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Some Comments on the Foreword to *The Urantia Book*

BILL SADLER
United States

William Sadler, Jr., better known as Bill, was a gifted student of The Urantia Book who also had a talent for distilling its most complex teachings into conversational language. Some of his informal talks were recorded and this article was developed from a transcript of such a presentation to a study group sometime in 1958 or 1959. He also authored A Study of the Master Universe and its Appendices. The following text, as it was transcribed, may occasionally contain feedback from the audience. While it may not be exhaustive of its original content, some UB quotes or references to such have been added for deeper study purposes.

...in my entire experience with this blue book, this is the first time any group of human beings has ever asked to have the Foreword discussed.

THE FOREWORD DISCUSSES just five topics. It discusses number one, Deity, in three sections—I, II and III. Second, it discusses reality. What is real? Again, in three sections—IV, V, and VI. It discusses, third, experiential Deity, in four sections—VII, VIII, IX, and X. Gosh, I can't count in these Roman numerals. Fourth, it discusses the three absolutes, in section XI. And fifth, the Trinities, in section XII. And of course you have the Acknowledgment. When you come right down to it, that isn't a whole lot of material. The catch is, it's rather complex: Deity; reality; experiential Deity—which is really a subdivision of the discussion of Deity; the three Absolutes—which is an extension of the discussion of reality; and the Trinities—which is a summation of the discussion of Deity. Really, all they're talking about here is Deity and reality, in one form or another—just two things.

I want to tell you something. This is, in my life, a very historic occasion, and one of very deep gratification because in my entire experience with this blue book, this is the first time any group



of human beings has ever asked to have the Foreword discussed. I have taught the Foreword under various stages of compression. I've used a kind of intellectual alamite gun [Note from the editor: specialized tool that uses pressure to force lubrication into a tight space] to force it down people. I've done a strip-tease with the Foreword. I've made it ridiculously simple. And I've always had a captive audience. But you folks actually asked to talk about the Foreword. Well, all I can say is—in terms of

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What are we talking about?

Dear siblings of the Urantia community,

AS MY PREDECESSOR Guy Perron could have asked, are you in great spirit? To me, this means, is your mind open for new concepts and are you willing to explore them?

Please let me first thank Guy for his devotion to UAI Journal and for his inspiring way of presenting information. As his destiny is calling him for service in new pastures, I am honoured and pleased to humbly take his seat with the hope of providing continual interest among the readership. I also take this opportunity to thank our devoted editorial staff, translators, graphic layout supervisor, Webmaster and the many people involved in putting together Journal, issue after issue. I wish everyone a peaceful new year, bearing the fruits we all need for a happy and worthwhile life.

What are we talking about in this issue? The teachings of *The Urantia Book* of course. But more often, it is how we talk about things that counts. Do we not read over and over that thousands of study groups should be formed? And when we do manage to assemble two or three persons at a table to talk, how do we go about making our study event an appealing one for the participants?

In this issue, we are featuring a talk from William Sadler, Jr. because of his dynamic way of explaining his elaborated concepts. His way of exposing the facts remind us how important it is for truth seekers to actually dig in depth if we wish to fully understand the meaning of the information contained in the Revelation. The revelators gave us a piece of the picture, but they leave it upon us to build on it... Such conceptual expansion would hardly

be desirable as it would deprive the thinking mortals of the next thousand years of that stimulus to creative speculation [330:2]. And as a new year is somewhat indicative of a beginning, we will present you what Bill has to say on the Foreword of *The Urantia Book*.

There is origin and destiny in every aspect of creation, so we will interlace this article with reflections on “The Power of Creation’s Purpose” from Ron Lawson who has summarized his views in his article on this subject and in which we are made more aware that everything has a reason to be. But when we ponder on all these things, how can we organise our mind so as to attune it with the prerogatives of the Father within? How can we, in our human aspect, elevate our thought patterns so as to bring us closer to His will in our own experience? Sheila Keene Lund developed a theme on this subject and here, in her exposé on “Cultivation of Universal Intelligence,” we are refreshed with the idea that with hard work, we can achieve divine perfection. While we can make astounding intellectual progress, universal intelligence blends in when we are committed to the expression of divinity within.

So if you meditate a bit on all these things, you could end up formulating a little prayer of some sort. If you would engage in effective praying, you should bear in mind the laws of prevailing petitions [1002:6]. Guaiume Lalgonquin gives us his opinion on this subject. “A Look on Prayer” is as personal as our relation to the Father but God has His own way of answering us.

And finally, isn’t there a sort of call for action in any prayer dedicated

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to our brethren? What can we do here and now to help society!? Mark Kurtz shows us how the very emblem of the three concentric circles can be of inspiration for us on the ways we can extend our service to God here on Urantia. It seems that we can all do something whatever circle we are in. So we will complete this edition with “Centering in Personal Circles.”

I pray this issue will give you something to talk about with enlightening thrill.

Alain Cyr, Chief Editor. ■

The Power of Creation's Purpose

RON LAWSON
USA

There is a great and glorious purpose in the march of the universes through space. All of your mortal struggling is not in vain... [364:3]

TO HELP UNDERSTAND the power of creation's purpose, we need to realize what purpose drives creation. Beginning on the very first page of the Foreword, our place in the scheme of creation is revealed in this sentence:

Orvonton is one of the seven evolutionary superuniverses of time and space which circle the never-beginning, never-ending creation of divine perfection ---- the central universe of Havona. [1:5]

Next, I find this sentence to be very enlightening about the actual functioning of the motivations driving creation:

Both potency of cosmic force and potency of spirit force are in process of progressive revelation-realization as the enrichment of all reality is effected by experiential growth and through the correlation of the experiential with the existential by the Universal Absolute [13:7].

And on the following page, reference is given to another of the many manifestations working on and ultimately controlling the process of Creation. Mentioned here is the *Deity Absolute*, who responds in terms of the welfare of the whole creation of things and beings, not only in its present state of existence, but also in view of the infinite possibilities of all future eternity [14:3].

The first intended impressions, then, of the Divine Counselor who wrote this awesome Foreword clearly lead one to conclude that Creation is – like the Almighty Father – endless. Not without a beginning, but once begun, it becomes perpetual in honor of its beginning. It's helpful here to consider the different meanings between *experiential* and *existential*. *Existential* philosophy seems to express Creation as a *fait-accompl* – a finished project – while experiential implies an open potential to continuity.

CREATION. The word radiates purpose and intent. It swells the heart with hope that meaning and purpose are designed into every facet of its expressions. As I opened PART I and read the first sentence, I knew in every fiber of my body this was proof of creation's purpose: *The Universal Father is the God of all creation, the First Source and Center of all things and beings [21:1].*



"Power of Creation" photo

At the end of the second paragraph the purpose of creation is defined with clarity and conviction: *God created the heavens and formed the earth; he established the universe and created this world not in vain; he formed it to be inhabited [21:2].* Our purpose is that we were meant to inhabit and explore this environment, to study and participate in the ongoing process of creation.

The POWER of Creation's PURPOSE

Purpose is the power that drives human lives. Some individuals grasp this principle early in life, some arrive at an understanding later on, and a few never seem to know it at all. The Roosevelts and the Reagans of the political world, the Einsteins and the Hawkings of the scientific world, the Saulks and Ventures of the medical world—they all understood what their purpose was. Most of humanity provides the applause for the accomplishments of those who have actually harnessed this power.

We follow concepts that mesh with our mental framework because they embellish our beliefs. We choose our heroes because they support one or another of the ideals we live by.

We all want to live our lives deliberately through things that attract us, things that satisfy our need to be involved. We follow concepts that mesh with our mental framework because they embellish our beliefs. We choose our heroes because they support one or another of the ideals we live by. We select the people we vote for because they resonate with our own objectives. Who we marry, what we wear, where we work, when we eat, why we pray, even how we talk—all result from some facet of our fundamental needs. Purpose is the power that shapes the course of our lives.

The exception to the power of purpose in our lives is the occasional accident. For someone who has already decided to live a life of purpose and to do it with passion, an accident is just a small delay, an issue to be resolved. For others, an accident might be the turning point where a life otherwise without significance begins to define the purpose of living. Ultimately we are all meant to

become familiar with what our goal is supposed to be. It's what we do with this knowledge that sets the limits of our life and determines what living up to our purpose entitles us to achieve.

How much we each understand and utilize this power determines our level of participation in life. The more willing we are to embrace this power the more passionate we are in pursuing the satisfaction of achieving our life's personal goals. It's what determines whether we are part of the show or part of the audience. When we develop a real passion about our purpose, it becomes an irresistible force and provides the motivation to resolve any opposing issue. It can be a force for good or a force for evil. Combined with passion, the power of purpose lifts our senses and designs the actions we take. Purpose can and does lift common lives onto the stage of leadership.

Moreover, it isn't always determined by what a person does. Purpose can, and often does, come calling without notice, without intention on the part of the individual; i.e., events culminating in an outcome that affects a life already planned causing those plans to be necessarily altered and adjusted to a new and higher purpose.

...the more we learn to trust that we know our purpose, our main objectives in life, the better we feel about ourselves. Being in tune with our purpose brings peace into our lives.

Think of something as defining as the terrorist strike on 9/11 and consider the massive changes in millions of lives. Those strikes were executed purposefully; they were carefully planned and prepared. The men who executed those plans did so deliberately, and passionately carried out what they believed and perceived as their main object. The lives changed by that event were suddenly introduced to all kinds of new purposes and simultaneously became motivated by new passions. Yet no one would have guessed that on September 11, 2001, any such thing could have suddenly and drastically changed the course of his or her life.

Another way of perceiving purpose in our lives is to consider how it defines the way we approach the future. A hungry person looks to the future intently focused on ways to get food. A tired person sets his or her purpose as where to find a quiet place to sleep and rest. A happy person might be acutely focused on developing the source of the happiness, refining it and prolonging it. Purpose is flexible so that we can adjust, modify, increase or decrease it. It's like a personal butler or maid, and the more we learn to trust that we know our purpose, our main objectives in life, the better we feel about ourselves. Being in tune with our purpose brings peace into our lives.

Our target isn't always sighted on just the immediate or near future. Much of the speculation humans do about the distant future and how we want to get from here to there is based on what we perceive about our purpose to be. That old teaching about being the captain of our fate, the master of our lives seeing far into the future, may well be how we shape the future. It's often said about someone who has exceptional talent, as say a

musician, a physicist, or a doctor perhaps, that they have been blessed from birth. And it's true, they have been. But it's far more likely that it was their devotion to an early grasp of the energy it takes to excel that blessed them rather than that they were born with some special talent. Remember, Purpose is the power that shapes the course of our lives.

While it is apparent what we do with our own ideas about this power, it is also obvious there has been some external power operating with a broader application of purpose. While it seems our solar system is a finished project, there is much going on beyond our borders. Creation is proceeding with a definite purpose. The universe we live in is revealing a destination and design that we are just beginning to see and try to understand. Science has opened doors into the cosmology taking place in what we refer to as outer space, the vastness beyond our own sun system.

No doubt the meaning those scientific observations are bringing into our lives will have significant effects in how we adapt our lives. Creation is going on while we watch. What purpose is being revealed in the clustering of distant masses of space dust? What is the power causing those accumulations to begin aggregating and forming new powerful bodies whirling away in the vastness of space? How will those events be felt here on our home? When will it be known what the purpose of these new formations is going to be? As the horizon of mankind's knowledge extends further and further into the wholeness of creation's development, where will we find ourselves? Will it still be an option for us to design a life fashioned by a sense of purpose?

The power of creation's purpose is yet to be clearly recognized or even partially understood, even by our most gifted and fact-oriented scientists.

We still have so much to learn about how to function within the framework of today's seemingly hectic living. Yes, there are differences in the pace of life from one geographic location to another here; but every human being is driven by the same basic needs. Each person, sooner or later, begins to sense we must have some purpose. As we begin to explore how to find that purpose, we steady our focus and try to develop the power to accomplish our goal. If we use this personal yardstick of the power of purpose in our effort to understand the meaning of creation, we just might discover our common destiny.

This, I believe, is the reason we exist: To use the power of purpose to expand our knowledge and to apply that knowledge for the universal benefit of all mankind. To finally understand why we are here and what we are to do within the framework of creation's purpose is the best and highest use of every talent we can muster.

The stage of universal space is set for the manifold and never-ending panorama of the creative unfolding of the purpose of the Universal Father [90:7].

The power of purpose perfectly squared with the power of creation. ■

Some Comments on the Foreword to *The Urantia Book*

Continued from page 1

the Bible: “This hour has come.” I’d like to do this, if I may. Would you let me try to give you a feeling for the Foreword first, and would you hold detailed questions until we’ve just taken an overview of the Foreword? I would like to try to communicate to you my feeling for the intent which is behind the Foreword.

The Foreword starts out with an apology. It says that our language isn’t very good. And indeed, it isn’t. It says we want to help you understand. You see, the secondary purpose of *The Urantia Book* is the illumination of the human mind. It’s primary purpose is the salvation of human souls. The book makes an intellectual appeal, because the book is in English. Therefore, it’s got to enter our consciousness through mind. The Foreword tips its hat in two paragraphs to the human desire to start from man and proceed to God. You’ll recall in one of the papers where they first talk about Trinity Teacher Sons, they tell why they wrote the book the way they did, starting from God and proceeding outward and downward to man.

They point out that if you start from man and go to God, this might be a certain way of grasping facts, but the truth would elude you. You don’t start with consequences, you start with causes, you start with sources. So they start this book talking about God—but there are two paragraphs here (that start on Page 1 at the bottom) in which very quickly they accede to the human yearning to start from the simple and proceed to the complex. In the last two paragraphs on Page 1, they very quickly start with our world and go right into Paradise. Then they add a few comments:

Your world, Urantia, is one of many similar inhabited planets which comprise the local universe of Neadon. This universe, together with similar creations, makes up the superuniverse of Orvonton, from whose capital, Uversa, our commission hails. Orvonton is one of the seven evolutionary superuniverses of time and space which circle the never-beginning, never-ending creation of divine perfection—the central universe of Havona. At the heart of this eternal and central universe is the stationary Isle of Paradise, the geographic center of infinity and the dwelling place of the eternal God. [1:5]

Now, I submit that’s quite a paragraph, isn’t it? In just eight or nine lines of type, they start here and take you swiftly into the center of all things. This is their concession to the human desire to start from the simple and go into the complex. I think it’s very significant that the Foreword starts with a discussion of Deity and divinity. Deity they define as a word which is larger than the word God, because God means a personal aspect of Deity. Deity can be other than personal as well as personal. The first half of Section I in the Foreword is nothing more nor less than a discussion of how Deity functions. They give

us seven levels on which Deity functions. These levels vary from the quiet to the active. They encompass all of the known, comprehensible functions of Deity: Deity can be very quiet. Deity can also plan, and that means that there is a potential, a plan which will be fulfilled, a plan that will be consummated. Deity can be fraternal, as in the case of Father, Son, and Spirit. Deity creates and spreads itself out over creation. Deity engages in creativity in time as well as instantaneous creativity—because evolution is simply creativity in time.

Evolution simply means that creatures go in partnership with Deity. When a Seraphim is created, she has nothing to say about her status. She simply is born as a full-grown Seraphim. But human beings have everything to say about their status as Finaliters. The evolutionary process is no different from the creative process except the act of creation is slowed down, broken into many stages and steps, and the creature has the possibility of going into partnership with the Creator, of being a co-creator of himself as he is to be. I think of the creative and the evolutionary aspects of Deity as the outgoing aspects of Deity. I think of the Supreme and the Ultimate aspects of Deity as the ingathering of the consequences of creation and evolution. When all finite creativity—when all finite evolution is summed up—it consolidates in Supreme Deity.

This a concept that’s quite new in *The Urantia Book*. It’s quite foreign to orthodox Christian theology. This concept is not wholly foreign to Western philosophy. The concept of a finite God is encountered in Western philosophy. But usually, when you encounter that concept, it is to the exclusion of an Infinite God. Only in this book do I find the two concepts associated. In the evolutionary Supreme Being, the Universal Father who inhabits eternity and pervades infinity is escaping from the terrible limitation of absoluteness. Through the Supreme Being, the Universal Father vicariously can have the experience of having an origin, of having a time of growth, of knowing what it is to struggle. How could an infinite God know struggle except through a finite expression of that infinite God? You see God’s love—his purpose, his energies—broadside throughout the finite level in creation and evolution. Then consider a bringing back together of all those things—and that is the Supreme function of Deity. In the same sense, on the superfinite levels, we have the Ultimate function of Deity, because what the Supreme is to the finite, the Ultimate is to the superfinite, to the absonite (not absolute, but more than finite).

This section goes on to discuss briefly what is finite, what is absonite, what is absolute. I think the simplest way of looking at it is to consider time and space. If we’re in time and space, we’re finite. Those beings who are above time and space, but understand time and space—deal with it—are absonite. An absolute being is timeless and

The evolutionary process is no different from the creative process except the act of creation is slowed down, broken into many stages and steps, and the creature has the possibility of going into partnership with the Creator, of being a co-creator of himself as he is to be.

spaceless. I can think of a practical illustration there. Jesus' personalized Thought Adjuster is a timeless being, a timeless entity. You'll recall that when the Master put the command of all celestial forces into the keeping of his personalized Adjuster, this Adjuster warned him. He said, "Now, I'll make sure you don't move about the planet, I understand space, but I want to warn you, if you want to do something that merely means an abridgement of time, I can't help you there, because I'm not conscious of time" (1516:4). This Thought Adjuster does not transcend time, this Thought Adjuster is timeless. Time has no meaning to the Thought Adjuster.

This section goes on to discuss divinity. It points out that there are many different kinds of divinity, qualities of divinity, but that the one thing which is characteristic of divinity is that it is the cement that holds all the acts of Deity together. If something is related to

The personal we understand. But then he also functions beyond personality. Here he neither fragments nor creates, he eventuates.

Deity in any way, shape, or form, it manifests qualities of divinity. Elsewhere in the papers the comprehensible elements of divinity are defined as truth, beauty, goodness. We are told that these are unified in living personalities as love, mercy, ministry. Elsewhere, we're told that God is love. We're told that mercy is love applied, and that ministry is mercy in

action. An effort is made in the second half of this first section to open up our thinking in terms of the quality of divinity, and for the first time you encounter the permutation of three.

There's seven different aspects of divinity portrayed here, and if you'll stop and consider, this is the same pattern you encounter in the Seven Master Spirits. They point out that divinity may be perfect, relative, or imperfect. Then they let these associate, and you wind up with seven different possible combinations. I think if you think of three in relation to seven, you'll find this pattern more than once (3:6-13):

1. Perfect in all respects, imperfect in none.
2. Perfect in some respects, relative in other respects, imperfect in none.
3. Perfect, relative, and imperfect all in association.
4. Absolute perfection in some respects, imperfection in all others.
5. Relative perfection in all aspects, imperfect in none.
6. Relative and imperfect in association, imperfection in all aspects.
7. I would say in human beings, you have an association of the perfect and the imperfect.

The Thought Adjuster would disclose perfection of divinity, and a human being would be a rather completely imperfect entity, wouldn't he? You would have Alpha and Omega associated in man. Having discussed Deity and divinity, this Foreword then goes on to talk about God. When we consider God, we are considering an aspect of

Deity, the personal qualities of Deity. How can we best understand that Deity can be other than personal? Well, the Universal Father is the Lord of gravity as well as the source of love. To use the word God loosely now, God has a different attitude toward the physical universe as compared with his sons and daughters in time and space. God could hardly love a spiral nebula, could he?

A spiral nebula is not a person. God's laws of gravity, of motion, of mass would apply to the spiral nebula. God's attitude of love would characterize his relationship to man. When I think of Deity and I want to name the Deity of God, I use the term the First Source and Center. I do not worship the First Source and Center. I worship that facet of the First Source and Center which is turned toward me, and this is God—more particularly, the Universal Father. I cannot worship that which I cannot comprehend or love. I cannot love the source of gravity. I can well love the Father of personality.

Even God, though, has its aspects. God functions on more than one level. We are not told how God functions in terms of absolute perfection, but we are told how he functions in terms of relative divinity expression. We're told that he functions prepersonally, personally, and superpersonally. When he acts in these three relationships, he acts in a different way. Pre-personally, he fragments. He produces Father fragments. Our relationship to these Father fragments has to do with just one class of them. They're called Thought Adjusters. They live in us as potential partners for the eternal journey. When he creates, he produces Sons, even as Jesus. Then he functions superpersonally. This is beyond personality. The prepersonal would be before personality.

The personal we understand. But then he also functions beyond personality. Here he neither fragments nor creates, he eventuates. The best thinking I can offer you on the word *eventuate* is this: An eventuated being, to me, is a being whose existence is inherently a consequence of a plan. I can illustrate this very simply. The Universal Father does not create the brotherhood of creatures. He eventuates it, in a sense. Simply by being the Father of each creature, brotherhood is inherent in the relationship of all creatures. I think we're stretching the word *eventuate*, but it's a good illustration. God does not create universal brotherhood. Universal brotherhood eventuates out of the fact of God's universal Fatherhood. You cannot have one without the other. (Don't make that go on all fours!) The word *God* has more than one meaning in these papers. The word God is used with seven different meanings. We are familiar with the first three—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. We're not familiar with God the Supreme. This is the emerging Deity of the finite level of existence. This is evolutionary Deity. This is God in time, not God in eternity. This is God in space, not God in infinity.

God the Supreme is not an infinite Deity. God the Supreme is a consequence of the acts of infinite

Deity. God the Sevenfold is an association of Deity. Our encounter with God the Sevenfold is in the bestowal of Jesus—a very real encounter! When Jesus said, “*He who has seen me has seen the Father*” [1750:7; 1947:8; 1960:1], he spoke as God and for God, and this is the truest illustration that we can apprehend concerning the function of God the Sevenfold. God the Sevenfold is God anywhere in time and space. God in action, in the imperfect, evolutionary domains.

To us, the only God that we can comprehend is in the human bestowal of Jesus, and this is God the Sevenfold in action. God reaching out from Paradise to fellowship any creature at any level of existence—even mortal creatures at the lowest level of existence. What God the Supreme is to the finite level, God the Ultimate is to the superfinite, the absonite level—that level which is like the ham in a sandwich. If the lower piece of bread is finite, and the upper piece of bread is absolute and infinite, then the ham would be absonite, transcendental, separating the finite from the absolute. God the Absolute would be the final expression of Deity. God the Absolute would be the final experiential, or comprehensible expression of the Father, as the Eternal Son is the existential expression of the Father. Existential, meaning, “that which comes into being by the inherent acts of God.” Experiential, meaning, “that which creatures have had a hand in, hence could understand.”

If God the Absolute could ever, ever appear in fact and in completion, then through God the Absolute we might understand God the Father as infinite. This tells me that God the Absolute will never complete his growth, because we will never understand. The Father is infinite. We’ll merely grow in that understanding. The third section deals with the First Source and Center. I’m intrigued with the fact that they speak of the First, Second, and Third Sources and Centers, but there are only two sections in these papers which use those captions. They discuss the First Source and Center, and then I believe over in Paper 8, they discuss the Third Source and Center. You see, God the Father and God the Spirit are quite alike, and they’re both quite different from God the Son. The Father and the Spirit are personal, as is the Son, but they’re also everything else besides being personal. They have many other-than-personal characteristics. The Son is personal and only personal. That’s why the Son can’t fragment himself, as both the Father and the Spirit can.

You can’t fragment a personality, and the Son can find nothing in his Deity to fragment, because there’s nothing in his Deity which is not personal. He is the full, personal expression of God. The Father and the Spirit are also personal, but they are also much that is other than personal; hence they can fragment themselves. You have Father fragments, and you have Spirit fragments. Son fragments, you will recall, come from the Creator Sons, not from the Eternal Son. Son-fused mortals derive their spirit endowment not from the Eternal Son, but from

the Creator Son of their local universe. In this third section, we are for the first time introduced to the Seven Absolutes of Infinity. We’re told about the relationship which the First Source and Center has to these seven Absolutes. I think the easiest way to think about these seven Absolutes is to think of them in terms of matter, mind, and spirit.

The Second Source and Center is the source of spirit. The Third Source and Center is the source of mind—not that there’s not also spiritual ministry there. The Paradise Source and Center, the Eternal Isle, is the source of all things material, and the controller of all things material. The easiest way to think of these three Absolutes is as the reservoirs out of which the matter, the mind, and the spirit of the evolving present and the unexpressed future are coming. From the Unqualified Absolute come the evolving universes. From the Deity Absolute come the spirit beings which are being created and will be created. From the Universal Absolute perchance they draw upon for mind. I’m not so sure about the last one, but I’m pretty sure about the first two.

But I think it’s a good convenient way of looking at this. Example: When a Local Universe Mother Spirit creates Seraphim, they appear in—what is it?—unit formation, a hundred and some odd thousand of them? It’s a large number of Seraphim. They don’t come from nothing. They come from something. When a cloud appears in the sky, that cloud does not come from nothing; that cloud was there in the form of invisible water vapor before a change in temperature made it visible. These Seraphim that were created were potential in the universe before the Creative Spirit, by her creative action, transformed them from a potential to an actual. The unborn of the next generation are potential in the germ plasm of the present generation of living human beings. If they weren’t potential, they jolly well couldn’t ever become actual, could they? This section makes an unqualified statement: There are seven Absolutes of infinity, but the First Source and Center is primal in relation to total reality. This is not polytheism we’re studying; this is monotheism.

There’s only one Infinite Being. Others share his infinity and his absoluteness, but none takes precedence over the First Source and Center. God, the Universal Father, is the personality of the First Source and Center. Then they discuss how God is related to the universe, and we see that God is not directly related to the universe, except in one aspect: God is related to creation, to the universes, through his six associated Absolutes, except in one particular: He is the direct Father of every personality in existence. All personalities derive that quality of being from the Universal Father, and they are linked to the Father by the personality circuit. The other six Absolutes do not participate with the Father in this bestowal of personality, with one minor exception: The

The unborn of the next generation are potential in the germ plasm of the present generation of living human beings. If they weren’t potential, they jolly well couldn’t ever become actual, could they?

Infinite Spirit, the Third Source and Center, has the Father's proxy. He's the Father's attorney, in fact, and he can act for the Father. But again, this is the delegation of creative power.

This section goes on to talk about reality. They point out the maximum reality which we can understand is a finite God. Let's face it. We want God to have a beginning, don't we? A beginningless God is really beyond our comprehension. The only reason we accept an unbeginning God is because it's ridiculous to have a beginning—because if he has a beginning, who's his Father, who's his grandfather, who's his great-grandfather? We have the choice between an uncaused cause or an endless series. Do you see that? And the endless series of course is ridiculous. The Greeks tried it. Back of Zeus they had Cronus, and back of him they had

someone else; but eventually, you give up, and you simply start with the uncaused cause. This section goes on to point out that conceptually we need a beginning, and though there never was a beginning, they're going to give us one in concept.

They warn us this is not a reality.

To God, to Deity, prior to any self-distribution, they give the name the I AM. And, they say, this is a philosophic concept. This is not a reality. The most helpful thing I can suggest to you to deal with this is this: We use the number zero in all of our mathematics, but you have never seen nothing, have you? You can see one of something, or one and a half, or two, but you've never seen a zero of anything, have you? Yet, we think in terms of zero. It's a most convenient concept in mathematics. Zero is a valid concept, but zero is not a factual reality, only a concept of reality. Are you with me?

The term I AM is just as valuable a thinking tool as the term *zero*. But neither are factual. Nevertheless, they qualify. They say, "Now, look. The I AM may be a theoretical concept and a philosophical concession, but the Infinite is not. The Universal Father is the Infinite." I think of the term First Source and Center as this: When you get down to the level of the Seven Absolutes, and you want to isolate out the Infinite, it is the First Source and Center. This is the Infinite as manifest on the level of the Seven Absolutes. Just as when you want to say, "What is the personality of the First Source and Center?" the answer is, "God." What name do we give to that personality, the Universal Father? That is the name of our choosing. How could he have a name?

He's nameless. In shorthand here, they tell you how the I AM distributed himself. They simply tell you—and these are valid concepts, but these are not factual realities—they simply say, I'm going to use the word *God* to describe pre-God, because it's a simpler way of telling the story. They simply say that God separated himself from total reality, and if he hadn't done that, there would have been no room in which anything could

take place, because how could you squeeze something in where God filled all things? God, as it were, contracted himself—and he can do this because he has will—what he contracted himself into is the essence of Deity, at the heart of which is will. What he left behind is the essence of non-Deity, non-will.

One of the greatest criticisms I ever read of the book of Genesis was written by a Zoroastrian theologian about 250 A.D. It's in the Pehlevi texts. This Zoroastrian, in criticizing Genesis, says, "God was not alone, because when God commanded, 'Let there be light,' in order for that command to have effect, there must also have been present an obeyer of commands." I borrow that term from the old Zoroastrian theologian. The Unqualified Absolute is the "obeyer of commands." When Deity takes snuff, the Unqualified Absolute sneezes. Now, when God separates himself from that which is not Deity, he still links himself to that which is not Deity. This linkage is the function of the Universal Absolute, the conjoiner of the Deity Absolute from the non-Deity Absolute. And I think three links linked together is an excellent symbol for that relationship.

God still fills all Deity. I think of God as contracting within Deity, while at the same time he expands to continue to fill all Deity. I think of God as separating himself from the Son, of conjoining himself with the Son, of constituting the Trinity, as a thing that happens simultaneously. So that instead of one of these circles—you know, the three circles—just being full of God, this circle is now a tri-concentric circle. It is full of the Trinity. In so doing, God achieves companionship. He separates himself from absolute personality, and in so doing, he becomes the Father of the absolute person, who thereby becomes his Son. And if he can become Father of the absolute person, he can become Father of any person. He ceases to be the absolute person, but becomes the Universal Father of the absolute person and of all other persons.

At the same time that he does this—when he expresses himself absolutely as a person—he expresses himself absolutely as a non-person, and this is the origin of the Isle of Paradise. Or, to anthropomorphize it, Paradise is the absolute machine which God built for the same reason that men build machines—to perform repetitive acts. The physical governing of the physical universes is a repetitive act, and God devised a flawless machine to do this job for him. Why should he personally attend to it when a machine, an absolute machine, can do the job? They tell us, in Section IV, that reality is not all spirit. These papers make some startling statements! They say, for example, that God is spirit, but Paradise is not. They point out that our direction Godward is spiritward, so that as we consider matter, mind, and spirit, the spiritual is the more real to us because our growth towards reality follows a spiritual route.

...*"God was not alone, because when God commanded, 'Let there be light,' in order for that command to have effect, there must also have been present an obeyer of commands."*

This is truth. This is not, however, fact. Energy, physical energy, is just as real as spiritual energy, but it doesn't have as much meaning or as much value to human beings. They point out here that reality can be Deified or not Deified. This planet is hardly Deified reality, is it? But Finaliters have partaken of divinity and are a creature part of Deified reality. They go on to point out that things may be either actual or potential. We are actual people. Children yet unborn are potential people, are they not? Of course, you can have something in between. A good illustration of something that is neither actual nor potential: the brotherhood of man. Is it unreal? No. No, you can't say that. Is it real? Well, read any newspaper and you can determine that it's not really here, is it? It is a becoming reality, isn't it? It's in the grey area, the zone of becoming. Are human beings real? Yes and no. Until they've fused with their Thought Adjusters, they are not truly real in the universe, are they? We're simply becoming citizens of the universe. Is a child an adult? Well, no. He's a becoming adult, isn't he? Or have you coped with teenagers?

This section closes with a discussion of not spirit reality. It discusses the Isle of Paradise, where they point out that Paradise is an absolute reality derived from Deity, but it is not Deity. I think the best way of looking at Paradise is: it is the absolute machine which God built. We can understand that because we build machines to do jobs. Somewhere in here—it's not in this particular context—it says Paradise is not conscious as man could ever understand the meaning of such a term. Paradise, in some way, is a knowing reality. Paradise is not mindless, but it does not have mind as we could ever understand the meaning of that word.

You should think of Paradise in two ways:

1. Paradise is a place, the dwelling place of God at the center of all things. It is our final destination in our quest for God. On Paradise, we will find God, and—figuratively speaking—we shall stand before him, face to face.
2. Paradise also has a function in the universe. As the Son draws all things spiritual, as the Third Person draws all things intellectual, so Paradise draws all things material. Paradise is the central governing power of the material universe of universes.

Section V talks about personality reality, and it points out that personality comes from God, and that all reality that is linked with personality is associable. Prepersonal fragments, superpersonal beings are all contactable and associable with personality and personal beings. This is a part of Deity reality in contrast to the not personal which can never be associated with the personal. Man has no fellowship with a rock, but man can have fellowship with an Adjuster, a Seraphim, or a Transcendentaler—given enough time to have contact with Transcendentalers. (They would be super personal beings). They sum up, at the end of this section, the

functioning entity of a human being: body, mind, spirit, and soul.

The body, our life mechanism. The mind which we think with and confuse ourselves with. The spirit which invades the mind, just as the sperm invades the womb. The soul is the embryo that comes into origin as a result of that cosmic conception. The human mind is the material womb of the soul. The spirit that comes from the Father is the invader, and when that invasion takes place—in about the fifth year of mortal life—something new begins to grow. This is the embryonic soul that evolves within the womb of the mind. This is the soul that has the capacity to survive death.

They point out that personality is none of these things. That personality is not matter, not mind, not spirit. Personality is a fourth reality in the cosmos. Personality is that which comes from God the Father—not the Son, not the Spirit (unless the Spirit acts for the Father). Then they define morontia, because the soul is morontia. The soul is neither matter nor spirit. The best definition I know of morontia is: it is a fabric the warp of which is physical, the woof of which is spiritual. One goes one way and one the other. Audience: The warp goes lengthwise; the woof crosses the warp. I'm looking at it—I wouldn't be that smart. Or you might say that matter and spirit will not mix.

They don't ordinarily, any more than oil and water will mix. But in the presence of soap, oil and water will emulsify. Morontia is an emulsification of the oil of matter and the water of spirit. Section VI deals with—in a sense is a continuation of their discussion of—Paradise. As they have talked about personality realities in Section V, they talk about nonpersonal realities in Section VI. They try to define some terms that they're going to use in talking about the physical—the material—level of cosmic reality. They talk about force, energy, and power. These are stages in the emergence of what we would recognize as physical reality. Force is the beginning. Energy is a stage of emerging. Power is a stage of having emerged. This ties in with their later discussion starting with space potency, going on down through primordial force, puissant energy, gravity energy, and universe power.

In terms of liquid water—this is good symbolization!—when you look up into the sky, and you don't see the water vapor up there at all—all you see is the blue sky and the sun shining—you might say that this would be like force. When it turns cold, and you see the clouds form—this would be like emergent energy. When it starts to rain—you've got universe power. You can feel the wetness. Does that help? Force would be intangible. Energy, you know—you'd sense it, but you wouldn't get your hands on it until it rained, and then you could feel it.

Are human beings real? Yes and no. Until they've fused with their Thought Adjusters, they are not truly real in the universe, are they?

They point out that mind always means somebody is doing something. There's administration if there's mind. Mind never is generated out of matter. Mind is put into matter. They talk about pattern, which is a very interesting bit of discussion here. They point out that pattern is a very real thing, but it's hard to put your hands on. We're very unhappy if we have unfortunate patterns. We call that being homely, being ugly. The whole beauty industry is built up around the improvement of the human pattern. Our forms are patterns. The spiral nebula is a pattern. A triangle is a pattern. The reason that these patterns appear is because the universe is full of energy—material, spiritual, mindal. And the universe has personality in it, and personalities are always trying to order the manifestation of energy.

So patterns are always appearing. Elsewhere in the papers they speak of the forms of ascenders as being patterns which become increasingly responsive to the purpose and action of the inner personality. I've long suspected that one of the main reasons we'll have for trying to grow in grace on the mansion worlds is, if we are ugly on the inside, we will jolly well look ugly on the outside—and the only Helena Rubenstein you can visit is the housecleaning of your own soul. When you begin to be good on the inside, you will begin to look beautiful on the outside. This is even true on earth. As the hand of experience writes on your face, the blank pages take on the aspect of your personality. I put it in my words: "We can't avoid wrinkles, but we have a choice as to which kind—the frowning kind or the smiling kind." You can choose which kind of wrinkles that you want to wind up with. The next four sections of the Foreword are a discussion of experiential Deity, and here they use the word *experiential* in contrast to the word *existential*.

Let's see what the word *experience* means. It means something that you learn by living through, and because of this, you grow in wisdom, you grow in judgment, you grow in capacity. This is utterly foreign to the nature of God, isn't it? How could God grow by any technique? God is infinite. How could God learn anything? God foresees. How could anything take the Father by surprise? Nothing could. God is beyond experience, isn't he? His nature shuts him off from all things experiential directly. He might experience vicariously, in Thought Adjusters, but never directly. And as it is with the Father, so it is with the Son, and the Spirit. These beings are existential Deities. They are beyond experience. They are without beginning or ending of days.

The Father's infinity could hardly increase, could it? If he starts out as infinite, what can be added to him? Now, the Supreme Being, the Sevenfold, the Ultimate, and God the Absolute are experiential Deities. Leave God the Sevenfold for the moment. The Universal Father is engaged in augmenting Deity. Having started with three, he is adding three. All of these expressions of Deity are

experiential. They have origin, historic origins. They have beginnings. They know growth. They know setbacks, if you please. As the Supreme Being is growing in time and space, I would say the Lucifer rebellion is like a cancer taking place within the Supreme. If you'll recall, they isolated the System of Satania, much as white leukocytes would wall off an infection in the human body. The Supreme Being is finite Deity, is growing Deity.

The Supreme Being compensates God for the lack of the experience of never having been finite. Through the Supreme, God can know what it would be like to have an origin and to grow. The Supreme Being compensates man for his inability really ever to understand an infinite God. We're told that God is the first truth and the last fact. We first feel God's love, and then we seek to understand him. That quest will never end. There are only two beings who understand God, and that's the Eternal Son and the Infinite Spirit. They can because they have infinite comprehension capacity. We will never understand God, but we will someday understand the Supreme Being, because he has an origin, he has a growth, he has a destiny, he can achieve completion—even as man has an origin, a growth, and can achieve the fulfillment of destiny in the Corps of the Finality. The Supreme Being is God as he can be understood by finite creatures.

The Supreme Being is not the personalization of the Universal Father, but the Supreme Being is the finite equivalent of the personalization of the Paradise Trinity. The Trinity is not a person. When we want to say what would the Trinity be like if the Trinity were a person and were finite, this is the Supreme Being. He who has seen the Supreme has seen the equivalent of the finite personalization of the Paradise Trinity. What we say about the Supreme Being in relation to the finite universe, we could say about God the Ultimate in relation to the Master Universe. This is the personification of the Trinity in relation to the Master Universe and as comprehensible by beings that are more than finite; and someday that will include us. The papers make this comparison between Jesus and the Supreme Being. As Jesus is the bridge over which man moves from the human level to the finding of God, so the Supreme Being someday will be the bridge over which finite creatures will move to those levels that lie beyond the finite of creature experience—the Absonite level. God the Absolute—they don't say much about God the Absolute.

I once paraphrased those two short paragraphs, and it took, as I recall, six typewritten pages to paraphrase them and break them down into what these compact words mean. These statements about God the Absolute are like anchovies—the flavor is packed in very tight. You don't eat anchovies in large quantities. You can dilute these paragraphs with much, much English, and you still have intriguing concepts. The trouble with God the Absolute is that God the Absolute is both experiential and existential. The chances are that our dealings with God the Absolute lie on beyond the whole

"We can't avoid wrinkles, but we have a choice as to which kind—the frowning kind or the smiling kind."

Master Universe. I can see an end to the Supreme; I can see destiny. I can see an end and destiny in the Ultimate, although it's almost incomprehensible. I can see only a beginning to God the Absolute. I can see no end.

Going back to God the Sevenfold and to the present days, if you look on page 11, you'll see that this is a Deity association. This is seven levels of Deity in action, and in time and space. I strongly suspect that God the Sevenfold will go on functioning after the present universe age in outer space—perhaps in slightly modified association, but in principle, this is God in action in time and space. These are the beings that we encounter on the Paradise Ascent, starting with Jesus, going up through the rulers of Orvonton, the Master Spirit of our superuniverse, and then successively the Spirit, the Son, and the Father. God the Sevenfold breaks down into three levels.

I would think of the Sevenfold in three principal subdivisions. One, two, and three are the Supreme Creators; they're so defined in the papers. They are not infinite, they're subinfinite. They're subabsolute. They're the folks who are out here working in time and space. These three Absolutes are, in a sense, the potentials out of which future things are drawn. But that's an oversimplification. These three Absolutes also function throughout all time and space, transcended time and space, et cetera.

Now, here's what makes their function very difficult to comprehend. Let's consider a child in a given situation. He looks at a green apple, he has hunger, and so he eats, without any thought of the consequences, of the bellyache. This is a stimulus and a response and a consequence without judgment, without foresight, without anything. An adult looks at the green apple. It looks succulent. The adult forecasts the consequences of eating green apples, and decides to pass it up, because the adult does not want the bellyache. The adult is not reacting to the stimulus of the present, is he? Yes, his salivary glands may react, and his mouth may water, but his reaction has to do with future time, does it not, and with the consequence of his act.

Michael, when he was here on earth as Jesus, lived a life from day to day, he looked ahead, he exhibited rare foresight. When he was pressed to do something prematurely, he said, "But this hour has not yet come." No one ever stampeded him. He was always looking ahead. He was reacting to consequences and to effects, just as the adult looks ahead, as compared with the child. These Absolutes react in a timeless fashion. When any Absolute reacts, this Absolute reacts in terms of the eternal past, the eternal present, and the eternal future.

Therefore, the reaction of an Absolute can never be understood within any frame this side of infinity. Does this make sense? The child couldn't understand why the adult wouldn't eat the green apple. The twelve did not understand why Jesus did not do certain things. The universe administrators are just as mystified by the

actions and transactions of the three Absolutes. Nobody, this side of the Paradise Deities, I think, comprehends what these Absolutes are doing, because one of them mechanizes everything, another one activates everything, and a third one unifies mechanization and activation. They say, don't look upon these Absolutes as antecedent to God. They're not. Don't look upon these Absolutes as being independent of the Trinity. They're not—although the Trinity deals with some of them only indirectly, and deals with one of them directly.

When the Paradise Trinity functions, in a total sense, this is the function of the Deity Absolute, and through the Universal Absolute this causes responses in the Unqualified Absolute. The Unqualified Absolute mechanizes, the Deity Absolute activates, the Universal Absolute correlates these two, unifies these two. This Foreword closes with a discussion of the Trinities. There are three of them. They point out that the Paradise Trinity is the existential Trinity. The other two are experiential Trinities. The Paradise Trinity has no origin. The other two Trinities have an historic origin, a time of coming into being, a time of coming into full function. The Trinities happen, I think, because of divinity. When God separates things, they've got to reunite in some way.

When he achieved threefold personalization as Father, Son, and Spirit, the Trinity became inevitable. This separation could exist only if there were a unification, because Deity is one. There could be a threefold personalization only if the three Deities were unified in some fashion. This sets a pattern which is followed as reality is expressed on the finite level. All those who participate in this finite expression and perfecting of the finite find themselves in essence reunified as a Trinity—as the First Experiential Trinity, the Trinity Ultimate.

Many beings are involved, but I visualize this as the union of the Deity of three groups of beings—the Supreme Creators, the Architects of the Master Universe, and the Supreme Being. This is not the union of over a million personalities; this is a union, again, of three Deities. All of the Supreme Creators add up to some form of Deity manifestation. This is a consequence of their success. It's not difficult for me to visualize the Deity expression of the Corps of the Architects of the Master Universe. And the union of these two with the Supreme Being—not as a person, but as Deity—constitutes the First Experiential Trinity, the Trinity Ultimate.

This is the Trinity which will supplement the acts of the Paradise Trinity in the exploration of the Master Universe. The consequence of the full development of the Master Universe is the formation of the Second Experiential Trinity, the Trinity Absolute. And the union of all three constitutes the Trinity of Trinities.

And that's what the Foreword means to me. ■

When any Absolute reacts, this Absolute reacts in terms of the eternal past, the eternal present, and the eternal future.

Cultivation of Universal Intelligence

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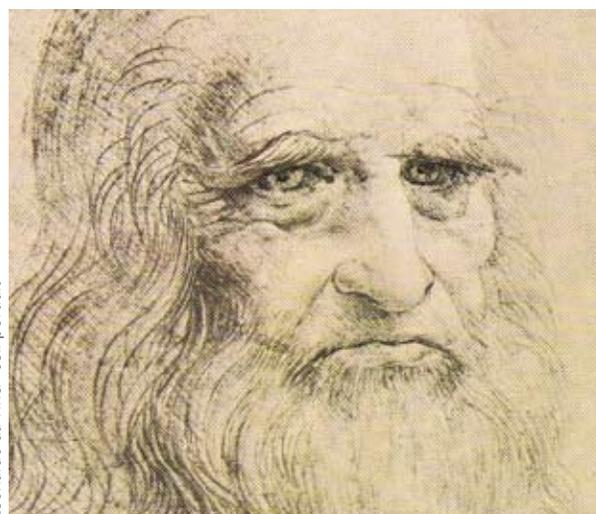
WHEN WE THINK of the phrase “cultivation of universal intelligence,” each of us may have a different opinion as to what it means. In a world of instant gratification, the thought of cultivating anything seems like an arduous and long-drawn out process and our immediate question probably is: What’s in it for me? Today almost all decision-making is self-serving, individually and collectively.

How many of us have done a little retrospective thinking and picked up a self-help book about some philosophy of living or a method to change some quirk in our attitude? Being knowledgeable about a problem is important because it is a step towards better behavioral balance and it can inspire us to a greater good. *The Urantia Book* is a book that inspires, answering many questions about our origin, history and destiny not provided anywhere else. We may even expound about some newfound knowledge to anyone who might listen, but a major question arises: How many of us truly assimilate the knowledge we have gained and allow our newfound insights to influence the choices we make?

Excellence of character and the enlarged spiritual vision of one inspired individual after another will generate a wave of love cascading into socially conscious service that will transform our world.

The teaching of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man underlying *The Urantia Book* has been around for thousands of years. Our world, however, is not close to living a brotherhood which requires that we expand our personal meaning and appreciation of this teaching so that we may truly participate in advancing civilization. Our efforts to herald world peace will always fall short if we don’t cultivate the cosmic awareness and capacity to love that are necessary to live the brotherhood of man.

To cultivate universal intelligence is to develop the human mind, ...*the thinking, perceiving, and feeling mechanism of the human organism. The total conscious and unconscious experience associated with the emotional life reaching upward through worship and wisdom to the spirit level* [8:2]. In practical terms, to cultivate universal



“Leonardo da Vinci” self-portrait

intelligence is to develop the noble character AND the cosmic perspective necessary to live the brotherhood of man, in attunement with the Indwelling Spirit and in keeping with the Universal Father’s divine will. *Only in the higher levels of the superconscious mind as it impinges upon the spirit realm of human experience can you find those higher concepts in association with effective master patterns which will contribute to the building of a better and more enduring civilization* [1220:4]. To cultivate universal intelligence is to grow in divine attunement, in the balanced union and coordination of the traits and character of divinity.

The cultivation of universal intelligence is not to be confused with cultivating the intellect—human reasoning limited to our five senses and interpretation of our surroundings. When we exclusively cultivate the intellect, we live a life of perception only, embracing the short-sighted attitude that seeing is believing. In *The Book of Life*, Jiddu Krishnamurti says: “Training the intellect does not result in intelligence. Rather, intelligence comes into being when one acts in perfect harmony, both intellectually and emotionally. There is a vast distinction between intellect and intelligence. Intellect is merely thought functioning independently of emotion. When intellect, irrespective of emotion, is trained in any particular direction, one may have great intellect, but one does not have intelligence, because in intelligence there is the inherent capacity to feel as well as to reason; in intelligence both capacities are equally present, intensely and harmoniously.”¹

Neither should cultivation of universal intelligence be confused with conscience. Conscience directs behavior but conscience is not intelligence; it is not the innate wisdom of the soul nor is it a divine voice speaking to the soul. *It is merely the sum total of the moral and ethical content of the mores of any current stage of existence* [1005:2].

When we cultivate universal intelligence we develop our ability to express greater goodness and honor the Universal Father’s loving command to every individual: *Be you perfect, even as I am perfect* [21:3; 22:3; 86:1; 295:1; 449:2;

637:1; and the Bible, Matthew 5:48]. Perfection is a tall order. What does it mean to be perfect in an incomplete, imperfect world?

From a universal perspective, perfection is a process, its full attainment achieved only in Paradise. Relative levels of perfection can be achieved during our lifetime by our determined efforts to grow in righteousness and love—truth, beauty, and goodness—the characteristics of the nature of the Universal Father.

“Divine perfection” starts with developing balance—the free-will mobilization of all faculties towards a human personality imbued with a noble character in the pursuit of higher spiritual meanings and values, with one goal and purpose in mind: to serve others with the selflessness of a loving parent. *When man consecrates his will to the doing of the Father’s will, when man gives God all that he has, then does God make that man more than he is* [1285:3]. What this entails, however, is hard work—not a favorite pastime. *Evolutionary man does not naturally relish hard work. To keep pace in his life experience with the impelling demands and the compelling urges of a growing religious experience means incessant activity in spiritual growth, intellectual expansion, factual enlargement, and social service. There is no real religion apart from a highly active personality* [1120:4]. How comfortable we are in our efforts at spiritual attainment and even self-transformation!!! These efforts may well be personally satisfying but are not socially transforming. The “highly active personality” is the commitment required to cultivate universal intelligence. *It requires time for men and women to effect radical and extensive changes in their basic and fundamental concepts of social conduct, philosophic attitudes, and religious convictions* [1705:1].

The cultivation of universal intelligence is in alignment with the Divine Plan of Progress because it has the potential to:

- Enhance those religious/spiritual habits of thoughts and actions that contribute to spiritual growth and righteous living.
- Promote intellectual growth.
- Foster emotional maturity.
- Cultivate moral insight, a sense of duty promoting moral values and their expression.
- Cultivate true spiritual insight, the ability to recognize and embrace the reality of God as a Father/personality and the fraternal actuality of all personalities.
- Strengthen one’s familiarity with God through better attunement with the Indwelling Spirit.
- Deepen appreciation for the beauty of natural creation.
- Foster the quality of selflessness, the capacity to love and the ability to live the brotherhood of man.
- Cultivate the cosmic perspective that contributes to religious unity and cultural progress.

- Self-empower each individual to blossom with cosmic insight.

The objective results are the “icing on the cake.” This may include a positive outlook on life, improved health, better relationships, enhanced career opportunities, a harmonic rhythm to every-day events, and a stable life environment. Genuine happiness is a natural outgrowth of a universally intelligent life!

When we cultivate universal intelligence, we free faith, elevate wisdom, and live truth. Excellence of character and the enlarged spiritual vision of one inspired individual after another will generate a wave of love cascading into socially conscious service that will transform our world. For maximum effectiveness the process of cultivating universal intelligence must be powered by an unequivocal **purpose**, a supreme goal toward which all our efforts, labor, and organization is directed. A universal purpose impregnates all goals and actions and becomes the inspiration for living, the core of our personal roadmap of life.

Intelligent action becomes possible only when we are able to evaluate systematically and objectively the merit of our knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions...

Purpose must be supported by **faith**. We have the power to create what we intend, but we must believe in our purpose without knowing how it will manifest or how it feels once we get there. Personally, faith always meant belief in God. In the process of writing *Heaven Is Not The Last Stop* I learned that faith is much more than intellectual conviction. It signifies a living relationship between creator and creature that fuels our desire to develop the qualities of divinity. Faith grows in proportion to our growth in the concept of God and our understanding of God’s relation to humanity; the greater our recognition and appreciation for the Spirit that indwells us, the greater our connection and love for God and our commitment to emulate his nature. Growth in the personal experience of faith validates our belief in God as Universal Father and ourselves as the sons and daughters of God. Even more, it opens our feelings to the brotherhood of all humankind. *Belief has attained the level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. A state of mind attains to faith levels only when it actually dominates the mode of living* [1114:5].

We may have a good idea of our purpose and goals, but without the mode of living to enable us to get there we may lose sight of it. The practice of cultivating universal intelligence in the light of epochal revelation provides clarity as to function and purpose, providing greater opportunity for growth in meaning. With increased depth in understanding comes the potential to effect a positive chain reaction that will help uplift both personal values and those of society.

Cultivating universal intelligence embraces the following seven activities, all of which are crucial in developing a balanced spiritual nature:

1. Improve quality of thinking
2. Explore beliefs (in light of epochal revelation)
3. Develop emotional maturity
4. Cultivate moral awareness and consistency
5. Attune to spirit guidance
6. Cultivate sound taste
7. Develop a consecrated attitude

1. To improve the quality of thinking is to develop objective and reflective mind skills. Intelligent action becomes possible only when we are able to evaluate systematically and objectively the merit of our knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions.

2. Lack of spiritual humility and the consequent reluctance to explore and question our beliefs is perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to spiritual growth. We are complacent with what we know and find comfort in our status quo. This is not surprising. **To explore beliefs** is to engage in an intellectual journey that is sure to engage the mind and heart in battle. The mind does not want

The process is ideally started in childhood, but it is never too late to start. to let go of the familiar and we may fear losing our security if we dare to question. There is no doubt about spiritual agitation when exploring beliefs with a questioning mind, but

exploring beliefs is not about discarding them; it is about expanding them so that we may discover a higher spiritual perspective from which to live our lives. It is about being open to all knowledge and determining where your beliefs fit in.

3. Development of emotional maturity is to recognize and address our character weaknesses and to reinforce our strengths. In the book *Gāyatrī*, the author I.K Taimni expresses the importance of this process: “Before any spiritual light from the innermost recesses of our being can break through into the realms of our mind, much has to be accomplished. Impurities have to be removed, distortions have to be straightened out, and the vehicles have to be harmonized. It is only in such a prepared mind, freed from these ordinary defects, that the light of higher knowledge can manifest.”²

4. Cultivating moral awareness and consistency is perhaps the most challenging because we take for granted the moral inconsistency we witness in family, business, politics, and religion. What does it mean to be morally consistent? “Morality is about being transparent and wholly trustworthy— to family and friends, in the workplace and in all of life. It is about integrity, ‘walking the talk’ day in and day out, in matters great and small, in private and public life.”³

5. To Attune to spirit guidance is to fix our intention on finding union with the Indwelling Spirit and then abiding in receptivity to its guidance. Moral choices, righteous expressions and spiritual humility, harmonized with generous love, provide leverage for the Indwelling Spirit to adjust the mortal mind to progressively divine attitudes. The practice of worshipful meditation fosters contact of mind with divinity and relaxation renews the

mind – conflict is removed and tension relieved – expanding human capacity for spiritual response.

6. To cultivate sound taste is to develop an aesthetic sense that expresses discernment and appreciation of things which reflect perfection. Sound taste, unlike personal taste, is based upon a thorough grasp of truthful knowledge, not necessarily devoid of emotion but certainly achieved with an open and rational mind. As we develop sound taste it enables us to delight in excellence and to appreciate the good and beautiful whenever found.

7. Having a consecrated attitude embraces more than ardent feelings of love toward God. It includes dedication to knowing God and to being in his loyal service by serving our fellow humans. A consecrated attitude emerges as a result of perseverance and mental commitment to *expressing the divinity within*. We can **develop a consecrated attitude** by making a habit of confiding in God while expanding our concept of prayer and worship.

Each activity in the process of cultivating universal intelligence may be tailored to address the needs, preferences, resources, and capabilities of each individual. The process is ideally started in childhood, *but it is never too late to start*. Many will have reached a certain level of mastery in one or more of these activities but excellence is characterized not only by physical and intellectual qualities but also by moral and spiritual capacities. Progress in divine character building entails expansion of spiritual meanings and exaltation of values and is an on-going eternal process.

The activities of cultivating universal intelligence can be addressed simultaneously in varying degrees of intensity. Each action may enliven or strengthen various qualities exclusively. Long-term focus and commitment overcomes personal challenges, including doubt. Like learning a new language, there will be times when we are frustrated but also times when we *know* that we are on the right track. With inspired purpose, our motivation is strengthened as we experience a growing connection with God and our fellow humans. The challenge deepens the meaning of life for anyone embarking on the journey. ■

Sheila Keene Lund is the author of the upcoming book: *Heaven Is Not The Last Stop*. URL: <http://www.heavenisnotthelaststop.com>

- 1 *Unity of Mind and Heart – The Book of Life: Daily Meditations with Krishnamurti* by j. Krishnamurti; HarperOne; 1st ed edition (may 12, 1995); url: http://www.krishnamurti.org/quotes/2005-09-03_unity_of_mind_and_heart
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A look at prayer

GUIAUME LALGONQUIN

Canada

"With feeling" photo



MANY PEOPLE HAVE AN INACCURATE idea about prayer by wrongly comparing it with the means which favour it, such as music, introspection, silence, fasting, etc. Prayer is a technique which allows spiritual growth. It starts off as a communication, which little by little is converted into communion, to finally become an opening into transcendence through worship and, as with faith, frees us from matter by the expansion of insight.

By opening the human end of the channel of the God-man communication, mortals make immediately available the ever-flowing stream of divine ministry to the creatures of the worlds.

[1638:4]

The basis of prayer

When in its primary form, prayer is simply a demand, a request, meant to fill a void or a lack of any sort. But even at that level, it has great value because it represents the first efforts of a long voyage, and all voyages always begin with small steps. That's how, at first, it can begin as a cry of rage to obtain vengeance and later transform itself into a merciful intervention for one's enemies. It can be the expression of a hope to change the will of God and later become a powerful technique to change oneself. Prayer is not a technique to escape conflicts but rather a stimulant to grow in the face of conflict.

Prayer greatly contributes to the spiritual development of mankind, to the preservation of values and superior ideals. It exerts a powerful influence to prevent isolation of the personality. But if it becomes a means to acquire egoistic advantages on one's peers, it brings very little to spiritual growth.

Prayer techniques

The most common praying technique is recitation, sometimes repetitive, of sacred formulas or even of formulas we have ourselves invented. This can be an excellent means of praying as long as one thinks what he says. Repetitive prayer is not sterile if the heart is in

it. It is another way to help us steer our inner soul. But if these incantations become repetitive while we think of other things, we must not hope to draw many results from them. Nevertheless, this is but one facet of prayer, which it is not compulsory for praying.

Prayer can be practised within a religious or non-religious frame because all things spiritual are not necessarily attached to religion. But, those who can realise their consciousness of God without recourse to symbolism must not deny the value that rites and symbols can have. It is not for man to judge his brother's prayer. The privacy of the soul is not of public domain.

Prayer is a technique of spiritual communication and must be learned like any other technique. It requires continual efforts, but must always remain an inviting and pleasant moment. When we encounter difficulties in concentrating to pray, we must not uselessly insist. One can still continue a few more minutes but must not persist. This would risk transforming that pleasant moment of communion into a rigid and obligatory exercise, and with time, prayer would cease to be the pleasant moment it should be.

When must we pray?

Many resort to prayer only when in trouble. [1640:1]

A lot of people only pray when they find themselves in difficulties. It is true that man does well to pray to seek comforting when tormented, but he must as well think of conversing with his Celestial Father even when all is well with his soul. Do we visit a friend only because we want to ask him something, or do we do it, once in a while, just to taste the pleasure of his presence?

Daily and frequent practise of prayer can, in time, develop the capability to permanently maintain this spiritual link and this, without effort; a sort of permanent prayer. However, it must never be a substitute for action but a stimulant to act. If we are able to listen to music or talk to someone while working, it is possible to do the same with praying. It is thus possible to live constantly

with God as we do with a loved one, whose presence makes us happy.

But one's capacity to pray in that fashion cannot be attained overnight. Many only pray in the morning and at bed time. Each person is different. The important thing is to find a landmark during the day, a moment, a place, which allows one to tame these moments of internal communion. The time dedicated to prayer is not what counts. One can easily be quiet for one hour, motionless, eyes closed and doing nothing, as well as giving but an instant to God and in that instance, unite with Him completely.

To whom must we address our prayers?

Praying is a hymn rising up to God. The spiritual vibrations coming from our soul spread all over Creation. Petitions which represent true spiritual values will immediately be received by all interested divine personalities, and each one of them will tend to their personal field of activity. God does not ask us to affix a celestial postal code on our prayers. But if we are uncertain about all this, we can

always address our prayers to Jesus, who as our Creator son will forward our petitions to the Father of all.

I have come forth from the Father; if, therefore, you are ever in doubt as to what you would ask of the Father, ask in my name... [1639:5]

When do we receive a reply to our prayers?

Parents cannot systematically give satisfaction to all their child's requests because of this one's lack of maturity and unawareness of what is good for him. The parents' superior wisdom dictates then that they must sometimes modify the replies and delay them until the child's comprehension is sufficient to receive them. And God does the same thing with us.

When a prayer apparently remains unanswered, the delay is often a foreboding of a more appropriate time to receive it. It must await until the material being has progressed to the spiritual level if the reply calls on higher spiritual concepts. It is thus possible to receive tomorrow, part of an answer to a prayer formulated in childhood.

The sincerity of any prayer is the assurance of its being heard; the spiritual wisdom and universe consistency of any petition is the determiner of the time, manner, and degree of the answer. A wise father does not literally answer the foolish prayers of his ignorant and inexperienced children... [1639:1]

We can see here how long-suffering born through faith can be so beneficial to man.

When you have become wholly dedicated to the doing of the will of the Father in heaven, the answer to all your petitions will be forthcoming... [1639:2]

Must we always pray alone?

It is not necessary for prayer to be always individual. Group or collective prayer is very effective because it largely enhances sociability. An excess of solitary prayer represents a certain danger which is tempered by group prayers or collective devotions. But it is not because we pray in the same place and at the same time that we pray in communion. One can feel alone in a crowd.

Can we ask for body healing?

Prayer soothes the soul but it is not a technique to cure corporal sickness; nevertheless, the repercussions of calm and interior peace are undeniable. From this point of view, prayer greatly contributes to the health of the body and to cure many mental, emotional and nervous system problems.

...Pray only for values, not for things; for growth, not for gratification. [1002:5]

Avoid materialistic praying; pray in the spirit and for the abundance of the gifts of the spirit [1639:5].

Are there various level of prayers?

It is difficult to categorise prayer in terms of levels. At one end is the primitive prayer where man asks God to protect him from thunder and lightning, and, at the other extreme, prayer becomes a quiet and peaceful time of listening and loving, bringing as a result, the soul into an attitude of true worship. It would be preferable to see the learning of prayer as a progressive growth instead of seeking levels of efficiency. There is, however, a prayer which is apart from others, which is only addressed to God and which is called the prayer of worship.

The secret of the prayer of worship is to forget the things we think we need. It is simply a search for intimacy with God. It is at that moment in which the human mind is in a sincere state of worship that the spirit of the Father speaks best to mankind.

Prayer necessarily is a part of religious experience, but modern religions have placed too much emphasis on it, to the detriment of the act of worship, which is essential. Prayer can enrich life, but worship illuminates destiny.

It is better to put your heart in a prayer without finding the words, than to find words without adding the heart. – *Ghandi*.

Worship, taught Jesus, makes one increasingly like the being who is worshipped. Worship is a transforming experience... [1641:1] ■

Centering in Personal Circles

MARK A. KURTZ
USA



"Centering in Circles" collage

THE THREE CONCENTRIC BLUE CIRCLES symbol brings to consciousness a good feeling for *The Urantia Book* readers worldwide, or we may assume so. It is the banner of Michael (606:0) and a symbol of our connectedness to higher ideals to which we aspire.

I'd like to share an idea with readers worldwide, to men and women of all societies, to believers in this great news that all persons are children of a great, good God. I invite each reader to dream a little and imagine a dot in the middle of the innermost circle. Place yourself, every aspect of yourself, in that dot. With the best of your imaginary vision, go there, and with the circles of the Trinity surrounding you, ask what relationship would you like? You have full and unabridged freedom of will to relate to God and to anticipate all that God has planned for you. Urantia teachings regarding personal discovery of God become substantial, continuing guidance for *desiring* more of relationship with the Universal Father.

Now imagine others improving their Father-mortal relations when they are able to see themselves surrounded by the essence of the Trinity. They may also put themselves in a dot in the center! Michael surely thought this through and chose the banner as his personal icon of relating to the Father! What a great example!

More could be added to the above, but now I'd like to expand on the idea---to apply three *personal circles* to your home and call them your personal Circles

of Service. These new circles are geographic distance symbols, circles of one mile or kilometer, then five and fifteen miles or other ranges of local relationships. The circles become a measurement of local environment and social relationships, an area you would easily identify for service and one that would be real and effective. It is a geographic area to apply your talents for service. This idea harmonizes nicely with many other persons' suggestion to act locally, but think globally.

More than one person has advised to serve personally and to help spread Urantia Book teachings through personal contact. These Circles of Service would become your defined personal working area. Most of us have a small circle of influence because many people are not national or international servants. It is the *local influence that is most important for overall dissemination success*. Therefore, each of us working locally becomes the most important dissemination servant, the worker bee, and foot soldier of time in service to the Father. Local effort is a substantial foundation for UAI mission.

Jimmy Mitchell, Chair of the International Service Board Dissemination Committee, inspired and encouraged attendees at the UAUS national conference in Seattle in July 2007. He encouraged people to become *living disseminators* by taking books to hospitals, doctors' offices, and other places where people wait for service. There could be many additional examples we

Who is there that, if you would know them better, would be inspired to greater levels of curiosity about life and God?

"Circle of friends" collage



could identify. Jimmy encouraged people to become *international living disseminators* when traveling to a foreign country. He said it is easier to get books into countries by carrying them in than by shipping. I am inspired by the passion Jimmy exuded that day. Why not become living disseminators within your Circles of Service as proposed here? And when you travel, your circles increase.

Would you be interested or inspired by Jimmy's passion by taking a look into the first of your personal circles? Who is there that you know who could be interested in Urantia teachings? Who is there that, if you would know them better, would be inspired to greater levels of curiosity about life and God? Who is there that could be hungry today for greater understanding and new, refreshing insight?

Apply these questions (and any others that you may identify) to the other two circles and expand your possibilities for local service. This writer understands

The greatest restrictions we place on ourselves are those that find origin in our minds.

that local situations and relationships vary widely throughout Urantia. Terrain and bodies of water might be a major influence of the "shape" of circles. Road or highway access may be plentiful or barely existent. Political and financial considerations could influence circles. "Local" could mean the severe limitation of a small village or could mean many units of distance measurement when roads and vehicles are no problem. This idea presented here, however, emphasizes local service, local in the best practical and suitable definition for each reader. The old advice to keep things simple rings true.

Jesus was always a local servant; as you recall, he served and taught as he passed by in the streets and alleys of towns and villages (1874:0, 1874:8, 1875:4). We have had discussions on the UAI email list, and other places too perhaps, about whether to disseminate teachings quickly and broadly with advertising or to go slow. I prefer a

quality touch and this usually means personal contact. Therefore, the Circles of Service idea applied to local service is sensible and attractive. Jesus traveled, but his service was always present tense (local), a personal style of valuing each person as he walked by.

Expand your imagination as Jesus most likely intended. Imagine circles around other homes where people love the new teachings. Imagine a rippling effect and imagine how large and spiritually powerful such a ripple could be. Recall the awful effect of a sea surface tsunami, like that which destroyed some seacoast cities recently. But, imagine the positive spiritual "tsunami" of men and women worldwide who experience new insight and understanding of the Father's love and value when they realize His love is personal! Imagine ripples of new circles moving over Urantia as more mortals establish their personal Circles of Service. Imagine Jesus' loving command-instruction, "Go into all the world...." (1051:1, 1584:1, 1824:6, 2043:1, 2055:2)

What are the possibilities with your three circles of local identity? Are there restaurants or snack bars within your circles where you could meet friends who could be interested in Urantia teachings? Would your kitchen table be suitable as a place to sip a refreshing drink and nibble on a snack as your philosophy shines in positive imagination with a friend? Or, could there be a person at work who would benefit from an occasional remark about Urantia topics?

Whom do you see nearly every day within your innermost circle? How often do you venture into your second circle and whom do you see there rather often? Is it rare or often you move into your third circle of local travels? Who could you envision there who is a thinker or one who needs your service of sharing truth? We would be wise to increase our curiosity about how we might serve locally. UAI success depends on quality local service. This is one of the secrets of wise dissemination.



“Reaching out” collage

I will leave it to others to discuss how to serve within our local circles. Many ideas have been presented in articles, seminars, conferences and study groups. Personal desire to share Urantia teachings varies with persons. It would be wise to think about our skills, determine if improvements are necessary and ask for training when we feel inadequate. What may cause you to fear service? Circles of Service could be difficult if there is anything effectively inhibiting action. What is in your life that stops you from serving anywhere, regardless of circle size? Our Master told us to “*fear not*” (1103:3).

Motivational speakers and writers worldwide have addressed human behavior problems and psychological issues. The greatest restrictions we place on ourselves are those that find origin in our minds. Thinking positively, the old saying applies nicely—“Where there is will, there is a way.” Our local circles are always there, wherever we live, but our power to affect our Father’s will is up to us to discover and to use with wise thinking and application. It is up to us to apply power to action for the Father’s will. This great book of wonderful teachings was not given to collect dust, but we are to go forth with power and conviction to share the great teachings. And we are to be wise, patient and respectful of personal will. Let the ripples develop naturally and let them run of their own power as the Father’s Thought Adjusters work valiantly within each of us.

We are to be brave, courageous, happy, and confident the teachings are intended for all Urantians to hear. The action is ours, the consequences God’s. Let us all wisely respect the sovereign will of each person and let us not become a bore! Beware your home does not develop an undesirable reputation.

Let us live a life of continuing curiosity—searching for ways to share within our local Circles of Service. How can we do this? We could host a study group, host a social event, sip and snack with friends, and let our light so shine that others will be pleased to know you. Return

to happiness after those occasional sad events and know with great faith you are loved, valued, and admired by God and angels when you do well.

Whatever your units of measure—one, three, or ten miles, or one, five and fifteen miles—is not as important as your willingness and capability. You choose your circles as best suits your local situation. Go forth in quality and joy and with increasing affinity with fellow Urantians to become dynamic and gracious living disseminators! We are justified in feeling good when we see circles developing around ourselves and around others. Love is the bond that forms the “glue” holding the circles eternally intact.

Let the circles around your home become eternally around your personality as you spiritually progress and personally move inward to Paradise. Let the circles forever fuse with you in service. We are told we are required to share what we learn and that we will have multiple opportunities to teach and serve as we move from sphere to sphere in progress. The “circles” will never leave us! Why not put them around yourself and your home today? This is your role—to find your definition of service that harmonizes with your best understanding of God and to lovingly give to your mortal fellows as you share.

We are justified in feeling good when we see circles developing around ourselves and around others.

The next step after reading this suggestion is to go into your circles within your mind and meditate on what this could mean to you and the Father. Your Thought Adjuster will help you determine your circle size and will take care of all the rippling that is needed on Urantia.

The next step is to seek inspiration through reading and study. In addition to *The Urantia Book*, there is the UAUS website resources link in which are found many inspiring articles. Also find the Study Hall filled with topical studies. We mortals are able to learn interdependently—we need each other.

The next steps are up to you. How large are your circles? Your dot can be any color you want! ■



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