

# JOURNAL



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**A NEWS JOURNAL FOR READERS OF *The URANTIA Book***

Produced by International URANTIA Association (IUA)

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⊙ **Also included: A special insert listing reader service organizations and contacts.**

## From the Editors

The *IUA JOURNAL* is dedicated to assisting all readers in their efforts to study *The URANTIA Book*, to inform readers about current and future events, to assist association between readers, and to serve as a communication avenue for readers.

We are interested in your thoughts and comments about the *JOURNAL*, the knowledge, wisdom and experiences you've had related to *The URANTIA Book*, study of it, and reader and IUA activities. We request and will appreciate your offering your thoughts and suggestions, as well as contributing articles, poems, study aids and other items that *JOURNAL* readers may find helpful or of interest. All these types of interesting and helpful and even fun or funny material are welcome for consideration for publication.

The *JOURNAL* seeks to collect and begin publishing helpful reader-developed study aids as a regular feature in the near future. If you have either old or new articles, study aids, or other contributions you are interested in offering to help other readers in their exploration of *The URANTIA Book*, please send them to us (addresses are listed at the end of the *JOURNAL*).

In an upcoming edition of the *JOURNAL* we plan to explore study of the book, study group formation, study group activities, techniques that readers have found useful, and discoveries readers might share with others. Articles and other submissions about study of the book, formation of study groups, participation and experiences in study groups, and any study aids are always welcome, but will be particularly appreciated for this upcoming issue devoted to study and study groups. Please try to forward any you may have ready for consideration, by April 30, 1997.

We hope you will enjoy this edition of the *JOURNAL* which we prepared with love and care for you, and that you are as excited about the upcoming study edition as we are. And we wish to thank those who continue to generously provide contributions for the *JOURNAL*. These gifts enrich other readers as they pursue study and fraternity. ❄ ❄ ❄

## Conference News

### **USUA National Conference Glen Ivy, California, USA "An Eternal Perspective" May 15 - 19, 1997**

This US national conference is fast approaching. Attendance is limited to under 100, and there are only a few reservations for singles and couples still available. Glen Ivy offers a modern, upscale lodge plus villas designed especially for intimate conferences. It is located in a peaceful canyon of the Cleveland National Forest, midway between Los Angeles and San Diego, in Southern California.

Many participants will be driving. Others will arrive at Ontario International Airport, in Ontario, California, where shuttle service will be available. The price for the conference, \$350US, is quite reasonable, and covers conference activities and materials, sleeping accommodations, and food. A preliminary deposit of \$100US will secure your reservation until April 15, which is the deadline for payment-in-full. Payment can be made by credit card (by phone or fax), check or money order.

If you would like to attend, we recommend that you make your reservation as soon as possible, since it is expected that the maximum number of attendees allowed, will indeed attend. It will, without a doubt, be an exciting and interesting gathering for *URANTIA Book* readers, and most especially for IUA members. For further information, please contact:

**Joe or Alice McCoy**  
Phone: 1/209/834-4520  
Fax: 1/209/834-2949

**ANZURA National Conference**  
**Sydney, Australia**  
**"Dare to Be Godlike—**  
**the Ultimate Challenge—**  
**A Practical for Ascenders"**  
**October 3 - 6, 1997**

This Australia/New Zealand national conference, sponsored by the Australia and New Zealand URANTIA Association, will be held in the Ave Maria Retreat Center, overlooking beautiful Sydney Harbour. For more information, contact:

**Ysbrand Oosten**  
Phone: 61/2-9228-5821  
E-mail: oosteny@www.nsw.gov.au

**IUA International Conference**  
**Helsinki, Finland "Facts, Meanings**  
**and Values"**  
**August 7 - 10, 1998**

The next international IUA conference will be held in Gustavelund, Helsinki, Finland, and sponsored by the Finnish URANTIA Society. International IUA conferences are currently scheduled for every second year. Stay tuned for further information.

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**I U A & Foundation News**

**Coordinating Committee**  
**Appointments**

We are pleased to welcome Catherine Jones as Chairperson, and Jo Anne Nelson as Secretary, for the Coordinating Committee. We also thank Lee Armstrong for the services he so generously provided as the previous Chairperson. He will continue to serve as a member on the Coordinating Committee. The other members appointed to the Committee are:

Neil Francey, Pat Goodson, Seppo Kanerva, Jay Peregrine, Trevor Swadling and Michael Zehr.

The Coordinating Committee has been responsible, in large part, for establishing the many IUA organizations which currently exist, as well as providing support for and coordination between the IUA and the URANTIA Foundation. Often, the valiant efforts of these few go unnoticed and unacknowledged, yet this dedicated group works diligently to forward revelation and brotherhood.

**New Associations**

We are also pleased to announce the formation of the first Canadian IUA group, Northern Lights. Brian King, of Mississauga, Ontario, serves as Northern Lights' first (pro tem) president.

With Northern Lights, this brings the total number of associations up to 19. In addition, two new IUA organizations are in the process of forming: one in primarily French-speaking Quebec, Canada; and another in Kentucky, USA. We look forward to welcoming them to our growing IUA family.

**New Trustee**

We are pleased to announce that Kwan Choi from Iowa has been elected as the new Trustee of URANTIA Foundation. Kwan is a Professor of Economics at Iowa State University, having received his Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Iowa. Kwan and his wife, Kathy moved from Korea to the USA in 1972. They have three boys aged 13, 18 and 20. Both Kwan and Kathy have been devoted students of *The URANTIA Book* for over a decade and have been holding family readings with their children. Kwan serves as an Editor of two major Economic Journals. Kwan says: "I try to practice the teachings of *The URANTIA Book* in my profession. When selecting articles for publication I, with the help of referees, try to eliminate all kinds of bias and discrimination."

Kwan brings a fresh element to the board of Trustees as his cultural background, coupled with his in-depth knowledge of *The URANTIA Book*, will add an expanded view to the Trustees' outlook in these times of International expansion of the URANTIA revelation.

## Study Group and Reader Mailing List Update Project

The URANTIA Foundation is currently in the process of updating its information to assist readers in contacting one another, and to facilitate referring readers to other readers and study groups in their area, or forming study groups, when none exist nearby. When this project is complete, you may be surprised to find how many other readers may be near you.

If you are not sure whether the Foundation has your current information, please contact Damian Bondi at the Foundation's Chicago office or send your updated information by fax, e-mail or regular post, to his attention there. Confidentiality of those on the list is an important consideration—if you do not desire to be contacted by other readers, please indicate this, and your privacy will be respected. You will continue to receive news and information as well as the names of readers whom you may contact, if you desire to do so. ❄ ❄ ❄

## Brotherhood and Service

Students of *The URANTIA Book*, and especially IUA members, have good reason to be excited and pleased about current and upcoming activities.

A Russian translation has been completed and is now in publication by the URANTIA Foundation. Many other new translations are scheduled to become available in the very near future, as well as over the next few years. Along with the English version, the French, Finnish, Spanish, and now the Russian versions are currently available. The Dutch translation will be published later this year, and the Korean and Swedish translations will be ready for publication in 1998. Seven other translations are scheduled for shortly after this.

In addition, the URANTIA Foundation is actively working to update and enhance its reader services. To assist all readers the URANTIA Foundation now has offices located in Finland, France, Spain, England and Australia, in addition to the main office in Chicago, USA.

One very important project which is underway is the updating and upgrading of the reader and study group mailing list and centralized referral system. Completion of this project will enable the IUA to perform its services far more effectively.

With all these translation efforts, along with the steadily expanding sales of existing language versions of *The URANTIA Book*, we may all look forward, very soon, to sharing the book with many new readers from many nations and cultures around the world. Many of these new readers will look to existing readers and to the IUA for fraternity and help as they seek to grasp the messages of the book, incorporate these into their lives, and seek association with others who are like-minded.

The IUA is a task-oriented, social and service organization to foster in-depth study of *The URANTIA Book* and the orderly dissemination of its teachings. All people of Urantia, now and in the future, are intended to benefit from the tasks performed by IUA members. The IUA is neither associated with, nor a competitor of, any religion. IUA welcomes people of all faiths, races, and nationalities. While all readers may contribute towards forwarding these important projects, the IUA was specially formed for several important purposes.

One of the primary tasks of IUA is to put readers of *The URANTIA Book* in touch with one another. These are the some of the important functions IUA performs:

1. Referring readers to study groups.
2. Responding to reader inquiries.
3. Sponsoring meetings, seminars, and conferences.
4. Developing teaching and leadership skills.
5. Publishing newsletters and periodicals.

As new reader needs arise, IUA may adapt to meet the challenge. You may personally help. Help is needed in these efforts, as well as to assist those who desire to set up study groups, to do so. As a reader who has already discovered and personally benefited through receiving *The URANTIA Book*, your knowledge, time, effort, and other contributions in the near future will be invaluable to those who are earnestly seeking the truths which you have found.

Now is the time to consider what you might do to help. If you would like to set up a new study

group in your area, or if you have suggestions, want to find out more about what you can do, or are already prepared to offer your services or other contributions now, or soon, please contact any of the following:

- Your local or national IUA, or any IUA member;
- Catherine Jones, Chairperson for the Coordinating Committee for the IUA, or any Coordinating Committee member;
- Any URANTIA Foundation office;
- Send your inquiries and comments to us at the *JOURNAL*.

A separate insert with information regarding how to contact individuals or groups is enclosed in this issue.

We hope you will consider what you may be able to offer others at this critical juncture in the spread of revealed truth. It is personal participation and service by each of us that will make the difference. The time has come: *"You see for yourselves that the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Let us all, therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest that he send forth still more laborers into his fields..."* [1681:8] We thank those who have worked so hard already, the many who continue to do so, and we hope you will join us in these worthy endeavors to benefit your brothers and sisters, both nearby and around the world. ☘ ☘ ☘

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***"You who know these truths must yield the increase of the fruits of the spirit and manifest a growing devotion to the unselfish service of your fellow servants. And remember that, inasmuch as you minister to one of the least of my brethren, you have done this service to me."*** [1917:1]

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## Conflict and Spiritual Brotherhood

*Jeffrey Wattles, Ohio USA*

It brings a smile to think of all the ways there are to go wrong when conflict arises. One can underestimate the issue or overestimate it; one can err in deciding whether or not to get involved; and if one decides to get involved, one may pick the wrong side; even if one picks the right side, one may go about it in the wrong way. Clearly, we have much to learn about conflict.

In *A Different Drummer*, F. Scott Peck distinguishes four stages of community: in the first stage, superficial harmony prevails, and people think that they are enjoying community. In the second stage, conflict rages, and the illusion of community is destroyed. In the third stage, people finally let go of whatever they are holding on to that blocks community. The fourth stage—which Peck reports having experienced in many a weekend workshop with a company here or an organization there—is like the descent of the Spirit of Truth at Pentecost. I take it that the surrender in question does not imply that one must necessarily change one's beliefs or abandon one's commitments, but relax the hold on them so that something new can dawn.

Conflict between believers who are supposed to enjoy community is especially troublesome. A divided house undermines the credibility of our testimony to the wider world. How can a follower of Jesus be true to the requirements of spiritual brotherhood while carrying out one's responsibilities in the face of serious conflict? *The URANTIA Book* has much to offer on the topic. After an introductory attempt to indicate a cosmic perspective, this essay will focus on how Jesus handled conflict.

### I. Gleanings from Parts I - III

Stop and ponder the eternal patterns of unity and harmony. The unity of the Paradise Trinity is so perfect that the three are one. Thanks to the administration of the Eternal Son in Havona, the spiritual status and the energy states are in *perfect and perpetual balance* [83:5]. How, then, do

tension and conflict arise? *While infinity is on the one hand UNITY, on the other it is DIVERSITY without end or limit* [1262:1].

In the beginning, the First Source and Center created the first absolute divinity tension between deified and undeified reality [6:1]. This tension creates a challenge in the evolving universes *where spirit through the mediation of mind is struggling for the mastery* [1275:1]. Our finite, moral beginnings are beset with potential evil, but if we fail to make reasonable progress, actual evil results [1435:6]; and what begins as creative tension can end in conflict where the part blocks cooperation with the creative purpose of the whole.

The First Source and Center originates another source of creative tension by articulating himself in the Paradise Trinity with seven possible viewpoints individually or in association. Each of the Seven Master Spirits represents a particular deity function and portrays a particular deity attitude. Even on high there is an instituted procedure for composing differences and coming to a unified group decision [188:3].

When conflict arises in the superuniverses it is handled in a manner consistent with divine law [114#6; 372#7]. There are regularly constituted tribunals [179-183]. Ultimately, the freedom of the part is coordinated with the good of the whole [137#7]; and there are many groups of beings who aid greatly in this process, including such beings as the universal conciliators [276#3], the social architects [432-33], the spirits of brotherhood, the souls of peace, and the spirits of trust [437]. In the discussion on Memories of Mercy we are taught: *You should realize that there is a great reward of personal satisfaction in being first just, next fair, then patient, then kind. And then, on that foundation, if you choose and have it in your heart, you can take the next step and really show mercy; but you cannot exhibit mercy in and of itself... True mercy comes only as the beautiful climax to these preceding adjuncts to group understanding, mutual appreciation, fraternal fellowship, spiritual communion, and divine harmony* [315:1].

On the one hand, conflict is essential. *New meanings only emerge amid conflict; and conflict persists only in the face of refusal to espouse the higher values connoted in superior meanings* [1097:5]. At the same time, it is crucial to deal well

with the emotions of conflict. *The mental poisons of fear, anger, envy, jealousy, suspicion, and intolerance...tremendously interfere with the spiritual progress of the evolving soul* [1204:3]. Eventually we outgrow *clashes of mind and wars of opinion* [278:3].

As we turn to Jesus, it is helpful to recognize a distinction between social and spiritual brotherhood. Social brotherhood depends upon evolutionary progress in the realms of social fraternity, intellectual cross-fertilization, ethical awakening, political wisdom, and spiritual insight. Spiritual brotherhood, by contrast, is something that can be immediately attained, and Jesus has shown us the way [597:3].

## II. Conflict in the life and teachings of Jesus

I take as my key the following passage:

*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 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.* [1866:3; cf. 2085:3; 2086:2]

In the venture of trying to discern analogies between some current situation and a situation in which we see Jesus acting, safety lies in remembering to regard Jesus' life more as an inspiration than as a detailed example to be imitated [1425:6; 1585:1]. It would also be a mistake to apply the Master's teachings for the individual directly to social and political organizations [1605:2]. Only in prayer can we gain the discernment and personal guidance necessary in a given situation [1002#9].

### 1. Jesus' trust in the friendly universe

Michael of Nebadon, originating in the Universal Father and the Eternal Son, in partnership with the Universe Mother Spirit, having achieved the

status of a Master Son, fully represents in his relationships the unity and harmony in which we hope to participate. It is refreshing to contemplate the fact that, however remote harmony and unity may be at present, they do characterize our source and our destiny.

From the standpoint of his philosophic perspective, Jesus could say, "*I am absolutely assured that the entire universe is friendly to me—this all-powerful truth I insist on believing with a wholehearted trust in spite of all appearances to the contrary*" [1469:3; 1457#2]. Jesus, the calm and happy laborer [1509:1], is the living antidote for anxious, retaliatory, or fanatical responses to evil.

## 2. Jesus' positive approach

Jesus was bighearted and tolerant [1583:4]. *It seemed to be his purpose in all social situations to teach patience, tolerance, and forgiveness.* [1580:8] He focused on the individual, made extraordinary efforts to get to know all kinds of people, and he loved people [cf. 1098:1] with a love based on understanding. When Jesus worked with the best of the religious teachers in Rome, *Never once did he attack their errors or even mention the flaws in their teachings. In each case he would select the truth in what they taught and then proceed so to embellish and illuminate this truth in their minds that in a very short time this enhancement of the truth effectively crowded out the associated error* [1456:0]; cf. [1592:4]. This is a good technique to practice in workshops.

"*The Positive Nature of Jesus' Religion*" [1769#5] shows the balance between Jesus' gentleness and his creative aggressiveness. For example, with the scriptures of his day, Jesus appropriated the best portions and did not mention the rest. His teaching of nonresistance does not mean to suffer evil without complaint and without resistance...*The turning of the other cheek, or whatever act that may typify, demands initiative, necessitates vigorous, active, and courageous expression of the believer's personality.* [1770:1] And ponder the gentle effectiveness of Jesus' response to the man beating his wife, tapping him on the shoulder, offering marvelously revelatory words, and smiling on him warmly [1470#2]. Jesus approached wrongdoers in an attitude of mercy.

Whoever experiences the love of Jesus knows what it is like, and without this foundation, the harder aspects of Jesus' life and teachings cannot be comprehended or truly applied.

## 3. Jesus' inner techniques for processing conflict

We know that dealing with conflict involves considerable commotion in the philosophic realms of the mind [1097:6]. Jesus taught, *All forms of soul conflict consist in the lack of harmony between the moral, or spiritual, self-consciousness and the purely intellectual self-consciousness* [1478:5] and that dangerous conflicts of allegiance are resolved by being wholly dedicated to the Father's will [1480:4].

Jesus processed conflict in a strikingly effective way. For three years, from age eleven to thirteen, his refusal to take a one-sided solution led to the development of a most serviceable concept. *Throughout this and the two following years Jesus suffered great mental distress as the result of his constant effort to adjust his personal views of religious practices and social amenities to the established beliefs of his parents. He was distraught by the conflict between the urge to be loyal to his own convictions and the conscientious admonition of dutiful submission to his parents.... However, he never shirked the responsibility of making the necessary daily adjustments between these realms of loyalty to one's personal convictions and duty toward one's family, and he achieved the satisfaction of effecting an increasingly harmonious blending of personal convictions and family obligations into a masterful concept of group solidarity based upon loyalty, fairness, tolerance, and love.* [1372:6]

Jesus processed the shock of his first visit to Jerusalem, when he saw the repulsive aspects of the practices surrounding temple by repeatedly retiring for meditation, trying to think things out, and emerged with a superb way of asking questions and responding to questions in his discussions with the religious teachers [Paper 125]. After the death of Joseph, Jesus spent two years carefully thinking through the forest of problems connected to his future career as a religious teacher [1389#3]. He meditated all night, thinking how to deal with the Messianic hopes of his followers, and made the compromise no longer to resist their regarding him as the Messiah [1532:1]. For him, prayer was an avoidance of emotional tension [and] a prevention of

*conflict* [2089:0]. His wholehearted concentration on accomplishing the Father's will enabled him to process conflict more rapidly than others [1708:3; cf. 1400:7]. He took time off for spiritual communion and prayed for assurance and strength in Gethsemane.

#### 4. Jesus' refusal to defend himself

Upon the outbreak of the Lucifer rebellion, Michael of Nebadon elected to remain aloof, while Gabriel took up the noble task of unceasingly exposing the rebels' sophistries [605#5]. When the Son of Man encountered his universe enemies on Mount Hermon, he simply committed them to *the adjudication of the Judges of a greater universe* [1493:6]. Jesus refused to defend himself and taught nonresistance. Even as a youth he was unwilling to fight for his rights [1368:6]. And as a prisoner he superbly refused to defend himself [1978-96].

#### 5. Jesus' avoidance of conflict

After training and ordaining his apostles, Jesus took the team to proclaim their message in Jerusalem. He did not attack the old ways but proclaimed a positive message. When opposition grew hot, he withdrew [1605#8]. During the early phase of his public work, Jesus quietly went about taking over the work of John the Baptist [1626:2]. After the Nazareth rejection, Jesus used the protective strategy of concealing his message in parables [1689:2]. He even entered Jerusalem for his final interaction with his enemies riding on a donkey, a symbol of peace and friendship. [1881:3]

Jesus taught others to avoid conflict, not in the sense of repressing the recognition of problems but rather in the sense of strategic bypassing of unhelpful entanglements. The Ordination Sermon sets forth the standards for those who would be ambassadors of a future spiritual age [1570#3]. The apostles are told, *Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.* No fleeting benediction, only persistent and heartfelt prayer will fulfill this assignment; love seeks out most those who are most in need of love. The apostles are not to go to law among themselves. They are to remove the log from their own eye before removing the speck from another's eye. Jesus' injunction not to judge but to show mercy is coupled with an exhortation "...to

*show just judgment and keen wisdom. Present not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample your gems under foot and turn to rend you."* [1571:5] Jesus warns against false prophets who "*come to you in sheep's clothing, while on the inside they are as ravening wolves."*

Jesus did not make the mistake of letting his philosophy of a friendly universe confuse different levels of perspective [1031:1]; he also warned his apostles about the enmity of the world [1946#3]. A lucid recognition of what he faced guided his responses.

One way to avoid conflict is to follow what I call the receptivity principle, sharing truth proportionate to the person's receptivity for truth, as illustrated by the fact that Jesus chose to work among the Jews, the group with the most advanced religious understanding of the day. Moreover, he gave advanced teachings, with the potential for unhelpful controversy, only to advanced questioners, such as Nathaniel, and then only on the condition that they promised not to publicize such teachings [1767#4].

#### 6. Jesus and mediation

What can we learn about mediation [275-79; 411:3,5] from Jesus? "*Blessed are the peacemakers,*" he said [1575:3]. Although Jesus refused to mediate a property dispute and *never meddled with the temporal affairs of even his apostles* [1821:4], he did harmonize the different versions of the gospel taught by his apostles [1658:1] and he taught them not quarrel over their parable interpretations [1690:3], though he did correct their message after their enthusiasm over his resurrection led them away from the center of the gospel [2052:4].

When his apostles were having social difficulties with the apostles of John, Jesus rather took his own twelve away for a time of diversion and relaxation, saying "*You cannot talk men out of their perplexities when they reach such a stage of involvement, and when so many persons with strong feelings are concerned.*" [1610:4] The three-day vacation with a moratorium on discussing the troublesome situation proved very beneficial.

When the two groups of apostles came together, however, he again refused to preside, though he gave talks on sympathy, cooperation, and tolerance [1624#6]. I dream of workshops,

conferences, and essay contests devoted to competitive and cooperative efforts to reconstruct imaginatively what Jesus might have said on these themes. During the apostles' three weeks together, they *learned to differ, to debate, to contend, to pray, and to compromise, and throughout it all to remain sympathetic with the other person's viewpoint and to maintain at least some degree of tolerance for his honest opinions.* [1625:8] These skills are much needed today. How shall we acquire them except by practice?

### 7. Jesus' provision for maintaining order among believers

Jesus, in the most detailed social teaching that he ever gave, provided a mechanism for dealing with certain serious problems within a congregation of believers. "*The Sermon on Forgiveness*" [1762#1] begins and ends with a parable of forgiveness. The first is the parable of the lost sheep, and the implication is that the purpose of the grievance procedure is to bring back an erring individual into the circuits of the love of the Father's family. The last parable reminds the hearer that those who have been forgiven much should be merciful toward others.

Between these two parables is a strikingly powerful procedure. "*If your brother sins against you, go to him and with tact and patience show him his fault. And do all this between you and him alone. If he will listen to you, then have you won your brother. But if your brother will not hear you, if he persists in the error of his way, go again to him, taking with you one or two mutual friends that you may thus have two or even three witnesses to confirm your testimony and establish the fact that you have dealt justly and mercifully with your offending brother. Now if he refuses to hear your brethren, you may tell the whole story to the congregation, and then, if he refuses to hear the brotherhood, let them take such action as they deem wise; let such an unruly member become an outcast from the kingdom. While you cannot pretend to sit in judgment on the souls of your fellows, and while you may not forgive sins or otherwise presume to usurp the prerogatives of the supervisors of the heavenly hosts, at the same time, it has been committed to your hands that you should maintain temporal order in the kingdom on earth. While you may not meddle with the divine decrees concerning eternal life, you shall determine*

*the issues of conduct as they concern the temporal welfare of the brotherhood on earth.*" [1762:5]

It takes a new epochal maturity for believers to organize for and practice such a procedure. Without the willingness to undertake this procedure, a group may find itself helpless to prevent individuals who mix good and evil from causing untold problems and even gaining the balance of power in a group.

### 8. Jesus' willingness to defend truth

Jesus would stand up for his position when it was attacked. As a child he confronted those who accused him of impiety for drawing a picture of the chazan on the floor of the synagogue school. "*The Discourse on Sonship and Citizenship*" [1929#1] is full of pertinent lessons on the balance of gentleness and strength. So long as believers are not required to worship another than God, they should live in peace with the civil rulers. "*In every possible way—in everything short of your spiritual allegiance to the rulers of the universe—seek to live peaceably with all men. Be you always as wise as serpents but as harmless as doves* [1930:4] *You are indeed to be gentle in your dealings with erring mortals, patient in your intercourse with ignorant men, and forbearing under provocation; but you are also to be valiant in the defense of righteousness, mighty in the promulgation of truth, and aggressive in the preaching of this gospel of the kingdom, even to the ends of the earth.*" [1931:5]

Listen to these words to his gospel messengers. "*We have made no direct attack upon the persons or upon the authority of those who sit in Moses' seat; we only offered them the new light, which they have so vigorously rejected. We have assailed them only by the denunciation of their spiritual disloyalty to the very truths which they profess to teach and safeguard. We clashed with these established leaders and recognized rulers only when they threw themselves directly in the way of the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to the sons of men. And even now, it is not we who assail them, but they who seek our destruction. Do not forget that you are commissioned to go forth preaching only the good news. You are not to attack the old ways; you are skillfully to put the leaven of new truth in the midst of the old beliefs. Let the Spirit of Truth do his own work. Let controversy come only when they who*

*despise the truth force it upon you. But when the willful unbeliever attacks you, do not hesitate to stand in vigorous defense of the truth which has saved and sanctified you.*" [1932:1]

Among his chosen messengers, Jesus was more aggressive; note his attack on their superstitions [1680#3] and his rebuke to Peter [1759#7]. It is always the Master's balance that challenges our discernment. He interceded for Kermeth, the trance prophet [1666:2], but walked out on the cold reception accorded to him by Annas [1596:2]. He defended the right of the strange preacher to teach his odd version of the gospel [1764#2] but blasted the hypocritical religious leaders. The spirit gives the courage needed for such devotion to truth [1575:5; 1582:1; 1607#1].

### 9. Jesus' conduct of open warfare

There was a militant side to the good shepherd as well, who was prepared to defend his flock even with his life. He taught the love of enemies, but he did not call for spiritual unity with the Sanhedrin, and he disentangled himself from the traitorous embrace of Judas [1974:4].

Many readers see only one side of the concept of tolerance. Jesus was very openhearted and taught tolerance, but not bland permissive acceptance of even sinful conduct [1638-39; 1653:3; 1676:5; 1766:5]. *[Jesus] declared that the heavenly Father is not a lax, loose, or foolishly indulgent parent who is ever ready to condone sin and forgive recklessness.* [1653.3] The challenge is to distinguish what behaviors are intolerable [2086:6] as opposed to merely irritating and to learn to respond to what is intolerable in a constructive way [315:1; 1470#2; 1974:3-4].

Jesus did finally go on the offensive, though not until it was necessary to pre-empt a concerted attack by his enemies who were about to declare open warfare on him [1707#1; 1708:1]. But even during this period the Master conducted himself in a manner that was mature, ethically elegant, and spiritually effective. He dealt only with that evil which was squarely in the path of his mission: *Being thus motivated by a wholehearted singleness of purpose, he was not anxiously bothered by the evil in the world.* [1594.5] His replies to challenging questions were dignified, enlightening, and final. He never let anger infect his righteous indignation. In

cleansing the temple, the bloody commerce was simply disorganized; no one's money was taken, no property was destroyed, and order was restored within a few minutes. After the last temple discourse [1905#1], in which another offer of mercy was combined with the words that "*there cannot be peace between light and darkness, between life and death, between truth and error,*" [1905:4] Jesus did not incite revolt. He simply walked out with his followers.

During the period of open warfare, Jesus proclaimed the higher phases of the gospel [1704:5]; this was the period of slow, steady, solid, and more spiritual growth [1718:1] of the kingdom. In addition, the good shepherd protected his sheep by critiques which clarified the radical issues at stake. In his final week in the flesh Jesus demonstrated the superiority of his spiritual way over the intellectual and physical attacks that his enemies were able to bring against him.

### 10. Jesus' way of spiritual brotherhood

An expert on church growth, addressing a group of *URANTIA Book* readers, was asked how they could spread their movement. "Love one another," was his immediate reply. In Gethsemane, Jesus prayed for all believers: "*I want them all to be one, even as you and I are one. . . . If my children are one as we are one, and if they love one another as I have loved them, all men will then believe that I came forth from you and be willing to receive the revelation of truth and glory which I have made*" [1964:3]. And he instructed his apostles to maintain spirit unity, which "*you can experience in the joy of your united dedication to the wholehearted doing of the will of my Father in heaven...Spiritual unity is derived from the consciousness that each of you is indwelt, and increasingly dominated, by the spirit gift of the heavenly Father. Your apostolic harmony must grow out of the fact that the spirit hope of each of you is identical in origin, nature, and destiny*" [1591:6; 1672:6; 1091:6]. We are told: *In this brotherhood of Jesus there is no place for sectarian rivalry, group bitterness, nor assertions of moral superiority and spiritual infallibility* [2085:6; 1092#6].

In the history of Christianity there have been betrayals of truth and goodness that caused conflicts; matters even got to a point where further growth was incompatible with unity [1010:3]. All this makes it

even more striking that all Jesus' followers are called to spiritual brotherhood, even with those whose theologies contain offensive elements and with people whose groups have done harm to interests of one's own group.

Once I joined with a very diverse group of readers to re-live the Edenic Sabbath outlined on page 832:6. After the scheduled period of worship I had planned to give a brief talk (the "intellectual" stimulation for the day) on the topic of spiritual unity; but for a time after the worship was concluded, we were in such a state of unity that to discourse about the topic would have been absurd. Clearly, spiritual unity among members of all religions is to be found in the worship of God [715-16; 722#6; 1010:4; 1012:5; 1091:6; 1133:1]. In searching *The URANTIA Book* in quest of guidance for realizing spiritual unity, one finds that what is most emphasized is improving the individual's relationship with God. Jesus has shown the way of spiritual brotherhood by the love that pervaded his thoughts, words, and deeds. He demonstrated in his life what he proclaimed in his gospel: the spiritual brotherhood, the kingdom of heaven [1702:3; 1710:3]. Once again, the gospel is found to be the key to the solution of another human problem.

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## **The URANTIA Book and the Internet**

With the continuing advances of computer technology, and decreasing prices for computers and many related services, the numbers of both individuals, and businesses who utilize Internet services are increasing rapidly. It is no longer a novelty to communicate personally, at a fairly reasonable cost, with people on the other side of the planet.

Electronic mail (e-mail) is, for many, replacing the more time-consuming methods of writing and mailing communications, and even for telephoning, for both personal, and business communications. Individuals and businesses publish just about any type of information one could imagine, for access by others to read, and hear, on the World Wide Web (WWW, or "web"). Very detailed

information can be presented with complex graphics, and links to related subjects and "sites."

There are now many *URANTIA Book* readers on the Internet. And many people are coming to first hear about *The URANTIA Book* by accessing websites, communicating with others by e-mail, or participating in newsgroups, or list services, which mention it.

The URANTIA Foundation currently provides websites in English, French, and Spanish, and a Finnish site is under construction. You will find the following available:

- information about the URANTIA Foundation.
- access to the complete text of *The URANTIA Book* in English and French.
- information on how to subscribe to e-mail services (listservers) to communicate with other readers about the book.
- information about the IUA, membership, and an application form to join.
- a Pronunciation Guide (audio).
- a listing of The URANTIA Foundation offices worldwide.
- access to get on The URANTIA Foundation's mailing list.
- information about Friends of URANTIA, and a membership form.
- information on current events for *URANTIA Book* readers.
- newsletters and archives.
- information about ordering *The URANTIA Book*, and other publications of the URANTIA Foundation on-line, or otherwise.

If you have a personal computer and are hooked up to the Internet, you may access the Foundation's website, the address on the Internet is:

**<http://www.urantia.org>**

Feel free to share this address with your friends who are on the Internet, even if you aren't yet.

There are also now separate listservices for English-, French-, Spanish-, and Finnish-speaking readers to communicate with other readers. In addition, there is a listservice set up exclusively for IUA members. Information on how to subscribe to these lists can be obtained either by accessing the

website above, or by contacting your local URANTIA Foundation office. —(cont'd on page 12)

## But How Can That Be True?

Carolyn Prentice, Minnesota, USA

Almost all readers of *The URANTIA Book* will tell you that when they first picked up the book, they were drawn to it because it confirmed something which they had always believed. For some people, it was the Lucifer rebellion; for others, that God didn't want blood sacrifice. Still others found that the scientific account of creation/evolution struck a chord. Readers are eager to share their stories about such "aha!" experiences.

But most of us have also had the opposite experience at times. We read something in this wonderful book that we don't want to know, that we would prefer not to be true. Sometimes, we slam the book shut in protest and don't open it again for months, even years. We don't share as many stories about our struggle to come to terms with something we don't want to believe, but it can be helpful to understand what others have had difficulty with. We read recently in the *JOURNAL* how one woman of Jewish heritage didn't want to accept the Jesus part of *The URANTIA Book*. Some of us are dismayed to find out that enslavement, in its time and place, actually helped many races. My husband had trouble with the hierarchy—just another bureaucracy with its concomitant red tape. I myself—I blush to admit—thought *The URANTIA Book* was a sexist book.

I know, it seems silly to make such an attack since this is the book that reports on the women's corps in Jesus' ministry. This is the book that says that a planet is not considered "*emerged from barbarism so long as one sex seeks to tyrannize over the other*" [564:6]. This is the book that points out that our local universes are created by a Creator Son acting in unison with a Creative Daughter. But in my experience what a movement or people profess, is often different from their real feelings, which come out in more subtle ways. I was suspicious. I could get past the language—God being the Universal Father (although on other planets He is the Universal Parent). I could get past the use of "man" to mean all human beings. I had trouble with other parts.

First of all, I had trouble with the Adam and Eve story. Okay, somebody had to make a mistake, and we women have been blamed through the centuries. I would have preferred for it not to have been true. And, as if that weren't bad enough, women are told that we are impatient, that we "*look upon immediate results*" [840:6]. And we had better not stray from our wiser, father-seeing husbands' sides! It's not exactly the message a modern woman wants to hear. It sounded to me like veiled misogyny.

Second, I was upset by the pronouncement that the development of the father-family led to real civilization [933:5]. In this modern day, women have often extolled the virtues of some native tribes that still believe in the mother-family. In fact, as marriages fail, more women, at least in the USA, find themselves single parents, and many children have only their mother-based family to call home. Women have risen to the task saying, "we can do it"; in fact, we have gotten so good at it, that we have questioned why a family has to be so father-based. To suggest that what we have returned to out of necessity is somehow inferior seems to imply that women are inferior at making families.

Third, the revelation that in his bestowals a Creator Son always appears as "*a male child of the realm*" [229:1] brought tears to my eyes, and I slammed my book closed in disgust. My husband was genuinely perplexed by my reaction. "It just doesn't seem fair," is all I could stammer out in explanation. Why would a Creator Son limit his bestowals in this way? Is only a male body worthy to house a Creator Son?

But I kept reading because I knew the book was true. But I struggled to put this whole gender issue into perspective. I wanted this book that was otherwise true to affirm that women are strong, that they are capable of creating good families, and that they should be offered the same opportunities as men. I had to plow on and trust that my Thought Adjuster and the Spirit of Truth would help me out. On my third reading of the book, I slowly began to understand.

Okay, Eve did make the mistake on this world. If I agree that men and women are different—and I do—then I have to agree that we have different faults. Wanting immediate results just might be one of them. *The URANTIA Book* doesn't say that men

are any better—they just have different faults. What I took as misogyny was my own one-sided defensiveness. Men are cast in equally unflattering lights. For example, it is pointed out that “*Woman has always had to work...Man has usually chosen the easier path*” [934:6]. Men aren’t exactly innocent because Eve made a mistake. Many of the Prince’s staff—both men and women—also rebelled long before Eve defaulted. So women aren’t being singled out as inferior just because one female ancestor happened to make a mistake. It’s just a historical fact—yes, Eve figuratively took the first bite of the apple.

The father-family thing just dawned on me one day. I was thinking back about the birth of my children, how I immediately felt connected to them because they had been inside me, had come from my body. They were part of me. I am amazed, in some respects, that men can feel a bond with their children because that obvious physical connection is lacking. But that’s just it. A mother-family is a natural thing; mother-love is instinctive. Father-love, on the other hand, takes intellectual involvement, a commitment. In a way, fathers have to adopt their children in their minds and in their hearts. And such a commitment does represent a significant leap in civilization: a man’s urge to protect and nurture a being that is not so directly connected to him is an evolutionary advancement. Although women should be applauded for doing the best they can as single parents, the trend back to the mother-family is not a reassuring omen for society. We need father-families because they require commitment and responsibility by men, whose natural tendency would be to shirk this responsibility.

Finally, I have come to terms with the exclusion of the female gender in Creator Son bestowals. One thing we learn over and over again in *The URANTIA Book* is that we are all different and have different roles to play, but we are all essential. The universe is about diversity. To take it back to the very beginning, the Universal Father, the Eternal Son, and the Infinite Spirit are different from each other—three different personalities with three different realms. Yet they are one unified deity, as the Trinity. What would happen if the Infinite Spirit felt that he was missing something because he was different from the Eternal Father?

Instead of feeling cheated that women never get a Creator Son bestowed in their form, I should

look at it in another way: The Creator Son doesn’t get to be a woman—that is withheld from him. Whether any other beings bestow themselves as women is not revealed, but I could postulate that maybe they are.

What would a universe be like if we all had the same roles? God loves us all and created us each to play our unique parts, male or female—apparently forever. The perfect Havona residents are hungry for experience—and yet that is not their role; they are existential. Angels, although they advance, will always be angels. The Creative Mother Spirit cannot leave her local universe. The Creator Son cannot bestow himself as a woman. All beings have some unique, secret experience on the sacred spheres of Paradise which can never be shared by unlike beings [144-147]. We Urantians will be father-indwelt, other beings will be spirit-indwelt, and still others are merely what they are.

So I finally have come to peace with those parts of *The URANTIA Book*. I’m sure that I will have other battles. The key is to keep studying, keep reading, keep praying. Go forward with faith that you will eventually understand. What is remarkable is that *The URANTIA Book* can withstand such criticism, resentment, and scrutiny, and still emerge intact as a coherent and consistent guiding light, a source for dependable truth in a confused world. ❄ ❄

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### **The URANTIA Book and the Internet**

—(continued from page 10)

At the present time, IUA may be well-served by setting up a website to enhance its ability to serve readers. Any who may wish to support this activity, either by contribution of funds, by contributing their technical skills, or through support of ongoing upkeep of such a site, or contributions of material for it, are urged to contact the IUA, the Coordinating Committee, or the URANTIA Foundation. ❄ ❄ ❄

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## The Nature of God: Its Revelation in Jesus, The Son of Man

*Adapted from a speech given in August, 1995, at an IUA Conference in Nashville, Tenn., USA*  
**James Perry, M.D. Nth Carolina, USA**

To attempt to explain the nature of God is something the whole world is grappling with. As I thought about the task of translating my emotional joy into a presentation that I could share with you, I wondered if perhaps I had bitten off more than I could chew. I thought that it would be helpful to relate something of my own religious experiences and my evolutionary concepts of the divine nature of God before I had a close encounter with *The URANTIA Book* of the third kind, and afterward, for we are told that it is man's experiences with the evolutionary religions that make it possible for revealed religion to be made. I think religious sharing helps us to better study and understand revealed religion, and to convert it into living expression. I invite you to join with me as I make a brief excursion into my religious past.

Some of my earliest memories of religious experiences occurred sometime before I started first grade. I remember my mother taking me along with her to prayer meetings. These meetings were held at a neighbor's house. I don't remember much of the content of these religious experiences except that it was a meeting that had something to do with God. The lights were turned off and candles were lit. The next memories of my religious experiences occurred sometime after I had learned to read, around the age of eight or nine. As my parents were originally from a rural part of North Carolina where they farmed to make a living, each summer my mother would send me along with my twin brother to spend our summer vacation on our grandfather's farm.

My grandfather was a very religious person and he prayed an awful lot. I would hear him sometimes during the noon break praying, but I didn't know what the purpose of his praying was then. I have since been informed that he was praying for rain. I remember that he had several Bibles, one of them a child's Bible. Because there was not very much for a child of my age to do on this farm, I

began reading, reading the only reading material that was available—and that was the children's Bible.

The most significant thing that I remembered from reading the children's Bible was a picture of Elijah being taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. I found this picture quite puzzling. Several years later, when I was about 12 years old, my brother and I, along with other relatives, went to a church revival. As best I can remember this was the first revival that I had ever attended. It was here under the influence of preaching and singing that I confessed Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Here is an excerpt from a letter that I wrote to Jesus in 1983, that records the aftermath of that experience:

Dear Jesus,

Father-Brother, I send greetings. I know that You know all my heart's desire, and all my thoughts. It has been quite a few years now since I first heard about You. I was very enthusiastic when I first received You as my personal savior. I was so happy that summer night of long ago, but when I awoke the next morning, the happiness was gone. That good feeling was no longer there. But still everybody talked about You, and told me how good You were. They were very happy for me. They told me that now that I was saved, I would not have to burn in the fires of hell forever and ever. I was certainly glad of that. I could not imagine burning in a fire forever and ever, but as I watched the fire burning in the kitchen stove, I knew that I did not want any part of that.

But still my life did not change much, nor did the lives of those around me. I still had the same problems then as before You became my Savior. People still talked about You all the time, but as far as I could tell all that talking and praying did not seem to help them very much in changing their material lives, but still I was glad to have escaped the burning fires of hell. There the whole matter rested, until tragedy struck my young life. Death claimed my mother when I was 14 years old, leaving seven children ranging in age from 18 to five years old, and four more that were of adult age. There were eleven of us.

It was there and then, that I realized that I did not know You very well, or know what You were really all about, as I fled into the darkness of depression, sorrow, and grief, from which I am only now beginning to emerge. For years, I drifted, becoming more and more sorrowful each year, and my pain only deepened as I struggled through the night of my life, trying my best to become happy. It seemed as if the more I sought happiness, the more unhappiness I found.

My father had great difficulty shouldering the responsibility for the family after my mother's death. She had always been the great moral supporter of the family and he was ill-equipped to deal with the rearing of the remaining children at home without her, and all too often he used alcohol to anesthetize his pain which made a bad situation even worse. My father was an unskilled laborer and did not make very much money, but there was also a beloved aunt who lived with us. She adequately covered the shortfall economically and morally. She tried her very best to compensate for the loss of our mother. My 16-year-old sister took over the moral training of those below her. It was very difficult for me to forgive my father. It took me a long time. And it was not until I found myself in similar circumstances that I realized that, whatever his shortcomings were, he did the best he could. God in his mercy always takes note of our origin and circumstances.

But I must confess to you that I had grave doubts about the nature of God. I had been taught that God was merciful, that He was good and true, loving and kind. I did not comprehend very much of that nature during those dark years, even going so far as to doubt His very existence and at the very least, to doubt His having any kind of loving relationship with me. Even though it was a fact for everyone to observe that bad things did happen to good people, it was generally believed that if you had enough faith those kinds of things did not happen to you. Brothers and sisters, it is impossible for me to adequately convey the sorrow, the loneliness, the anguish and guilt that I felt during those long dark years that shaped so much of my character and outlook upon life. Up to the point of my mother's death, I had believed in God and had attended Sunday School regularly. I was even responsible for my mother joining a formal church. I was about 12 years of age then.

After almost giving up on religion and God for many years, since I did not see the relevance of believing in Him, I experienced a new kind of darkness—a life lived without faith. I thought to myself that if God could not or would not protect me from human disasters, then what was the point of believing in Him? But experience eventually forced me to acknowledge that if God did not exist and I could not have a relationship with Him, then life itself was meaningless and without value. And it was this dire assessment that drove me back into the

arms of Christianity after a period of pursuing occult mysteries and eastern religious philosophies. I was desperate and decided to take another look at God. I knew that I could not continue as a Christian with the childish belief that I had in Him before. And it was while I was struggling with this dilemma that I recalled that in my collection of so-called occult literature, I had a book that contained the description of the life of Jesus—*The URANTIA Book*.

I began to read *The URANTIA Book*, never for a moment suspecting that Jesus was indeed the revelation of the Father's nature as well as my Savior of years past, which brings us to our topic under discussion: The Nature of God. On page 17:2, the Divine Counselor tells us that our level of understanding of the spiritual values and universe meanings is inadequate, and furthermore, that our language is so impoverished that he encounters almost insurmountable difficulties in trying to expand our cosmic consciousness. But the Divine Counselor also goes on to say that because we are indwelt by a divine spirit and our souls are surrounded by the Spirit of Truth, that it is possible for him to expand our concepts of divine values and meanings because these divine spirits conspire to help us grasp divine values and meanings. In our attempt to comprehend the nature of God, he admonishes us to take as background the religious life of Jesus both before and after attaining full consciousness of divinity, as the actual revelation of the Father's nature, as we study the ideas about the Father's nature. He also says that we should relate ourselves to God as spiritual children of a loving spiritual Father.

And now that we have completed this excursion into my religious past, let us focus on the comprehension of the religious life of Jesus, heeding the advice of the Divine Counselor. The Divine Counselor points us to the study of the religious life of Jesus as *the most enlightening and spiritually edifying of all revelation of the divine nature* [33:2]. We ask the question, "Why?" We shall not waste any time on trying to decide if there might be another way just as good, but with a leap of faith will assume that this pointing by the Divine Counselor toward this divine Son, Jesus, is the best way to comprehend the Father's nature. Sometimes when the question, "why?" is asked, it leads us to a deeper understanding of a subject, as opposed to trying merely to discover "what?" Let us define religion according to *The URANTIA Book*. We assume that this definition is

the one the Divine Counselor has in mind when he asks us to study the religious life of Jesus. *The URANTIA Book*, page 1091:1, tells us, *True religion is to know God as your Father and man as your brother.*

So if the religious life of Jesus was the striving and the eventual full achievement of knowing God as his Father and man as his brother, then our efforts must be directed at considering those activities in his life both before and after his full comprehension of divinity that show us his religious life; in doing so we shall achieve a better grasp of the divine nature. Now let's ask the question why is Jesus the one to reveal the Father's nature? *The Eternal Son is the eternal Word of God. He is wholly like the Father; in fact, the Eternal Son is God the Father personally manifest to the universe of universes. And thus it was and is and forever will be true of the Eternal Son and of all the co-ordinate Creator Sons: "He who has seen the Son has seen the Father."* [74:7] Michael is a co-ordinate Creator Son, a being who is the personification of the Father's loving character, not in the infinite sense, but in the absolute sense of his origin, and all of the co-ordinate Creator Sons are perfectly reflective of the Father's nature.

Now let us move on to the analysis of the definition of true religion, namely, to know man as your brother and God as your Father. Why is it so important and necessary to view all mortals as our brothers? Well, to understand the answer to that question, we must understand the relationship of mortals to one another and to God. That part of us that comprehends God, which knows God, is the soul. We recognize that we are not brothers and sisters from a purely material kinship point of view, since we have different biological mothers and fathers. But the biological part of us is not a son or daughter of God. Only the spiritual aspect of us is a son or daughter of God. Each moral mind, in cooperation with the Thought Adjuster, re-creates itself, and it is this re-creation that is a son or daughter of God, and brother or sister to one another. Since God is the Father of all these reborn creatures, they must be brothers and sisters in the spiritual sense.

So how do we know God as our Father? We know God as our Father through his divine goodness. The value of divine goodness is unmistakably recognized and received by the soul. Such a recognition and reception make such an impression

on the soul that it reaches that attitude where God can be nothing else, except a loving Father. Wisdom instructs the soul that the worship of God is true, beautiful and good. The divine love of the Father is so embracing, so encompassing and of such a quality that the soul can find nothing greater for its supreme loyalty. Under such worship such a soul would exclaim, "He touched me, O, He touched me, And O, the joy that floods my soul; Something happened, and now I know He touched me and made me whole!" And it is this truth that constitutes divine worship, the recognition of God as Father. So in knowing God as our Father and man as our brother, we are acknowledging the vertical relationship with God our Father and the horizontal relationship with man our brother. Now we are in a position to examine the elements of Jesus' religious life, both before and after his full realization of divinity.

Jesus' religious life began when he received his Thought Adjuster. This was when he made his first wholehearted moral decision and made it possible to begin the effort to know God as his Father and man as his brother. Jesus' religious life began with him wholeheartedly dedicated to doing the Father's will. And he began that dedication at a very early age. We are told that he would say his prayers just as he was instructed to by his parents, but then would insist on having "*just a little talk with my heavenly father*" [1360:1]. Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father seeking to do the Father's will. Jesus' prayers during his youth were a model of reverence as exemplified by this quotation: *The Master was a pattern of reverence. The prayer of even his youth began, "Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be your name."* [1103:4]

Let us see if we can discover how Jesus went about knowing God as his Father and man as his brother, and hopefully as a result of this study we will be in a better position to understand the Father's nature. But how did Jesus learn to view man as his brother? Jesus loved man so much because he placed a high value upon him. He loved his fellow men because he discovered their value, and he did this by discovering their motivation. *The URANTIA Book* tells us: *These high levels of human living are attained in the supreme love of God and in the unselfish love of man. If you love your fellow men, you must have discovered their values. Jesus loved men so much because he placed such a high value upon them. You can best discover values in your associates by discovering their motivation. If some*

*one irritates you, causes feelings of resentment, you should sympathetically seek to discern his viewpoint, his reasons for such objectionable conduct. If once you understand your neighbor, you will become tolerant, and this tolerance will grow into friendship and ripen into love. [1098:1]*

The revelation of the Father's nature through the divine Son, Jesus, was a progressive experience that unfolded, subject to the delays of time and to the handicaps of space. Jesus was born into the world as a helpless infant and progressed from that point to an adult of the realm. And his religious life unfolded along those same evolutionary lines. On page 1408:5 we are told that: *The self-realization of divinity was a slow and, from the human standpoint, a natural evolutionary revelation. This revelation and self-realization of divinity began in Jerusalem when he was not quite thirteen years old with the first supernatural occurrence of his human existence; and this experience of effecting the self-realization of his divine nature was completed at the time of his second supernatural experience while in the flesh, the episode attendant upon his baptism by John in the Jordan, which event marked the beginning of his public career of ministry and teaching. And it was this process by which the Father's nature was gradually revealed until it reached that fullness of perfection.*

As Jesus continued to live his mortal life, he continually sought the Father's will in the recurring moral conflicts of his life. And as he continued in his efforts to discern the divine will, the Thought Adjuster likewise continued its efforts to reveal the divine will to Jesus. We know that Jesus prayed because we are told that he did. On page 1408:4: We are told that *He lived his mortal life just as all others of the human family may live theirs, "who in the days of the flesh so frequently offered up prayers and supplications, even with strong feelings and tears, to Him who is able to save from all evil, and his prayers were effective because he believed."* But why is faith so essential to achieving the revelation of the Father's nature? Faith is the passport from the limitations of self to the endless exploration of the Father's nature, from the incompleteness of self to the glorious completion of divine perfection. Faith in the human soul frees the self from the fear of being a transient reality in the universe. Faith is the way to knowing the Father's nature, the way to realizing greater and greater quantity of the quality of the relationship with the spiritual Father.

Faith answers the questions, "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" because of its validity in all matters pertaining to the personal relationship of the spiritual child to its Father. It empowers the self to overcome all doubts about the validity of the relationship with the Father. And though faith can never prove the fact of sonship, it actually assumes the fact of sonship, and moves on to initiate the process that consummates the relationship. It actually takes the fact of sonship for granted and creates a consciousness in the soul of that presumed fact. We are told that *Jesus enjoyed a sublime and wholehearted faith in God. He experienced the ordinary ups and downs of mortal existence, but he never religiously doubted the certainty of God's watchcare and guidance. His faith was the outgrowth of the insight born of the activity of the divine presence, his indwelling Adjuster. His faith was neither traditional nor merely intellectual; it was wholly personal and purely spiritual. [2087:1]*

As time continued to pass, Jesus continued in his habit of seeking to reveal the Father's nature in perfection, and that requires parental experience. But we are told that nothing can stand in the way of an individual who is wholeheartedly dedicated to doing the Father's will. We know that as a part of his mandate, he was not permitted to sire children of his own. So how was this problem resolved? The solution to this problem presented itself in the form of a human tragedy when his human father was suddenly killed. Jesus was just 14 years of age. At this time we are informed *...that Jesus had a sizable family of small children left to his watchcare when his father met his accidental death... [1373:2]*

This assumption of fatherly experience was an essential experience for Jesus. Though it appeared initially that this would delay his religious mission of revealing the Father's nature, this very experience was necessary in order to reveal the Father's nature in perfection. And we may all take a lesson from this. If we dedicate our lives to doing the Father's will, placing our careers in time and eternity in his hands, we may rest with assurance that he has seen the end of our experiences from the beginning and has foreseen every eventuality that could befall us, and that his very plans for our lives have taken these experiences into consideration, and thus these experiences become a necessity for us to fulfill the Father's mandate: *Be you perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

As Jesus continued in his prayer life, he learned more about the Father's will. His prayers ascended from the level of prayer, up through thanksgiving to the high plane of true worship. And through all of this he was guided by his Thought Adjuster and by the Spirit of Truth of which he was and still is the personification. Prayer is so important because it is the mechanism by which we learn how to do the Father's will. What is the mechanism of prayer whereby the believer ascends up to true worship? The human soul experiences or is destined to experience three stages of prayer, and they are: The will to believe, the will that believes, and the will that is. And in the comprehension of these stages it is best to relate oneself as a child relates himself to his father. This orientation allows for the teacher-student relationship. In this attitude the child can be taught, and is therefore willing to learn.

The will to believe indicates that the soul is cognizant of the need for help, and the belief that the help will be forthcoming. The soul is thus willing to experiment and pray. There is a lot of doubt during this stage, but the will to believe is strong. This will to believe is a stage of growth of the soul and connotes a certain level of soul consciousness, albeit the will to believe does not share the same level of consciousness of the will that believes or the will that is. But there must be a beginning of spiritual consciousness and the will to believe reflects the beginning of that consciousness. The will to believe is only dimly conscious of the needs of other souls, and therefore its requests as they are realized in the conscious mind are selfish in nature. But no matter how ill-advised or ignorant, as long as the petitions are in sincerity, with faith and truth according to understanding, there is nourishment of truth and righteousness that allows for growth, the very soul growth that will eventually overturn the error in prayers.

The will to believe sheds the "eggshell" of its former state. This new state is characterized by direct requests for revelations of divine truth, beauty, and goodness. It recognizes the values of truth, beauty, and goodness concealed in experiences. The prayers are of a nature that requests those experiences that hold these valuable meanings of truth, beauty, and goodness. Belief transcends its former level and becomes faith. It does not doubt the Father's goodness, but assumes that there is goodness that can be realized in the fullness of time and if not in time, then surely in eternity. The will with such a faith

signifies a soul that has been born again. Its battle cry is always, "Not my will, but Your will be done." It thirsts for truth, and hungers for righteousness. It sees truth in all moral experiences, and strives for the unity of beauty—the appreciation of truth in goodness—in its experiences. Its decisions are approaching the past-future significance, and therefore are not dependent on solely what is going on in the present. Such a one has truly escaped from the pure present, has struck step with the eternal, and has truly taken on eternal significance.

Those with will belief are cognizant of other souls, their prayers become more unselfish, and their requests become more spiritual, and therefore the answers to their prayers are so recognized more often. But even those whose prayers may be so lofty, so pregnant with the ideals and ideas of a future existence, must wait before their prayers are fully answered in time. It is a state whereby the soul comes to identify completely with the divine spirit, and effects a bona fide contract to eternally abide by the Father's will. The will that believes evolves to the level of thanksgiving. And finally there is the will that is.

A consecrated soul dedicated to doing the Father's will eternally, is in effect, and in truth, one with the Father. In this state the soul is self-conscious by faith that it is a revelation of the Father's nature. The will that has achieved the state of true worship has truly faith-recognized the living Father of divine love and mercy, and has become a personification of this divine love and mercy in its soul. The will that is, is constantly planting seeds of love and mercy in the souls of individuals that it comes into contact with. And so it was with the human Jesus who traversed all three levels of prayer as a man among men.

Jesus also emphasized the importance of worship in his life. Worship is necessary, and it is necessary because without it, the sustenance of the very spiritual life withers and dies. Worship renews the creature, renews the values and meanings that are the very essence of the creature's life. Worship makes the son like the Father, and since the creature is an experiencing one, the process of becoming like the Father is an endless process. Worship is therefore a never-ending process, an interminable process of ever-increasing recognition and consciousness of divine values and meanings.

The divine meanings of worship are experiential and are progressive. As the worship process continues, the depth of the meanings increases. The meanings of the values of worship give the assurances of divine sonship, as the son realizes that the continuous enlargement of these meanings is the reality of the experiencing of the Divine—the Father's nature. Divine meanings are inherently and intrinsically satisfying and pleasurable. The divine values of divine worship fill the soul with the goodness of God. Worship has value because it is the only way that the creature can experience fellowship with the Father. It allows for the effective expression of the spiritual content of God. Worship is the effective recognition of the Father's nature by his son. It is the process from the son's point of view that gives a life of eternal values and meanings.

As Jesus' religious life continued to unfold, there was that increasing reflection on the outside of the fruits of the spirit, as Jesus ministered to his brothers and sisters. He was displaying the fruits of the spirit. We are taught that the fruits of the spirit *...are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.* [381:7] Also, we find that the fruits of the spirit *...are the substance of the Supreme as he is realizable in human experience, and the fruits of the spirit are the essence of the highest type of enjoyable and ennobling self-control, even the heights of terrestrial mortal attainment—true self-mastery.* [1290:3] And finally, on page 2062:10, we are taught that when *...man yields the "fruits of the spirit" in his life, he is simply showing forth the traits which the Master manifested in his own earthly life—the divine nature.*

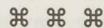
During the post-baptismal experience when Jesus became conscious of his full divinity, his religious life was no different in the essentials. While it is true that he had perfected the doing of the Father's will, he still remained dedicated to doing that will to the bitter end of his mortal existence. Jesus did many wonderful material miracles while on earth, but this was because of his merciful nature and because it was the Father's will. His greatest manifestation of mercy was during his final moments on the cross when he said, "*Father forgive them for they know not what they do.*" He could not have done that had he not been fully saturated by divine love and mercy. His whole life was a joyous labor of love and mercy. He always said, "*fear not and be of good cheer.*"

But eventually the time appeared when Jesus died the mortal death, and his mortal revelation of the Father's nature ended. Would present mankind and all future mankind be denied this perfect and supernal revelation of the Father's nature? Would the memory of one who tried to initiate a higher standard of religious living remain just a memory of a man who meant well, but who was destroyed by his enemies? Would Jesus remain just a historical footnote? The answer to all these questions is an unqualified "no," for when the divine son completed the life in the flesh, this act liberated new spiritual potentials. It now became possible for the spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Truth to live with the souls of all mankind revealing the Father's nature to all to the fullest extent of their capacity. This Spirit of Truth restates the life of Jesus for each generation of mortals, always seeking to live the spirit of Jesus' life through each mortal, displaying the Father's character. This is the way of the revelation of the Father's nature.

The Spirit of Truth imparts new spiritual prerogatives to the believer. The believer is now equipped with spiritual weapons. They are to go out to conquer the world with unfailing forgiveness, matchless good will, and abounding love. They are equipped to overcome evil with good, to vanquish hate by love, to destroy fear with a courageous and living faith in truth. The Spirit of Truth manifests itself by: loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace. The Spirit of Truth endows mortal man with the power to forgive personal injuries, to keep sweet in the midst of the gravest injustice, to remain unmoved in the face of appalling danger, and to challenge the evils of hate and anger by the fearless acts of love and forbearance. [2064:3,4] In this way the Father's nature is constantly manifested to mankind. Remember, brothers and sisters, *...to hear Jesus' teaching is not equivalent to knowing God, to knowing the divine nature, but to see Jesus is an experience which in itself is a revelation of the Father's nature to the soul.* [1857:3] We must with the Spirit of Truth see Jesus, which is the revelation of the Father's nature for all ages and for all levels of spirituality from the beginning to the end.

And now, let me say that Jesus lived a really human life beginning from an infant and progressing to an adult, and this life that he lived

revealed the Father's loving character to mankind. His religious life was characterized by prayer, worship, loving unselfish service and a wholehearted dedication to doing the Father's will—unconsciously revealing the Father's nature. His life shows us how an infinite, absolute and eternal God lives a mortal life if it were actually possible for Him to do so. He lived constantly in the divine embrace, and experienced the thrill of living a life dedicated to doing the Father's will. His faith ascended to such heights that it became devoid of fear. He revealed the Father's nature, a nature of endless love and eternal mercy. And now that he has departed the mortal life, his Spirit of Truth continues to show us how God lives a mortal life. The Spirit ever seeks to manifest the life of Jesus through each child of God. His mortal life is the inspiration for an entire universe, so perfectly did he reveal the divine nature.



*Salvation is the free gift of God, but those who are born of the spirit will immediately begin to show forth the fruits of the spirit in loving service to their fellow creatures. And the fruits of the divine spirit which are yielded in the lives of spirit-born and God-knowing mortals are: loving service, unselfish devotion, courageous loyalty, sincere fairness, enlightened honesty, undying hope, confiding trust, merciful ministry, unfailing goodness, forgiving tolerance, and enduring peace. If professed believers bear not these fruits of the divine spirit in their lives, they are dead; the Spirit of Truth is not in them; they are useless branches on the living vine, and they soon will be taken away. My Father requires of the children of faith that they bear much spirit fruit. If, therefore, you are not fruitful, he will dig about your roots and cut away your unfruitful branches. Increasingly, must you yield the fruits of the spirit as you progress heavenward in the kingdom of God*

[2054:3]

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