynamic receptivity, open to the discovery of divine values which the immediate moment holds as potentials. Imagine for a moment that you are engaged with another person in an effort to solve a problem. You're sincerely seeking the best possible outcome. As you engage in this discussion, you try to do your best thinking; you simultaneously attempt to be conscious of the moral and ethical values in the situation. You try to phrase your communication in a caring and loving manner. The interaction is free from any effort to psychologically or emotionally manipulate the other. As you communicate you are trying to remain "conscious of consciousness"—you've mobilized your best resources and while applying them you are still actively evaluating—seeking to discern even higher values. You may even attain a level of involvement where you actively seek to bring an understanding of the Father's will into the interaction—you're sharing the inner life with God as you participate in this relationship.

This experience, in which the personality engages in a choice-making dance with the meanings and values of the cosmos, is the living process by which we open ourselves up to spiritual guidance. The Midwayers comment that, "Every time man makes a reflective moral choice he immediately experiences a new divine invasion of his soul." (p. 2095) Spiritual values do not exist independently of the process of personality interaction. This living process of relationship is where the fruits of the spirit appear. It is where we apply the higher levels of the golden rule. It is where we implement Jesus' great commandment. It is where Jesus' brotherhood of the kingdom is experientially discovered. *This is the paradigm of spirituality which the apostles failed to grasp.*

And I ask today, "Do we get it?" Have we really gained any more understanding than the apostles had regarding the profound implications of Jesus' teachings about the kingdom of heaven? In Paper 170 the Midwayers comment that "to his apostles Jesus always taught the kingdom as embracing man's personal experience in relation to his

fellows on earth and to the Father in heaven." "The kingdom of heaven," said Jesus, "is a spiritual relationship between God and man."

Given this paradigm of spirituality, and the apostle's difficulty in grasping it, appreciate the remembrance supper. This sacrament, which Jesus initiated, has the potential for invoking a social context in which it is possible to experientially discover that which he was unsuccessful in communicating to his followers. The remembrance supper is an intimate social activity. Through the employment of this sacrament we are encouraged to attempt to become conscious of our personal relationship with the Father as well as our relationships with our fellows, and to merge these into an experiential wholeness catalyzed by a shared appreciation of the Master's life.

Spiritual values do not exist independently of the process of personality interaction. This living process of relationship is where the fruits of the spirit appear. It is where we apply the higher levels of the golden rule. It is where we implement Jesus' great commandment. It is where Jesus' brotherhood of the kingdom is experientially discovered. This is the paradigm of spirituality which the apostles failed to grasp.

Said the Master on the occasion of that first remembrance, "Every soul who attains the realization of this united nature of God and man shall live forever. And this bread of life which I give to all who will receive is my own living and combined nature. The Father in the Son and the Son one with the Father—that is my life-giving revelation to the world and my saving gift to all nations." (p. 1711) In the context of the remembrance supper our souls can experientially feel the spiritual state of personality integration which *The Urantia Book* indicates needs to be actualized as a cultural reality on a broad scale.

A Melchizedek refers to the remembrance supper as "the practice of the presence of God which eventuates in the emergence of the brotherhood of man." The Midwayers comment that by establishing this sacrament, "the Master sought to set man's reborn soul free upon the joyous wings of a new and living spiritual liberty."

This "religion of personal spiritual experience," the Urantian paradigm of spirituality, is creative participation in a progressive culture of integrated mortal-divine personality association. It contains an ideal of daily living in which every single encounter with another person is an opportunity to participate directly in the spiritual transformation of the world.

Repercussions of the Lucifer Rebellion

Once we begin to appreciate the critical importance of the relationship between mortal personality and the

The Quest for Spiritual Culture, cont.

personality of the universal Father, we can more fully appreciate how the Lucifer rebellion has affected human institutions. In Paper 53 a review of the Lucifer manifesto shows that item number one in Lucifer's declaration of war against Michael was a denial of the reality of the universal Father. And even today, tens of thousands of years later, there is still confusion in the world regarding whether or not this essential relationship with the Father is real, or merely a conceptual illusion.

The long-term repercussions of failing to establish a spiritual basis for social evolution may be seen when we compare the state of our institutions with those described for a normal world in a post-Adamic epoch. Failure to establish a relationship with the Father significantly reduces an individual's chances of perceiving and implementing values which transcend self-interests. And it is from this impoverished set of values that many of our world's institutions derive their character.

Recovery from the Lucifer rebellion requires elevation of the values by which the people of our world conduct their affairs. On the level of planetary institutions and culture, the realization of full recovery is limited only by individual free-will decision making processes which choose and actualize values within the cultural milieu on a moment-by-moment basis. It's the ultimate democracy—we each cast a vote every time we make a choice of values which affects a human interaction.

We can get an idea of how the universe authorities are dealing with this situation by observing the focus of the last three epochal revelations. Each of them has represented an attempt to re-establish a spiritual foundation on the planet from which cosmic citizenship might develop. Machiventa Melchizedek dealt with the very basic dynamics of the relationship with God—its faith-grasp by the mortal mind. Jesus continued the process with a revelation of the nature of the Father's personality and his love for each individual. Each of these revelations aimed at restoring the integrity of this underlying relationship between the individual and God. Jesus, with his teachings about the kingdom, also laid the groundwork for a fuller appreciation of the interpersonal nature of reality.

The Urantia Book furthers this process with its revelation that this emerging network of spiritualizing personality relationships is a vital part of the living cosmos. The primary task of the fifth epoch seems clearly laid out before us—fostering the development in our world of a cosmic foundation of spiritualized personality relationships. This is the essential infrastructure which must be in place before a meaningful spiritual culture can evolve. Upon such a foundation, men and women will more easily discover those higher

values of universe socialization and cosmic citizenship by which our institutions might truly be transformed.

Seraphic Ministry

There are indications in the book that the number of seraphim devoted to this task is enormous. I suspect that almost everyone in this room, at one time or another, has felt a deep desire to assist our unseen friends in some small way in their task of planetary enlightenment, to support the plans they no doubt have implemented relative to this revelation.

The primary task of the fifth epoch seems clearly laid out before us—fostering the development in our world of a cosmic foundation of spiritualized personality relationships.

In attempting to get a useful idea of what cooperation with the revelators and their seraphic associates involves, we can study the way in which seraphic involvement in human affairs is described in *The Urantia Book*. With that knowledge it should be relatively easy for us to recognize what we need to do to support and reinforce their efforts. If we could accomplish this and foster the growth of a readership in which each individual is actively seeking cooperative engagement with the program being implemented by the planetary government, we might be able to do a great deal in terms of helping "apply spiritual pressure from above" to the problems of our day.

So how do the seraphim work? In Paper 113 we are told that they are "mind stimulators," continually seeking to promote circle-making decisions in the mortal mind; that they "operate from the outside inward, working through the social, ethical and moral environment of human beings." This network of spiritualizing interpersonal relationships is real. It forms a morontia environment in which the seraphim are able to minister to participating minds and souls.

In Paper 196 we're reminded that, "The human mind does not create real values; human experience does not yield universe insight. Concerning insight, the recognition of moral values and the discernment of spiritual meanings, all that the human mind can do is to discover, recognize, interpret, and choose." (p. 2094) It is the Seraphim who make spiritual values "visible" to the superconscious, as it functions in the social, ethical and moral environment of interpersonal communion.

In *The Urantia Book* we are encouraged to pray for values; we are told such praying indicates that religion has "evolved to that level where the human mind recognizes the reality of beneficent powers or beings who are able to enhance social values and to augment moral ideals...." (p. 995) From the ministry of the Mighty Primary Supernaphim

who facilitate the relationships between the diverse residents of Paradise, to the Primary Seraphim, who facilitate relationships between the Ancients of Days, the Trinity, and the Creator Sons, on down to the Home Seraphim, who function within the relationships between your family members, the ministry of the Infinite Spirit is continuously fostering the value-potentials inherent in personality associations.

These relationships—our first living connections with the infinite cosmos—are fragile, tenuous affairs which flicker back and forth from reality to unreality in accordance with the quality of values being implemented in any given interaction. This is the arena in which the seraphim labor to reinforce the faintest flickers of faith, to strengthen newly emerging souls and immediately begin integrating them with the culture of the spiritual cosmos.

At a conference like this, we can actually feel this process taking place—we feel spiritually invigorated and challenged to be our best in our friendships. New meanings and values appear in our relationships with each other on a daily, if not hourly, basis. Consider for a moment some of the angelic orders which serve in this personal universe: *The Interpreters of Cosmic Citizenship, The Union of Souls, The Spirits of Brotherhood, The Ethical Sensitizers, The Social Architects, The Heart of Counsel, The Satisfaction of Service, The Quickeners of Morality*—the list goes on and on.

Just contemplating these names gives us a glimpse into the personal nature of the spiritual cosmos. This entire ministry of the angelic orders is focused on the spiritual enhancement of relationships between personalities. The Master Seraphim of Planetary Supervision foster the development of human institutions by making higher values available to the mortals who participate in the work of those institutions. These seraphim minister *within* social groups—the angels of the churches, the angels of the races, the angels of progress, the home seraphim. The *angels of enlightenment* are occupied, not only with the mental and moral training of individuals, but of small groups—families, groups, schools, communities—virtually any association of mortals persisting over some period of time seems to provide a context for seraphic ministry.

How do we support their work? Six quick action-points:

1. First and foremost is our personal relationship with the Father. *The Urantia Book* tells us that the secret of Jesus' unparalleled religious life was his consciousness of the presence of God; and he attained it by intelligent prayer and sincere worship—unbroken communion with God. God needs to become an integral part of all our processes—not just when we're alone in prayer or worship, but also during the process of engagement with the problems of our lives and our world.

2. We support seraphic efforts by cultivating a sensitivity to the divine values they attempt to bring to our attention.

3. We support their work by courageously choosing those values to shape our relationships with others—"by decisions, by more decisions, and by more decisions."

4. We support seraphic services when we reinforce the higher value-choices we recognize being made by our fellows—stabilizing and affirming existing values where appropriate; recognizing and reinforcing religious living in others.

5. We lay the groundwork for enhanced seraphic action when we provide spiritually useful information. Get *The Urantia Book* spread around the planet! Remember the parable of the sower in Paper 151. Jesus said that this parable was a hint as to what messengers of the kingdom might expect in their ministry from generation to generation as time passed. Maximize all available opportunities and resources for the spread of the revelation. Don't wait for things to happen—make them happen.

6. Be involved; participate creatively in human associations. Rededicate yourself to service in your marriage and your family, your work community and your study group. The cultural icon of the monastic saint living in contemplative bliss aloof from the cares of less enlightened folk is no longer useful. Mother Theresa, Dag Hammarskjöld, Vaclav Havel, countless men and women with high ideals, working in the inner city, in classrooms, in churches, struggling to revitalize our institutions—these are the new icons of the applied spirituality of the fifth epoch. The benign virus of love is not going to invade the sentimental emotion stream of humanity unless we're out there helping to make the personality connections necessary for its transmission.

By dedicating ourselves to such a program, by choosing the highest values we can recognize in any given situation, we can serve as conduits through which the higher values of the spiritual world may be passed to the mortal world and incorporated into planetary institutions. "True religion," a Melchizedek tells us, "is the devotion of the self to the service of meaningful and supreme values." (p. 1012)

This vision is ennobling; it is empowering. Your family, the local school board on which you serve, your kid's soccer team, the youth group at your church, the working group at your office—when you realize that these are all arenas in which the seraphim are laboring to achieve a spiritual transformation, the most commonplace tasks of daily life take on cosmic significance and become worthy of our best efforts. This is how the religion of personal spiritual experience can become "the mighty lever which lifts civilization from chaos." (p. 793)

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to ask you to take a deep breath, and take a moment to look around you. Impress upon your

mind the image of this beautiful concert hall and the hundreds of readers sitting around you. Recall the moments of worship you have experienced here this week, insights you may have gained, friendships you may have advanced.

And as you serve in the years to come, when you run into difficulty or feel overwhelmed by circumstances, reflect back on this moment, a time in which you sat in assembly with a gathering of universe conscious citizens of Urantia. In your times of challenge, rest assured that many of these individuals are valiantly serving the Father's purposes in their own corners of the world, in their own sets of challenging circumstances.

Look ahead as well, to a reunion on the mansion worlds, where we can reminisce about the Urantia adventure, deepen our friendships, and perhaps be launched on the universe career in the company of cherished friends from the mortal adventure.

And as you leave here today, and see your fellows streaming out of the doors of this auditorium, appreciate the fact that they are on their way to Africa, Asia, the Pacific, to Europe, to North and South America, ambassadors of a dawning new age of religion on our planet, carrying a heightened understanding of the kingdom of heaven to be planted in the families and human associations of our world.

May the call to high adventure contained in *The Urantia Book*, this call to support the seraphim in the work of the fifth epoch, increasingly dominate the motivations, aspirations, and creative efforts of each one of us. And may God richly bless each and every one of you with unlimited opportunities to participate in the spiritual rehabilitation of our world.

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It is just because the gospel of Jesus was so many-sided that within a few centuries students of the records of his teachings became divided up into so many cults and sects. This pitiful subdivision of the Christian believers results from failure to discern in the Master's manifold teachings the divine oneness of his matchless life. But someday the true believers in Jesus will not be thus spiritually divided in their attitude before unbelievers. Always we may have diversity of intellectual comprehension and interpretation, even varying degrees of socialization, but lack of spiritual brotherhood is both inexcusable and reprehensible. p. 1866:3

META-VALUES II

The Reality Thermals of the Universe: Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Love

Larry Mullins

Note: The term "Meta-Values" was coined originally by Abraham Maslow. Dr. Maslow believed a "Science of Values" should be developed, an idea that has yet to be realized. Urantians can readily grasp the concept of Meta-Values, and can use it to improve their ability to live the teachings of the Urantia Papers.

An Organized System That Seeks Truth

Human activity, ideally, is an organized Meta-Value-driven "system" that must operate within a changing and difficult world. Modern discoveries in quantum physics show that closed, old-fashioned systems and organizations which strive for *stability* and *control* are doomed to entropy and decay, while only *resilient, organic* systems survive and thrive amid the rapid changes of modern life. Do not be discouraged if you discover yourself repeatedly slipping "out of the zone." Consider this analogy: the successful Apollo flight to the moon was on course only ten percent of the time! Keep at it and you will become so adept at "course correction" that it will happen unconsciously, and virtually automatically.

The Unity of Truth

Values and Meta-Values have been written about by many religionists. The Urantia Papers have sought to interface with the highest and most enlightened precepts of science in their revelation of spiritual insight. The Urantia Papers, as no other document in history, establish the unity of truth that is underlying the highest scientific precepts and the richest spiritual insights.

As Urantians, we are called upon to release the prodigious concept of Meta-Values from the twin-tombs of religious dogma and scientific materialism, where it lives comatose with a logic-tight barrier preventing "cross-pollination." The concept of Meta-Values needs to be re-activated. To energize and activate the concept of Meta-Values, we must understand it as synthesized and connected with all enlightened discoveries and with the disciplines of science, religion, and philosophy. If this is done, Meta-Values can be transcultural and unifying, in the same way technology is transcultural.

Indeed, Urantians know that Meta-Values are part of the unity of truth that underlies all of reality. Therefore, we must assert that Meta-Values are not a mere question of taste and preference, but a universal language of cosmic realities. Therefore, what is True for me is also True for you, and for Aborigines, Chinese, Spanish, or Russians. Likewise, what is Beautiful and Good transcends—or should eventually transcend—cultural barriers. Love, or

Truth in Action, is the ultimate universal language of Urantians. With these points in mind about the unity of Truth, we will revisit the scientific grounds upon which an enlarged Urantian theory of Meta-Values may partially rest.

Goodness—the Meta-Value of Relationships

Some of what the Urantia Papers tell us was discovered clinically and presented by Abraham Maslow when he coined the term Meta-Values, and proposed a Science of Values several decades ago. The major difference between Dr. Maslow's ideas and the Urantian perspective is that Maslow believed Meta-Values to be higher *biological* drives that have no relationship to spiritual realities. The enlarged Urantian theory proposes that Meta-Values are spiritual realities, that they originate in God, and these spiritual realities impinge upon the human psyche, through the Thought Adjuster interaction with an enlightened mind. People and things *have* value, Meta-Values *are* value.

The difference between the two views is significant. We cannot have a *relationship* with even the most personally attuned of the Meta-Values—Goodness. We can only have a relationship with another person. In the inner life we can have a relationship with the personal aspects of God, the loving Father of the Universe. It is this living relationship that is the basis for *The Step Beyond*¹. Without such a relationship, goodness is only a philosophical principle.

We Urantians insist that Goodness is far more than a bromide: Goodness is THE basic personality-related reality of the benevolent universe. As Rodan observed, God is far more than this personality reality—but he cannot be less.

Dr. Maslow certainly was aware of the perplexing question of the true origin and nature of Values. Had he attributed Meta-Values to a personal God, Maslow would have probably been ridiculed by his colleagues, and quickly fallen into academic oblivion. However, he wrote boldly and went farther than most scientific minds:

*"Man demonstrates in his own nature a pressure toward fuller and fuller Being, more and more actualization of his humanness Man is ultimately not molded or shaped into humanness or taught to be human.... This is not contradiction to the data that is already amassed which show clearly that living in a family and in a culture are absolutely necessary to actualize these psychological potentials that define humanness."*²

Dr. Maslow is asserting here that we *absolutely* need people-associations to actualize our own human potentials as tangible realities. The Urantia Papers extend that premise to say that we also absolutely need a relationship with a

"person" in the inner life—God the Father—to actualize our spiritual potentials. The fruits of success in the inner life naturally overflow and enrich the way we think and act. Testimony after testimony by Twelve Step participants, and folks who have had peak religious experiences, prove that this is at least a plausible, if not a certain conclusion—even when approached by secular scientific methods.

The Urantia Papers propose that the "self-actualizing" process of Dr. Maslow is significantly a spiritual as well as a psychological process. More than that, the Papers propose that the self-actualizing process itself will never be understood by psychology until the reality of spiritual factors are accepted. The self-actualizing process was acknowledged by Maslow as moving us toward higher realities—toward what is True, Beautiful and Good. It is therefore not unreasonable to argue that self-actualizing is in essence a spiritualizing process, so to speak. Again, Dr. Maslow also saw the clear connection:

*"If the various extant religions may be taken as expressions of human aspiration, i.e., what people would like to become if only they could, then we can see here too a validation of the affirmation that all people yearn toward self-actualization, or tend toward it. This is so because our description of the actual characteristics of self-actualizing people parallels many of the points and the ideals urged by the religions, e.g., the transcendence of self, the fusion of the true, the good and the beautiful, contribution to others, wisdom, honesty and naturalness, the transcendence of selfish and personal motivations, the giving up of "lower" desires in favor of "higher" ones, increased friendliness and kindness, the differentiation between ends (tranquility, serenity, peace,) and means (money, power, status,) the decrease in hostility, cruelty and destructiveness (Although decisiveness, justified anger and indignation, self-affirmation, etc. may very well increase.)"*³

In this brilliant series of insights Dr. Maslow compares the Values and qualities he discovered in studying the highest and best humans with the spiritual qualities of religionists. It was in a later work, *Values, Religion and Peak Experiences*, that Maslow declared that the domain of Values should be appropriated, or impinged upon, by science for study. His opinion was that religionists should no longer be able to lay exclusive claim to enlightened Values. A scientist, he believed, should face the facts of the discovery of Meta-Values as intrinsic (but usually latent qualities) in all normal humans. Meta-Values fully emerge as the fruits of maturity in the highest (most efficient, effective, mature and successful) human specimens. Maslow insisted that scientists should objectively study these Values.

Meta-Values II, cont.

Unfortunately, Maslow did not (perhaps could not) propose to appropriate "God" along with Meta-Values for scientific study. However, Viktor Frankl, the Austrian Psychiatrist who survived the Nazi death camps, was not reluctant to factor God into the human psyche. Frankl did not advocate that science return its original role of hand-maiden to theology, but rather had a more daring vision for scientists:

*"In contrast to the 'fluid' border between the conscious and unconscious, the line between the spiritual and the instinctual cannot be drawn sharply enough.... Since human existence is spiritual existence, we now see the distinction between conscious and unconscious becomes unimportant compared to another distinction: The real criterion of authentically human existence derives from discerning whether a given phenomenon is spiritual or instinctual.... This is due to the fact that—in contrast to the psychoanalytic concept—being human is not being driven but 'deciding what one is going to be' to quote Jaspers... or to quote Heidegger: 'I would say that being human is being responsible. . . responsible for one's own existence.'"*⁴

Viktor Frankl's observations deserve careful consideration by Urantians. He believed in an inner core of spiritual reality as the critical reality-factor in human development. The Urantia Papers define this irreducible essence of self as personality, making the distinction between the essence and human personality, which may be said to be the shadow of the essence. Moreover, Frankl lived this truth in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany and survived deprivation beyond our imagining. Frankl defined religion as an inner, personal experience of this spiritual reality:

*"If religion is to survive it will have to become a profoundly personalized religion which allows any human being to speak a language of his or her own when addressing himself or herself to the ultimate being.... God is partner to our most intimate soliloquies."*⁵

No wise Urantian will fail to note the parallel of Frankl's insights with the revelation of the Urantia Papers:

"Since true religion is a matter of personal spiritual experience, it is inevitable that each individual religionist must have his own and personal interpretation of the realization of that spiritual experience. Let the term 'faith' stand for the individual's relation to God rather than for the creedal formulation of what some group of mortals have been able to agree upon as a common religious attitude. 'Have you faith? Then have it to yourself.'" (U. B. p.1091)

Unfortunately, much of the great work of Viktor Frankl has not been fully recognized due to the influence of the sacred cow of "scientific" mono-materialism. Indeed, much of modern science has broken with the tyranny of religious dogma, only to become virtually bound in the tyranny of mono-materialism. So, when most quantum scientists run up against the unexplainable, timeless, spaceless mysteries of the very small, they find it safer to postulate a preposterous series of "infinite parallel universes," than to allow for a more elegantly logical First Source and Center.

These scientists would rather affront our common sense than admit to the existence of God, even as an impersonal force. Thus they fail to see that it is logical that emerging reality of the inconceivably small is timeless, spaceless, and not under physical law. For they are looking at the fringes of the Unqualified Absolute—they are seeing the peripheral stages of the mind of God as, amid his Absoluteness, he makes "room" for time and space. Therefore, we Urantians must now challenge the ultimate sacred cow of science (not of all scientists, but contemporary science in general)—that God is territory that is virtually forbidden to scientific inquiry.

Especially important evidence that clinically supports the concept of a contactable God-presence in the human psyche may be drawn from the abundant testimony of Twelve Step participants. There are overwhelming signs that there is "something"—yet to be scientifically accounted for—that is functioning in Twelve Step Programs. Why is it forbidden to postulate, from this evidence, the possibility of a personal God—just as science postulates black holes and "strange attractors" by examining only the provisionary evidence of their existence?

Surely a master practitioner of enlightened modern scientific objectivity could place a negative template over the earlier stated insights by Dr. Maslow and thereby discover evidence of a void—a missing dynamic that could be filled if a scientist were "allowed" to at least consider the possibility of the existence of a personal, inner God as postulated by Viktor Frankl.

Consider what Dr. Maslow has said: *First* his assertion of an absolute need for personal relationships if we are to actualize as fully functioning humans. *Second*, Dr. Maslow saw the intrinsic nature of Values as parallel to religious feelings, and as qualities which emerge from within—without exception—in all healthy, Self-Actualizing people. If we add to these two postulates the mountain of human testimony about the inner life experience, God becomes a reasonable, perhaps a compelling possibility. We must, then, be puzzled to observe modern science cripple and distort itself as it twists and turns to avoid even considering the factoring-

in of God as a cosmic reality. The mono-materialistic scientist is a high priest of a dogma that is as restrictive as that of the 19th century theologian.

Meta-Values and Growth Choices

It is arguable that Abraham Maslow perceived Meta-Values, and understood them on the operative level better than any well known psychologist or religionist before or since. He understood that we must make "gut level" value judgments, or choices, constantly. What we elect as our core values matters enormously. *What we are is clearly revealed by our gut-level choices and unconscious, habitual actions.*

"Actualizing" as a psychological concept parallels spiritual growth in that it is ultimately about effective and productive choosing. Actualizing is the process of choosing the more "actual" or the more real over any other alternative. Actualizing is the choice of the Good over the less good, the Beautiful over the less beautiful, and the True over the less true. Actualizing is about choosing Love over indifference. Finally, actualizing is choosing Growth over inertia or safety. These psychological concepts espoused by Dr. Maslow are in perfect parallel with the Urantia Papers. The Urantia Papers are, to a large degree, an education toward the ability to make decisions, with the repetitious caveat that a decision is never completed until it is acted out. *How do Meta-Values help us decide which path is the path to growth?*

A Loving Higher Power - the Great "Attractor"

When an individual personally discovers the reality of Beauty and Truth in the universe, this experience allows him to conjecture (at least) the existence of an impersonal Higher Force. The discovery of Goodness, or benevolence, in the universe goes further. It allows us to suppose that the source for this universal "force" is personal and caring. On the level of our own experience, we discover the power of Goodness when we see that it is the Meta-Value most closely related to people and relationships. Does this matter? Yes, it matters enormously:

Every evil philosophy that has done harm, that has exploited, humiliated and persecuted people, every belief that drenched our planet with innocent blood, was devoid of Goodness in its core values.

The Missing Ingredient from Mission Statements

If you are a Urantian business person, a career-seeker, or any type of visionary, Meta-Values can add a single ingredient to your "Mission Statement" or your life vision that could multiply its effectiveness many times. Meta-Values provide a core of strength and stability within—a strength that will never fail you—and yet Meta-Values will also stimulate and fuel fearless growth and progress in the face of a changing world.

Perhaps the best way to explain the importance of the key Meta-Value of Goodness, and how it works to configure behavior, is to consider what can happen when people overlook it. Our highest and most enlightened leaders and scholars too often forget its importance. For example, Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, a man whom the *Economist* has called: "God's man in action," has defined leadership in this way: "[Leadership] requires three things: having a clear vision, articulating it well, and getting your team enthusiastic about sharing it. And above all, the leader must be consistent. As the Bible says, no one follows an uncertain trumpet."

The problem with this definition is that it could work (and did work) for an Adolph Hitler or any criminal mind as efficiently as for a high-minded leader. When Goodness, in the sense of unconditional concern for all people, is omitted from a philosophy, the philosophy can drive a leader to do great harm. The development of leadership characteristics, divorced from values—especially Meta-Values, and particularly Goodness—can result in a virtual human monster who is hungry for power and control at any cost. Greatness, in reaching its most enlightened human levels of attainment, cannot be divorced from goodness. A nation of people that does not collectively require Goodness and integrity from its leaders is on a slippery slope.

A Value-sensitive definition of Urantian leadership is: a leader who establishes a core set of worthy Values and who pursues a Vision that is harmonious with these Values. Yes, the leader needs to be clear and decisive, and must be able to excite her followers. But any mission or vision that does not take into account goodness, or the greatest good for all concerned, is inadequate to address the approaching millennium.

Loving Service—the Shortest Route, the Greatest Urgency

The Urantia Papers make it clear that authentic spirituality does not stop at the front door of a business. Further, the theme of *The Urantia Book*, from one perspective at least, hinges upon the reality and application of Meta-Values as the most practical, powerful, and transforming forces on earth. In the balance of this article we will examine ways Urantians can apply Meta-Values to revolutionize their lives.

Add an element of loving service to your life each day. Buckminster Fuller declared that the secret to his enormous success was his effort to orchestrate each encounter with each person for their benefit and spiritual advantage. At first, apply loving service within your own normal field of activity. If you have a difficult phone call to make to a friend or relative, resolve that it will result in their benefit and spiritual advantage. Look for the continuous small opportunities we are given to serve as you pass by.

The "Yoga of Love" is the royal road to freedom. Remember, the yoke of Truth and Love is light, it is never a burden. The Urantian-actualizer is generous and loving not as a reaction to guilt or imagined "duty," but rather because he or she overflows with an abundance of the fruits of Truth, Beauty, Goodness and Love. The flow of Meta-Value energies into the personality is actually enriched when an individual pours the fruits of Meta-Values out upon the world.

As you operate within your usual sphere of activity, watch also for the creative "unicorn" of opportunity which may appear at any moment. Be ever-vigilant, ever-prepared to make the faith-action leap. Even as you leap, know that you are making a Faith-Action—and are entering into an endless process. And, even as you succeed, know that soon you will again be called upon to startle those who know you with an even more daring leap of faith. Faith-Action will, however, become second nature. And one day, almost unnoticed, the great peace that is beyond understanding will be yours. You will realize that anxiety, doubt, and tension have disappeared completely. You will then know you are in the zone, in the flow, and you are propelled toward your destiny upon the exquisite cosmic currents of "light" itself.

Not a Day Without Alignment

Recall the motto of the fledgling artist: "Not a day without a line." As Rodan observed, your only task, each day, is to daily achieve Meta-Value alignment. Once we have alignment with the Father, all else follows. Without such alignment, you go forth to bend the universe to your own will. Anxiety, fear, exhaustion, and a continuous feeling of impending doom is the result.

What to Do

1. *Meditate First on the Will-To-Beauty.* In your daily meditation, ask the Father for a deeper understanding and awareness of Beauty. Look for the means to bring more order to the material chaos around you. Consider that your own great gift will be as beautiful in its own way as any Beethoven Sonata, or Shakespeare Sonnet, or Michelangelo statue. The domain of Beauty encompasses all the material factors of the universe. In pragmatic terms, the scientist's search for order is a search for Beauty. The discovery of Beauty amid the apparent chaos of the universe is the great joy of the scientist.

Beauty may be discovered in the material world by the scientist, or it may exist spiritually as a Pattern that is a potential in the mind of God. Look for the Pattern that is yours, the one that cries out to be brought into material manifestation for the Supreme by your heart and mind and hands and feet. Spiritually, strive to capture your Pattern of what "ought to be." Beauty is continuously seeking to actualize in your life. Each day try to foster the actualization of more Beauty. *The state-of-mind we seek to rise to as we*

meditate upon Beauty is one of supreme confidence: We have a valuable gift to give.

2. *Meditate on the will-To-Goodness.* Once you have acquired a feeling of confidence, as a practitioner of Beauty you will use the creative imagination of the inner life to explore opportunities to do good. As a Urantian you know that Goodness can best be understood through the medium of our relationships:

A. Goodness is the Meta-Value of Personal Relationships. (Including your relationship with God, the Universal Father.)

B. Personal Relationships transcend all other realities you can know in your lifetime.

C. Personal Relationships are ends in themselves.

D. We cannot go forth to do great things if our Personal Relationships are in disorder.

E. Before we can do great things we must learn to do good things.

As we Urantians go through our lives, if we are active, energetic people, we will brush and bump against other personalities. The riddle of other personalities must be solved. Knowing that you are a child of God, it is axiomatic that other people share equal spiritual status with you in this regard. You are not an only child. The Fatherhood of God clearly implies the brotherhood and sisterhood of humankind. This we Urantians cannot escape.

So keep in mind that when a thirty-year old Buckminster Fuller stood at the shores of a desolate, dark lake and considered suicide, he also stood upon the shores of destiny. When Fuller looked into the reality of non-life, he felt a life-changing, down-grasping message resonate in his heart. "*You have no right to destroy yourself. You do not belong to you. You belong to the Universe.*"

Thus it is that we have no right to exit life, nor even avoid life because it seems to be a bleak struggle against impossible odds. As Cyrano declared: "*A man fights for more than the mere hope of winning.*" You belong to the universe no less than Buckminster Fuller, and the universe would have you claim your birthright as a child of God. The universe would teach us, at whatever cost, to love and serve our fellow brothers and sisters. We learn to love them through knowing them. As Marva Collins (the brilliant black teacher in Chicago who made Shakespearean scholars out of "hopeless" drop-outs), looked beyond the gross appearance and attitudes of the rejected children who came to her, we must learn to do likewise. Ms. Collins said she hugged them until "their eyes began to dance." As the images of all those you know float into your consciousness during meditative moments, bless them with conviction and ungoverned energy.

3. *Meditate upon Your Will to Truth.* Our Will to Goodness is manifested in raw energy as Love, and it becomes wise and prudent Love (or Goodness) when it is in a living relationship with our personal Will to Beauty.

As we learn in the Urantia Papers, Truth itself is an emerging, vibrant and living relationship of Beauty and Goodness.

Truth is a living, conscious drive toward objective reality. Truth is a growing composite of the exhilarating meanings and insights that we discern when we are "in the zone," in a perfect dynamic balance between Beauty and Goodness. Truth is a pulsing, actualizing, creative and energetic attitude of recognition, confidence and love.

4. *Meditate upon Your Personal Truth.* I cannot go beyond definitions of Truth that may seem bland and rhetorical. We Urantians know our personal Truth must be defined and expressed by ourselves by *living it*. Truth can only be defined by living it. It is a great paradox, perhaps, that while we all pursue the same objective Reality (God the Father), our perception of this reality will be ever personal and unique. And yet, it will also be discovered to be harmonious with the differing, but equally enlightened perceptions of others. It is a basic premise of the Urantia Papers that all ordinary, normal human minds already possesses an appropriate measure of personal Truth—our problem is to live up to that Truth. When we do that, new insights and greater truths will become spiritually discernible. And who can judge—perhaps your Truth may "have something to impart to this generation which other generations have refused to hear?"

5. *Meditate upon and Understand the Process of Enhancement.* We are not called upon to struggle against error. We consider our "deficiencies" as non-realities, as areas of non-actualization or lack of development. We seek to enhance the appropriate Meta-Value to foster growth in those areas that are impoverished spiritually, so that they may unfold in their natural glory.

We do not seek to curb either our assertiveness nor our Will to Beauty, nor our compassion or Will to Goodness. No Meta-Value can be excessive. A Meta-Value can, however, cause problems when it is out of sync and harmony with its complement. So we struggle to maintain a position of equilibrium, or an exquisite poise, by enhancing the counter-part Meta-Value. Thus, if we are "too aggressive," we rejoice at this energy, and balance it with an appropriate degree of compassion. If we are "too nice," and are taken advantage of, we learn to rejoice in our aptitude of compassion, and foster an appropriate degree of assertiveness, or self-interest to achieve balance in future relationships.

In my job as a management consultant, I have learned that women managers are often wonderfully compassionate, but are actually frightened by their instincts to be assertive. Men, on the other hand, are generally very pleased with their assertiveness but afraid of the "touchy-feely" stuff. They are afraid of their own Will to Goodness. Yet nothing is more compelling than the manager who is a dynamic balance of compassion and

assertiveness. Confidence and Love, in appropriate measure, form the requisite dynamic for leadership in the dawning millennium.

This idea of enhancement of the desirable rather than repression of the less desirable is a unique paradigm shift that Jesus offered us, so please consider it carefully. This is the spiritually-transcendent method of making dramatic change. It is easily understood, but requires careful and thoughtful execution. If you have understood the requirements of the Master and have eliminated the resentments and self-doubt that bar the way, you can most effectively use the enhancement technique. When you apply it, you will experience results that are virtually beyond imagining, because you are engaging the mightiest forces in the universe. Rather than inhibiting, or controlling, or directing Meta-Values, you are learning to enhance them and balance their enormous energies. *No one can predict the result when Meta-Values achieve the enthralling, ephemeral moments of perfect balance in the human psyche.*

6. *Do a Meta-Value Inventory.* James W. Fowler wrote an excellent book on the psychology of human faith, and our quest for meaning: *Stages of Faith*. In it, he postulated a powerful set of questions. Answer them, and you will know how far you are "into" the process of self-actualization. (*One definition of Self-Actualizers is: people who are where they want to be and are doing what they want to do.*)

- What are you spending and being spent for? What commands and receives your best time, your best energy?
- What causes, dreams, goals or institutions are you pouring out your life for?
- As you live your life, what power or powers do you fear or dread?
- To what are you committed in life? In death?
- With whom or what group do you share your most sacred and private hopes for your life and the lives of those you love?
- What are your most sacred hopes, those most compelling goals and purposes in your life?

These are powerful, deeply stirring questions for Urantians. They are disturbing because they challenge us to the inner core of our being. They probe our Values. They remind us that we may be on the wrong "bus," and that we may one day find ourselves in a place where we never intended to be. When we are young, we may take this bus or that one, we may make many detours, and, laughing with the joy of childhood, pick up the pieces, and start again. When we are young we seem to have a limitless abundance of time.

But for all of us, there comes a day when we sense that it is time to be about the task we were created to fulfill. We no longer have the luxury of wasting energy and squandering time. And we face the fact that, locked within our heart and

soul is the nine-tenths of us that the Supreme—and the world around us—most desperately needs. Now is the time to take the shortest road, with a sense of the greatest urgency. Too much is at stake to delay another day, even another moment.

So, if these questions disturb you, I urge you to read them again. Read them every day. Read them until you can answer them with an attitude of confidence, peace, and love. As Urantians, we have a unique opportunity to set into motion a true "science" of Meta-Values. Young Urantians watch our loyalties to Values, and learn by watching. Yet, even if we are loyal and wise, we older Urantians may not live to see a Urantian University of Meta-Values materially arise upon our planet. Even so, we may trust that our loyalties will inspire the hands and hearts of future Urantians, who will follow us and actually create such an edifice, and fill it with spiritual light. And, we must have faith in the grander vision of the Urantia Papers: Upon all of the untracked and lonely vistas of the intellectual and spiritual frontiers that we dare to penetrate and stand upon today—however tenuously—one day will come a wave of new Urantians whose fresh energy and vitality will build wondrous cities of Light and Life.

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² Maslow, Abraham. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. New York: Nostrand Reinhold, 1968: 160-161.

³ *ibid.*, p. 158

⁴ Frankl, Viktor. *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*. Insight Books, 1997: 32. (A recent update of *The Unconscious God* by Viktor Frankl, first presented as a series of lectures in 1947.)

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 149-151

If something has become a religion in your experience, it is self-evident that you already have become an active evangel of that religion since you deem the supreme concept of your religion as being worthy of the worship of all mankind, all universe intelligences. If you are not a positive and missionary evangel of your religion, you are self-deceived in that what you call a religion is only a traditional belief or a mere system of intellectual philosophy. p. 1780:6

Living The Family of God

Marvin Gawryn

"Jesus sought to substitute many terms for the kingdom but always without success. Among others, he used: the family of God, the Father's will, the friends of God, the fellowship of believers, the brotherhood of man, the Father's fold, the children of God, the fellowship of the faithful, the Father's service, and the liberated sons of God." (U. B., p. 1861)

"(Jesus) next explained that the 'kingdom idea' was not the best way to illustrate man's relation to God...Jesus said, 'The people of another age will better understand the gospel of the kingdom when it is presented in terms expressive of the family relationship....'" (U. B. p. 1603)

Jesus taught a radically new way of living, in family relationship, with God as our spiritual parent and all people as our sisters and brothers. This way of life can be thought of as patterned by seven central truths, each of which can be lived out within successively larger circles of family relationship.

1. *The Fatherhood of God.* The spiritual parent/child relationship is our primary experience in the family of God.

2. *The Brotherhood of Man.* Life in the family of God is profoundly fraternal and sororal.

3. *The Indwelling Spirit.* God has placed a perfect fragment of himself within each human being. Spiritual family life is intimate. It is close, constant, and comforting.

4. *The Will of God.* God offers us guidance in each passing moment. We can discern his will and attempt to follow it. Life in God is family, is progressive. We grow increasingly like God as we ascend toward his presence on Paradise.

5. *Love.* Relationships in God's family are always affectionate, dedicated to the good of others.

6. *Eternal life.* We can feel secure because these family relationships will be there for us forever. We are just beginning an endless adventure of growth in God's family.

7. *Faith.* We can trust God utterly. As children in the family of a divine parent, we are perfectly cared for. Our ultimate welfare is secure. Increasingly, we can depend on God, follow him; and that changes the way we live.

The family of God experience involves living these truths in the context of at least five successively larger family circles, each of which is an arena of activity and/or service:

1. *The Inner Family*, including our Thought Adjusters, Jesus (the Spirit of Truth), our angels, and the presence of our local universe Mother Spirit.

2. *The Home Family*, parents and children (and/or others) who live together and create a home culture.

3. *The Fellowship Family*, any group of like-minded believers.

4. *The Interfaith Family*, the family of all believers, both within and outside of organized groups.

5. *The Global family*, all of God's children on this world, including those who have not yet discovered him.

Two additional family circles, which we will increasingly encounter in the eternal ascent, are important to consider:

1. *The Original Family*, the Paradise Trinity, providing the pattern for all subsequent family relationships: Universal Father, Eternal Mother-Son, and Infinite Spirit.

2. *The Universal Family* of all beings in the grand universe.

Jesus taught a radically new way of living, in family relationship, with God as our spiritual parent and all people as our sisters and brothers.

This constellation of thoughts regarding the family of God emerged during three years of research in *The Urantia Book* and in religious history on the general topic of the socialization of religion. I'd like to share a few of the other conclusions drawn from these studies, primarily regarding cult evolution, central spiritual truths, and religion as a way of living. What does the book tell us about the socialization of religion? This quote focuses on the nature of cultism:

Every inspiring ideal grasps for some perpetuating symbolism—seeks some technique for cultural manifestation which will insure survival and augment realization.... From the dawn of civilization every appealing movement in social culture or religious advancement has developed a ritual, a symbolic ceremonial.... Every effective religion unerringly develops a worthy symbolism.... Regardless of the drawbacks and handicaps, every new revelation of truth has given rise to a new cult, and even the restatement of the religion of Jesus must develop a new and appropriate symbolism.... This enhanced symbol must arise out of religious living, spiritual experience. And this higher symbolism of a higher civilization must be predicated on the concept of the Fatherhood of God and be pregnant with the mighty ideal of the brotherhood of man. (U. B., p. 965-6).

What is this higher symbol the revelators speak of? Once again the book provides us some guidance:

"The family occupied the very center of Jesus' philosophy of life—here and hereafter. He based his teachings about God on the family...." (U. B., p. 1581)

Rodan states, *"I do not hesitate thus to glorify family life, for your Master has wisely chosen the*

father-child relationship as the very cornerstone of this new gospel of the kingdom." (U. B., p. 1776)

(Jesus) next explained that the 'kingdom idea' was not the best way to illustrate man's relation to God.... Jesus said: 'The people of another age will better understand the gospel of the kingdom when it is presented in terms expressive of the family relationship....' (U. B., p. 1603)

"Jesus swept away all of the ceremonials of sacrifice and atonement.... The creature-Creator relationship was placed on a child-parent basis.... All ceremonials not a legitimate part of such an intimate family relationship are forever abrogated." (U. B., p. 1133)

So, if we ask the question, "What might this central metaphor be, this new and higher symbol which eventually will develop out of the revelation?", perhaps the answer is family. "No cult can endure and contribute to the progress of social civilization and individual spiritual attainment unless it is based on the biologic, sociologic, and religious significance of the home." (U. B., p. 966) There are many other quotes that point to family as the central symbol which emerges from a study of Jesus' gospel in *The Urantia Book*.

Returning to the broader subject of the socialization of religion, what is it about symbols and cult that make them so important? Modern life is very complex and distracting. *The Urantia Book*, while it is wonderfully clarifying, is also huge and many-faceted. We need a way to highlight and simplify its most essential truths, to remember them constantly, a way to carry them inside us. We need a way to hook these truths together into a meaningful whole, a vivid symbol which shapes the way we live.

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This symbol, this ideal, must motivate us. It must inspire us to live out the truth in our daily lives, both as individuals and in our various group relationships. Even beyond our personal and social lives, cult and symbol can equip us to act as a powerful cultural force which, eventually, can transform human society. This way of living in the family of God is one possible representation of Jesus' gospel. It is a way of pulling together and connecting the central truths of the gospel, which are also the central truths of *The Urantia Book*.

Living the Family of God, cont.

The symbol of the family of God has value only insofar as we translate it into an actual way of living our lives. If it remains simply a set of ideas, then it is dead. "Truth cannot be defined with words, only by living." (U. B., p. 1459) "When theology masters religion, religion dies; it becomes a doctrine instead of a life." (U. B., p. 1141) It must become an ongoing experience, a set of unfolding relationships between God and human beings. These truths and family circles are simply a series of touchstones. If we use them, they can help us live more spiritually fruitful lives.

These elements of life in the family of God are simply a series of road signs that point the way along a path. They can help to keep us channeled within an unfolding process—a process of living out our lives as children in God's family. You might ask, "Why these particular seven truths?" They emerged from the research in *The Urantia Book*. They appeared over and over again, hundreds of times, sprinkled throughout the text. And they were almost always highly emphasized as central to Jesus' gospel. Here are just a few examples:

Fatherhood of God. "And when all is said and done, I can do nothing more helpful than to reiterate that God is your universe Father, and that you are all his planetary children." (U. B., p. 72)

Brotherhood of Man. "The acceptance of the doctrine of the fatherhood of God implies that you also freely accept the associated truth of the brotherhood of man." (U. B., p. 2053)

Indwelling Spirit. "'The kingdom of God is within you' was probably the greatest pronouncement Jesus ever made, next to the declaration that his Father is a living and loving spirit." (U. B., p. 2084)

Will of God. "Jesus always and consistently interpreted religion wholly in terms of the Father's will." (U. B., p. 2088)

Love. "Therefore man's nearest and dearest approach to God is by and through love, for God is love." (U. B., p. 50)

Eternal Life. "... Jesus had blended man's highest moral ideas and spiritual ideals with man's most sublime hope for the future—eternal life. And that was the gospel of the kingdom." (U. B., p. 1866)

Faith. "Jesus taught, 'Faith is the open door for entering into the present, perfect, and eternal love of God.'" (U. B., p. 1545)

Indeed, there are many quotes where four or five of these central truths of the gospel cluster together in a single sentence!

"... a genuine religious experience ... concerns

itself only with learning and doing the will of the Father in Paradise. The earmarks of such a religion are: faith in a supreme Deity, hope of eternal survival, and love, especially of one's fellows." (U. B., p. 1141)

"...by faith accept the truth which portrays that the Universal Father so loved the world as to provide for the eternal spiritual progression of its lowly inhabitants...." (U. B., p. 28)

"The religionist of faith believes in a God who fosters survival, the Father in heaven, the God of love." (U. B., p. 68)

It was as a result of this clustering of truths, and similar repeated support for the importance of the family circles, that this listing emerged. Hopefully, nothing really essential to the gospel has been left out, and all elements connect to the central symbol of the family.

These truths and circles can be explored and developed within each of our lives. If you would like to try working with this framework in your own spiritual life, you might start with Inner Family activity: prayer, worship, and communion. The first priority is to begin and maintain a habit of regular prayer and worship. Even if you spend only 15-20 minutes a day, I believe you will start to experience powerful results.

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You can use these elements of the family of God's way as a framework, a kind of inner process template. You can try to spend inner time working with each of the seven truths on a daily basis, living with them, experiencing them, letting them unfold inside of you. And you can pray about how to live the truths more fully within each of the family circles.

You might find that, as you start to get your Inner Family life going strong, it is natural to begin applying these truths in the other family circles as well—in your home with your partner and children, with fellow believers and believers from other traditions, and in your life in general.

You may see these truths blossoming in your life in different ways: encountering a sister or brother with a problem and feeling the satisfaction of helping them with it; or encountering a difficult choice, asking for a sense of God's will, and getting clarity; or perhaps during a pause in the day, feeling the Father's presence within loving you, and loving back; or at the end of a long day, looking up at the stars in the night sky, and getting excited about the eternal adventure.

Living as a child in God's family can become an ever-present experience for each of us. The potential of the family of God symbol lies in the power it has to unify human experience, if it becomes an actual way of living. There is great life coherence in the integration of family relationships on all conceivable levels; from the original and inner families to the home family, from the fellowship family to the family of all believers, from the global family of all human beings to the universal family of all beings in the Father's vast creation.

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(These ideas were presented in an earlier form at the Fellowship's 1993 International Conference under the title "The Familist Way," copyright 1993)

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A Clarification

The Spring issue of the Journal carried an article "Understanding Evil in Human Experience" in which the following paragraph appeared:

The second major source of evil in human experience is centered in finite personalities. Much of the suffering experienced in our world is the result of human evil—the ignorant violation of universe law and spiritual truth, and in humankind's sinful behavior—knowing and deliberate infraction of natural law and the will of God. These innumerable human forms of evil and sin precipitate crime and violence, and are socially compounded, resulting in brutalities like Dachau and Auschwitz and in wars with mass destruction like Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It has been called to my attention that some people reading this might assume that I was implying that Dachau and Auschwitz were in the same ethical classification as Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This certainly was not intended. Under *The Urantia Book* definitions of evil and sin, Dachau and Auschwitz are sinful human activities; while Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and war in general, would usually be regarded as human evils (lack of perfection). My intent was to cite Hiroshima and Nagasaki as illustrations of mass destruction, not to equate them ethically with Dachau and Auschwitz.

-MJS

The Principles of Jesus' Teaching

Richard I. Bain

It is a great privilege to be a teacher, especially to be a teacher of *The Urantia Book*. But it is also an awesome responsibility to teach about a book whose authors identify as the Fifth Epochal Revelation. Quite often the initial impression of this book will be determined by what we say and how we say it. Can we measure up to such a responsibility? I believe that we can, with the assistance of the Spirit of Truth, become worthy teachers. We can do this because we have one of the greatest teachers of all time as our example and mentor. We who aspire to be teachers of *The Urantia Book* would do well to consider and adapt the principles used by Jesus in his teaching for he was a consummate teacher. In a sense, his whole life was a series of lessons in which he taught the world not only through what he said, but what he did. His role as teacher is especially notable during his time with Gonod and Ganid, the Indian merchant and his son, as well as his time with the apostles and disciples during his three year public ministry. In fact, the very principles he used in teaching were those he taught to his apostles and disciples.

Even if we never expect to be a teacher, if we talk to others about *The Urantia Book*, then we can be sure that sooner or later some spiritually hungry soul will pepper us with questions about this book and then we will suddenly be thrust into the role of teacher. Are we prepared to function in this role? Only a few of us can hope to be the master teacher that Jesus was, but I believe we can all function acceptably if we adopt and incorporate Jesus' principles of teaching into our teaching.

By principles, I mean the way Jesus approached teaching and the philosophy behind his methods, as opposed to the methods themselves or the content of his teaching. But it is sometimes difficult to separate the principles from the methods. The following list is my attempt to point out many of the principles that guided Jesus' teaching.

Teaching Principles of Jesus

1. Respect and be sensitive to a person's beliefs and the customs associated with their religion. On page 1655, the authors tell us that Jesus dealt with the Jewish traditions in a positive manner. He pointed out that which was good in the Jewish teachings of his day, but he did not compromise truth to win souls for the kingdom. Jesus used the best of Jewish scripture to teach the truths he wished to convey. (pp. 1674, 1767, 1769) He advised his apostles to avoid attacking existing older teachings. (pp. 1582, 1456) For instance, Jesus pointed out to his apostles when he first taught them, that he did not denounce the teachings of Moses and the prophets. (p. 1592)

The Principles of Jesus' Teaching, cont.

2. Add something of value to a person's religion; don't try to take away from a person's system of beliefs. (p. 1592) Emphasize what is good in a person's belief system; ignore the undesirable; let the good crowd it out. This is the method Jesus used in working with the leaders of various religious groups in Rome. (p. 1456) There may be those times when something you say will undermine an incorrect belief. When this happens, be sure to offer something of greater value for that which is no longer credible. (p. 1672)

3. Never use fear as a motivator; rather, accentuate the positive. All too often religious teachers have relied on guilt and fear to bring people into the fold. True, Jesus did warn that the unfruitful vines would be destroyed, but more importantly he taught that our Father loves us and we should love one another as spiritual brothers and sisters. (p. 1592)

4. Adapt the content and level to the pupil. (p. 1692) Consider the comprehension capacity of the students. (p. 1535) Note that Jesus did not expect the same level of understanding of the Alphaeus twins as he did of his other apostles. Jesus also counseled his apostles and disciples to begin with the simple and progress to the more advanced truths. He told them to bring people into the temple before explaining all the details of the temple. (p. 1592)

5. Be humble. We are separated from our pupils only by our accumulated knowledge and, hopefully, evolved wisdom. One day some of them may be better teachers than we are. Even Jesus said, when addressed as "Good Teacher," "Why do you call me good?" (p. 2088) He reminded his apostles that, "It is not your kingdom; you are only ambassadors." (p. 1593) Lest we think that because we have *The Urantia Book* we somehow have a monopoly on truth, let us remember that a portion of the book is a restatement of eternal truths that have been taught to mortals through many books and many teachers. We are privileged to have the clearest restatement of these truths available since the time of Jesus, but our possession of the book does not make us in any way chosen or special.

6. Use examples and ideas from everyday life to teach deep spiritual truths. (p. 1692) Jesus did just this with his parables. Consider his parables concerning new wine in old wineskins, or sewing an unshrunk patch on a garment. He used many different sorts of illustrations from the everyday life of the Jewish people. He used illustrations familiar to bakers, carpenters, farmers, herders, tailors, and those of many other professions. He used illustrations familiar to the everyday lives of both men and women.

7. Be flexible and adaptable. When Jesus was teaching his apostles, they might ask a question somewhat off the subject Jesus was teaching about, but Jesus would seize upon this opportunity to teach a valuable lesson on the new subject. While Jesus did do some structured teaching, his lessons were more often spontaneous, arising from the

situations in which he and his apostles and disciples were involved. As the authors of the Jesus papers express it, "Jesus was a teacher who taught as the occasion served; he was not a systematic teacher." (p. 1672)

8. Live what you teach. This is perhaps the most difficult principle to follow. Jesus said in reference to himself that whoever has seen the Son has seen the Father. He not only taught about the Father but he acted as our Father would in his interactions with others. Jesus lived what he taught. (p. 1749) But we aren't Jesus—can we really expect to live up to his level? Perhaps not, but can we expect people to believe our words if our lives are a poor example of the truths we try to teach? As Jesus told his apostles, "Of the teacher more is expected than of the pupil." (p. 1570) It is difficult to hold up truth, beauty, and goodness as supreme values if they don't shine forth in our lives. Jesus spoke to this issue when he said, "The measure wherewith truth seekers are drawn to you represents the measure of your truth endowment, your righteousness. The extent to which you have to go with your message to the people is, in a way, the measure of your failure to live the whole or righteous life, the truth-co-ordinated life." (p. 1726) If we are spiritually fragrant, then we will attract people to us.

9. Do what you love. If teaching others doesn't inspire you, then perhaps you should consider another role in the Urantia community. Many hands are needed for innumerable tasks that don't entail teaching. Be an Andrew or a David Zebedee. Nevertheless, if you are called upon to be a teacher because no one else is available, give it your best effort. If you feel intimidated, consider all the spiritual forces that are aligned with you: the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, your guardian angel, your Thought Adjuster, and the other person's Thought Adjuster. If there is any spiritual receptivity in the other person's soul, how can you fail with such a great team on your side?

10. Don't isolate yourself from life. Jesus often went off to pray and commune with the Father, but it was usually to pray for his apostles and the work he commissioned them to do. He participated in life fully. He worked at many different professions and did them all well. He spent time learning how people of many different cultures live and worship. He taught and fraternized with the poorest of the poor and the most wealthy of his culture. He was a versatile and well rounded person.

There are many other books besides *The Urantia Book*, and many other spiritual communities besides our Urantia community. How can you compare *The Urantia Book* with the Bible to a Christian inquirer if you know very little about the Bible? What would you say to a Baha'i or a Muslim about *The Urantia Book*? It is good to have a support group and friends within the Urantia community, but do you have friends who are not students of the book?

11. Expect some disappointment and you won't be overly discouraged. When Jesus and the apostles visited Chorazin, they were not well received; the apostles were very discouraged about this. (p. 1644) At another time, James and John wanted Jesus to call down fire on the village of Samaritans who would not let them stay in the village overnight. (p. 1553) Obviously, James and John had a bit to learn about dealing with disappointment.

Surely, few of us will have to suffer as much disappointment as Jesus did. His family misunderstood him and, except for Ruth and later his brother James, did not fully accept his mission and teachings. The Jewish hierarchy almost unanimously rejected his teachings and even plotted to kill him. After the feeding of the 5,000, most of Jesus' followers turned away from him. And finally, he was executed on the cross as a common criminal. Many of those we would like to introduce to the book will reject it. It will be a real test of our character to see if we can accept this rejection but still be friends with that person. Like the Havona pilgrims, we must "feast upon uncertainty, fatten upon disappointment." (p. 291)

12. Don't rely on a strictly emotional approach in teaching truth. (p. 1765) The authors advise us that strong emotions are not necessarily a sign of spiritual experience. (p. 1766) While we should not rely on highly emotional appeals, we can use them to gain attention when appropriate. Jesus taught the apostles that they can use emotions as a key to open the door to the mind, then appeal to the soul through the mind. (p. 1730)

13. Don't do for others the things that they can do for themselves. Jesus several times told his apostles that they had to make decisions themselves; Jesus would not take that learning experience from them. (p. 1668) Also recall that when Rodan came seeking counsel with Jesus, the Master declined and assigned Nathaniel and Thomas to confer with Rodan. Jesus knew that Nathaniel and Thomas were capable of helping Rodan integrate his philosophy with his new found faith; and Jesus' faith in them was justified. This principle is certainly an apt one for teaching our children independence.

14. Be patient with everyone, including yourself. (pp. 1593, 1590, 1672, 1739) Jesus had every reason to be disappointed with his apostles. They were forever debating about who would be greatest in the coming kingdom. Even at the last supper, after all the times Jesus had admonished them about the last being first, they were vying for the seats of honor close to Jesus and once again debating about their positions in the coming kingdom. But Jesus dealt patiently with their human failings until the end.

Tact and tolerance are the handmaidens of patience. Jesus counseled his apostles that these are necessary virtues when dealing with people. (p. 1740) Patience, tact, and tolerance are the lubricants for the wheels of progress.

15. Every good teacher is also a good student. human Jesus wasn't born with inherent knowledge. As a child and as a young man, he had to learn new ideas as we do—at least until he was able to contact his divine nature. (p. 1460) I have often been surprised at the insights a new student with a fresh point of view can bring to a study of *The Urantia Book*. This book is such a treasure trove of information and ideas that we can hardly exhaust them even after studying the book all our lives. I admire people such as the late Dr. Jim Mills, who went back to school, obtained his Master's degree, and then his Ph.D., long after he retired so that he could attempt to bring *The Urantia Book* to the notice of academia.

16. Be genuine and natural. (p. 1771) Nothing will alienate people more quickly than discovering that a teacher is not what he or she pretends to be. The authors instruct us that Jesus was unaffected and natural in his dealings with people. (p. 1594)

17. Don't dogmatize. (p. 1592) The authors of *The Urantia Book* tell us quite plainly that the book has some flaws and that it is only one of a continuing series of revelations. If we hold this book up as perfect truth, we are bound to be embarrassed at some point as those we seek to teach find and point out the flaws. The authors point out that attempting to crystallize truth is a sure way to kill it. As Jesus told his disciples, "You are not given truth to crystallize into settled, safe and honored forms." (pg. 1917)

18. Be a good listener as Jesus was. (p. 1874) Sometimes we are so anxious to tell the story of *The Urantia Book* that we forget to pause to get the reaction of our listeners. One of the greatest gifts we can give someone is to listen sympathetically to them. But sometimes being a good listener requires priming the pump to get the words flowing. Jesus knew how to draw people out. Sometimes he used a startling saying such as telling someone that they had to be "born again." Or he would often ask a question to get the mind of the other person activated.

19. Respect the personality of the individual you are teaching. Don't use physical force or overpowering arguments to coerce men and women into the kingdom. (p. 1765) As Jesus taught his apostles, "allow each soul to develop in its own way." (p. 1582)

20. Use humor as an effective teaching tool. (pp. 549, 1874) The authors mention how Jesus could have good naturedly handled the unruly crowd at the synagogue in Nazareth if the apostles hadn't stirred them up. (p. 1686) On page 1736 we are informed that Jesus appreciated humor. Unfortunately, much of Jesus' humor is lost in the Bible and even in *The Urantia Book*. It may be in part because his humor was subtle and related to the Jewish culture of his day. Also, much of it may be lost when his words are translated into English. We do know that he referred to James and John humorously as the "Sons of

The Principles of Jesus' Teaching, cont.

Thunder" after they wanted to call down lightning on some Samaritans. (p. 1552) Also, his giving the name Peter to Simon Peter apparently had humorous overtones. (p. 1550) A number of years ago, I read a book by Elton Trueblood called *The Humor of Christ*, in which he points out the types of humor found in Jesus' words in the Bible. The humor is there, if you look for it.

The authors of *The Urantia Book* devote a significant amount of space to humor when describing life on the mansion worlds. One of the great advantages of humor as a teaching aide is that it helps us to achieve insight into new truths or facts. (p. 549)

21. Don't overteach. One of the illustrations of human philosophy used in teaching morontia mota states in part, "a pint can never hold a quart." (p. 556) Jesus knew the capacity of his apostles; he didn't overteach them. The authors warn us that overteaching can precipitate confusion. (p. 1535) The authors also remind us, "While light dispels darkness, it can also be so 'blinding' as to confuse and frustrate." (p. 1572)

22. If you wish to be a teacher of religious values, it would be wise to ignore the civic, social, and economic realms in your teaching. (p. 1542) It is no secret that certain conservative religious groups have tried to gain control of the United States congress. This attempt seems to have backfired, and some are now calling for a return to attaining spiritual ends through changing individuals. And it has been to the detriment of some of the liberal Christian churches that they have focused on social action while neglecting spiritual issues.

Jesus refrained from commenting on scientific issues, social concerns, economic policies, and political problems.

When pressed on the issue of the rule of Rome over the Jews, he wisely said, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's and to God the things which are God's." (pp. 1580, 1899)

I believe that in an age to come, *The Urantia Book* may achieve a status approaching that of the Bible in Western Civilization today. There will be many with a great hunger to know what the book has to say on numerous questions. There are those who will be so awed by the size and complexity of this book that they will seek out teachers to help them understand the deeper concepts. There will be others who lack the patience or time for an in-depth study of the book who will look to teachers to give them the essence of the book. The time for such a teaching corps has not arrived yet, but the hour for preparing for such a time is upon us.

I believe that today we are in the phase of the Urantia community's evolution of teaching teachers. We need to give them the tools to successfully introduce the book to many different sorts of people in many different situations. With what better tools could we equip them than the teaching methods and principles of Jesus?

Richard Bain is an electrical engineer and an editor of *Interface International*. He is a long time student of *The Urantia Book*.

Some day a reformation in the Christian church may strike deep enough to get back to the unadulterated religion of Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. (2091:5)

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