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Finding and Framing Truth

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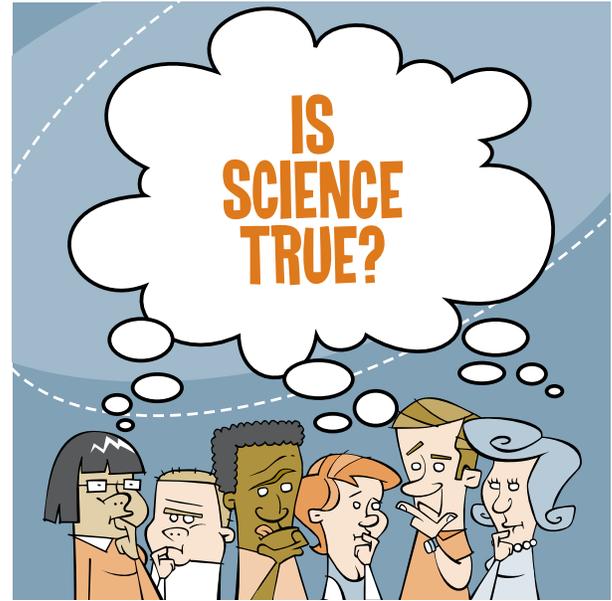
How does the modern sophisticated soul deal with truth, let alone revelations about truth? In the following article we try to frame the question, to illustrate the problem, and to see where students of the Urantia Papers may fit in.

TWENTY EIGHT YEARS AGO CARL SAGAN'S TV series *Cosmos* was first shown. The content is now dated, and easily forgotten, but who could forget his sincerity, and the enthusiasm with which he presented what at the time were revelations to the public about the cosmic context of mankind? The unveiled joy and unfeigned awe with which he presented these things provoked many a cynical and "scientifically literate" interviewer to ask, "So is all this the handiwork of God? Do you believe in a Creator?" To whom he would issue the rhetorical challenge: "Whatever your mathematics or your gods, they will have to explain... this!" as he dialed up yet another astrophysical wonder on the view-screen of his virtual starship.

Together with the interviewer, we would catch his benign virus, suspend our disbelief and gaze at the marvels he revealed.

Gently he taunted both materialists and religionists, pointing to the insufficiencies in their frames-for-thought. He provoked both camps to reach beyond their box, not to settle for another's assumptions, not to bind themselves with prejudice and preconception, to untangle themselves from old assumptions about truth, of both the mystical and materialist kind.

But while dismissing outworn and untenable beliefs, he fostered the idea that humans exist at the edge of something wonderful; that we are able—and free—to glimpse something numinous hinted at by truth; to feel



"Is Science True?" illustration

it made manifest in the beauty and power of the cosmos. He left hanging the questions of if, and by what means, we might interact with "the numinous," this indefinable foundation and font of reality. He allowed skeptics the freedom to reflect, without the pressure of having to argue or agree.

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DEAR READERS OF THE UAI JOURNAL,

When we ponder on the meaning of the word truth, we could certainly find similar definitions in many dictionaries. A search on WordReference.com also gives us this definition: In terms of accuracy, *it is the quality of nearness to the truth or the true value.* To me, this definition points out that in general we never have the total truth about any fact because such understanding requires an ongoing process in which we constantly discover broader meanings as our observation seizes new values. So it seems that as we progress and ascend, truth, while being a personal affair, is related to a collective development in which we live our individual expansion. No one, in human terms, contains the whole truth.

This is why the use of any available tool regarding spiritual development should be considered wisely. Sometimes, our personal convictions lead us to commend certain methods, while on other occasions they draw us into hasty criticism.

There are no royal roads, short cuts, or easy paths to Paradise.[551:2]

In this issue, our feature article is from Nigel Nunn, who reminisces on past impressions and embraces the relationship of fact and truth. His approach in Finding and Framing Truth provides an additional perspective for us to

ponder and to build our library of knowledge. Also, as our last edition left us in the middle of Bill Sadler's article on the Discussion of the Absolutes, we will now present his conclusion on this topic. As in his previous presentation, Part Two affords us with dynamic mind matter, but we should remember that Bill's presentation reflects his personal point of view. Thus readers are invited to use this material as a guide to enlighten their own theories on the subject. Gaétan G. Charland, in conclusion to his previous article published in May, supplies us with ways to train ourselves as leaders and teachers in his paper titled Local and Personal Initiatives. Aren't we all looking for ways to improve ourselves and help others progress? Gaétan shows us a few of them here. As a closing for this edition and with William Cooper's permission, we offer you a presentation on *The Apprenticeship of Love*. Love is the binding cement in which any evolution is made possible, and this three-part essay has many hints for us.

While the UAI Journal team wishes you great pleasure in reading this issue, we also wish you a lovely and peaceful summer.

Alain Cyr ■

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Finding and Framing Truth, continued from page 1



“Chemistry, Genetics & Mathematics” illustrations

This fresh approach to exploring reality struck a chord, especially within those who had out-grown traditional systems of belief, yet who knew first-hand the response that comes from intimacy with the divine. Such souls could no longer subscribe to spurious beliefs conjured by sacred texts, but their hunger, and passion for seeking truth, was as strong as ever. After his death, Carl’s collaborator and third wife Ann Druyan wrote:

“Why do we separate the scientific, which is just a way of searching for truth, from what we hold sacred, which are those truths that inspire love and awe? Science is nothing more than a never-ending search for truth. What could be more profoundly sacred than that?”

Ann Druyan, <http://csicop.org/si/2003-11/ann-druyan.html>

“There is never conflict between true knowledge and truth. There may be conflict between knowledge and human beliefs, ...” [The Urantia Book, p.1459:4]

The relationship between faith and belief, between understanding and fact and truth, continues to tease those with time to reflect. The materialist creed includes the idea that if something is not proven, one ought not assume it to be true; that mankind’s reservoir of truth should be filled only with the essence of that which we can prove. But there is a problem with this modern materialist ideal, of planetary man carving his own path, of accumulating knowledge and wisdom via incremental evolutionary discovery: progress can be haphazard, and facts can be glimpsed out of context. Like quantum mechanics: we discovered the flickering, oscillatory nature of matter before learning about that which flickers. This led scientists into a frame for thought (cage?) built upon indeterminism and chance. Knowledge of the ultimatons might have shunted science around

this conceptual bottleneck; and to think the ultimatons was revealed at that very moment when scientists most needed this crucial clue.

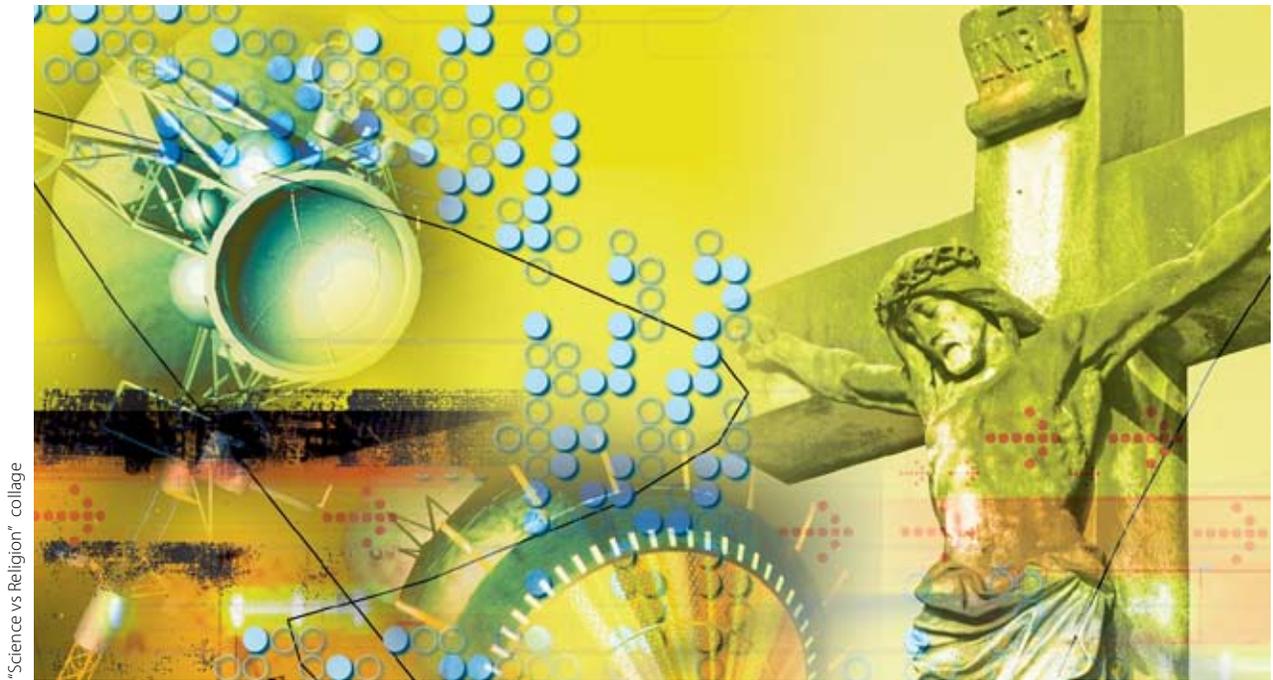
“But truth can never become man’s possession without the exercise of faith. This is true because man’s thoughts, wisdom, ethics, and ideals will never rise higher than his faith, his sublime hope.” [UB, p.1459:5]

For the generation that grew up with the Beatles and *Star Trek*, Carl was a catalyst helping to blend science and the mathematical with the personal and the numinous. He urged us to feel out the way towards truth, then to stride beyond our childhood frames and find it!

“Man must think in a mortal universe frame, but that does not mean that he cannot envision other and higher frames within which thought can take place.” [UB, p.1260:3]

Sagan’s exploration of truth continued in his novel *Contact*. In the 1996 film adaptation, he weaves together the lives of a scientist and a religionist, two characters that epitomize respectively a rational and a faith-based approach to life. Both the scientist, Ellie Arroway, and the religionist Palmer Joss, are on the hunt for truth of the deepest and widest kind. But their love for each other is grated upon by what seems to be the incompatibility of their views about how truth is best discovered. The movie reaches a climax when Arroway, in the middle of a relativistic ride to the center of the galaxy, is forced by tears of joy to halt her methodical report. Her voice and breath taken away by the truth in what she sees, she can only mutter: “too beautiful... they should have sent a poet.”

Such souls could no longer subscribe to spurious beliefs conjured by sacred texts, but their hunger, and passion for seeking truth, was as strong as ever.



"Science vs Religion" collage

Sagan ends the story when these characters glimpse that, having started from opposite sides of a conceptual divide, their relentless and uncompromising journeys have brought them to what seems to be the same place. But when asked by their fellows to prove, or even to describe, their personal discoveries, both realize that such description lies beyond where reason can go—beyond the “full philosophic limit” and that interaction with truth by mortals is mediated by faith.

As readers of the *Urantia Papers*, we can see that such authors and characters seem ready to engage a frame for thought unimaginable by humanity until now. But many such modern mortals have learned to seek proof rather than to apply what they believe to be a discredited mediaeval faith. How could such souls ever be expected to accept “a revelation” such as the *Urantia Papers*? Likewise, is it realistic to hope that any of the great religious traditions might evolve themselves through the eye a needle into an enlarged fifth epochal frame? For both camps, this is likely a leap too far.

As contemporary humans that have endured a reading of *The Urantia Book*, have we not become a living bridge between human states old and new?

How to bridge the gaps between the present cultures of our world and the frame-for-thought set up by the *Urantia Papers*? How to accelerate the cultures evolved within the “fourth epochal frame” so that they might strike step with the fifth?

Transfer between two states implies an interface that touches, and is compatible with, both. Is this not what we are? As contemporary humans that have endured a reading of *The Urantia Book*, have we not become a living bridge between human states old and new? Are

we not primed to serve as evolutionary links, helping to inch our world towards Michael’s better way, and his sweeter, larger truth?

Epochal revelation is a technique for adjusting and expanding the frame for thought used by an influential culture of the day. Melchizedek used Abraham to inject the belief in one all-powerful God, in whom we need only have faith. Jesus used his apostles and his Spirit of Truth to lay a new foundation of truth—that Melchizedek’s all-powerful God is the personal Father of us all. This key support of his frame for thought makes true the fact of the brotherhood of all mankind. And now, the fifth revelation of epochal significance extends our frame again. The *Urantia Papers* illuminate this truth, and recast this fact in a much expanded frame; and then they dare to go on, to reveal how he is our Father, and imply a glimpse of why.

“Man — a moment of opportunity”

So how is God our Father, and why? Well, it seems that we are that moment where He aligns two fragments of himself, then waits upon our will. We are that moment when He allows another will to say “Yes!” or “No!” to him. We are that moment when Eternity opens and welcomes a new child, or the angels mourn the death of that child that only we could be.

This is the phenomenon of man: that we launch a Paradise Finaliter, or we murder that child that only we could be. In the Father’s frame He either sees us surf His waves of love into His absolute domain, or He endures the pain of losing that child... whom only we could be. ■

Discussion of the Absolutes Part 2

BILL SADLER
USA

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. The following excerpt has been edited to remove extraneous comments and remarks from the audience. Headings have been added to aid the reader in following the structure of the presentation

CREATION GOES RIGHT ON, AND THERE comes a time when the creative act of the Paradise Deities brings to a close the first universe age. In my own thinking, I date this from the creation of the twenty-one Ancients of Days. They tell us this is the technical beginning of the time universes. They tell us that when we go up on Paradise, when we want to look up history—recorded history—this is the first historic event that is of record. Prior to this statement of fact of the creation of the twenty-one Ancients of Days, it's prehistory (209:6).

The Eternals of Days, as their name suggests, started with Havona, which started with the Infinite Spirit. The Infinite Spirit—in testifying that Havona is as old as he is—simply says, “We're both eternal” (91:4). There was no point in time when they started. The second universe age—the one we're in now—is the age of the evolutionary seven superuniverses. Now we hit the fifth level of total Deity function, but there's an overlap. Creation still operates in the present universe age, but something new is added: evolution. What is evolution? It is creativity in time, that's all. How does it differ from pre-evolutionary techniques of transferring potentials into actuals? It differs in a very simple way. Creatures can go into partnership with the Creators now. If this thing is going to happen by *fiat*, how can you understand it as a creature? If it happens slowly, then you can participate in the evolutionary process.

No Havona natives ever went into partnership with God to evolve, to become Havona natives, did they? They were born as Havona natives (346:2). Critters like us can go into partnership with God in the evolution of ourselves as we are to be. This is a partnership



"Absolutes & Experience" illustration

arrangement. It produces that tremendous difference between the evolutionary and the created types which is outlined in one of the papers on the Universal Father. On page 51, is the inventory of what I've come to call, “the inevitabilities,” which points out that much of that which harasses us is inevitable. It's inherent in our status. You want courage, altruism, hope, faith, love, truth, idealism, loyalty, unselfishness, pleasure. In order to have these things, you must be confronted with the alternatives. You must make a choice.

If you could know everything, you couldn't have faith. This is knowledge. If there were no fear, how could there be any hope? If you couldn't be an S.O.B., then how could you be loyal? At our level, if there weren't any pain, would we comprehend pleasure? This is inevitable if you're going to have an evolutionary technique, and you can't have creature partnership with deity by any other method than to slow down this creative process and keep it from being instantaneous, so that creatures can understand what's happening. These things then become inevitable. On the next page (52:1), they further discuss why these are inevitable. If you're going to have a creature and not a robot, then you must endow that creature with free will. And if you endow unwise, immature creatures with free will, tragedy becomes inescapable.

Creation still operates in the present universe age, but something new is added: evolution.

Then they discuss why isn't this true in the central universe (52:2). Then on 52:3, they make this marvelous contrast between the hopefulness of a Havona native and the exquisite trust of an ascending mortal: the calm expectancy of a pleasant future on the part of a Havona native, who knows absolutely nothing about the precarious hope that we hang onto, living down

here on this uncertain ball of mud. They point out that this Havona native is just naturally kind, but he never rawhided a belligerent self to get himself into this frame of mind. He never let altruism triumph over unmitigated selfishness. He points out that the Havona natives—sure they're loyal to the Trinity. But they've never really known what it was like to hang on by the skin of your teeth and be loyal. In other words, the Havona natives would have held Thermopylae as a matter of course, but the Spartans knew they could be killed. It's a difference in degree.

Are we better than they are? No; we're different. Without them as a pattern, how the dickens would we get to Paradise? I think free will is proportional to the choice possibility of the creature. I think each person has as much free will—can activate as much free will—as he needs to. I think this grows. For example, I think the range of choice of a Creator Son is colossal—utterly colossal, not absolute—because he, too, must choose within the framework of that which is choosable by a sub-paradise Deity. I think the range of the Father's free will is the greatest of all. It's limited only by his nature.

He could not choose an ungodlike thing. He could not choose an evil thing. I think his Sons could. But they don't. This loyalty business is beginning to appear on all subabsolute levels. I think we have as much free will as we can use.

Here's my concept: Let's set up a sliding scale. At one end let's put "outward things" at the material level. At the other end of the scale, let's put "inward things," culminating in the spiritual level. Does that scale make sense? In other words, we have all kinds of choices, ranging from the material realm to the spiritual realm. If super things are involved—more than things—then I think we have a greater range of choice, even on the outside reality.

But then I want to come from the outside, starting with material things, moving still outside towards supermaterial things—like people, who are more than just matter—coming little by little inward. Once we get on the inside, moving upward towards spiritual things, at the outer extreme of the scale, I have less choice. My choices are extremely constricted. I can't choose to be other than my present age. I can't choose to be other than a male of the species, which means I will never know what life looks like to the other half of the human race, the female.

I have some choice out there. I cannot avoid the appearance of wrinkles in my face, but I do have a choice as to which kind. If I frown all my life, I'll get one kind. If I grin most of the time, I'll get another. The wrinkles are beyond my choice, but the type of wrinkles I can choose.

Now, as I come inwardly, my choice range is freer. As I move on the inside of me upward, from material

problems to philosophic, psychological, sociological problems, I have a greater range of choice. As I move up to the moral level, the ethical level, my choice range becomes even greater. As I move spiritward, this range of choice becomes greater and greater until I reach the question of God. At that point, I have absolute liberty. It would have to be that way.

At that point, my choice range is absolute. It is totally unfettered. It is that way because God has willed it to be that way. Where he is concerned, I can tell him to go to hell, or I can try to serve him all the days of my life. And if it's anything less than that, the whole damn thing is phony. I've got to have that range of choice, or I'm a robot, and he's up there with strings. And I know I'm not. I'm a son.

Having thus provided for the growth of the immortal soul, and having liberated man's inner self from the fetters of absolute dependence on antecedent causation, the Father stands aside. Now, man having thus been liberated from the fetters of causation response, at least as pertains to eternal destiny, and provision having been made for the growth of the immortal self, the soul, it remains for man himself to will the creation or to inhibit the creation of this surviving and eternal self which is his for the choosing. No other being, force, creator, or agency, in all the wide universe of universes can interfere to any degree with the absolute sovereignty of the mortal free will, as it operates within the realms of choice, regarding the eternal destiny of the personality of the choosing mortal. As pertains to eternal survival, God has decreed the sovereignty of the material and mortal will, and that decree is absolute. [71:3]

At the bottom of that page, it says: the portal of survival, *opens only in response to the freewill choice of the freewill sons of the God of free will* [71:7]. It's a charter of liberty. At the same time, quite the damnedest challenge that could be issued to queer, graduate mammals like us. We're pretty mammalian, you know. We're not quite completely human. It's in this sense that we're made in the image of God. It's in this sense that he can call us sons. God, to me, is an affectionate being, very adventurous, very exploratory. People are this way. This is a kinship which we share with the Father of all. He likes to go adventuring.

Otherwise, why didn't he leave the fried egg alone? He didn't have to. We like to adventure. We sometimes get our fingers burned and pull back a little bit. But basically, in every normal human heart is a craving for growth and adventure. Let's imagine a firehouse. I want a firehouse because I want that pole that the firemen slide down. Imagine a three-story firehouse. When we talked about everything on the other side of the looking-glass, we were discussing the third floor, strictly—nothing but the third floor. The minute creation started, we're dealing with the next two floors, because at the creative level God projected two levels which were to stand in

Let's set up a sliding scale. At one end let's put "outward things" at the material level. At the other end of the scale, let's put "inward things," culminating in the spiritual level.

contrast to the absolute level. First he projected the finite level. And the finite level is characterized by time, space, and experience.

The absolute level is timeless, spaceless, and existential. And the finite level has no more contact with the absolute level than does the first floor with the third floor. These two levels don't touch each other at any point. So this requires the projection of an intermediate level, the absonite level. In these papers the absonite level is defined as a *pre-echo of a finite level* [1159:6]. In other words, it's just as logical to think of it as coming after as coming before. The absonite level is not timeless. It transcends time. A timeless being has no time consciousness.

The best illustration I can think of is Jesus' Thought Adjuster, who's timeless. He warned the Master, saying "Now, look, you don't want to get involved in any abrogation of natural law. Now, as concerns space, I'm in perfect command of the situation. If you idly wish you're in Rome, it won't happen. I'm space conscious." An Adjuster would have to be, otherwise, how would he find it? He said, "I'm not time conscious. Time, to me, has absolutely no meaning. So if you want to do something that merely involves the shortening of time, I can't help you. I don't work on that wavelength" [paraphrased loosely from 1516:4]. A Thought Adjuster, in terms of time relationships, is up on the third floor.

Now, a Transcendentaler, an absonite being—like an Architect of the Master Universe, or a Force Organizer—they know all about time and space. They're perfectly conscious of time and space and transcend time and space. They're not timeless. They're not spaceless. They are time transcendents. They are space transcendents. When we go to Paradise, we're going to find the Father. We're going to be working at the bottom of the finite level. We're going to get into the center pole, and this is the Universal Father. It's a genuine, legitimate finding of the Father on the most limited basis possible. It is the minimum finding of the Universal Father. As Finaliters, we go out and successively serve in superuniverses other than Orvonton. Each time we come back to Paradise, we find the same Universal Father, but we're up a little bit on the center pole.

You know, it's a long way between the floor and ceiling on the finite level. Believe me, the Finaliters are not at the ceiling, although they're a decent ways up. When we want to see total Deity on a finite level, what we're asking to see is, "How is the Trinity personified on the finite level?" We want to meet Mr. Trinity. There is no Mr. Trinity. The trinity is a corporation. You don't meet a corporation. It's a legal person, but not a person person. We'll be shown the Seventh Master Spirit. This is the nearest thing, the Infinite Spirit's concept of what the Father-Son-Spirit would be like if they were alive. That's fine. But someday, if we can find the Supreme Being, then they can say to us, "This is the Paradise Trinity as the Paradise Trinity is comprehensible to finite creatures."

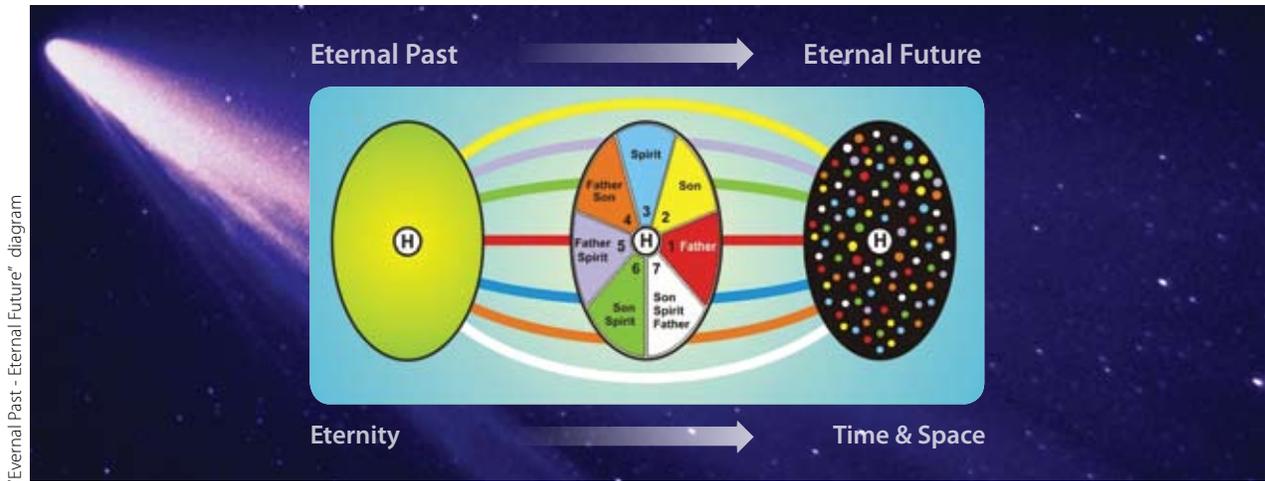
But we'll have to reach the ceiling of the first floor to do that, because that's the age of light and life: The ceiling of the first floor.

The Supreme Being will mean to us then in our effort to understand total Deity—that's what we're studying here, the function of total Deity—just what the personality of Jesus means to us right here and now in our effort to comprehend personal Deity. I don't understand the Universal Father. I don't understand the divinity of Jesus, but I jolly well do understand the humanity of Jesus. I understand the Son of Man. I'm intrigued by the Son of God. But they're the same person. That helps me live with my failure to understand his divinity. I do understand one pole of him. The other pole is still shrouded in some mystery. But I know it's the same person. I know I like him. I know I'm going to like his divinity because I do like his humanity. The Supreme Being is going to do something else for us. He's going to help us break through into the second floor.

Incidentally, that's where we'll start in equipping all that roughed out plumbing, you know. We have capacity to do this. The papers tell us this. The Supreme Being will help us break out of the finite level just as Jesus helps us break out of the material level. He's a living bridge. Like God, he's no respecter of persons. Only, he works with totals because he's a total Deity. The Father deals with each of us as individuals. The Supreme Being will not deal with any of us until he can deal with all of us. The Father emphasizes the "each" relationship. The Supreme Being emphasizes the "all" relationship. You believe, and the Father welcomes you into the family. Jesus' story of the prodigal son well illustrates the attitude of the Universal Father where love is paramount. But this isn't enough for the Supreme Being. You've got to produce. He needs us. Therefore, he awards those of us who are productive. You can get rank with the Universal Father, but you can get campaign ribbons with battle stars only from the Supreme Being. This means you have to be there and do something.

The Supreme Being will help us break out of the finite level just as Jesus helps us break out of the material level.

Now, we're going to consider the third universe age. Because the minute we deal with the seventh level of the function of total Deity, we've got to break out of the present age. We've got to consider the wide-spreading areas of the outer space levels. Because up there, a second experiential Deity is in the process of growth, just as the Supreme Being is growing in the present age. There are four outer space levels. Last year we worked out—we did some arithmetic, and let's just take it for granted this year. We based our arithmetic on clues given in the papers. We had to make some assumptions. Wherever there were two possible assumptions, we chose the more conservative of the two. Here are the rough magnitudes we worked out. This whole book is mostly about the seven superuniverses and Havona, right? And we said,



“Let’s get some sizes to think about.” If we think of the seven superuniverses and Havona as being roughly like a tennis ball, what would that be in relationship to the first outer space level?

Well, it adds up to a very small bedroom or a very large closet. Think of a room that is 8 feet wide, 8 feet long, and 8 feet high. Can you see a tennis ball hanging in the middle? It’s pretty small in relation to the room, isn’t it? That’s the first outer space level. Now, to visualize that in relation to the second outer space level, we should get a city block. Visualize a city block with eight building sites on it. These are generous lots, one hundred feet. Picture blocks squared off on all sides. It’s a square block. Then go up eight hundred feet. Put our small room in the middle of that city block. You’ve got it. That’s the second outer space level.

I picked cubic Chicago for the third outer space level. I want a sixteen mile cube. Toss this city block in the cubic city. You have the third outer space level. For the fourth outer space level, I picked the moon, even

though it’s somewhat undersized. I’m about thirty per cent shy of my volume. This book is written about the tennis ball. When we move from the first floor to the second floor, we’ve now got to think in terms of the magnitude of the moon. This is too big. All you can do is feel it. But we are going out there, so they tell us. This is what we’re in training for.

Gee, whiz, our local universe isn’t anywhere near settled in light and life. Michael’s only got life planted on about one third of the projected worlds. This universe is two thirds unstarted!

Now look. When God really pervades a human life, you get a flavor such as you find in the life of Jesus. If that seems too tough to look at, consider the impact Jesus had on the lives of the twelve apostles. And you can see what even a secondary impact does.

We’re talking about spiritual growth now. You know the long story of the ascent to Paradise; you know that it’s tough. It’s not easy. You’re not a milk-toaster when you get up there. What is it? Long since you’ve learned to *feast upon uncertainty, to fatten upon disappointment*... to show *“indomitable courage” when confronted by immensities*... Long since, your battle cry has become, *“In liaison with God, nothing—absolutely nothing—is impossible.”* [291:3] These are

tough, salty veterans as well as sweet people. Consider the training a Finaliter gets. Consider the tremendous training that lies ahead for the Finaliters because these seven superuniverses are going to be around for a long time, and they’re still growing. Gee, whiz, our local universe isn’t anywhere near settled in light and life. Michael’s only got life planted on about one third of the projected worlds. This universe is two thirds unstarted! We haven’t even got the subdivisions opened up yet, much less the sewage in. This is still inside the tennis ball.

What’s a seventh stage finaliter going to be like? As they say, they think that when we enter the seventh stage of spirit existence, this will be the last of the jubilees of time and will inaugurate the first of the jubilees of eternity. What are finaliters going to be like in the fourth outer space level? Have you any way even faintly to grasp the time involved? We are up against one, two, three, and now we’ve hit many. And one, two, three represents our limit of time comprehension. This is many, many, many. We’re going out there. This whole development involves uncoupling three new levels of human personality. We’re told that we have seven dimensions of personality expression. I think Bud made a pretty good explanation of that when he said it’s like building a house. You know you’re going to grow, and you only want to pour these foundations once.

You’re going to provide for seven bathrooms, but you’re only going to have use for three of them—which are the three we’re using now. So what do you do? You rough in the plumbing for the other four. Now we’re going to start equipping three out of these four to operate. These have been lying here dormant all this time. Now we’re going to open up a new annex, a new wing.

[Audience interrupts with a question: Is our mortal goal to reach absonite levels of supercreature attainment? Is that our mortal limitation?

[Sadler responds.] That’s our post-universe age goal. We can’t do it in this age. We can fumble with it. Here’s what we’ll encounter. We’re told that differences of attitude, feeling, and response persist forever.

For example, males and females are still going to exhibit characteristic non-sexual qualities of maleness and femaleness in the Corps of Finality. We'll intrigue each other. We'll think a little differently. Thank heaven. Was it the Frenchman who said, "Vive la difference!" Intellectually, we even off at the end of the Morontia career. That is to say, we have equivalent horsepower of brains, mind. This doesn't mean that the artist will be adept as a physicist. We'll still have our specialties. We'll still be highly individualized, but we will have equal basic brain power. We will encounter spiritual differentials. These won't even out until we enter the Corps of the Finality. Then we will have equal spiritual capacities, responsiveness, or quality. When we even out spiritually, then we discover a new differential, the absonite differentials. We become conscious of this.

So we're working at it. I think at the upper limits of the first floor, we begin to get repercussions from the second floor, even though we aren't there yet. When you get to Uversa, who do you find there? Havona Servitals working down there. They're getting you ready for Havona. You aren't at the Havona level yet, but you're dealing with Havoners up on the superuniverse capitol. There's an overlap thing.

The word *absonite* is used in this sense. The Architects of the Master Universe are referred to as having wonderful minds, *superb spirits, and supernal absonites* [351:2]. This is a quality of being analogous to mind and spirit. We know nothing about this. The word *absonite* is a word which is used as an adjective to designate the second floor of the firehouse.

They also use the word *transcendental* to apply to the second floor and speak of Absoniters or Transcendentalers as living on that floor.

That's a good word. They transcend time and space. They define the attributes of Deity as they appear on the second floor as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience. These are not absolute attributes of Deity. They are ultimate attributes of Deity. The Supreme Being, for example, is not omnipresent. He is ubiquitous, which means "many presences," but not omnipresent. He's not limited to one presence, but he's not everywhere. The Infinite Spirit, through his creative daughters, is ubiquitous in the seven superuniverses.

Each local universe Mother Spirit pervades her local universe and nowhere else, because she is a space-conscious being. And if she weren't space conscious, she wouldn't know where to stop being, and you'd get conflict between two local universes. Where she is, that is Nebadon. When you go outside of her, you've gone outside of Nebadon. When you get up to the absolute level, you have presence, which is beyond omnipresence. This is a presence quite apart from space. On this absonite level—I like that word, it's handy, short—we're going adventuring. We're being commissioned to work out in these outer space levels. Why? Why do the Counselors

come down? Why do the Paradise Sons come down? Come out, I should say, into time and space, to work with us? We need them because we're imperfect. We need a lot of help from beings who have more of perfection, even much of perfection.

They've got to be a ladder that we've got to climb. How could you explain God, except by living him, as Jesus did? I mean, you look at his life, and if the papers are right, his life is greater than his teachings. That's the same reason we're going out there. They need us because they're being deprived of something. The Supreme Being has finished his growth, and the kind of growth that we know about will then be a permanently past event in all creation. We can grow as we grow because we are plugged into the Supreme Being. We share in his growth. This whole experiential evolutionary process requires the growing presence of the Supreme Being.

When he's finished his growth, it's over. No beings will ever again grow as we are growing today. These beings out in outer space will benefit from his presence. We suffer from his absence. They'll benefit from his presence, but they can't have his presence and also participate in his growth. We've hit another inevitability here, haven't we? You can't make square circles. You can't be part of something incomplete and enjoy it as a completion. They are going to be lacking the very thing which we are, which is experiential, evolutionary beings.

It's up to us to compensate them for this deprivation, just as the beings of the central creation try to atone to us what we lack because we are starting in imperfection. We've got a mission out there. Our goal out there is to go in quest of the Father all over again. You see, if we can go through this tremendously long period of growth, going from the tennis ball to the moon, I can't grasp that. I can say it, but it doesn't really mean anything to me, except that I can feel that I'm trying to cope with something that is.

I'm a Bantu trying to visualize a thousand and beyond three I've got the word "many," that's all. In fact, I'm worse off. I think I'm trying to visualize a trillion as a Bantu. We're in quest of the Father. We're in quest of God the Ultimate, who is on the second floor what God the Supreme is on the first floor. And if we can ever graduate from the second floor, we're going to know God the Ultimate. And this is probably possible. This merely requires an unbelievably long stretch of time. We're told that we have three unexpressed dimensions of personality which can be expressed on the absonite level. So I think we've got the equipment to work up there. You see, when the Father gives us a Thought Adjuster and gives us personality, he's given us a tremendous lot of equipment. This is good for the whole race!

All during this time, we are exploring two ways. We are exploring the reality of the Universal Father on

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superfinite levels, and at the same time, we are exploring the reality of this Thought Adjuster within us. Example: They tell us when we fuse with our Thought Adjuster that one of the things which the Adjuster contributes to the combined nature of the fused being is past-eternal memory. But I don't think we can cope. I think we have to live forward long enough to be able to think equally far backward. So that if we lived a million years forward, I think we can cope with what the Thought Adjuster's trying to give us. We can think a million years backward. And if it's ten trillion years, then we can go that much further back. Someday we will look back on units of ten trillion years and understand what they mean. They will then become as days are today on our planet. And we can each know the truth of this because we will feel it in our own lives.

A week is not a long time to an adult. A week is a very long time to a little child. This is the best way I can understand time transcendence. Someday we will get to the end of the absonite road. Someday, the whole Master Universe will be finished. It'll be done. And God the Ultimate will be a finished being. This will mean the complete function of deity on this seventh level. Well, is it all over then? No. It's not all over, because things can happen. Let's go back to the beginning now. Consider what things were like just before the creative level was reached. At the beginning of all things—at what I call the zero universe age, or just before the first universe age—we have two existential Deities, right? The Father and the Son. And they have a power platform for operations, the Isle of Paradise. And what do they do? They produce a being equal to themselves, achieve the union of the Trinity, the first Trinity, and produce a universe which is limited as to quantity, but unlimited as to quality.

Could the Deity Absolute ever be experientialized? The answer is no. You'd have to exhaust infinity to do that.

I'm sure they could have filled all infinity with Havona, but they chose not to. They limited their creative act, didn't they, to one billion worlds. But they didn't limit it as to the quality of divinity expressed in that perfect creation. This creation is undilutely divine, but it's not infinite. It's important that we realize something can be perfect without filling everything. Do you follow me? Now, Havona serves as a nucleus of the seven superuniverses, right? One of the characteristics of a nucleus is that it exists in relation to a cytoplasm—the white of the egg. Go back to eggs again. I love eggs. I love to use them as an illustration.

Havona characteristics are transmitted out here as beings come out here. And when this universe is finished, when the seven superuniverses are finished, I think we're going to have another nucleus, the second nucleus. The appearance of the first nucleus is associated with the appearance of the Paradise Trinity.

The development of the second nucleus which is the Grand Universe—meaning the seven superuniverses as dependent on the Central Universe—the appearance of this second nucleus is also associated with the formation of a trinity, the first experiential trinity. This is the trinity made up of the Supreme Being, the Supreme Creators, the Architects of the Master Universe (1166:0).

I don't think that there will be any nucleus formed when the first outer space level is perfected. I think the four outer space levels are successive cytoplasmic areas in relation to this continuing nucleus. Because not until all four outer space levels have been completed do we again witness the formation of a Trinity. It takes the appearance, the emergence, of God the Ultimate to produce the second experiential Trinity, made up of the Supreme Being, the Ultimate, and this mysterious, Unrevealed Consummator of Universe Destiny (1167:2). Now, is this the end? Well, I don't think so. You see, there's still the Deity Absolute. We've come back now to the yolk of the egg. Could the Deity Absolute ever be experientialized? The answer is no. You'd have to exhaust infinity to do that. What's going to happen, then? Are we at a deadlock? Are we at an impasse?

This second experiential Trinity has a function which suggests something larger than the Master Universe. What is this Master Universe? Is it an end? I submit that the Master Universe is the third nucleus, the final nucleus, and that it exists in relation to some outer cytoplasmic universe which is infinite, which has no end.

It's a triple nucleus. I visualize this: At the beginning of all things, we had two existential Deities and a power base for operations. They trinitized an equal being, the Infinite Spirit, and produced an omelet. At the final Master Universe age, the age of the fourth outer space level, I can see harmony, a theme reappearing.

Once again, we have two unique Deities. Experiential Deities, this time. Once again, we have a power base for operations—the perfected Master Universe. I would suggest, and the papers will support this, that the Supreme Being and the Ultimate will in some unimaginable way trinitize God the Absolute and begin the invasion of the cosmos infinite. They will establish a beachhead on the shores of infinity. Now, God the Absolute so trinitized is subinfinite, because neither the Supreme Being nor the Ultimate nor the combination of the two is an infinite Deity (1168:5). But how vast are the resources on which they draw! And, remember, they can mobilize all of the experiential potential from the tennis ball, the bedroom, the city block, the cubic city, and the moon. This is vast. This is less than infinite, but nonetheless tremendous.

What they can mobilize will not represent an unworthy effort. And God the Absolute, I think, is going to appear. And since he's subinfinite, he can grow. I think this is the final adventure—the post-Ultimate adventure—and I think we'll be there because the papers instruct us that the last adventure that the human personality is competent to attempt is subinfinite penetration of the absolute level of reality. We can get up onto the third floor, and we can grow and grow and grow. The reason that we can't ever finish is because—I drew this a little wrong—this building happens to be open to the skies. There's no roof on the third floor. We can go, and we are never going to hit the top. There is no roof on the third floor. Again, as I consider this, the first universe age had no beginning in time. It had an end in time.

The last universe age will be the mirror image of the first. It will have a beginning in time. It will have no end in time.

[Question from the audience: Could you tell me the difference between the absonite and the Ultimate?]

The absonite and God the Ultimate? They're related. The word absonite is to God the Ultimate as the word finite is to God the Supreme. The absonite is a stage of action on which the Ultimate is eventuating. The finite level is a stage of action on which the Supreme Being is evolving. One refers to a level. The other refers to a person.

To illustrate, go back to our firehouse which we just talked about. To the second floor of the firehouse I would give the name *absonite*. In this sense I would use it as synonymous with transcendental. This is the level on which God the Ultimate is eventuating by experiential techniques. The word *ultimate* also applies to the values on that level. The word *ultimate* also applies to the function of the Paradise Trinity on that level, the Trinity of Ultimacy.

The Ultimate also applies to the function of the First Experiential Trinity, denoted the Trinity Ultimate—made up of the Supreme, the Supreme Creators, and the Architects of the Master Universe. Those are the uses of the word *ultimate*. *Ultimate* all by itself capitalized would mean God the Ultimate. *Ultimate* un-capitalized would refer to the level of values on that second floor. As the word *Supreme* capitalized or un-capitalized would similarly refer to Deity or to a level of quality on the first floor of the finite level. Finite is to Supreme, roughly, as absonite is to Ultimate. On page 3 they talk about levels of divinity. They talk about absolute perfection, relative perfection, and imperfection. Now, don't make this one go on all fours, but roughly, very roughly, I would think of the absonite level as being relatively perfect. Now, I don't think that's what this is intended to illustrate. That would

come nearer to fitting this pattern than any other pattern presented here. Again, when they talked about Havona, Havona is not absolute and Havona is not not-absolute. Havona is not really finite. It is not non-finite. The papers say Havona is nearer the absonite than any other concept revealed to us. It's not really absonite. But then again, the Univitatia exist in a level midway between matter and spirit, but they're not morontians (415:0).

But a better illustration would be to say a Havona native is finite. Now you're dealing with a perfect being. Man is not only finite, he's a pretty lousy finite. He's an imperfect finite. Havona natives are finite in the perfect sense of the word. The pattern creatures for human beings are found on the outer circuits of Havona, which contains something of everything that's going to appear in the Master Universe.

The growth of the Supreme is by a technique of experiential evolution. The growth of the Ultimate is by a technique of experiential eventuation. The growth of God the Absolute is by a technique of experiential existentials (13:7). The word experiential runs through all three levels. But as you go from the first to the second level, you substitute eventuation, and then you get into experiential existentials on the third level.

We went out to the end of space and beyond and that takes a lot of nerve to speculate along those lines. And we know that we're distorting the devil out of the concept. We're speculating. But let's do it. The authors of these papers speculate. They say, "We don't know, but we think."

Eventuation

[Audience asks him to explain "eventuation."] It's very simple. It's a superfinite thing. God the Father functions in three ways below the third floor. This is his sub-infinite, sub-absolute function. He functions in a great big, pre-personal sense. And when he functions in that way to produce something, he fragments, and what you get is an Adjuster. He also functions personally.

And when he functions personally, he creates, as when he collaborates in the production of a Creator Son. He also functions superpersonally. And when he functions superpersonally, he eventuates something. Eventuation does not involve creation in the same sense that fragmentation is not an act of creation. When he fragments, I think of God the Father as a big newspaper. He tears off a piece of this newspaper. That's a Thought Adjuster. Or some other Father Fragment, like a Gravity Messenger.

Eventuation does not involve creation in the same sense that fragmentation is not an act of creation. When he fragments, I think of God the Father as a big newspaper. He tears off a piece of this newspaper. That's a Thought Adjuster.

When he creates—this, of course, is the most comprehensible thing. Now what he does when he eventuates, I can't visualize. Except I can feel the difference between fragmentation and creation. So I now can set up a third member of the series, and say that eventuation is as much different from creation as creation is different from fragmentation. Now I've got a little feeling up here. The Architects of the Master Universe never were created, neither are they creators. They're spoken of as these uncreated non-creators. They are eventuators. And what the authors of the papers have done—and they so state—they've simply said, "To avoid introducing an arbitrary term, we've taken an English term and attached special meanings to it" (350:6) They could just as well say, "God glooped them."

Then we'd have to figure out what the word *glooped* means. As you get near the ceiling of the first floor, you're getting up to the place where time conjoins transcended time. In just one reference here, they call the Supreme Being the *Immanence of the Projected Incomplete* [56:2]. I think that term was put in here to stimulate our thinking. And here's what it means to me: Something which has immanence is the opposite of something which has transcendence. It is a presence rather than an aboveness. Do you follow me? It's God in the universe. Emerson presented transcendentalism as a contrast to immanencism—if I can coin such a word—the projected incomplete.

The Supreme Being is incomplete. Someday he will enjoy an immanence in the grand universe. I think in certain ways, he can project this immanence. And, let's say, shine a colored slide on the ceiling of the first floor, where time conjoins transcended time. And that juncture there might have reflective properties, just like a literal ceiling. And then he can reflect back onto the first floor level a part of the image of what he is to be in the future. We're monkeying with our sequence concept here, and it's dangerous. At any rate, he isn't here. And if he isn't here, how in the devil do you explain the presence of the unqualified supervisors of the Supreme who represent him in universes settled in light and life? He shouldn't be able to do this until he's a completed being.

Three infinite persons seem to be the minimum number of beings required to activate the prepersonal and existential potential of total Deity—the Deity Absolute [116:5]. A nice distinction.

We know the Universal Father, the Eternal Son, and the Infinite Spirit as persons, but I do not personally know the Deity Absolute. I love and worship God the Father; I respect and honor the Deity Absolute [116:6].

I once sojourned in a universe where a certain group of beings taught that the finaliters, in eternity, were eventually to become the children of the Deity Absolute. But I am unwilling to accept this solution of the mystery which enshrouds the future of the finaliters [116:7].



"Universe" collage

The Corps of the Finality embrace, among others, those mortals of time and space who have attained perfection in all that pertains to the will of God. As creatures and within the limits of creature capacity they fully and truly know God. Having thus found God as the Father of all creatures, these finaliters must sometime begin the quest for the superfinite Father. But this quest involves a grasp of the absonite nature of the ultimate attributes and character of the Paradise Father [116:8]. This is the second floor of the firehouse.

Eternity will disclose whether such an attainment is possible, but we are convinced, even if the finaliters do grasp this ultimate of divinity, they will probably be unable to attain the superultimate levels of absolute Deity [116:8]

That's the third floor of the firehouse. And then he hedges: *It may be possible that the finaliters will partially attain the Deity Absolute...* [116:9]. [Sub-infinite penetration.]... *but even if they should, still in the eternity of eternities the problem of the Universal Absolute will continue to intrigue, mystify, baffle, and challenge the ascending and progressing finaliters, for we perceive that the unfathomability of the cosmic relationships of the Universal Absolute will tend to grow in proportions as the material universes and their spiritual administration continue to expand* [116:9].

He's growing faster than the finaliters are growing. That's what that sub-infinite penetration means, I think. But the universe is growing faster. We'll never make it. We'll never get there. I think we'll attain the Deity Absolute as God the Absolute, in some sense. But I don't think we'll ever comprehend the Deity Absolute. As we someday will understand the Supreme Being. And at some immeasurably more remote day, we will understand the ultimate of Deity. ■

Local and Personal Initiatives

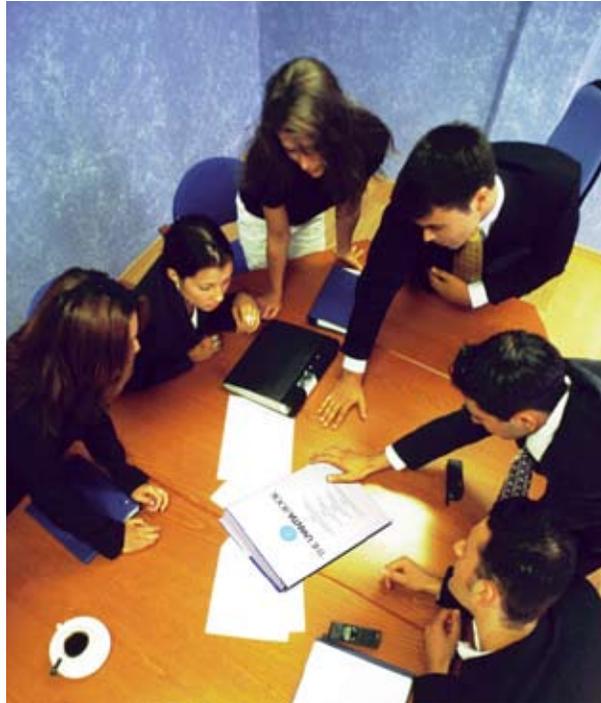
GAÉTAN G. CHARLAND
Canada

IN THE FIRST PART OF THIS ARTICLE, WHICH was published in the previous issue of this Journal, I shared with you certain ways that are available to us to train ourselves as teachers, those regular activities that are available within UAI or other organizations pursuing the same mission. We explored together how study groups and conferences could provide means in that sense; I also believe that study groups and conferences can be used to accomplish much more than the ideas I explored with you and those activities by themselves could be the subject of interesting articles.

The second part of this article has to do with personal initiatives and should be viewed as such. It is not my intention to make publicity of those initiatives and neither should those initiatives be viewed as recommended ways by UAI to train others or ourselves as teachers or used to foster spiritual growth within the membership at large. It befalls on the readers themselves to make those choices; I believe that Urantia Book readers are a very distinct category of person. In this way do I mean that generally we are acutely aware by our own truth searching nature how to discern truth and can decide by ourselves what means we should take to progress spiritually in our personal life.

The second part of this article depicts my personal search to find ways and methods to train myself as a teacher and find ways to become a better disseminator of spiritual truths. The results of my search is personal and do not engage the endorsement of UAI or any of its members. It is solely an experience that I share with you, so you the members or readers alike are aware of such means. While exploring such avenues has given others and me great intellectual and spiritual benefits; it should be remembered that progress of any kind is always a personal experience dependent on one's own sincerity, humility and desire for growth.

In 1999, in an article of the UAI Journal written by Georges Michelson DuPont, was mentioned the name of a man living in Senegal that Georges claimed had taught the teachings of *The Urantia Book* with unprecedented success to more than 800 persons, most of them Muslim.



"Group Study of UB" collage

That was all I needed to get me to go to my first UAI international conference in New York where I was going to meet Moussa Ndiaye for the first time. Because I needed firsthand experience of his teaching skills and method, in 2001 my wife, a friend and I traveled to Senegal for a 21 day stay with this quiet teacher. This man not only teaches but serves readers in other ways too. Moussa organized a local association of UAI in his country and has been actively involved with it since its formation in 2001. Along with that he also served as a Urantia Foundation Representative, helping the Reader Services Department with many new reader contacts throughout Africa.

...generally we are acutely aware by our own truth searching nature how to discern truth and can decide by ourselves what means we should take to progress spiritually in our personal life.

We returned from that trip so enthusiastic that many believed we had been caught in the spinning web of a guru. Notwithstanding what many believed, we have every year since, organized many training sessions to anyone interested in this simple yet profound method and technique of teaching molded on Jesus' approach. More than a hundred and fifty people took those training sessions and while most of them were long time readers of *The Urantia Book*, many of them were not and yet experienced life changing benefits from them. What really amazed me of this method was its simplicity, its nature and the spirit of its sharing. What is also truly remarkable with such a method, is that it can easily be used to teach anyone from any religion, race or culture the teachings of *The Urantia Book* without mentioning the source. It is mostly directed at non-readers but can benefit readers alike.

Not everyone coming into contact with this method will be as enthusiastic about it as I was, but that is understandable as we are all different. But any sincere seekers of God can on the other hand benefit incredibly from the first seminar, which addresses itself to the human persona, his consciousness, his personality and the nature of faith. There is enough in that first course, mostly taken from *The Urantia Book* to give any man or woman a true sense and awareness of self as the creation of God. For many individuals, it restores human dignity and a very high and profound respect for the Creator bordering on true worship. That first seminar taught me a very basic and fundamental truth; it is through genuine spiritual awareness of self that we acquire the awareness of God within ourselves. There is nothing mystical about this and it is accessible through factual experiences to any sincere seekers.

...it is through genuine spiritual awareness of self that we acquire the awareness of God within ourselves. There is nothing mystical about this and it is accessible through factual experiences to any sincere seekers.

Having found a teacher who had a method, which had proven itself effective many times with many different people, can be a tremendous blessing while at the same time a very important responsibility, to share what has been given, to teach what has been learned. No matter how much we speculate, we argue, we analyze, there is nothing that can replace the authenticity of true experience. So far, in my local area

where some of us have been studying this unique method for a few years, a small group of about twenty Urantia Book readers has come together to meet regularly to share their understanding and experiences with this method.

The lessons that I have learned from this humble teacher are many; one of them is to be constantly working in harmony with truth, beauty and goodness. To be forever attentive to the spiritual needs of others, to be very respectful of their beliefs and progression, to be patient and tolerant, to be humble and find comfort in our faith as sons and daughters of God. To manifest to the best of our ability the will of God in our life, to spend time each day in prayers and worship and be forever mindful of his presence within us and in others and again to pray and to worship.

As for another personal initiative, last year I met a woman by the name of Sheila Keene-Lund, a reader of *The Urantia Book* for many years and also a member of UAI. She was an accredited teacher of Transcendental Meditation for more than twenty years and has demonstrated her incredible capacity to teach by writing a book that reconciles the teachings of *The Urantia Book* with worldwide spiritual beliefs and personal development techniques. Sheila has been facilitating workshops at different Urantia conferences and has produced a very significant work that explores how one can progress spiritually by discovering the significance

of the Will of God and how it applies in our life. The difference of this book with other secondary works is that it offers a program, a very simple and effective framework that fosters spiritual growth while engaging the readers in spiritual exercises. This program could be effective in study groups or retreats as a way to improve our understanding of *The Urantia Book* while giving us meaningful tools to achieve spiritual growth.

So far I have attended two workshops that introduce the readers to the program featured in this book and both times I have been very impressed by the quality of its content and its practicality. It is solely based on the teachings of *The Urantia Book* and will be available soon in bookstores. The title of this book is *Heaven Is Not the Last Stop – Exploring a New Revelation*, and you can visit the web site that bears the main name.

Another personal initiative that is taking form is the program to train ourselves as teachers that Carolyn Prentice has published in this Journal through many issues. She will soon start work on producing a more substantial program based on her previous work. These initiatives will be a welcome addition to the slowly evolving teaching aids that will be made available to the serious students who wish to improve their teaching skills or their dissemination abilities.

And lastly, the Internet school (UBIS) which has been available now for many years, thanks to the incredible work of Dorothy Elder and the support she received from the Foundation. This school offers courses to students everywhere on Urantia where peoples have access to the Internet. The courses are offered in many different languages and provide a first hand experience to readers who wish to serve as teachers after receiving proper training.

There are among ourselves readers who have or will produce significant secondary works and if they can help us in our mission to become better teachers, then we should encourage their use as such.

There is more to teaching than just teaching, there is first and foremost to live our life according to the will of God. To become and to be what we teach; isn't that how Jesus was teaching? It is a daily task, it never ends, it motivates us in service to others, we become more and more part of the whole, we endure in the presence of criticism because we know what we know and no one can take that away from us. The bond between our Adjuster and us is growing more and more as each day of service passes. Then do we understand that the best way to teach another is with the awareness that an Adjuster like ours inhabits their mind and also that the Spirit of Truth is always present when spiritual activities are involved.

In spiritual work, only God can accredit us as teachers and never should we take for ours the privilege of accrediting others. ■

The Apprenticeship of Love

This article is a threesome gathering of what some people had to say on the subject as it was illustrated in the periodical journal, The Circles, in its Fall 1986 edition. Today, the editors of UAI Journal feel that such efforts in describing the moral values of Love have merit to be re-published for the benefit of all who can add these thought gems to their workbook.

Learning to Love

BY BILL COOPER
ARLINGTON, TEXAS

The idea behind the topic “Learning to Love “ was to explore the proposition that becoming a loving person is something that can and should be learned. I want to talk first about what love is, because I expect most of us are not really up to speed on the subject. Then I want to consider why we should invest effort in learning to love. Next I want to look at a few techniques of learning to be loving. Finally I want to talk about the magical consequences of love learned and shared.

When Jesus gave his new commandment to love one another even as he had loved all people, he was talking about love as the desire to do good for others. He was talking about love like the feeling and attitude a parent has toward his child. The parent’s relationship with his child involves his desire to equip his child for life as best he can. At its finest, the parental role is serving, unselfish and even occasionally self-sacrificing. This type of love puts the other person’s real welfare first. It is fair, firm, just, merciful, giving, tolerant and always unselfish. Love is unselfishness. It is the desire to do good to others. It is the urge to be a friend to everyone and help them through life. It is entirely possible to feel this way about everyone, even if they are undeserving of such friendship, or refuse it, or ridicule it, or even attempt to misuse it.

And so, you see, the love we are talking about is not a sentimental quality. In fact, it can be approached unemotionally, even in a businesslike manner. Friendship, unselfishness and the desire to do good for others can be approached even as a somewhat formalized code of personal conduct if that is personally comfortable. If you can project how a friend would behave and what is unselfish behavior under the circumstances and what is best for everyone concerned, then you can determine what love would do.



“Love” collage

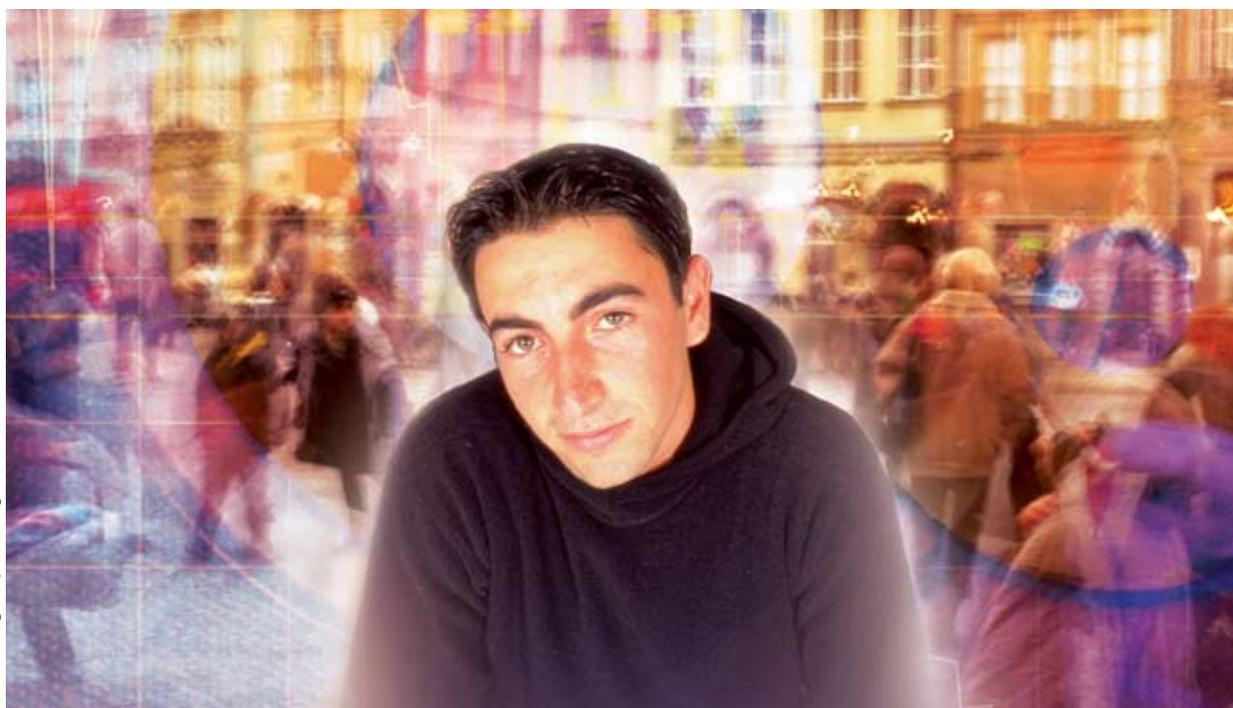
Loving one another in this way does not appear to be a common standard of behavior in our world. This leads me to conclude that it is not a quality which arises automatically with age or without effort in any great number of people. Of course, there are a few people who have a talent for displaying the qualities of love. Their special talent is a gift to us all. It shows us all what the possibilities are. Once demonstrated by talented people, these possibilities can then be imitated by the rest of us. In this way the talents which are distributed among a people are a mechanism of continuing revelation.

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Therefore, instead of becoming discouraged with ourselves for being unable to achieve loving behavior as easily as some others may do it, we should be encouraged that the talent of others demonstrates what can be achieved. Without the revelatory effect of talent, many things that we can all learn would never be discovered. And so it is with loving one another as Jesus instructed us to do. If he and other talented people had not demonstrated what a love-filled life looked like, it would be nearly impossible to imagine. But now that it has been demonstrated, it can be learned. This is what Jesus was urging all people to do: to learn and practice being a loving person with everyone, especially with those who would abuse us. This learning to live lovingly is not easy to master, but of all the things we can learn in this life, it is the most important and the most cosmically real and durable. Furthermore, the benefits of living life with love for all of one’s fellows begin to flow even from the most imperfect and unmasterly loving efforts.

If lovingness is learnable, then what course of education is appropriate for learning it? The self-reeducation required to live life lovingly is really two somewhat separate, progressive processes. One of these tandem processes is the spiritual-intellectual process of becoming committed to the idea of living life lovingly.

"Love among People" collage



It involves all of the thinking about, praying about and asking our spiritual helpers for enhanced ability to live lovingly. It is all of the planning, all of the study, all of the personal spiritual illumination about living lovingly and all of the dreaming of what it would be like. The various aspects of the spiritual-intellectual process

The experience of acting on our theories of lovingness tests their practicality. Love should be wise as well as generous. Sometimes it is in the better long-term interests of the other person to permit him to experience the unpleasant consequences of his behavior than it is to save him from them.

of learning to live lovingly are essential to success, even though they are incomplete if the complementary process is not also followed. This complement is the process of actually putting one's intellectual concepts of lovingness into practice. The experience of acting on our theories of lovingness tests their practicality. Love should be wise as well as generous. Sometimes it is in the better long-term interests of the other person to permit him to experience the unpleasant consequences of his behavior than it is to save him from them. Living lovingly requires continuous analysis of what is best for the other person, constant self discipline to avoid the temptation to punish, and constant reassessment to be sure that selfish interests do not creep back into our decisions regarding what we think is in the best interests of the other person. Living lovingly is not boring. It is intellectually, spiritually and emotionally active and challenging. The process of putting love into action is challenging too. It is only through trial and error that we can really tell what works and what does not, what is real and what is mere erroneous theory, and whether we are really committed to living life well or would rather simply dream about it.

Learning to love requires observing, thinking and trying. A good technique for learning to love is careful and prayerful observation. Observe how people behave when they are being loving. Observe how people express themselves to those they love. Observe how friends treat each other. Notice what unselfishness looks like in all sorts of circumstances. It is even helpful to try to treat others as you would like to be treated. Observing, thinking, praying, reflecting, acting and then reflecting still more on the nature of friendship, unselfishness and the desire to do good for others--these are ways to learn to live lovingly.

The magic of living lovingly is that it is contagious. It spreads, it propagates, it grows and the world is changed for the better just because you live life lovingly. And, slowly, as the benign virus of love is spread, error and evil are conquered, just as in an earlier era the wild beasts of the forest were conquered by the progress of civilization. It is interesting that the contagious quality of love makes it possible for those of us—who are willing to study and practice ways of living lovingly—to be able to teach love even to those who would reject any formal teaching of love. Therefore, it is extremely important for us to study and practice living the loving life. God has provided the revelation of love to us all. The next step is, for those of us who can, to imitate the revealed examples. When this is done, love will have enough carriers to spread the contagion even to those who would refuse to work at living more lovingly. It is an important service we all can do for our Father and in the process we can have a large measure of spiritual joy and happiness as byproducts.

Learning to Love Is Learning to Live

BY DAVID GLASS
FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Learning to love is a spiritual journey into the knowledge of *how best to live* in intelligent response to the limitless love of the Father.

LOVING OTHERS IS A RESPONSE

Loving others is often a response to the discovery that one is loved. From eternity, the infinite love-potential of the Father has motivated him to create beings whom he might love and who could love him in return—honestly, freely, genuinely, sincerely, and spontaneously. We first experience love as it is expressed by our fellow mortals, and later, through the revelations of truth, we *learn* of and then *dare to experience* the cosmic LOVE of the Universal Father.

We not only love because we discover that we are infinitely loved by the limitless Father, but also because we discover an inner and creative source of love within ourselves from which we can at first ladle out and later on pour out love upon our planetary fellows. Such spiritually inspired and humanly realized events will ultimately triumph in the lives of all the people of our world, and that will be the realization of the brotherhood of man.

GOD IS LOVE; BUT LOVE IS NOT GOD

It is important that we not lower the personal quest for love to the level of spiritual selfishness by seeking love-satisfaction from other mortals. Early in our lives we might think that we are most joyful when we are loved, as when a youngster is presented with a toy which he likes. But some day we grow beyond that orientation and into the realm of *joy through giving*. Such an attitude liberates the individual from his self-concern and the ego's clamoring for attention.

In searching we receive the blessings of a progressively spiritualizing consciousness and find the courage to take another step Godward. *As we learn about God, we learn about love*. And from our learning about love and reality, we become progressively more successful in choosing more perfect ways of doing things. When we learn how much we are loved, we learn how better to live.

LOVE IS EXPERIENTIAL

Love is experiential, not only for man, but for the Father. God not only bestows an infinite affection upon evolving man, he actually *transforms* him by living out portions of his *never-ending* love through our universe careers and eternal destinies. We learn how to love and how to live as God loves and lives through us.

LOVE IS OUR GIFT TO GOD

Love is the only gift that the mortal child can offer the Infinite Creator. *The affectionate dedication of the human will to the doing of the Father's will is man's choicest gift to God; in fact, such a consecration of creature will constitutes man's only possible gift of true value to the Paradise Father* [22:5]. Seeking God's will is the natural result of our love for him. In finding that will, man gains an unsurpassable insight into how to live now and forever. This is another way love teaches man how to live.

This one gift of willing to do the Father's will is truly limitless even though it is but one gift. This is true because our love for God is continually increasing, and the opportunities to express love to the Father are ever-expanding. The more we love the Father, the more lovable we become and the better we perceive the way of life that leads to eternal perfection. The more love we give to the Father, the more our capacity for receiving his love experientially increases. Learning to love leads to the endless expansion of our capacity for personal spiritual life, because love is the secret of progressive self-realization and spiritual liberation.

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LOVE DRAWS US TO GOD

Since the source of love is an infinite one and since man's capacity to respond to the Father's love (through Adjuster fusion) is also limitless, the ever-widening spirals of the mutual love bestowals of God upon man and the worshipful love offerings of man to God will continue to expand forever.

The love of the Heavenly Father, once comprehended and appropriately responded to, kindles a divine flame of love in our hearts which he progressively nurtures. His love unerringly guides us up through the universes to his Paradise Isle, at each step of the way instructing us in the new ways of living in harmony with ever-higher orders of intelligences which we will encounter on the long journey Godward.

As we experience and learn about the love of God, we instinctively and consciously but sometimes unconsciously live differently. The delight of living the spiritual life helps to mature each personality, to stabilize him, and to provide him with a broader base from which he can rise up into a further finding of the love of God. And thus man's learning to love and learning to live play leap-frog with one another. Man experiences first personal expansion and then self-consolidation; first growth and then synthesis; personal advancement and then social service; loving others individually and then assisting to unite them in the love of God. In all of these and in countless other ways, love illuminates and defines the best ways of living.



"Love among People" photo

The Classroom of Practical Experience

By KAYE COOPER
ARLINGTON, TEXAS

It seems that God teaches us so many of the things we need to know by presenting us with challenges that are just beyond our present reach. In order to meet the challenges and triumph, we have to grow a little. This is true with love. The Father is our

The Father is our personal tutor in the learning of love, and he is a demanding taskmaster! The task in learning to love is to grow gradually from an absorption with ourselves and our desires into an enthusiastic and wise concern for the needs of others. In our so-close-to-animal state we are not prone to want to do either of these things: grow to meet new challenges or forget our own desires to concentrate on others.

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Growing to meet new challenges often seems painful as we approach it. We grope about in confusion as we try to figure out what is the best thing to do (what is God's will). I have agonized any number of times over whether to insist that my son do what I knew to be best for him or to allow him to make the foolish choice and (hopefully) learn from the experience. Sometimes firmness was the right answer, sometimes it was granting free will. There was no hard and fast rule to follow, no automatically correct alternative to follow each time. Such confusion feels very painful as you approach it and while you are engulfed in it.

Considering the pain we expect and often experience in growing, our natural inclination is to avoid the circumstances which require growth. Those opportunities for growth are, of course, the very thing we need. I suspect, therefore, that we would not learn to love very rapidly if left to our own devices.

Recognizing that characteristic, God has taken certain steps to entice us into growing situations. The following are some of the situations which offer us opportunities to learn to love:

1. Early friendship. Early in our lives, we satisfy a very basic longing for companionship by forming friendships. The desire not to be lonely will keep us involved with friends even though they hurt us, disappoint us, or even betray us. The desire for companionship is strong. It needs to be because children are not very good friends. They are too self-centered and selfish, even cruel—in other words, immature. These early friendships may be of varying duration, but as children most of us are engaged in some number at all times (or else we are suffering the pain of loneliness). Our lessons of love are just beginning here.
2. The mating couple. God has provided the very powerful force of sexual attraction to entice us into a primary and long-term relationship. Sex added to the already-functioning desire for companionship is fairly effective at holding two people together when the rough edges of their selfish immaturity start grinding against one another. Caught in this tender trap, men and women either (1) get out, (2) settle in for a long war, or (3) learn to love.
3. The nuclear family. God has provided another type of desire to entice us beyond mating into an even more intense classroom—the desire for parenthood. In primitives

The nuclear family. God has provided another type of desire to entice us beyond mating into an even more intense classroom—the desire for parenthood.

the maternal instinct of the female operates to ensure a family for the child. As civilization progresses, both partners seem to develop a desire for progeny that creates and holds together the nuclear family of parents and child or children. Surely nothing is quite so effective as our children at teaching us mortals the meaning of love. When they are little, the magnitude of their needs combines with their inherent beauty in our eyes to overcome our selfish wish to be taken care of. We become the caretakers. As they grow older, our love must grow.

I thought perhaps when my son had reached his teenage years that most of my learning about love from him was over. After all, he was beginning his journey away from me and into independence in earnest. Much to my surprise, some of my most dramatic lessons came then—beyond what I had assumed to be the end. It was then that I learned how to go on giving what my child



"Dynamic Family" photo

needed even though I was incensed at his treatment of me, appalled at his lack of good judgment and wishing mightily for an end to teenage chaos. When he wanted to give up on our family and leave, Bill and I realized it was up to us to make the family work, to continue giving him what he needed, to pray and have faith. We loved him too much to give up. With any person other than our child, we probably would never have put up with so much turmoil—and never learned our lessons of love. But love triumphed, and our family is strong, well and happy.

God has equipped us chemically and emotionally with these almost undeniable urges which compel us to seek circumstances in which we must grow or be miserable. That might seem like a dirty trick—except that having done it, God then committed himself to go with us all the way. We have his constant presence to depend upon, his guidance to teach us the lessons of love. He has used these external circumstances and our own needs to show us the treasure of his presence within us, his watchcare about us.

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Learning to love is a confusing, bewildering, painful and wonderful process of seeking his subtle presence within us to know how to love. As we increasingly learn

to feel his gentle influence within, we find his love flowing through us ever and ever more naturally.

Learning to love requires foremost our *desire to be loving*. God will help us progress as fast as we want to. Our desire to learn to love is subject to our free will choice, and God respects our will. You see, we may have developed a general desire to be loving, but the small steps of progress toward that goal come in the moments when we are faced with a choice to be selfish or consider the needs of the other person. In that second of time when we make our choice, do we give up our selfish will and seek God's? If we do, God will help us to find a way to be loving.

If in that moment we choose selfishly to do our will (to get angry, to manipulate the other person, to use him in some way—whatever the selfish choice is), then we've missed a chance to make progress. The heartfelt desire to be loving is an essential element of learning to love, but even further, that desire must be translated into action, the act of cooperating with our ever-present tutor in love—our Father. Once we view our lives as a classroom and our relationship problems as God's provisions for our growth, it becomes easier to stop struggling against the circumstances and start cooperating. ■

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