

Bridging the Gap at Our Level

GAÉTAN G. CHARLAND
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WHAT DO THE WORDS "BRIDGING THE gap" mean to those of us who read *The Urantia Book*? Many different meanings can come to mind, but if we look at the challenges that life offers us at very personal and practical levels of accomplishment, if we try, to the best of our abilities, to have coherence in our own life on all levels, whether material, intellectual, or spiritual, then bridging the gap could have more significant and personal meanings. In simple terms, we should do our best, everyday, to stay connected with the presence of God within ourselves; that is what I call bridging the gap on a personal level.

There exists a vast gulf between the human and the divine, between man and God. [1207:5]

Bridging that gap is easier said than done, but this is the challenge we all face in our lives. How can we hope to accomplish anything worthwhile if we are not connected to the source of all things? This is probably the most difficult and important challenge facing us. The Urantia Book discusses it very clearly:

How can we hope to accomplish anything worthwhile if we are not connected to the source of all things?

The great challenge to modern man is to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor that dwells within the human mind.

Man's greatest adventure in the flesh consists in the well-balanced and sane effort to advance the borders of self-consciousness out through the dim realms of



Bridging the gap illustration

embryonic soul-consciousness in a wholehearted effort to reach the borderland of spirit-consciousness—contact with the divine presence. Such an experience constitutes God-consciousness, an experience mightily confirmative of the pre-existent truth of the religious experience of knowing God. Such spirit-consciousness is the equivalent of the knowledge of the actuality of sonship with God. Otherwise, the assurance of sonship is the experience of faith. ▶

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GREETINGS FELLOW Urantia Book readers and readers of the UAI Journal Aficionados!

Welcome to the Final Edition of the UAI Journal for 2009 and although it is not the official First Edition of 2010 lets hope it sets the tone. It is this 'time' every year that we look both forward to our future and reflect back upon our lives. When we do this, according to our favorite tome, we are growing spiritually as well as personally. *"The time unit may be a day, a year, or a longer period, but inevitably it is the criterion by which the conscious self evaluates the circumstances of life, and by which the conceiving intellect measures and evaluates the facts of temporal existence."* [1295.8] *"As the human mind reckons backward into the past, it is evaluating past experience for the purpose of bringing it to bear on a present situation. As mind reaches out into the future, it is attempting to evaluate the future significance of possible action. And having thus reckoned with both experience and wisdom, the human will exercises judgment-decision in the present, and the plan of action thus born of the past and the future becomes existent."* [1295.4]

Each of our contributors provides us with a separate platform for spiritual and personal growth as we embark upon 2010 and beyond — with 2009 fresh in our experience. We are fortunate to have four exceptional investigative excursions into the pursuit of wisdom and truth - through faith and its outworking in the real world. Each one opens a portal to the ultimate odyssey of God-finding. As I take all of them with me into the New Year I'll also take with me the words of Symmachus*

(A.D. 384) *"We have a common sky. A common firmament encompasses us. What matters it by what kind of learned theory each man looketh for the truth? There is no one way that will take us to so mighty a secret."*

In our first article, *Bridging the Gap*, by Gaétan Charland; we are specifically challenged to "do our best, everyday, to stay connected with the presence of God within ourselves." Gaétan examines the challenge personally and provides us with a hint to help each of us accomplish this supreme human task by asking "what do we have within ourselves to make this possible?" From a Urantian perspective, Gaétan well presents the ageless lesson: For each of us to affect world peace, we must first start with the peace in our own world.

In the second contribution, *Early Ministry of Jesus*, Rick Lyon provides us with a perfect example of initiating peace in the real world. This essay was prepared for the 3rd annual Fall Study Session for Greater Lake Michigan Urantia Association. The theme was, "The Personal, Private, and Living Revelation of Jesus to the Individual." Contained within Rick's discussion is the quintessential clue to peaceful existence; "We cannot know exactly what God's will is concerning any given situation, but we can ask ourselves, "Will my words or my actions produce truth, beauty, or goodness?" And if the answer is yes, then we can be assured that we are doing God's will." Herein is shown a well-trodden path to the Father and peace through the Master Son. Rick certainly captures the spirit of good will in his life and actualizes it in his association with his fellows.

The third article is chapter two of Rick Warren's new book,

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INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL

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TB&GnTUB. This chapter, "Truth And God" is followed by "Goodness And God", and "Beauty And God." This three-fold essay-within-an-essay gathers and accentuates quotes germane to its titles, in order to provide a fundamental understanding of the character and nature of our Father. Rick writes of the revelations on God and truth: "Father's Truth moves, flexes and lives where ►

Genesis of the Universe, continued from page 1

And God-consciousness is equivalent to the integration of the self with the universe, and on its highest levels of spiritual reality. Only the spirit content of any value is imperishable. Even that which is true, beautiful, and good may not perish in human experience. [2097:2-3]

If ever we have any hope of making a difference in life, it behooves us to understand the responsibilities that are associated with this challenge. As it clearly states in the last paragraph, only the spirit content of any value is imperishable, and we can conclude by this that all else is only scaffolding that will perish when we die. With a more practical question we can ask ourselves, what is it we want to accomplish in our life? Do we want something of eternal value or something of material substance? How much are we ready to give to our faith—to God? These are simple questions that deserve sincere and honest answers, for they are at the heart of our life and survival.

As readers of *The Urantia Book*, should we not have greater responsibilities than anyone to bridge the gap between man and God, for we know more than anyone else the values of truth? Most of us that are gathered in this community belong to one organization or another

Editorial, continued from opposite page

dogma is static, unbending and dead. Bits and pieces of truth you may string together from experience to form a partial model of truth, but only God is absolute Truth. God is genuine Truth, but forget not, he is more.” How can one go astray if they utilize this philosophy as a guide?

In our final article, “*The Language of God—A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*”, by Seppo Kanerva, we are offered clear thinking on the substantiation of divinity that so many within the scientific community have searched for. He utilizes the research of Dr. Francis Collins in this article (Collins is a world renowned scientist, known for his work on the human genome project). Collins states, “*theistic evolution is a position and concept currently dominant among serious biologists who have not forsaken their faith.*” Collins then concludes “*Evolution is one of those circumstantial evidences; it is one of God’s ways of speaking.*” Seppo unites faith and belief to the scientific method when he clarifies; “there ought not to be any conflict between religion (especially personal religion) and science. Science can help religion purify itself of senseless and indisputably untruthful notions and dogma.” And as evolution is slow but effective perhaps the ‘time’ is right for science to nudge us into the technology of faith — and the underlying code of “*such a life — on such a planet!*” [1224.0]

Happy and enlightened reading!

Suzanne Kelly ■

*Symmachus on replacing the statue of victory in the roman forum, AD 384

dedicated to the dissemination of *The Urantia Book* and its teachings. As members of those organizations our task is fundamentally to help bridge the gap between man and God. How successfully we do this will in large part depend on how well we can bridge the gap between ourselves and God. Let us, together, explore how we can accomplish this.

God has given us everything possible for us to know and be conscious of ourselves and of Him. If we are to become perfect as God is, then we must fundamentally have within ourselves the potential and means by which we can achieve that goal.

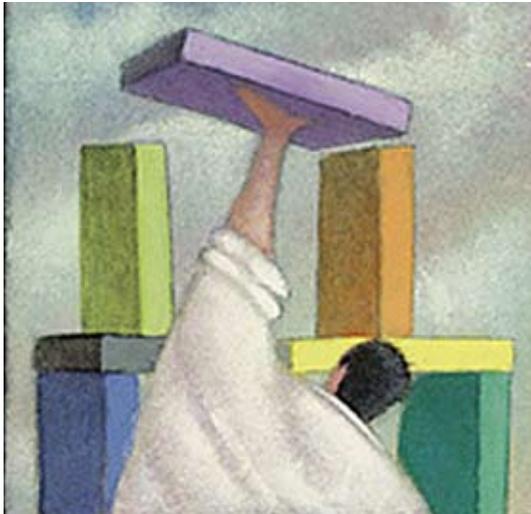
What do we have within ourselves to make this possible?

1. We have a personality with all its power. It is through personality that we can become self-conscious and have free will, the power to choose what is morally right or wrong.
2. We have a mind with which to think, feel, and perceive.
3. We have the seven adjutant mind spirits by which we acquire the ability to adapt to the environment and the capacity to acquire the consciousness of self and of God.
4. We have the Holy Spirit by which we acquire spiritual insight and intelligence.
5. We have the Spirit of Truth by which we can always discern spiritual truth and find our way during our upward struggle or in times of doubt.
6. We have a Thought Adjuster by whom we acquire a direct communication with God and the divine potential necessary for us to attain eternity and become perfect. We also receive the gift of faith through that spirit.
7. We have a Guardian Angel to help us during our life in the flesh and to accompany us all the way to Paradise.

If we are to become perfect as God is, then we must fundamentally have within ourselves the potential and means by which we can achieve that goal.

We have all those gifts and much more. Adding to that, each of us, as a result of our distinctive and unique personality, have many different talents for which only our finite imagination and willingness to serve put limits on.

If we are to help mankind bridge the gap between themselves and God by disseminating the teachings of *The Urantia Book*, do we not have a responsibility to express, to the best of our abilities and through our spiritual gifts and talents, the will of God in our life? I believe we do. *The Urantia Book* tells us that entering



Bridging the gap, building blocks illustration

the Kingdom of Heaven is but the first step, and to stay in, we have to work and progress.

Truth cannot be defined with words, only by living.

[1459:2]

If we know God, our real business on earth is so to live as to permit the Father to reveal himself in our lives, and thus will all God-seeking persons see the Father and ask for our help in finding out more about the God who in this manner finds expression in our lives. [1466:2]

When we look at ourselves, what do we see?

Do we see someone who is striving, everyday, to live the reality of God within him, or do we see someone who, most of the time, is expressing his lower human nature?

The only way we can change the world for the better is by changing ourselves; the only way to become a good and effective disseminator of truth is by living that truth.

Are we highly conscious of the fact that a divine fragment of God inhabits our body with us—that this body is not our sole possession—that we are only the landlords and we have a high responsibility to the tenant who shares the body with us?

Do we take good care of that body and the mind that accompanies it? Or, do we more often than not, desecrate the temple of God by our self-justified human habits?

When we speak, what are we expressing? Love, tolerance, patience, or is it fear, aggressiveness, intolerance, and impatience?

When we listen to others, what do we hear? The sound of a soul in need of help or the cacophony of a human voice

When we look at others what do we see? Their potential, their qualities, their sonship with God, or do we pass judgment on them and pick at their flaws?

We have to realize that what we see and hear in others is often a reflection of our own self—of our aptitude or inaptitude to discern beauty, goodness, and truth in our life and the lives of others. By enlightening the qualities in others we discover their potential; by focusing on that potential we enhance the power of their expressions and by helping in the actualization of that potential, we reveal the manifestations of truth, beauty and goodness. We reveal God the Supreme in others; we bring God closer to man

The body and mind of man are the dwelling place of the gift of the Gods, the spirit of God becoming the spirit of man. The mind of man thus becomes the mediator between material things and spiritual realities. [1779:1]

The only way we can change the world for the better is by changing ourselves; the only way to become a good and effective disseminator of truth is by living that truth. Anything short of living that truth will make us resound like empty cymbals in the ears of others. *The Urantia Book* was given ahead of its time to prepare the world for the time when man will be ready to look for the truth. In *The History of the Urantia Movement*, by Dr. William S. Sadler, in the message titled, "The Publication Mandate," we find this information.

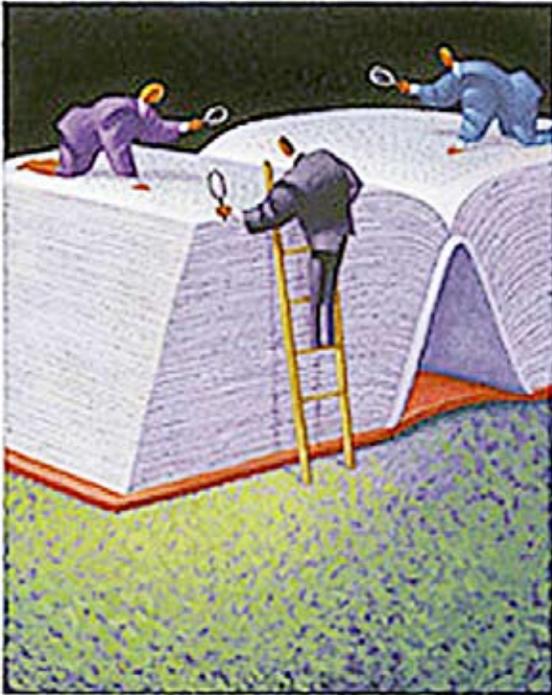
"An early publication of the book has been provided so that it may be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers.

"The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its worldwide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness when the battle for man's liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind."

The world needs to see Jesus living again on earth in the experience of spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master to all men. [2084:1]

Is this era now? If yes, are we ready? Do we live our lives in ways that people see an example of Jesus? Personally, I do not believe we are in that era and furthermore, I do not believe we are ready for such an era... I will let you meditate on that. It is important that we be honest with ourselves and do not start believing that because we have found *The Urantia Book* that the only thing required of us is to pass this book along to the next person.

If we have accepted sonship with God and entered his Kingdom, then must we do everything we can to help others do the same, and what better way than by becoming an example to those hungry souls. Study



Searching the big book illustration

groups are a good place to start in our quest for spiritual change for they offer us the opportunity to share with one another our spiritual insights and experiences. By being a participant in a study group we can benefit from the intellectual and spiritual progress of each other by mutual edification. They also offer us a place where we can create the experience of a growing spiritual brotherhood. All this is possible as long as all the participants agree on some basic spiritual principles of interaction with each other.

Study groups can also be viewed or used as small classrooms where each and every one of us can learn to become better leaders and teachers. The only limits to study groups is the strength of our imagination and faith in the spiritual gifts and potential that God has placed in us to actualize the spiritual realities that inhabit us—the Thought Adjusters.

Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination. [1459:5]

Where does that leave us? What is it we can do right now to respond to the challenges of training leaders and teachers, to bridge the gap between man and God, and to achieve better communication with the divine Monitor that indwells us?

Here are some basic steps that *The Urantia Book* tells us to take if we want to respond to one of those challenges:

You must not regard cooperation with your Adjuster as a particularly conscious process, for it is not; but your motives and your decisions, your faithful determinations and your supreme desires, do constitute real and effective co-operation. You can consciously augment Adjuster harmony by:

1. *Choosing to respond to divine leading; sincerely basing the human life on the highest consciousness of truth, beauty, and goodness, and then co-ordinating these qualities of divinity through wisdom, worship, faith, and love.*
2. *Loving God and desiring to be like him—genuine recognition of the divine fatherhood and loving worship of the heavenly Parent.*
3. *Loving man and sincerely desiring to serve him—wholehearted recognition of the brotherhood of man coupled with an intelligent and wise affection for each of your fellow mortals.*
4. *Joyful acceptance of cosmic citizenship—honest recognition of your progressive obligations to the Supreme Being, awareness of the interdependence of evolutionary man and evolving Deity.*

This is the birth of cosmic morality and the dawning realization of universal duty.

[1206:4-8]

In conclusion to all I have just written, if we unite in these efforts—our desire to depend solely on Jesus and on his incomparable teachings—could it be that we would become those new teachers that this world urgently needs...?

Are we ready to respond to the challenges of training leaders and teachers, to build thousands of study groups? Are we ready to be second milers, to join in this extraordinary adventure to bring man closer to God—to bridge the gap? The choice is ours, and remember, when man goes in partnership with God, great things may and do happen; and

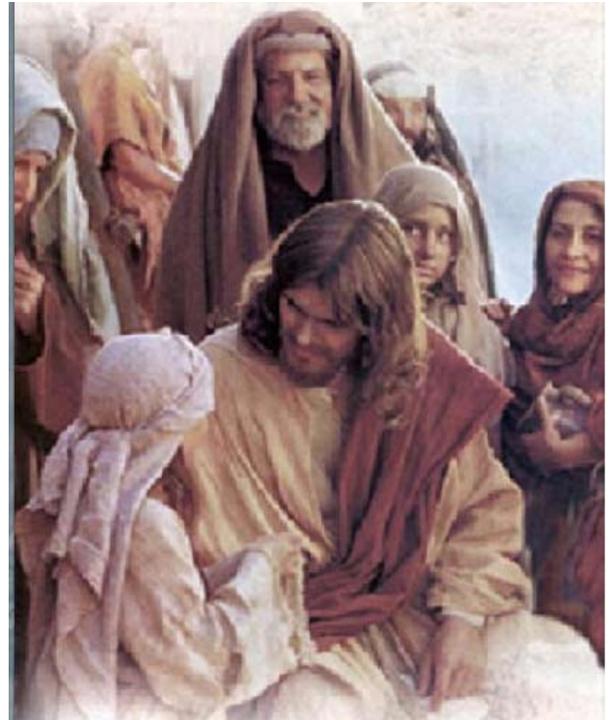
when man and God enter into partnership, no limitation can be placed upon the future possibilities of such a partnership. [1299:2] ■

...in a study group we can benefit from the intellectual and spiritual progress of each other by mutual edification, a place where we can create the experience of a growing spiritual brotherhood.

The early life and personal ministry of Jesus

[Note that this presentation was shortened due to time consideration but is presented here in full]

RICK LYON
USA



Jesus loved all people, especially children illustration

THIS ARTICLE WILL COVER JESUS' EARLY and middle life, as well as the personal ministry of Jesus, beginning with his appearance in the temple at Jerusalem at the age of 12 through the often trying times of his father's death when he had to assume adult responsibilities while still no more than a boy himself. I conclude by describing his two year trip to Rome and his finally achieving the complete sovereignty of a universe.

The early part of Jesus' life I like to call, "Finding Man." This is the period in his life when he set out to discover how humans lived and, in the process, laid the foundation for the revelation when it later came to the Roman world in Europe and the eastern Mediterranean. This is the period of his personal ministry to hundreds of individuals, so it is probably the most relevant to our topic of his personal, private, and living revelation to the individual.

As young children we dreamed of far off places that we heard about and we tingled with anticipation when that day came—when our dreams came true. Jesus had that same experience when he was twelve years old.

Much of this study involves the trip to Rome in which Jesus served as an interpreter for a merchant from India and as a tutor to the merchants' seventeen year old son, Ganid. Let's consider this weekend as a personal walk with Jesus—discovering Jesus and ourselves through his early life, his family life, and through the eyes of a seventeen year old boy.

All of us have childhood memories that we cherish. For some of us it may be going to Disney World—or Disney Land for all of you from California. As young

children we dreamed of far off places that we heard about and we tingled with anticipation when that day came—when our dreams came true. Jesus had that same experience when he was twelve years old. The world was a little different in AD 7. There were no Disney Worlds, but for Jesus the great event of his childhood was the first time that he visited Jerusalem for Passover. During this visit he experienced a few days of independence from his parents—something that every teenager longs for. Like many of the events in our lives, the reality did not live up to the anticipation. Jesus was greatly disillusioned by the inner appearance of the temple and the attitudes of the people there. He was disappointed in the dogmatic celebrations. He also could not understand why his mother was unable to attend the ceremonies with him—as women were not allowed to join the men.

So, here is Joseph and Mary, after a long journey, probably hot and tired and in a huge crowd of people with a disillusioned and indignant teenage son.

Been there done that!

After attending some of the sessions and being impressed by the beautiful and symbolic rituals, Jesus became disappointed yet again by the explanations that included the wrath of God and God's anger. Turning to his father he spoke one of his first memorable sayings, *The Father in heaven cannot so regard his erring children on earth. The heavenly Father cannot love his children less than you love me.* [1378:1]

Just imagine taking your twelve year old son or daughter to Disney World and walking through throngs

of celebrating people and farm animals (and all the things that farm animals tend to leave behind). Then, in this child's dreamland and this joyful celebration, finding one of the main attractions to be the slaughtering of these animals and the washing away of their blood on the pavement, all for the supposed glory of God.

Jesus was overcome by all this and begged his parents to leave. Like any wise parent with an upset child, Joseph took Jesus to see something beautiful and pleasant—the bronze gate—but Jesus had had enough for one day. Jesus knew that the Father in Heaven was not pleased with what he saw in Jerusalem.

The rest of the week was better for the family as they visited with friends. Several times during the week, Joseph and Mary found their teenage son sitting alone, deep in thought—probably what we would call moody—and they did not know what to do for him and were afraid to ask.

Anyone else ever have this problem?

This had probably been a miserable week for Joseph and Mary, and it was topped off with every parent's nightmare—they set out for home, but Jesus was not with them. Only after Mary learned that Jesus was not traveling with Joseph and Joseph learned that Jesus was not with his mother did they realize that Jesus was missing.

And that's when the struggle started.

The day after his parents left without him, Jesus paused on his way to the temple, and looking out upon the people of Jerusalem, he wept over the sight of a spiritually impoverished and tradition bound people. Remember, this is a twelve year old boy. Admittedly, not your average twelve year old, but none the less, still no more than a child. Jesus did not yet realize who he really was. While his parents searched for him, no doubt in panic, Jesus enjoyed the freedom to do things he would not have gotten to do otherwise, such as visiting the temple and participating in the discussions with the many teachers there. At these temple study groups, Jesus became the center of attention through his mature questions and wise logic. [1383:1]

After the tense and emotional reunion with his parents they made their way to Jericho for the night. On their way, Jesus paused, and shaking from head to toe with emotion said, *Oh Jerusalem Jerusalem and the people thereof, what slaves you are—subservient to the Roman yoke and victims of your own traditions—but I will return to cleanse yonder temple and deliver my people from this bondage.* [1384:5]

From that day on, Jesus and the world—even the universe—would never be the same.

The Urantia Book tells us that it was at this time in Jesus' life that the *flood tides of spiritual illumination swept through the mortal mind of Jesus and filled his human heart to overflowing with affectionate pity for the spiritually blind and morally ignorant multitudes assembled for the ancient Passover commemoration.* [1376:1]



Young Jesus learning the skills of carpentry illustration

During the night, a messenger sent by Immanuel appeared before Jesus and said, *The hour has come. It is time that you began to be about your Father's business.* [1376:1]

Quite a week for a twelve year old boy, and this was only the opening act of the grand adventure that led to our creator achieving the complete and unquestionable sovereignty of his universe, thus ending the Lucifer Rebellion.

Let us now move to a later time in the life of Jesus after his father was killed in an accident, leaving Jesus to assume the role of father to his brothers and sisters.

The Urantia Book says:

Apparently all Jesus' plans for a career were thwarted. The future did not look bright as matters now developed. But he did not falter; he was not discouraged. He lived on, day by day, doing well the present duty and faithfully discharging the immediate responsibilities of his station in life. Jesus' life is the everlasting comfort of all disappointed idealists.

[1393:1]

He had to deal with raising a set of teenagers of his own and their "adjustments" that come to all of us during that period in life, both intellectual changes as people begin to question things around them, and emotional, as they transition from boys and girls to men and women.

During this time, the family suffered severe financial hardships, but even as life for this Nazareth family became more difficult, Jesus always maintained an optimistic attitude. He gave comforting words to

his family by saying things like, *Mother-Mary, sorrow will not help us; we are all doing our best, and mother's smile, perchance, might even inspire us to do better. Day by day we are strengthened for these tasks by our hope of better days ahead.* [1400:6]

No matter how difficult life became for this family, even when the brothers James and Joseph wanted to kick Jude out for his embarrassing behavior problems, Jesus held them together.

He had to deal with raising a set of teenagers of his own and their “adjustments” that come to all of us during that period in life, both intellectual changes as people begin to question things around them, and emotional, as they transition from boys and girls to men and women. Remember this when our children try our patience: Jesus shared this same experience.

Jesus worked as a boat builder for about a year and then traveled extensively around the Mediterranean meeting and learning about hundreds of people in all walks of life.

During this time, he faced a mother who became disappointed in him for not fulfilling her vision of his divine mission, but he kept their home happy, safe, and warm by the strength of his leadership, the friendliness of his personality, and the love that he had for them. His family was a team. People do not usually think of families as teams, but Jesus included all the family in decisions with his regular family meetings—even to the discipline metered out to an offending child.

He wisely led the family and taught the children to assume responsibility by incorporating them in the family affairs and decisions. His positive method of teaching is revealed in his dealings within his family.

Always and everywhere did he say, 'You shall do this—you ought to do that.' Never did he employ the negative mode of teaching derived from the ancient taboos. He refrained from placing emphasis on evil by forbidding it, while he exalted the good by commanding its performance. [1401:2]

This period in the life of Jesus is probably best described as the family life of Jesus. The family is the most important unit of personal association there is, and he learned a lot about how our mortal families function and the trials that we face. As with everything he did during his life here on earth, he taught us how we should behave and his example is one we can apply to our own families and personal relationships.

He experienced times when Mary was sorrowful and unhappy, and as the old saying goes, “If momma ain’t happy, ain’t nobody happy.” He had to deal with Jude as a rebellious teenager causing the family problems. But he also experienced the joy of having a baby in the house and probably some parental pride as his siblings grew toward adulthood themselves. Jesus loved his family and they loved him. You can not ask for anything better than that.

The next phase of Jesus’ life begins with Paper 129, when Jesus handed over the repair shop, as well as his position as head of the family, to his brother James, and it ends when Jesus presented himself to John for baptism.

In the year AD 21 Jesus left his family to begin the next phase of his mortal career— discovering how men live on earth. Jesus worked as a boat builder for about a year and then traveled extensively around the Mediterranean meeting and learning about hundreds of people in all walks of life. Several readers of *The Urantia Book* went to Spain for the international conference last spring and the image of the Mediterranean is still in my mind. Never have I seen a prettier blue than the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea. I remember sitting on my hotel balcony watching the sea and thinking, “My gosh, if I could have stood in this very spot for the last 10,000 years, what history I could have seen.”

Jesus’ tour of the Roman World began in AD 22 [1427:1] when he departed Jerusalem as the interpreter for a merchant from India and as the tutor to the merchants’ son, Ganid.

After Jesus’ two year adventure to Rome, he spent some time with his family and friends and then set out again, this time as the conductor of a caravan to the Caspian Sea. He gained experience as the leader and administrator of a large group of people traveling in the caravan. He participated in a school of religion in Urmia on his way to the Caspian and then spent two weeks as an independent teacher of this school on his return trip. Following this was a period of individual travel to many cities.

This period in his life concludes with him spending time alone on Mount Hermon, formulating his plans for the conclusion of his life on Urantia and confronting Satan and Caligastia, thereby achieving the complete and unquestionable sovereignty of his universe. This is the period we call “The Great Temptation” and it actually was 40 days—*The Urantia Book* says six weeks, so 42 days give or take.

Jesus, now fully aware of who he was and accepting of the bestowal plan, spent the remaining few months keeping busy in the Zebedee boat shop. When John the Baptist made his way up the Jordan River to Capernaum, Jesus laid down his tools and said, *My hour has come.* [1495:5]

This seven year period in Jesus’ life was a time of great discovery in the ways in which men live, but it was also one of the greatest teaching periods of his life. It was certainly the most geographically widespread teaching period. The importance of this teaching to the future of his message is beyond doubt. He paved the way for the arrival of his revelation in the Roman Empire.

Jesus was not just an observer in this process of finding out how mankind lives and makes a living. He learned by doing and doing well. He was a carpenter, a

boat builder, a scribe, a linguist, a caravan leader, a father, a brother, a son, a friend, a teacher, and a student.

Jesus participated in life. One day he loaded packs onto twenty camels and did so with such experience that Ganid asked, *Teacher, is there anything you cannot do?* [1481:3]. Jesus became an expert at everything he did. By his example, let's live our lives to the fullest. Do our very best at everything we do—and do something great with our lives!

I want to share with you a quote that says something very telling about Jesus' relationship with the individuals that made up his earth family, and I think this demonstrates many things about how Jesus relates to the other individuals he meets during the next seven years as well as how we should relate to the individuals in our own lives:

The Son of Man had now made every preparation for detaching himself permanently from the Nazareth home; and this was not easy for him to do. Jesus naturally loved his people; he loved his family, and this natural affection had been tremendously augmented by his extraordinary devotion to them. The more fully we bestow ourselves upon our fellows, the more we come to love them; and since Jesus had given himself so fully to his family, he loved them with a great and fervent affection. [1419:2]

Notice that it says that the more we give ourselves to others, the more we love them. It does not say, the more we give ourselves to others the more they will love us. Actually that is often not the case. Perhaps the important thing is not how much they love us, but rather, how much we love them.

After leaving his family, Jesus worked for a year on a boat-building venture with Zebedee, an old friend of his father. This joint venture gave Jesus the experience of working with a father figure and his work greatly improved the construction methods and safety of sailing vessels of that time. Jesus lived with Zebedee and became like a son and brother to the Zebedee family. Jesus was the beloved father/son/brother of his own family and became like a son/brother to this family that he lived with for only one year. That really says something about how Jesus related to the people he associated with. He not only became their friend, but became like family to them. Maybe there was a reason for that.

Life is about giving ourselves to others. Jesus gave his time, attention, and interest to those individuals around him. He was genuinely interested in each and every person.

In every personal contact that Jesus made, he had two purposes:

1. his desire to learn about the life they were living and

2. to say or do something to make their lives richer and more worthwhile.

His usual technique of social contact was to draw people out by asking them questions, usually beginning by his asking them questions and ending with them asking him questions.

The Urantia Book states:

As a rule, to those he taught the most, he said the least. Those who derived most benefit from his personal ministry were overburdened, anxious, and dejected mortals who gained much relief because of the opportunity to unburden their souls to a sympathetic and understanding listener. [1460:6]

Jesus offered practical and helpful suggestions and spoke words of comfort to them. He would tell them about the love of God and that they were the children of this loving Father in heaven. Jesus was fond of doing things for others even if it was just a little thing.

People love to share and love to talk about themselves. If you only ask a few simple questions of someone—where do you live? Do you have kids? What do you do for a living? you don't even have to talk but just listen and they will think that you are a great person. Why? Because you took the time to be interested in them. So maybe if we have the courage to strike up a conversation with someone, ask questions, listen sympathetically, and do something for them, then we can be a light to those we meet much as Jesus was to the people he met.

I recently attended the 40th anniversary of my undefeated high school football team. The only high school football team to ever go undefeated and never play a home game. Did I mention that we were undefeated? We were so small and poor that we did not even have our own football field. Yet, we beat all the bigger schools that year. At this reunion, I met one of my best friends from high school. We were close pals back then and ran around together all the time. But during the last 40 years, we got jobs, families, and lives, so we stopped communicating. When it came to the reunion, we were glad to see each other again, but we soon ran out of things to talk about because we just aren't that close anymore.

Our personal relationships with others are like this. The more we talk to people the closer we become to them. Our relationship with God is the same way. If we never talk with him, we will never be close to him. If we pray and worship regularly though, and stay in constant communion with him, then we become close with our Father in Paradise. I know there are times when I feel close to God and times when I do not, and when that is the case, it is because I allowed myself to get too busy to spend

...if we have the courage to strike up a conversation with someone, ask questions, listen sympathetically, and do something for them, then we can be a light to those we meet much as Jesus was to the people he met.

quality time with him. The same goes for my family, my friends from high school, and my wife Shelia.

During this seven year period, Jesus set out to communicate with as many mortals as he could in order to learn about them and from them. Communication helps us to understand each other. Communication brings out truth and prevents misunderstandings and confusion (though I don't think that applies to email).

Papers 129 through 134 are, I think, the most revealing of Jesus' personal and private relationships with individuals. How many of us would like to have lived during the time Jesus walked this earth? The gossip magazines always ask celebrities, "If you could spend time with anyone from history, who would it be?" I think for all readers of *The Urantia Book* the answer would be "Jesus." What a great experience it would have been to listen and learn at the feet of the Master. What a great experience it would have been if we could have spent months living with Jesus and listening to his stories and words of wisdom. How exciting it would have been to share personal and private time with him—one on one. We cannot have this experience in the flesh, but we can share such a time with a young boy named Ganid.

A few years ago I taught a course for the Urantia Book Internet School (UBIS) titled, "The Mission of Joshua the Teacher." That course studied this time in Jesus' life and his trip to Rome. Ganid was lucky enough to have had Jesus as his personal tutor for almost two years, and they became very close friends. Can you imagine, Ganid waking up on the mansion worlds and asking, "Is my friend Jesus here?" (Though, of course, Ganid would have been calling him Joshua).

One of the things we discovered in our UBIS course was that nearly every question asked by Ganid and the people that Jesus met are questions that we would like to ask too. Many of the personal and private revelations of Jesus came in response to a question asked by someone he met. It is hard to not write down everything that Jesus said or did without calling it a personal revelation. Perhaps everything he did and said was a revelation. Let us go through some of these interactions and see how we can apply them to our own personal lives. After all, what good is a personal revelation if we don't personally use it?

JONAH AND THE WHALE [1428] — Early in the trip to Rome, Jesus met a man named Gadiah, a young Philistine. Gadiah asked the question, *Do you suppose the big fish really did swallow Jonah?* [1428:2]

My understanding of Jesus' response is that we all have "whales" that can swallow us up. For some, it may be drugs, or alcohol, or gambling, or a hundred other addictions. For some of us it may be work or some obligation to duty that throws our life out of balance. It

may be some family situation that we obsess over. Many times it is fear of the great "what if." What if we don't do this or don't do that. What if this happens or what if that happens. But when we find ourselves swallowed by the whale, we can, if we choose to follow God's will, bring balance back to our lives; we can escape from the belly of the beast and find light and happiness once again. Let me add, never underestimate the power of prayer or the request for help from our indwelling spirit. Our father and our indwelling spirit know more about what we need than we do, but it never hurts to ask.

DISCUSSION OF GOOD AND EVIL [1429] — Gadiah, asked, *How can God, if he is infinitely good, permit us to suffer the sorrows of evil; after all, who creates evil? In response Jesus said, My brother, God is love; therefore he must be good, and his goodness is so great and real that it cannot contain the small and unreal things of evil.* [1429:1]

Notice that Jesus called evil "unreal." In high school science class I learned that there is no such thing as cold. Cold is the absence of heat but cold is not a thing itself. Evil is like this too. Evil is not a real thing but rather the absence of good. Evil only becomes a "thing" when a person chooses not to do good. Free will involves choice and choice requires at least two things to choose from. By giving us the power to choose to do good—to do God's will—the potential to choose not to do good and to reject God's will was inevitable. This is why our Father in heaven permits good and evil to go along together, just as nature allows the wheat and the weeds to grow side by side. So, God did not create evil; evil is just a rejection of the will of God. Evil becomes sin by the knowing and deliberate choice of rejecting God. [1693:7]

DEALING WITH DISAGREEABLE PEOPLE [1430] — One of the young men who worked with Jesus in the shipyard said, *If the Gods are interested in me, then why do they not remove the cruel and unjust foreman of this workshop?* Jesus replied,

Since you know the ways of kindness and value justice, perhaps the Gods have brought this erring man near that you may lead him into this better way. Maybe you are the salt which is to make this brother more agreeable to all other men; that is, if you have not lost your savor. [1430:2]

How many times do we get caught up in the insecurities of others? How many times do we slip and fall because we allow someone else to overpower us with their immaturity and anxieties? How many times do we envision getting back at such a person, thinking up all sorts of mean things that we would never really do?

Jesus points this out and says that if we know more truth than this person who is dragging us down, then perhaps we should try to lift this person up. He tells us that there is no greater adventure than to help someone struggling with life and bring them to the light of spiritual peace and happiness. Abraham Lincoln once

...there is no greater adventure than to help someone struggling with life and bring them to the light of spiritual peace and happiness.

said, “Am I not destroying my enemies when I make them my friends?”

If you read anything about psychology, you often find that a bad attitude or a mean disposition is really a cry for help. Jesus goes on to say, ***Surely you are not the coward who could stand by on the seashore and watch a fellow man who could not swim perish! How much more of value is this man’s soul floundering in darkness compared to his body drowning in water!*** [1430:2]

Maybe the unjust foreman was actually crying out for help like a drowning man in the river. After Jesus spoke with his co-worker, the worker threw a rope to the spiritually drowning man and saved his life.

WHY BOTHER MEETING STRANGERS? [1431] — Ganid asked Jesus, ***‘Why do you occupy yourself so continuously with these visits with strangers?’ And Jesus answered: ‘Ganid, no man is a stranger to one who knows God. In the experience of finding the Father in heaven you discover that all men are your brothers, and does it seem strange that one should enjoy the exhilaration of meeting a newly discovered brother?’*** [1431:1]

Knowing that all people are my brothers, why do I find it so hard to talk with them about our Father?

THE WILL OF GOD [1431] — Everyone struggles with this question in their lives, I think. What is the will of God? What is God’s will for my life? Is it God’s will that I marry this person, take this job, or buy a yellow mustang rather than a red corvette? This is probably the number one question of people struggling to find God. In Nashville a few years ago, this was the topic of a conference and it was there that I felt like I understood God’s will for the first time.

We cannot know exactly what God’s will is concerning any given situation, but we can ask ourselves, “Will my words or my actions produce truth, beauty, or goodness?” And if the answer is yes, then we can be assured that we are doing God’s will.

Jesus tells us that the will of God is the way of God. To do the will of God is to become more like God, and God is all that is good and beautiful and true. So maybe the answer to this question of “What is God’s will?” can be found on our bracelets or t-shirts that have the saying, “What would Jesus do?”

THE YOUNG MAN WHO WAS AFRAID [1437] — All of us have parts from *The Urantia Book* that we call our favorites, and for me, this is one of my favorites. Here is the story of a young man who had given up on life and fled to the isolation of a mountain. Life had been hard for this young man—he grew up without a father and apparently few friends. He felt helpless and worthless. Today we would diagnose that as depression and spend a lot of money on drugs and therapy. All this



Jesus showed the way towards the light photo

young man wanted was for everyone to go away and leave him alone—or so he thought.

Here is another example of how to meet and serve people by asking a question. As they met, Jesus said, ***Greetings, my friend! why so downcast on such a beautiful day? If something has happened to distress you, perhaps I can in some manner assist you. At any rate it affords me real pleasure to proffer my services.*** [1437:1]

The young man’s fear and his negative feelings about himself caused him to ignore this pleasant greeting, but Jesus continued his attempt to communicate with the young man. Jesus asked the young man for help, and few people, no matter how backward or withdrawn they are, will not respond to a request for help. Jesus simply asked for directions and the young man came out of his shell and gave a detailed report of the pathways through the mountains that he knew so well.

Obviously, this brought some sense of satisfaction to the young man; it made him feel important and he liked that he had something to offer. Once he had given directions to Jesus, Jesus offered to give something back. The young man was shocked by this offer, probably because he did not think that anyone cared or that anyone could see his pain, but to him, Jesus said:

My friend, arise! Stand up like a man! You may be surrounded with small enemies and be retarded by many obstacles, but the big things and the real things of this world and the universe are on your side. The sun rises every morning to salute you just as it does the most powerful and prosperous man on earth. Look, you have a strong body and powerful muscles, your

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physical equipment is better than the average. Of course, it is just about useless while you sit out here on the mountainside and grieve over your misfortunes, real and fancied. But you could do great things with your body if you would hasten off to where great things are waiting to be done. You are trying to run away from your unhappy self, but it cannot be done. You and your problems of living are real; you cannot escape them as long as you live. But look again, your mind is clear and capable.

Your strong body has an intelligent mind to direct it. Set your mind at work to solve its problems; teach your intellect to work for you; refuse longer to be dominated by fear like an unthinking animal. Your mind should be your courageous ally in the solution of your life problems rather than your being, as you have been, its abject fear-slave and the bond-servant of depression and defeat.

But most valuable of all, your potential of real achievement is the spirit which lives within you, and which will stimulate and inspire your mind to control itself and activate the body if you will release it from the fetters of fear and thus enable your spiritual nature to begin your deliverance from the evils of inaction by the power-presence of living faith.

And then, forthwith, will this faith vanquish fear of men by the compelling presence of that new and all-dominating love of your fellows which will so soon fill your soul to overflowing because of the consciousness which has been born in your heart that you are a child of God.

This day, my son, you are to be reborn, re-established as a man of faith, courage, and devoted service to man, for God's sake. And when you become so readjusted to life within yourself, you become likewise readjusted to the universe; you have been born again, born of the spirit, and henceforth will your whole life become one of victorious accomplishment. Trouble will invigorate you; disappointment will spur you on; difficulties will challenge

you; and obstacles will stimulate you. Arise, young man! Say farewell to the life of cringing fear and fleeing cowardice. Hasten back to duty and live your life in the flesh as a son of God, a mortal dedicated to the ennobling service of man on earth and destined to the superb and eternal service of God in eternity. [1437:3-1438-1]

...most human beings are like the lost child. They spend much of their time crying in fear and suffering in sorrow, when actually they are only a short distance from safety and security...

Please forgive me for reading such a long quote that most of you know by heart, but for me, this is the supreme example of the personal, private, and living revelation of Jesus to the individual. What person, after hearing these words, could do anything but charge forward in the adventure of life? What more do we need to hear?

LOST CHILDREN [1465] — One day while in Rome, Jesus and Ganid found a lost child and helped this child return home. From this, Jesus illustrated another of man's problems and how to solve it.

Jesus said that most human beings are like the lost child. They spend much of their time crying in fear and suffering in sorrow, when actually they are only a short distance from safety and security, just as the child they helped was only a little way from home. During those times when we too feel lost and afraid, our father is not far away. The Father lives in the child. God is always with us. We are never alone. Knowing this brings comfort to us, but how enjoyable it is to help another lost and frightened child, whether they are 9 or 90 years old, to find their way home.

INDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM [1468] — One day while resting at lunch, Ganid, who was from India, asked Jesus what he thought of India's caste system, and I think this question can be applied to the social classes and races of today. Said Jesus, *Though human beings differ in many ways, the one from another, before God and in the spiritual world all mortals stand on an equal footing. There are only two groups of mortals in the eyes of God: those who desire to do his will and those who do not.* [1468:3]

We as people can be classified by many standards—intelligence, money, race, what we do for a living, our attitudes, or our personalities—but God is only concerned about our spiritual standing—do we choose to do God's will or do we not, and when we look into the eyes of our brothers and sisters, that is all we should be looking for too.

THE PUBLIC WOMEN [1472] — One evening, as Jesus and Ganid walked by the sea, they came across two "public women." After Ganid rudely told them to go away, Jesus told him that, though he meant well, it was not up to them to judge these women because they did not know the circumstances that led to their evil ways. He explained that the spirit of God lives in every human mind, and while these women are children of God, they are also human. These women had used human desires as the only way they could find to make a living, but this certainly was not the way they would have chosen if circumstances had been different. In this typical way of Jesus, he saw a problem, taught a lesson from it, and then made everyone's life better before journeying on.

Let me now go through some of the multiple personal and private conversations that Jesus had.

To the miller, he taught about grinding up the grains of truth in the mill of living experience so as to make the difficult things of divine life understandable to the weak and feeble among our fellow mortals. Said Jesus, *Give the milk of truth to those who are babes in spiritual perception.* [1474:2] For those of us who can understand some of the more difficult concepts of *The Urantia Book*, we should find ways to explain them in



In his travels, Jesus met all manner of people illustration

simple terms to those who are just learning. We do not feed cereal to a baby until after he has become hungry for more than just milk.

To the Roman centurion he said, *Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's. Loyalty to God, if you should come to know him, would render you all the more loyal and faithful in your devotion to a worthy emperor.* [1474:3]

Jesus told the leader of the Mithraic cult that God sent his spirit to live within us, and that this spirit will lead all truth-loving and God-serving mortals from this life through the portals of death and up to Paradise where God waits to receive his children. This is the Thought Adjuster working within us to guide and help us find our way home.

To the Epicurean teacher he said that the greatest thing in all human experience is coming to know God whose spirit lives within you and seeks to lead you forward on that long, almost endless journey, to the day when we actually stand in the personal presence of God. Again, our Thought Adjuster at work.

Jesus told the Greek contractor that as you build the material structures of men, so you grow a spiritual character within your soul.

To the Roman judge he instructed to judge justly and with mercy because some day you will seek mercy before God. Judge as you would be judged and be guided by the spirit of the law as well as the letter.

To the waitress working in the Greek inn who complained about all the hard work, Jesus suggested that she should find pleasure in her work because she was actually serving God, who lives within the hearts of all the people she served.

Jesus told a Chinese merchant to worship only God and remember that the Father's spirit lives within us and guides us. If you follow the leadings of the indwelling spirit, we are certain to continue on a path of finding God.

To the truth seeker from Britain Jesus suggested that he look within himself for the spirit of the Father. Jesus asked if he ever talked with the spirit of his own soul and he explained that such a thing is difficult and seldom yields conscious success; but every honest attempt to communicate with our indwelling spirit is received by that spirit. Our prayers are always heard.

To the runaway lad Jesus said that we cannot run away from God or ourselves. Everywhere we go we take ourselves and the indwelling spirit. We are sons of God and we should face life bravely and intelligently.

Jesus told the condemned criminal that even though his fellow men convicted him and sentenced him to die, that has no bearing upon his chance for salvation if his repentance is real, and it did not prevent him from receiving justice and mercy before the heavenly courts. What a message of hope that is for all of us.

We also read:

The Son of Man, during the time and through the experiences of this tour of the Roman world, practically completed his educational contact-training with the diversified peoples of the world of his day and generation. By the time of his return to Nazareth, through the medium of this travel-training he had just about learned how man lived and wrought out his existence on Urantia. [1424:2]

...we cannot run away from God or ourselves. Everywhere we go we take ourselves and the indwelling spirit. We are sons of God and we should face life bravely and intelligently.

The real purpose of his trip around the Mediterranean was to *know men*. Jesus wanted to learn all he could about the people he met and how they reacted to the situations of daily living. He personally met hundreds of people on this journey. He met and loved all manner of men, rich and poor, high and low, black and white, educated and uneducated, cultured and uncultured, animalistic and spiritual, religious and irreligious, moral and immoral. Jesus also wanted to do what he could for these people to improve their lives. So, what seems at first to be a simple journey, like something we might do for a vacation, is actually one of the greatest events of his life here on Urantia and most certainly in human history.

The Urantia Book states:

To the onlooking celestial intelligences of the local universe, this Mediterranean trip was the most enthralling of all Jesus' earth experiences, at least of all his career right up to the event of his crucifixion and mortal death. This was the fascinating period of his personal ministry in contrast with the soon-following epoch of public ministry. This unique episode was all the more engrossing because he was at this time still the carpenter of Nazareth, the boat builder of Capernaum, the scribe of Damascus; he was still the Son of Man.

[1424:5]

What impresses me the most about this period in Jesus life are the results of the personal, one on one relationship that he had with average people—the fruit that his teaching and inquiring mind produced.

Jesus himself regarded his six month stay in Rome as one of the richest and most informative of any period of his life on earth, no doubt because of the personal contacts he made during that time. As readers of *The Urantia Book*, we come to conferences and have the same experience—we quickly forget what the speakers said but we long treasure the personal contact with other readers we meet during the event. And it is these personal relationships and interactions that are the most informative and uplifting.

What impresses me the most about this period in Jesus life are the results of the personal, one on one relationship that he had with average people—the fruit that his teaching and inquiring mind produced.

The two men from the shipyard became prominent members of the church founded by Phillip and influenced a Roman Centurion to become a believer of Peter's ministry. One of them died ministering to 20,000 Jews while they were being slaughtered. [1430:3]

Jesus' conversations with a merchant from Mongolia led this merchant to share them with his family, friends, and business acquaintances. His son became a priest and spread the teachings. His son and grandson followed behind him. I wonder what great things await this revelation in China as a result of this personal and private conversation Jesus had with this one man.



Jesus ever remains the light of the world photo

The young man who was afraid became a leader of the Christians in Crete.

Claudus was on the verge of suicide, but after speaking with Jesus, he went on to become a preacher of the Cynics and joined with Peter to preach the gospel in Rome and Spain.

What great things might happen if we have the courage to speak and share the teachings with some stranger? What seeds of greatness might we plant if we go into partnership with God by simply opening our mouths?

The life of Jesus in the flesh had at least three results. One, he showed us how we should interact with our fellow man; two, he showed us the love and personality of our heavenly father; and three, he discovered for himself, for our father, and for our spiritual brethren, who these mortal beings really are and why they live such a life on such a planet. This enables them to understand us, love us, show mercy to us, and judge us fairly.

The more you understand someone, the more you love them. The personal, private, and living revelation of Jesus to the individual enables man to understand God and God to understand man, and therefore, to love one another as Jesus loves us.

When it came time for Jesus to leave the caravan that took him to Rome, Ganid's father said, *Farewell to a great teacher, one who has made us better and helped us to know God.* [1481:6]

And this ends the chapter in the life of Jesus which might be called, "The Mission of Joshua the Teacher." ■

TB&GnTUB

Chapter 2 ~ Truth and God

RICHARD E. WARREN
USA

God is the first truth and the last fact' therefore does all truth take origin in him, while all facts exist relative to him [1125:1]

ALL GENUINE TRUTH IS RELATED TO GOD, the source and standard of Truth. The truth for you is that Father needs your experience to create the Supreme, an evolved time/space being in whose making you have a creative role—if you want it. But, even more than your experience, the God of all Creation wants your most intimate and personal friendship.

The ultimate truth is that Father wants you to have and exercise creative freewill within the wise confines of pre-existent reality that Father fashioned for such an existence. If you have faith in the truth of God, and you truly want to help manifest the Supreme, you will eventually see God. In the meantime, you will have the entire cosmos as your university, your playground, and your focus of service. First, though, you will want to know what truth is to God.

You have a multiplicity of spirit influences within your unique body/mind/spirit unit right now. These inner influences will assist you in finding and living truth. In fact, the Father of Creation lives in you this very minute, as does the Spirit of Truth (a spirit singular to Truth! It's that important.), and the seven spirits of the Mother of Nebadon perennially flow into your head from her seven-headed fount. All these inner networks of divine sorting and leading are there to assist and guide you in living truth, creating beauty, and doing good. These loving influences benignly conspire to offer you the Universe and most of its treasures—forever! Got a better offer?

What an immense span of truth the revelation offers, from soul awakening on this spinning, organic, fully self-contained planet called Urantia, to the shores of Absolute Truth and the presence of Father on Paradise. Out here, on the very fringes of imperfection, you were born in abject ignorance, without the knowledge of even the concept of truth. As you grew in body, mind, and spirit, aspects of truth, goodness, and beauty became part of your being, one experience at a time.



Truth sends forth shoots illustration

From your trials and ordeals come spirit value (or values rejected). Discovering, learning, and teaching Paradise values continues until your temporary body is dead, your meat shed. Then begins your journey in earnest, on the other side of the curtain of death.

Are you not pleased that your lease on that body is a mere 99 years (or less)? In the blink of God's eye you live, learn, and choose survival by temporary attachment to a flesh body with built-in obsolescence. Then you pick up another body (made of lighter stuff no doubt), repeating this cycle all the way inward to Paradise. The beauty of the truth about the design of the scheme of mortal evolution is staggering, isn't it?

Your nascent soul moves from Urantia to Mansonia where the divine indweller imparts more truth, beauty and, goodness up to the level of perfection of our local universe—Nebadon. Soon enough the day of fusion becomes a real possibility for you. After fusion, you embark on your post-grad exploration of the good, true, and beautiful, in preparation for Paradise perfection. Such a journey in such a Universe!

God is spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.[1614:0]

How do you worship Father in truth? God's Truth is abundant, but it is hidden from novice souls behind a thick veil of the obvious. Given enough time and facts, even without revelation, you could deduce the truth, the nature, the meaning, and the purpose of Father's universe. In so doing you would discover the truth of all existence. Your life is utterly dependent on God's existence before you. But the truth of Father's origin, if he had one—the when, where, and how—are not known by any being in the entire cosmos except Father, and maybe the Eternal Son and Infinite Spirit.

...If God is Truth and you are child of God, what is truth to you? Whatever you understand truth to be, it is not a boring universe.

...you gave up nothing to obtain your individual life (except maybe non-existence in eternity) and there is nothing holding you in that body but your freewill desire to live.

Mysterious or not, God is Truth. Revealed truth declares that this Father of Truth is your most intimate friend who lives at your very center. Is that not the best truth of all? Doubt not that we will gradually discover what truth is to Father, up to our capacity as a child of God at least. We all receive a partial insight into the totality of Absolute Truth through our unique experiences traveling through space, from world to world, tracing a single line on the great mosaic, one

that no other has traced. Father's truth is expressed anew in you, through your Thought Adjuster, when you are living the spirit-led life. Truth has the taste of God..

It requires great courage to face genuine truth, partial truth needs less courage, and falsehood involves little or no courage. Father is the truth from the absolute to your own level of existence.

The truth of how God can be personally present with every member of the universal family everywhere at the same time, and still be our One Universal Sovereign who (in perfection) runs the Universe, is explained by saying that omnipresence and omnipotence are divine prerogatives. This puts a label on them, but explains nothing. The Truth of God is the greatest mystery of all, but you always know Father exists, because you and the cosmos exist. Besides, a real and vibrant piece of Father lives inside you, seeking your constant embrace, your loving attention, and your eternal friendship.

The truth is that you gave up nothing to obtain your individual life (except maybe non-existence in eternity) and there is nothing holding you in that body but your freewill desire to live. That desire is mixed, probably, with a love for life, or at least, an abiding curiosity about how your incarnation will play out. Death may obscure the truth of the details of your unending life, but faith insists that continuing life is real, good, and beautiful, worth any price you might be



Seeker on the mountain top illustration

asked to pay during your brief stint on Urantia. Grandeur truths await you, without number or end.

God is absolute truth. As truth one may know God, but to understand—to explain—God, one must explore the fact of the universe of universe. [1125:1]

The greatest and most real of all truths is God. To grasp the total reality, meaning, and value of truth up to your capacity, you must view things as God does—become God-like. God is Truth, but truth is only one aspect of God. To know Father's truth in perfection you will know and become living truth, as only you can. But you will want to know everything else about Father before you actually meet him on Paradise, in person.

You may wish to thank God for providing you with innumerable teachers and countless years to achieve the creature level of perfection that is required of you. After that, you will want to serve endlessly, bringing divine truth to your less advanced siblings—those still seeking knowledge of their origin and destiny in Father's good, true, and beautiful universe.

If God is the source, center, and destiny, of all truth, personality, value, meaning, and purpose, then truth, for you personally, is how you relate to Father on the spiritual/personal level. All genuine truth-reality is connected to Father somehow, someway. This is a universally acknowledged fact about truth's relationship to God. If God is Truth and you are a child of God, what is truth to you?

Whatever you understand truth to be, it is not a boring universe. The time/space cosmos was created as your school and your cruising ground, where you learn, grow, and advance in spirit, service, wisdom, knowledge, and the God-like dissemination of truth. The universe was made so you can eventually find and live truth, but it takes effort. No hurry, no worry, every worthy goal will be reached if you, each day, relentlessly and willingly seek out the advice and counsel of your "truth response" mechanism, also known as the Spirit of Truth.



With God all things are possible illustration

This Spirit of Truth is Father’s Absolute Truth adapted to the spiritual needs and requirements of this corner of the cosmos. The Spirit of Truth replaced Jesus; it is his enduring gift that pervaded all Nebadon when the Urantia incarnation was finished. You have a direct line to divine truth and a light on goodness making you a potential creator of new and lasting beauty—a surviving child of time and space.

Having noted your role in this creative, energetic, and spirit managed universe, and having realized the truth that you have a living relationship with the indwelling and divine Paradise Father, you might well ask: “What understanding of truth, goodness, and beauty is required of me during the remainder of this dash in the flesh in order to produce a soul that will endure the voyage to the God of truth? What is the truth of being and acting for me personally? How can truth be lived?”

Truth cannot be defined with words, only by living.

[1459:2]

If you live truth, you truly live. If you attempt to imprison truth, stagnation quickly follows. Father’s Truth moves, flexes, and lives whereas dogma is static, unbending and dead. Bits and pieces of truth you may string together from experience to form a partial model of truth, but only God is absolute Truth. God is genuine Truth. But forget not, he is more.

When the authors of the Papers declare that “God is truth,” they also want you to realize there is much, much more to God than truth. God is good, but goodness is not God. God is beauty, but beauty is not God. Can you see from these facts the truth of God’s multi-dimensionality of character and being? Father can combine truth, goodness, and beauty into a seamless personal loving association with the whole universe family simultaneously. What must it be like to be all truth all the time in absolute perfection as God



Reach for the higher and all else will be discovered therein illustration

is? Father, how did you conceive and personify Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and the Universe!?

The truth is God wants you to live. Father wants not one person to die, but rather to become love in motion guided by truth’s living light—a light that ever circulates through the divine heart and goes out to every cell in the universe of universes, even to the children of Urantia.

If you live truth, you truly live.

Truth is living; the Spirit of Truth is ever leading the children of light into new realms of spiritual reality and divine service. [p1917] ■

The language of God— a scientist presents evidence for belief

SEPPO KANERVA
Finland

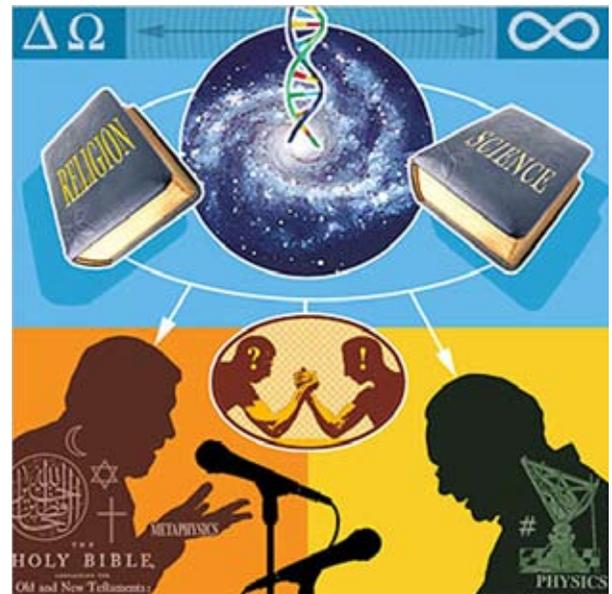
IN PRINCIPLE, EVERY HUMAN BEING KNOWS that God exists; knows God to be. To know that God exists is unlike any other knowledge, for this knowledge is not derived from, or predicated on, empirical observations, data, or deductions. Knowledge of the existence of God is called faith. This faith is not spontaneous.

This faith is the gift of God; faith is God-given. [1610:2 and 1537:4]

This received knowledge prompts man to act, and when he, in his mind (which consists of reason and feelings) begins to think about it, to analyse it, and to make conclusions, this effort ends up in a religion—a belief system. Religion is evolutionary. All of this is in accord with God's will, because evolution is God-

ordained. For hundreds of thousands of years man has been working on his religion, but like biologic evolution, the evolution of religion is slow and inert, so much so that for many millennia it appears as if no progress was made. Throughout time—in the midst of all change and tumult—religion had been viewed as a stabilizing factor in communities and societies; it has for ages been deprived of every chance of undergoing change,

transformation, and progress. Everything religious had to remain the way it was inherited from the ancestors; everything had to be performed and done the way it had always been performed and done; nothing could be changed, everything had to remain stable and stagnant. Superhuman revelations, though, give new impetus to religious evolution from time to time. What unites and constitutes a common feature of evolutionary religions and theologies, based on human reason, is their untruthful God concept. The theological God of the monotheistic religions is contradictory and disunited, a profoundly small, thoroughly petty God,



The great 'religion v science' debate illustration

and an oftentimes cruel, punishing lawgiver, who metes out eternal damnation to every violator of his laws and rules. Not one of the existing institutionalized religions understands the greatness of God (even if they may call him the Almighty)—his everythingness, his multifacetedness, and his multipersonality. The God of religions is just god, even though in reality God is also Deity and Divinity, with innumerable divine personalities and personhoods. Timeless and spaceless God is integrally existential, evolutionary, experiential, absolute, co-absolute, sub-absolute, infinite, finite, original, and immeasurably more. Despite the many revelations, religions have not progressed sufficiently for them to meet the expectations of human thinkers and intellectuals.

With all that in mind, it is easy to understand why thinkers and intellectuals reject evolutionary religions and deny even the very existence and reality of God. Organized religions fail to provide them with intelligent and honest answers, so intellectuals go elsewhere and seek refuge in other explanations. A “scientifically proven” explanation of existence is their most frequent refuge. There is every reason to call this attitude and orientation a religious belief in science. On these grounds, and with good reason, the intellectuals criticize the extant religions and conclude that those religions are erroneous and must be rejected. When they take, as they invariably do, the scientific methods of research and reasoning into the domain of religion, intellectuals and scientists enter a place where those methods are invalid and improper.

Reason is the understanding technique of the sciences; faith is the insight technique of religion. [1136:2]

Yet, there ought not be any conflict between religion (especially personal religion) and science. Science can help religion purify itself of senseless and indisputably untruthful notions and dogma.

...religion had been viewed as a stabilizing factor in communities and societies; it has for ages been deprived of every chance of undergoing change, transformation and progress.

Religion is not the product of reason, but viewed from within, it is altogether reasonable [1104:4]

Furthermore,

Science is sustained by reason, religion by faith. Faith, though not predicated on reason, is reasonable; though independent of logic, it is nonetheless encouraged by sound logic. Faith cannot be nourished even by an ideal philosophy; indeed, it is, with science, the very source of such a philosophy. Faith, human religious insight, can be surely instructed only by revelation, can be surely elevated only by personal mortal experience with the spiritual Adjuster presence of the God who is spirit. [1137:6]

Dr. Francis Collins is one of the most prominent scientists in the world. Collins is a chemist, a physicist, and a physician. He has doctorates in both chemistry and medicine. He was the head of the team of two thousand scientists, working in eight countries who, concluding their ten years of enquiry and research, made public the structure of the human genome in a function at the White House, on June 26, 2000. The human genome consists of all the DNA of the human species and could be described as a three-billion-letter text. The letters exist in four face types, and they appear in a certain order, which has now been unravelled and established. Every cell of every human comes with this information. Should these letters be printed on paper in an eleven point font and bound into a book, the book would be 170 meters high. Dr. Collins cannot believe that this code came into being by chance. Untypically of a scientist, Collins believes that this code, which is the map determining the structure of every human being, is a work of God. Collins made sure that, at the White House function, President Clinton would characterize the genome as a God-drawn map that determines the physical structure of man. The genome is one way of God's speaking; it is the language of God.

Dr. Collins gives an account about the genomes of man and other organisms and about the efforts to get their structure determined, as well as about his overall work as a biologist and physician, in a book that he published recently under the title of *The Language of God—A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (Free Press, New York, 2006). In the Introduction of his book, Collins assumes that many will be taken aback by the notion that he, a scientist who is rigorously conditioned by the practices and methods of science, is nonetheless a firm believer in a transcendent God who is beyond material existence. The purpose of the book is to show that belief in God can be a fully rational and sensible choice—that the principles of faith are actually complementary to the principles of science. Collins proves that scientists who advocate atheistic science—scientists like Richard Dawkin, whom he mentions by name—have gone astray and are biased.

Collins rejects pure Darwinism, as well as the so-called creationism (a doctrine asserting that God created everything, the way it is told in The Bible). He also discards the theory of Intelligent Design (a theory

which asserts that life appeared as the result of intelligent planning). In the place of these theories he puts forth arguments and tenets in favor of a notion that he terms "theistic evolution." In his words, theistic evolution is a position and concept currently dominant among serious biologists who have not forsaken their faith. There are a number of somewhat differing views among the proponents of the concept of theistic evolution, but at its most typical, the concept comes with these arguments [Collins, p. 200]:

1. The universe came into being out of nothingness approximately 14 billion year ago. (The revelation shows that this notion is much amiss; Michael of Nebadon set out to organize our local universe 400 billion years ago.)
2. Despite massive improbabilities, the properties of the universe were precisely tuned for life. (This argument is correct.)
3. While the precise mechanism of the origin of life on earth remains unknown, once life arose, the process of evolution and natural selection permitted the development of biological diversity and complexity over very long periods of time. (This notion is correct, but it is necessary to make one clarification: all features of future evolution were already coded in the "germ plasm" which was planted in three locations on our planet.)
4. Once evolution got underway, no special supernatural intervention was required. (With some reservations, this notion is correct.)
5. Humans are part of this process, sharing a common ancestor with the great apes. (This view is correct.)
6. But humans are also unique in ways that defy evolutionary explanations and point to our spiritual nature. This includes the existence of the Moral Law—the knowledge of right and wrong—and the search for God that characterizes all human cultures throughout history. (This argument is correct.)

...principles of faith are actually complementary to the principles of science.

Collins writes:

"God, who is not limited in space or time, created the universe and established natural laws that govern it. Seeking to populate this otherwise sterile universe with living creatures, God chose the elegant mechanism of evolution to create microbes, plants, and animals of all sorts. Most remarkably, God intentionally chose the same mechanism to give rise to special creatures who would have intelligence, a knowledge of right and wrong, free will, and a desire to seek fellowship with Him." [Collins, 200]

Collins opines that of course no proof of the reality of God can be presented; even so, there are innumerable factors and facts that constitute circumstantial and indirect evidence speaking in favor of such a reality. Evolution is one of those circumstantial evidences; it is one of God's ways of speaking. ■



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