

THE *Light and Life* JOURNAL

An Exploration of the Spiritual Universe

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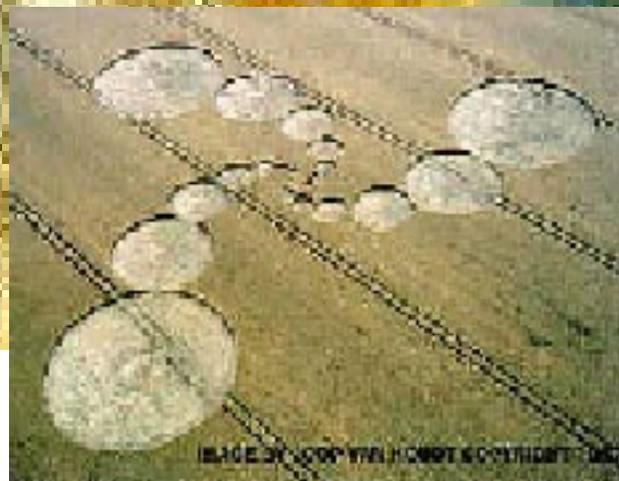


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ISSUE #2 --WINTER 1997-98

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Jesus lived on earth and taught a gospel which redeemed man from the superstition that he was a child of the devil and elevated him to the dignity of a faith son of God.

.... And now that he has personally left the world, he sends in his place his Spirit of Truth, who is designed to live in man and, for each new generation, to restate the Jesus message so that every new group of mortals to appear upon the face of the earth shall have a new and up-to-date version of the gospel, just such personal enlightenment and group guidance as will prove to be an effective solvent for man's ever-new and varied spiritual difficulties. -- The Urantia Papers.

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We are an independent publication dedicated to the educational and entertaining exploration of planetary faiths, religions, and spiritual movements, especially in their relationships to each other, and to the current evolutionary changes on the Earth and in its societies. Opinions of writers are not necessarily those of the publisher. In fact, we encourage respectful but candid debate of cutting edge spiritual issues and welcome your submissions and letters of reply. The Journal officially believes in the Urantia Papers as a foundation of spiritual truth, but not the only source. Truth can be most readily found through a close personal relationship with God but can also be found in other inspired works and even in the next person you meet.

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Overcoming Pauline Christianity

Following the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, two men stood poised in history to form a new church of his teachings. Why was Paul such a success and Abner a failure?

Editor's Introduction: *Here are fascinating and instructive dialogues on Abner and Paul from email discussion, from both Urantia Book and Holy Bible sources. The discussion was opened by Paul Premsager from New York State.*

Abner and Paul are both mentioned in the Urantia Book, each more than sixty times. They were both loyal disciples of Jesus and served him faithfully to their lives' end. Each loved the Master and was a leader in the early church.

However there are some important differences. Abner knew Jesus during his earth ministry and shared the preaching of the kingdom of God along with other apostles. He thus possessed firsthand knowledge of the Master's earth life and ministry. Paul on the other hand had no first hand knowledge of Jesus of Nazareth. His knowledge of Jesus was through a vision of the resurrected Christ. He only had a second hand knowledge of the earth life of Jesus.

Abner, as the head of the church at Philadelphia, preached the pure and unadulterated version of the gospel of Jesus, namely the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. This notwithstanding, his efforts to extend the kingdom of God did not bear fruit like those of Paul. The UB notes that Abner had an attitude that did not endear himself to the fellow believers and that he fell out with James, Peter, and Paul. In adhering to the pure version of the gospel he was rigid and intransigent and failed to win friends. He made a poor choice of teachers to send to the school of Cymboyton, such teachers that desired to dominate other religionists and leading to the closure of the school. Thus was lost an opportunity to bring the gospel to the whole of the orient.

Abner, his devotion to the Master and his leadership of the seventy of the preachers of the gospel that Jesus chose notwithstanding, is not even a footnote in the history of the Christian church.

Paul, whom Abner denounced as the 'clever corruptor of the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, the son of the living God'(UB1832) not having firsthand knowledge of Jesus' earth life, was a great success in founding many churches. He gave a new twist to the gospel and made it acceptable to millions of people. He blended the gospel of Jesus with Greek philosophy, Mithraic cults, and Hebrew theology and offered a gospel about Jesus.

He had the courage to defy Mosaic law and dispensed with the rite of circumcision. He understood the then-prevalent notion of the necessity of a blood sacrifice to appease God and presented the death of Jesus as just such a sacrifice. In this he heavily drew from Hebrew theology and Philo's teaching.

He invented original sin and offered a remedy in his version of Christianity that seems to be working very well in ridding many believers of their guilt and admitting them to the fellowship of believers under the benevolent hegemony of the clergy. In all this he acted as a 'keen theologic trader'(UB 2071). In Paul's own words: 'I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' (Bible I Cor 9:22)

Paul's teaching that he first preached and later documented in his letters, which form half the books in the New Testament, have been the mainstay of Christianity for the past twenty centuries. The Christian theologians have accepted them as dogma and they continue

to inspire millions even today. Even Augustine and Aquinas with their giant intellects dared not to contradict him and have swallowed his doctrine of original sin hook, line and sinker. Although thinking men have questioned his doctrines down the centuries, today they are still striking a responsive chord in the hearts of believing christians.

The UB lists Paul as one of the seven outstanding human teachers in ethical and religious teaching alongside Sethard, Moses, Zoraster, Lao Tse, Buddha, and Philo (UB 1339). In the last two millennia he has no equal! There are numerous quotations from the writings of Paul in the UB, probably more than that of any other single author of biblical books or otherwise.

Questions: Why was Paul such a phenomenal success and Abner such a dismal failure? What do their lives and their methods of presenting the gospel teach us? Peace, Paul

A response from Richard Omura

Seeds and where they are planted

Paul and Abner were two different seeds. I assume they fell on two different soils because they did not travel or work together. When we plant two different seeds in different soils, how can we say if the difference in harvest is due to the seeds and not the soil?

If the seed that was Paul was planted elsewhere in different conditions, would we have the same results? If the seed that was Abner was planted in soil that was more ready for his teachings, indeed, the harvest would be different. In other words, can we truthfully say that Paul was a better teacher, propagator, organizer, etc., than Abner just by the results?

As the Master's parable says, (and I paraphrase), there are many seeds, some fall on rocky soil, some in fertile.

Was Paul the seed, a better seed than Abner the seed? Or was it just a matter of where the seed had fallen?

Love to all,
Richard Omura

From Steve Tiller

The Magic of the Pauline Message

Paul had an experience that led him to living, life-changing, faith. He spread the word with the passion of his experience. The world was ready to hear the message of a glorified risen Christ that the disciples found so amazing.

I mean let's be realistic. How many of us - if we had lived day by day with the master and he spoke of spiritual growth and the father in heaven and he taught us these truths of the message: Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

And along with this message occasionally there were these stunning displays of power. He feeds 5,000 people; some guy with leprosy is totally healed. Which lessons would we remember? The feeding of the 5,000 or the lesson on contentment with slow spiritual growth in God's kingdom? Let's not kid ourselves!

Then the police kill him. We watch him die. And the guy comes BACK TO LIFE!

What message do you think we would have all been preaching in the year 45 A.D.? It would not have been the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. That message would have been overshadowed by the risen Christ. And that is why the spread of Christianity was so rapid. It swallowed up other cults by incorporation of the beliefs as it engulfed their believers in the amazing fact that this God - whom you could touch just a few years before STILL LIVED.

And guess what? For all the complaining you hear about Christianity on the net

- this part of the Christian message is not untrue. Don't forget this part. It really did happen too. It wasn't made up, its focus was just different. It became the religion about Jesus rather than the religion of Jesus.

But would we, as individuals, have been with Abner? Or with Peter and Paul? Who had the more exciting message?

Why did the masses come to see Jesus? For the spiritual messages or to see the healings?

This same process continues today.

The new exciting message of Christianity conquered the world in 50 years. It brought millions of souls to the kingdom of God. They might have been confused about where that kingdom was and where God was. But it brought them to a position where they had the opportunity to hear the Spirit of Truth.

The Urantia Book has been here for 50 years. How many readers? Who are the Peters, Pauls, and Abners among us?

Have we done as much to advance the kingdom as Paul?

Are we the Abners of tomorrow?

smileystevewholovesyouall,

Replying to Paul's statement that even Augustine and Aquinas accepted Paul's views

Insights on Augustine

Since you mention Augustine: He and Paul pre-eminently put their stamp on Christianity. They truly stand at the beginning and the end of the formative period of Christianity. They have some things in common too: they both were keen intellects, conversant with ancient thought-systems, and more importantly, converts who had been a little less diligent in meeting the demands of their previous persuasions.

Afterwards they must have felt a strong urge to make up for lost time. They also must have attributed their conversion to Providence itself, as an undeserved grace. This explains both their uncommon zeal and their approach. The British bishop Pelagius, for instance, who opposed the notion of original sin, and who advocated the belief that every human was given enough free will to work out his own salvation, was effectively dealt with by this man who must have felt himself a living argument against these assertions.

Paul's missionary activities might be partly explained by similar psychological motives. As for Abner, his antecedents probably lacked this explosive mixture. Though his message might be more to the original truth, his manners were also perhaps too parochial to appeal to the sophisticated of his time.

Couldn't resist to add my Zweipfennig ... Thieu Klijn

A response from Michael Gillespie used the Urantia Papers for more fascinating insight into the Paul-Abner issue:

The Vividness of Human Appeal

Twice, on page 961/841 and again on page 1005/879, two of the revelators, in the first instance "a Brilliant Evening Star of Nebadon" and in the second "a Melchizedek of Nebadon," write of the power of ideas. They note that it is not an idea's "reality or reasonableness," nor "its certainty or truth," but the "vividness of its human appeal" and the "universality of its ready and simple application" in which "the power of an idea lies."

That the revelators felt it necessary to make the point about the power of an idea not once but twice, and that they do so in their discussion of the development of the ghost cults and the nature of evolutionary religion may be worth considering. When we ponder the success of Paul's gospel about Jesus

and the relative failure of Abner's determined efforts to promulgate the Gospel of Jesus, ought we not consider the very real possibility that Paul's well-intentioned corruption of Jesus's teachings into a gospel about the risen and glorified Christ were simply more vivid and easier to accept and to apply than the superior teachings of Jesus that they replaced?

Given ghost fear as the antecedent of evolutionary religion, or, as the revelator put it, "the fountainhead of all world religion," and the later notion of "glorified ghosts who had progressed beyond the domain of ghostland and into the higher realms of spiritland" (page 961/841), is it so difficult to understand why men would find the idea of a risen and glorified Christ a vivid one indeed and easy to accept and apply, especially as compared with the alternative: the far more complex philosophy and demanding set of principles created by Jesus himself and propounded by Abner, who was, after all, placed at the head of "the seventy" (page 1800/1582) by Jesus.

There is something to be said, I think, for the idea that the world's greatest letter writer kept enough of the most appealing aspects of the Master's life and teachings to make his gospel message vivid and powerful while either failing to comprehend or for other reasons putting aside the more difficult yet nonetheless essential elements of the Master's philosophy of religion. One could certainly argue that the Master's teachings would have been diluted and corrupted sooner or later anyway, and that, but for Paul's efforts, the Master, as an historical religious figure, might not have gained the widespread recognition that he certainly did gain as the object of Paul's gospel.

But there is no denying the revelators' apparent feeling and regard for Abner and his valiant and determined efforts to be true to and to promulgate the Master's teachings. Perhaps they appreciated the man's loyalty to the Master and his ideas as much as his

ability to comprehend the import of superior wisdom and defend teachings that others found obscure.

Peace, Michael Gillespie

From Paula Thompson came a succinct and insightful reply ...

The Message as Baby Food

I believe that Paul was successful because he was willing to meet people where they were. He was not so fetishy about the gospel. He really wanted people to get the message somehow even if he had to water it down. It is like baby food; you have to make it easy to digest.

He was also tenacious; he didn't give up. Most of all he acted. He may not have always been right but at least he acted, which is essential to the success of any undertaking.

Abner did not have a lasting effect because he was rigid and unyielding about Jesus' teachings. He refused to compromise. Like the steward who buried his talent in the ground, he lost nothing, but neither did he gain anything.

He was true to the Master's teachings in letter, but not in spirit. He did not feed Jesus' sheep because he was unwilling to give the sheep the food they wanted to eat. He tried to give them bread and wine; they just wanted hay.

We can learn from these two not to be afraid to act on our inner desire to share the truth with our brothers and sisters. We may not always be correct but at least we are trying and by trying we are becoming experientially better at what we want to become perfect at. If we truly believe that "All things work together for good," and "The act is ours, the consequence is God's" then we really only fail when we do nothing.

Of course, God expects us to act according to our highest ideals. In my accounting to the Master of Truth, I would rather say, "Well sir, I tried but failed" than say "Well Sir, I really didn't try. I was afraid I might mess things up." I wouldn't want to make him tell me, "Oh ye of little faith."

Peace ... Paula

From Hawaii and Dennis Shields came an intriguing perspective ...

Paul wasn't stuck in Philadelphia

Aloha youbedobedoers

Robert Schuller has recently been quoting a theme of Saul of Tarsus

"Imitate me as I imitate Christ."

Perhaps it is a question of modeling

Paul had the love part right [or sorta right]

Abner had the theology part right

Paul was coming from the perspective of spiritual transformation and zeal

Abner was coming from a perspective of intellectual assured-ness based on living experience

Paul compromised with the needs of the day and damaged the gospel of the kingdom

Abner failed to socialize the truth and lost to the world the purer gospel [until 1955 that is] (He refers to publication of the Urantia Papers.)

The major difference between the two was the ability and the lack thereof to infect their comrades and contemporaries with the benign virus of love.

Paul was a better lover of men than was Abner [please don't read any gay connotation into this while you're busy

not thinking about pink elephants]<G> And with Paul's mobile trade of converting hemp cloth [more commonly known as canvas] into tents, he was a much better socializer, and through his travels available to many more men and women than was Abner, who was planted in Philadelphia. [Remember what W. C. Fields said post-'humorously' about his preferences regarding that town]

Paul knew how to organize his fellows

Abner did not

Aloha

Dennis [a bee can't spread no pollen lest it leave the hive, and I hope those who don't see the light are prepared for the heat.] Shields

In his unique style, soul poet jim mccallon responded

Just Do It! And Paul Did.

Hello Urantia ... someone asked ...

Why was Paul such a phenomenal success and Abner such a dismal failure?

because Paul did not require years of prompting, prodding, and training before he willingly went out to minister the revelation as he understood it ... the actions were his, the consequences were God's....

What do their lives and their methods of presenting the gospel teach us?

"The evolving soul is not made divine by what it does, but by what it strives to do."....

"Action achieves strength; moderation eventuates in charm."....

Although Paul (it is said) was wrong in thought, in intent it seems, he was very very right....

people heard him, and they acted on that hearing....

the actions are ours....

there is of course also, the proximity issue Paul never had to walk with Jesus never had to look into his eyes, listen to his words try and comprehend can 'you' imagine being Abner? or any of those people who had actually known Jesus? ... and then to try and go on after?

somewhere Paul heard the truth, and while he may not have heard it as clearly as Abner, or the apostles, the impact, the profound change that it had upon the man was enough to turn him totally around

imagine that a truth so startlingly real in your mind, that you drop everything that your whole thought process changes, your whole life rearranges

the UB says that before we can be considered as having adequately possessed ourselves of a truth, we must have willingly displayed our ability to pass that truth along to another

at the same time we know, that while we may be judged by our intent, our growth is still dependent upon "action" by passing it along

that was what Paul did he passed it along ... and as he did, he 'grew' he 'learned' he 'possessed' himself of the truth...

yeah ... he made his mistakes too but if the consequences are God's if the intent was what made him divine well ... what more can i say?

jim mccallon

A reply from Michelle Klimesh linked the spreading of Christianity with earlier efforts ...

Machiventa, Moses and the Masses

My incomplete answer is tainted by my

recent study of the spread of Machiventa's teachings. The people who spread the Salem gospel were faced with a dilemma: knowing the truth, but not being able to sway the masses with it. They had to adapt what they knew to what people were willing to accept at the time. Those teachers who tried to stuff the "whole enchilada" down people's throats were dismal failures in spreading the teachings.

Moses had the same problem. He had a wide grasp of reality, but his followers were so far removed from his level of understanding that he had to "dummy down" his teachings to make any progress with them.

Paul adapted his teachings to the people he preached to. Abner so loved the truth that he wouldn't alter it for anyone.

What do their lives and their methods of presenting the gospel teach us?

We need to learn to understand who we're speaking to.

Michelle Klimesh

An unfortunate aspect of the triumph of Pauline Christianity may be the regression of women's roles in society. Paul Premsager spoke again in the discussion by opening a new subject, with a thoughtful email post on:

Paul and Misogyny

A few days ago a post read: Women have trouble with Paul because he added misogyny to his teachings. Let's face it, that guy had a problem with the female sex, and it shows in the religion that sprang from him.

On this subject the UB has this to say: 'The apostle Paul was a devotee of this cult (contenance cult), and his personal views are reflected in the teachings that he fastened on the Christian theology' But this cult led Paul to look down upon women. And the pity of it all is that his personal opinions

have influenced the teachings of a great religion. (UB 977 para 2). UB also says, 'Paul little dreamed that his well-intended letters to his converts would some day be regarded by still later Christians as the "word of God." Such well meaning teachers must not be held accountable for the use made of their writings by the later-day successors.' (UB 1084 para 8).

Unfortunate as some of Paul's teachings are, his writings taken as a whole have had a positive effect in stemming the tide of degradation of women. Paul reiterates the Master's teaching, 'in the kingdom of God there is neither rich nor poor, free nor bond, male nor female. All are equally the sons and daughters of God.' (UB 1679 para 3)

This statement by the Master that apostles heard MANY TIMES is conveniently omitted from the gospels. Paul is the only writer that reiterates this in one of his letters. 'There is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Bible, Gal 3:28).

In his recommendations to the married, Paul taught self control and chastity and inveighed against fornication. He commanded husbands to love their wives and to the wives of such loving husbands he prescribed subservience. Those wives who practice Pauline Christianity (every woman is free to choose what religion or faith she wants to practice) and manage to swallow this bitter medicine seem to reap fidelity, love and respect from their husbands. They appear to stoop only to conquer. Every woman is free to reject this doctrine and that is her prerogative. For every woman that finds Paul's teaching offensive there are many more that find it a saving grace.

Consider the estate of women worldwide for a moment. In countries where Christianity is the dominant religion they are spared the indignities and degradation that obtain in other parts of the globe.

In the UB the following passage is most

telling and pathetic: 'Women's estate is little short of hopeless under the peculiar degradation which attaches to her in Mohammedanism, and she fares even worse under the teaching of several other Oriental religions'. (UB 937 para 4). Burning of the widows and genital mutilation of the females and other such horrors come to mind.

Peace, Paul

Robert Crickett joined the discussion with a thoughtful post which studies:

The Mind of Paul

The significant point for me in any differences between Paul and Abner is the actual spiritual experience they both espouse. I was drawn to a number of questions: was the spiritual experience they personally acquired the same or different? Was it the same but arrived at from different religious backgrounds? Was it different altogether?

By way of solution, I sought to invest body, mind and spirit into the Pauline experience, as best I could according to his terms, in order to find out if what he said would happen actually does happen. If someone tells me that if I mix the contents of this packet of crystals with hot water and let it set that I'll have jelly, and I do that and sure enough I have jelly, then what the person said is true and real. I wanted to know if what Paul says is true and real.

I understood him to be saying that if one genuinely pledges belief in the risen Jesus, and that he was a divine personality who died for one's sins which commenced in the sin of Adam during the era of Satanic sovereignty, and that by making faith decisions one's mind will be renewed with the mind of Christ, and that the Holy Spirit will empower one's personal life overall lack and sickness and want in life, and that one will be personally assured eternal life with a parental

God, Abba, in the company of perfected ones and heavenly beings ... I wanted to know that if one did all this, would one indeed experience true and real answers to spiritual questions.

Just as Buddhism emerges from the single item called reincarnation and how to get out of it, remembering that Buddha is a term for that spirituality which is the salvation from reincarnation reality, it seems to me that Paul's whole paradigm is based on a single premise, salvation from genetic sin reality.

His words told me: it is possible to personally experience one's own fundamental mortal and animalistic nature and to perceive that nature to be sinful ... and in the perceiving of this sinfulness, to realise one's bondage within materiality and mortality such that one will initiate a cry out for salvation from one's own condition and petition the source of the non-material and the eternal.

And yes Paul is quite right, it is possible to experience what he describes. All true religions do this, and well. The spiritual experiences provided within our Michael and Mother Spirit are indeed real and true, and Paul lived out his version of them, as do we all.

Where Paul differs from others who preach salvation from our mortal condition however, is that he goes on to deliver an explanation regarding where the sin came from in the first place and traces it back through Hebrew scripture to the account which predated his life (but not his people), which speaks of Adam's default, and anecdotally from the words of Jesus as they echo in the lives of his followers on earth. Buddha simply said that sin was beginningless, it has always been there, infinitely, but that in fact Buddhahood (God-Human-mindedness) rather than sin was one's essential nature. Paul went on to preach the antidote for the problem of being undergirded by sin, to be associated by faith with the risen Christ and the

sinless Jesus.

The breadth and depth and height of Paul's religious thought does impact upon people who want to fathom the kinds of issues about which he writes. How did Abner tackle the same issues of sin, mortality, materiality and salvation ... or did he bypass these in the pursuit of a different fundamental focal point? And what of students of the Urantia Book ... do we, in all realness and truth, fathom the same issues which Paul found inextricably relevant?

Lovingly yours ...
in the personalness of God and the
wonderfulness of Jesus,
Robert Crickett.

*Finally, let's return to Paul
Premsager, with a thought-provoking
study of a controversial concept:*

Atonement and Pauline Christianity

Recent posts on the subject of atonement and the significance of Jesus' death on the cross prompted me to visit this subject again both in the UB and the Bible.

All those who have posted are in agreement on the facts of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The disagreement appears to be in the interpretation of the significance of the death of Jesus on the cross. Some have argued that Jesus' death on the cross was not required by God the Father and quoted the UB to substantiate their position and others have argued that it was God's plan to save us through the atoning death of Jesus and offered many quotes from the Bible to make their point.

Paper 89 in the UB entitled Sin, Sacrifice, and Atonement describes the origin of consciousness of sin and guilt and man's efforts at expiation. It credits Moses for forbidding human sacrifice and Paul for making an end

of human and animal sacrifice. 'And while he may have unnecessarily encumbered Christianity with the teaching about blood sacrifice, he did once and for all make an end of the doctrine of redemption through human and animal sacrifice' (p948)

Paul was a special recruit of Jesus. He appeared to him on the road to Damascus and commissioned him to preach the gospel. This is attested to both in the Bible and the UB. Paul claimed that this gospel was revealed to him through Jesus Christ and not by man. (Gal 1:12).

Why did Jesus have to recruit Paul even while his twelve apostles were alive and preaching the gospel? I believe it is because Paul possessed those qualities that the twelve apostles lacked. He had an excellent education (student of the famous Rabbi Gamaliel) and knew Greek philosophy and as far as the Jewish law was concerned he was a strict pharisee and in observance of it second to none.

He grew up in Tarsus a cosmopolitan city, and had a very different outlook on life from the Galileans. As Saul he was a Jewish bigot, but after he met Jesus his love transcended all religious and racial barriers. He reached out to the gentiles, something the twelve apostles who were looking for a political Jewish state were unwilling to do.

Even Peter the foremost of the twelve apostles required a special vision from heaven to overcome his prejudice to bring the gospel to Cornelius, a gentile at Caesarea (Acts 10). Paul also possessed extraordinary courage a quality that was lacking in Peter. On the night of Jesus' betrayal a servant girl bullied him into denying the Master.

Paul, on the other hand, possessed unflinching courage. Remember how he publicly denounced Peter when his Jewish prejudice intruded into dinner arrangements. He had the courage to challenge the Jewish law and persuade the church at Jerusalem to dispense with the rite circumcision for the

gentile converts. In this he was not very consistent and expediency played a role in his circumcising Timothy.

In his loyalty to Jesus he was unwavering to the point of death. We who live in the 20th century can believe that faith alone is required to please God, and forgiveness of God simply need to be received because God has already forgiven us.

When Melchizedek preached this doctrine of finding favor with God by faith alone it was not received well. The Salem missionaries who went to India, where the Vedas prescribed an elaborate system of sacrifices, could not persuade the Hindus that faith alone was sufficient.

Moses, whose ancestry was a party to the Melchizedek teaching, prescribed all manner of animal sacrifices. I believe he did this for the people of his age who were not advanced enough to know that God did not require sacrifices.

The UB describes Paul as an expert theological trader. His brand of Christianity is a synthesis of Hebrew theology, Greek Philosophy, and Mithraism, and he added his own experience with Christ, whom he knew as the savior. He claimed that he became all things to all men that he might by all means save some (Cor 9:20).

In this, the gospel of Jesus suffered some distortion but Christianity gained more than it lost. It is the genius of Paul that made the gospel appealing to the Greeks and the Romans and down the ages some of the best and brilliant minds of Urantia have subscribed to his theology. He had the powers of persuasion and ability to understand the feelings of sin and guilt. His theological concoction has been a balm to millions of souls that were burdened with sin and guilt. This is the proof of the pudding.

Paul is mentioned in the UB more than sixty times. The quotes ascribed to him and the allusions to his writings

are too numerous to count. There is no other author who is quoted more often in the UB. The UB counts him as one of the seven great teachers of Urantia who contributed to the spiritual uplift of humankind. In the last two thousand years none of his stature has appeared on the Urantia scene. He is only second to Jesus in altering the course of history as the historians attest.

In ages to come every thinking man and woman will formulate his and her own theology commensurate with his or her spiritual maturity. As free sons and

I Believe

by GINNY JAKUBIAK

Spiritual testimony given at a public gathering in Spokane, Washington. Thanks for these simple yet powerful words.

I believe in one God, the Father of us all.

I believe that He has created me and given me eternal life.

I believe that I am an evolving creature, one that will attain divinity through progressive steps.

I believe that I have been given help along the way in the person of Jesus who took the form of a human and who was truly human and divine and who brought the message of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

I believe that there is tremendous order in the universe and that everything is under the watchcare of celestial beings and that we are not hurtling chaotically through space, but that our planet and our universe have a divine destiny.

I believe that I can communicate with these celestial beings and that they are loving beings, who are anxious to bring us information, guidance, and protection.

I believe that evil has no power over me and that I'm free from all demonic influences.

daughters of God they will be forever free from the shackles of creeds, dogma, and orthodoxy. The UB is a helpful tool to accomplish this.

Those who wish to propagate the gospel of Jesus would do well to avoid the intransigence of Abner and learn from Paul how to compromise and persuade and succeed. Urantia needs such men and women in this day of confusion and spiritual searching.

Peace, Paul Premsagar

I believe that I have within me the divine light of an Indwelling Spirit and that you, too, possess this light.

I believe that we are all equal, that God loves us equally and that each one of us has a divine destiny that is available to us if we just ask.

I would like to conclude with a quote that I think summarizes what I've just said:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate; our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that frightens us.

We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

"And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same and as we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

Holistic Approaches to Health

by Dr. DAVID SCHLUNDT
Vanderbilt University

We hear more and more each day about holistic health, wellness, alternative therapies, mind-body integration and so forth. What do these words mean and is there anything of value here for the person who is interested in leading a healthy and happy life?

Holistic health or wellness is a recognition that being healthy is more than just being free of symptoms. Good health is not simply the absence of disease. Good health or wellness is a matter of strength and balance. Wellness comes about only through positive, goal-directed efforts to enhance strength and move you life into greater balance. There are many avenues one can pursue to increase strength and balance thereby enhancing wellness.

Strength

By improving one's strength, you increase your resistance to disease, you may slow the aging process, you improve your ability to cope with stress and crisis, and you expand the range of activities that are available to you. Physically, strength comes from eating well, getting regular exercise, avoiding substance abuse, and getting a sufficient amount of rest.

Emotionally, we can strengthen ourselves to withstand the stresses and strains of living by developing positive interpersonal relationships, by having realistic goals and expectations, and by making relaxing and stress reducing activities part of our regular routine.

The mind is strengthened by the learning of new knowledge and skills. The more we know, the better prepared we are to cope with stressful and challenging situations. The more we know about staying healthy, the better pre-

pared we are to make sensible choices in what we eat and do. We are all constantly strengthening our minds by learning new skills that help us in our interpersonal, and vocational lives.

Recently, scientists have learned that there is an association between health and one's spiritual life. People who are spiritually active, on the average, have better health, lower risk for many diseases, and live longer. Exploring your beliefs, working to strengthen your faith, and seeking to better understand your relationship to the object of your faith is spiritually strengthening.

Balance

The person who tries to do everything perfectly ends up in a bind. There is never enough time to pursue everything with the same level of commitment. This person will not be able to find a healthy balance. One of the main tasks we all face in life is setting our priorities.

If we pursue one activity to the exclusion of all others, we get out of balance and this can be detrimental to our health and well being also. Someone who focuses on career skills, or making money to the exclusion of other activities ends up neglecting proper nutrition, becomes sedentary, ends up ill-prepared to cope emotionally with stress, ignores a great deal of information that is important for well-being, and avoids thinking about their spiritual life. Other times, people feel so overwhelmed by it all that they give up and do nothing to improve their health.

Perfectionism, single-mindedness, or hopelessness are not the way to pursue

holistic health. The way to health is to find balance in your life, to spend time strengthening body, mind, and spirit.

Balance means making choices that contribute to your overall health and well being. Balance means moderation and compromise. It is more a matter of making reasonable choices than trying to do everything perfectly. Eating well, being physically active, getting plenty of rest, controlling the stress in your life, learning new information and skills, and attending to your spiritual needs are all part of a balanced or holistic approach to wellness.

Choices

There are many new choices available that can contribute to holistic health and wellness. Some of these activities contribute more to bodily health while others are like vitamins for the mind and spirit.

The following is a list of options. Nobody utilizes all of these options. They are presented as a range of possibilities from which one can choose a few avenues towards strength and balance.

1. Nutrition. The base of healthy eating is to limit your intake of fat and saturated fats and to eat a variety of foods including fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. There are many vitamin and mineral supplements available along with options like vegetarianism or macrobiotic diets. There are many who believe you can feel better and strengthen your immune system by dietary manipulations.

2. Exercise. Any physically active pastime is better than no activity. Choose activities, sports, hobbies, and exercises that get you up out of your chair and moving. There are many choices from walking to swimming to bicycling to aerobics classes that are available as forms of exercise. Don't overlook the fact that walking just to get places, hiking, gardening, hunting,

golfing, and many other pastimes are also ways to stay physically active and healthy.

3. Yoga. Yoga is an ancient practice of stretching and breathing that is becoming very popular these days. In yoga, you learn to stretch the body by coming into different positions or poses. Yoga focuses the mind, stretches the muscles, and is a great stress-relieving activity.

4. Tai-chi. Tai-Chi is derived from Chinese culture and involves slow rhythmic movements, focused concentration, and breathing. Practitioners describe it as a way to get in touch with the life-force energy, called Chi, which moves through our bodies. Tai-Chi improves flexibility, coordination, and reduces stress.

5. Herbal medicine. The medical traditions of China, India, and Native Americans have long histories of using various herb and herbal combinations to treat and prevent disease. A variety of herbal blends, herbal teas, and herbal extracts are available through health food stores. Many of these are intended for the treatment of specific ailments, although some are used to promote good health and well-being.

6. Humor. There is a growing body of evidence that humor and laughter can reduce stress and strengthen the bodies immune system. Having fun is something you can do just about any time and any place. The possibilities for adding humor to your life are endless.

7. Healing touch. There are a variety of techniques that involve the use of touch, pressure, and massage as a way to heal and strengthen the body while simultaneously relaxing the mind and soothing the emotions. Some techniques, like neuromuscular massage, are modern while others, like laying on of hands, are part of Christian religious traditions, and others, like acupuncture, are based on Eastern traditions.

8. Relaxation. A variety of techniques can be learned to relax the body and

the mind. Progressive muscle relaxation involves alternately tensing and relaxing muscle groups in order to train the body to be able to relax deeply. Other relaxation techniques involve the use of visual imagery. Many audio tapes are available and can be used to learn how to relax.

9. Biofeedback. Biofeedback involves taking a bodily process that is related to stress or tension and, by using electrophysiological equipment, turning it into a visual or audio signal. Muscle tension, skin resistance, skin temperature, blood flow, and heart rate can all be captured by equipment and made audible or visible. Making the physiological process something you can be aware of allows you to gradually learn how to control it. For example, you can learn to relax the muscles in your forehead by trying to lower the sound of a tone and this will help with the treatment and prevention of tension headaches.

10. Meditation. There are many forms of meditation, but they are all similar in that they involve a quieting of the mind and the body and a focusing of awareness. Some techniques use counting breathes, other involving repeating a word or phrase over and over again, while the simplest approach is to just sit still and attempt to quiet your mind and body. Most people who meditate report that it leaves them feeling physically relaxed, mentally alert, and emotionally calm.

11. The power of prayer. Prayer can be done almost any time or any place. It is a matter of talking privately with God, expressing your problems and concerns, and asking for help and guidance. People differ in their ideas about God and about what one should pray for. However, prayer is an integral part of most religious faiths and can become an important part of a person's commitment to holistic health.

-- David G. Schlundt, Ph.D.
schlundg@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu
Department of Psychology

Life: A Prayer

by Steve Tiller

Father within: Thank you for allowing me to live surrounded and surrounding the grace of You. So much joy is available whenever I choose to pick it up and make it mine. You are always there. A continual ministry available to me in infinite ways and variety. A simple act such as closing my eyes and being still for a minute places me in awe of the presence and bounty of you in my life and my life in the world through you.

I breathe in You.

VERONICA: Lesson #61 on Courage

Transmitted Feb. 18, 1995, Volcano, Hawaii .

Skillful archers of awakened accuracy,

Realize that although you are at the very inception of your wondrous migration of eternity, there are vital virtues of mortality necessary to your progress.

Courage is a unique and temporary attribute of expansion in your mortal existence that is pre-supernal, pre-fusionary, and pre-cognizant of self-actualization.

The valorous power of faith and trust in the First Source and Center will permeate your being with the courage to become the embodiment of Supreme will. Once you enter your cherished supernal transformation, you will forever outgrow your essential need for courage since courage can only manifest in a climate of fear.

As you comprehend the certainty of the Father's love, you will be saturated in the peaceful beauty of tranquility and safety that transcends the requisite for trepidation. But for now, understand its noble value in the commencement of your ascension career. Seek its expanding development as a necessary element of the continual flourishing of your maturing spirit evolvement.

Aspire to the courage to speak with wisdom and act in the guidance of inspired surrender. Let courage illuminate your darkened caverns of tremulous hesitation and endow you with the everlasting immunity of His divine refuge in the perfect shelter of His eternal warmth of loving security.

THE URANTIA PAPERS: Copyright & Spiritual Revelation

A legal battle in Colorado has encouraged Urantia Papers believers to organize a new religion and overcome stringent copyright restrictions on their celestial revelation.

INTRODUCTION: *Here's how the popular media set up a pivotal court battle that has focused wide attention on a purported spiritual revelation, the amazing and controversial Urantia Papers. We follow the reports here and thread them with commentary by Urantia Papers readers, partly spurred by the usual media inaccuracies.*

And now Spiritual Court TV fans, let's pick up the action ...

BOULDER DAILY CAMERA -- RELIGIOUS DISPUTE

Urantia readers fight copyright suit
By CLAY EVANS - Camera Staff Writer

The "Urantia Papers" are 2,097 pages of cosmic history, spiritual insights and an expanded history of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Among the titles of the 196 papers: "The Nature of God," "Growth of the Trinity Concept" and "The Crucifixion."

Most commonly published as "The Urantia Book" by the Chicago-based Urantia Foundation (pronounced Yu-ranch-uh), the massive treatise purportedly was "authored" by supermortal, angel-like beings in 1934-35, transcribed by an unknown process and finally published in 1955. Since the first publication, some 300,000 copies of the papers have been printed and distributed across the globe.

Boulder has become a Urantia Mecca of sorts: It's home to many readers as well as the Jesusonian Foundation, a non-profit organization to distribute secondary Urantia materials, funded by Celestial Seasonings tea magnate and Urantia reader Mo Siegel.

But is Urantia a religion?

Chicago's Urantia Foundation says no: It argues that the papers are not religious documents and that it has the sole right to publish them and use the symbol of three concentric circles that have come to represent Urantia thought.

But Boulder County resident Kristen Maaherra, who is being sued by the Foundation for creating an index to the Urantia Papers, and scores of other readers say unequivocally that Urantia is their religion.

On Monday, the Urantia Foundation's lawyers will ask a U.S. District Court judge in Denver to uphold earlier rulings that it holds valid copyrights and trademarks on Urantia publications and symbols.

"A small minority of readers want to use the text and circles for religious reasons. But the Urantia Book is not a religious organization for just a few people," said Tonia Baney, executive director of the Chicago foundation. "It is meant to uplift people of all faiths, cultures and civilizations."

AT THIS POINT, Urantia reader Phil Calabrese steps in via email to take exception to the quote:

PHIL: Already I detect some inconsistency here. On the one hand, Tonia is saying that the UB is for the uplifting of all faiths, cultures and civilizations, and then in the same sentence saying that for readers to take this seriously and base their religious beliefs and practices on the Urantia Papers is somehow questionable. Can this be for any other reason than to protect at all

cost the copyright claims of UF, to stretch to the breaking point the truth about what the UB is all about, lest in doing so UF might give some legal advantage to its legal opponents?

AGAIN, from the Boulder news story:

Counters Kristen Maaherra: "It absolutely is our religion. I do believe it is a revelation." She said the term "Urantia" can't be copyrighted: It's simply the term for "earth" used by Jesus, this planet's "local creator-father."

Maaherra's lawyers will argue that granting trademark and copyrights to the foundation would be tantamount to handing the Catholic Church exclusiverights to use the cross as its symbol. They want Maaherra to get the chance to make that argument before a jury of her peers.

"It's like trademarking the cross, or the star of David, saying nobody can use it," said the 53-year-old Left Hand Canyon resident whose husband, Eric Schaveland, has been ordered not to use the Urantia symbol on his World Wide Web site. "I do not have a clue why they are suing us. Any sane leaders would have thanked us, come to us and said, 'Hey, we've seen your index, would you let us distribute it?'"

"You'd think they want the word out there. Anybody who has even heard of the Urantia Papers has won the lottery," she said. "To get (the papers) out to a hungry world is the whole point." Maaherra and Schaveland only distributed their index to current readers of the Urantia Papers and gave them out for free, she said.

The conflict, which began six years ago, has split "Urantia readers," as they call themselves, and brought them to a crossroads: Is Urantia a religion, or merely a secular organization and commercial opportunity?

U.S. courts generally have been reluctant to grant copyrights on clearly religious texts, said Boulder consultant and Urantia reader Phil

Geiger. Currently, the foundation holds valid copyrights and trademark rights. However, because of a court decision, a rival group known as The Fellowship legally published its own edition of the papers during a 12-month window that closed in June 1996.

Maaherra and others who call Urantia their religion believe the material should be in the public domain, like the Bible. "It's clearly a religious book. There's no doubt in anybody's mind who reads it," said Paula Thompson, director of the Jesusonian Foundation in Boulder.

Some readers also have complained that the foundation's hardback "Urantia Book" is prohibitively expensive at \$65. The Fellowship's, paperback edition, currently illegal to sell, went for less than \$20.

"This book was not meant to be a big cash cow. That's the way believers truly feel," said Boulder Urantia reader Donald Green.

Foundation head Baney said the Urantia Papers themselves make clear that readers are not to form a religion from the work.

PHIL counters this via email:

PHIL: Now that's a huge distortion of what the UPs say about what to do and not to do with the UPs. While there are warnings given concerning "institutionalized" organizations (like UF itself) that can do great damage to the very causes for which they were once initiated, the UPs also point out the dangers of no organization, as in the story of Abner versus Paul, and also in describing the emerging (Urantia) "cult" of believers as needing some sort of evolved religion and religious practices. And there are other places where qualified organization is promoted.

BACK to the Boulder newspaper article:

"When you read the papers of Jesus, you understand we are constantly asked to live his teach-

ings.” she said. But we are warned in several places not to organize. That’s what (St.) Paul did, and we got the Catholic Church.”

PHIL reacts again to this quote:

PHIL: So is this the philosophy of UF? Neither organize, nor allow others to organize around the Urantia Revelation? Is this “fostering a religion?” As was even noticed by the writer of the article, this goal in the Declaration of Trust constitutes UF’s primary duty. Has UF strayed so far from its defining vision in defense of a questionable copyright (not mentioned in the DOT) that it now unwittingly sacrifices its primary object of “fostering a religion” on the altar of maintaining the copyright? Is this what the UF lawyers have brought things to?

PHIL rolls on for awhile to support his premise and summarizes with:

PHIL: The sooner UF gets out of bed with its lawyers the better and more healthy will be the Urantia Movement.

BUT there’s more in the Boulder newspaper. AHA! The reporter checks the UF website!

However, the Urantia Foundation’s charter seems to make clear that it has a religious mandate: Under Article 2.1, the foundation is directed to disseminate essential teachings and doctrines “through the fostering of a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology,” according to information published on the foundation’s Web site.

Baney also said the foundation had published an edition for \$19.95. (Thompson of The Jesusonian Foundation in Boulder confirmed that an inexpensive, vinyl-bound edition is available.)

Maaherra and her husband “are well intentioned, but they’re being used by other people,” Baney said, declining to elaborate.

With the fate of their religion in the hands of a judge, some Urantia devotees seem baffled that there is controversy over the document they feel has changed their lives.

“Believe me, I’ve tried to figure it out,” said Maaherra. “I guess they just want to control it.”

The article ends. PHIL summarizes his views via email:

At various times I have heard UF say, and it is my understanding of trademarks and service marks, that personal religious use is not an infringement. But UF doesn’t seem to be consistent about that either since Eric was sued for using the Circle Symbol on his website. The problem for UF is that the copyright is becoming inconsistent with its larger goal of fostering a religion. I hope UF sees this before it is too late and loses its way completely. -- A lover of the Urantia Papers, Phil C

ANOTHER PHIL from the Boulder area -- Phil Geiger -- emailed a correction to the Boulder Daily Camera article:

GEIGER: Re: the 10/16/97 article “Religious Dispute” by Clay Evans, I’d like to correct a statement he attributed to me. First, courts don’t grant copyrights (they either uphold or invalidate them). Second, religious works in general are certainly copyrightable. What I did say was that court’s are reluctant to INTERPRET matters of religious controversy, and consequently will generally defer to secular law; and that the nature of the Free Exercise clause of the 1st Amendment recognizes that religious conscience is distinct from secular conscience.

Recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions have, unfortunately, removed the balancing test from the equation that had been traditionally used to adjust, whenever possible, the interests of public policy to the dictates of religious conscience and duty. By equating religious conscience, which embodies both a respect for secular law AND the

higher dictates of spiritual law, with such purely monological beliefs as atheism, the Court has further secularized our country.

Said Founding Father and author of the Free Exercise Clause James Madison: "Before any man can be considered as a member of Civil Society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe. And if a member of Civil Society, who enters into any subordinate Association, must always do it with a reservation of his duty to the general authority; much more must every man who becomes a member of any particular Civil Society, do it with a saving of his allegiance to the Universal Sovereign".

- Phil Geiger - Boulder, CO

Media interest in the case grew. Reporter Sue Lindsey at the Rocky Mountain News in Denver stepped up to do a feature story on Eric and Kristen.

EARTHLINGS FEUD FOR CYBER-RIGHTS

Urantia Foundation wages war on couple who put "celestial" writings on Internet

The Jamestown couple just wanted to publish an Internet index to the Urantia Book, a mammoth tome that details the teachings of their alternative religion.

But Eric Schaveland and Kristen Maaherra soon found themselves in a legal fight with the Chicago-based Urantia Foundation.

The foundation last year slapped them with a lawsuit alleging copyright and trademark infringement.

It's an unusual case that focuses on the legality of publishing celestial teachings in cyberspace. It's being decided in the terrestrial domain of Colorado's U.S. District Court.

Schaveland and Maaherra argue that religious teachings given to earthlings by heavenly beings

— the main belief of Urantians — can't be copyrighted. But the Urantia Foundation contends it must protect its ownership of the book.

Battling this lawsuit and an earlier one in Arizona has brought the couple to the brink of poverty. Unable to pay their lawyer, the two will represent themselves when they go to Denver federal court Monday for a hearing in the case.

"We've been in a firefight for 6 1/2 years," Maaherra said. "We don't have time for much else."

Schaveland and Maaherra and their 15-year-old son live simply in their rustic mountain cabin in northern Boulder County with two goats, one dog and one cat.

There's an outhouse out back.

The cabin overflows with books and computer equipment. They sleep in a nearby greenhouse, where they can see the stars.

"We're totally bankrupt," Maaherra said. "It's cost us a lot. It's cost us everything. Everything we could get our hands on has gone to pay for legal costs."

Schaveland works as a mason, but more times than not his wages are used to pay for copies of depositions, he said.

"It takes a lot of creativity away," Schaveland said. "There's always a court date or a brief to respond to. It's hard to have a normal life. "It keeps us at poverty level and keeps us distracted from what we'd really like to be doing."

Maaherra, during an interview at the couple's cabin Thursday, heaved a copy of the formidable book onto the sofa. "Here are the Urantia Papers," she said. "It contains more than 2,000 pages of revealed truth. It's philosophy, cos-

mology — it's complicated stuff.”

Believers say the Urantia Papers were channeled by superhuman, extraterrestrial beings to a group in Chicago over a 20-year period until 1935. Earth is called Urantia by these beings.

The 196 “papers” in the Urantia Book, first published in 1955, describe the history of the planet and universe as seen from the perspective of beings from another world.

Believers view Jesus as just one son of God. They believe Jesus was sent to form and rule this universe. Humans are evolving beings destined to become angelic spirits as they ascend through different stages of enlightenment.

“It was our dream to create an index to the Urantia Papers that could be used as a study aid,” Maaherra said. “Any sane religious leaders would thank us, not sue us,” she said.

The couple's 4,636-page index is at least as unwieldy on paper as the book it is designed to organize. But as a computerized index, it made relatively easy work of locating particular subjects or quotes in the Urantia Book.

Schaveland's home page used three blue concentric circles, called the Banner of Michael, that Urantians view as their key religious symbol.

Schaveland and Maaherra also made the entire text of the Urantia Papers available on their Internet sites.

The Urantia Foundation, which owns registered Urantia copyrights and trademarks, contends that the couple violated its ownership of the material.

“Trademarking the Banner of Michael is like trademarking the cross or Star of David,” Maaherra said.

She and Schaveland contend that Urantian religious teachings are in the public domain, as

the Bible is, and cannot be copyrighted. The foundation disagrees, while disputing the contention that the Urantia Book constitutes a religion.

Maaherra “has declared that the Urantia Book is her personal religion,” the foundation said in a statement. “We believe that this is Ms. Maaherra's personal point of view. Urantia Foundation must, however, consider the global point of view and has to protect the text not only in the United States but also worldwide.”

The foundation said that the Urantia Book “is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end. It is designed to bring God closer to man and to bring man closer to God.”

The case is similar to a Colorado Internet-copyright case the Church of Scientology filed in 1995 against former members Lawrence Wollersheim and Robert Penny. Wollersheim and Penny posted secret church teachings on the Internet. That case is pending.

Urantia Foundation lawyer Steven Hill, however, compares the Urantia case to a recent Internet trademark infringement case involving the Colorado Rockies.

In that case, a Denver district court judge granted the team's request to bar references to the Colorado Rockies baseball team in a man's Rockies World Wide Web site. “The standard here is whether or not commercial use of the trademarks have been made,” Hill said. “If so, is that use of such a nature that a consuming public will be confused about the marks when viewed on the Internet? That's the fundamental question.”

Schaveland and Maaherra say religious teachings given to earthlings by heavenly beings can't be copyrighted. “This is a gift from God to the planet and it belongs to the planet, not the foundation,” Maaherra said. “You can't copyright things written by nonhumans.”

Maaherra, a devout Urantian for 27 years, was

sued first in Arizona in 1991 for distributing the index and Urantia Papers.

A federal district court judge last year declared the foundation's renewal of the copyright on the Urantia Book invalid. But that decision was overturned by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in June. The Colorado lawsuit was filed in August 1996.

Maaherra and Schaveland said the Urantia Foundation's reluctance to disseminate Urantian philosophy has fueled dissent, if not outright rebellion, among members of the group. "The foundation believes the world is not ready for the Urantia Papers and they're doing all they can to stop Urantians from sharing God's gift to the planet," Maaherra said.

But foundation director Tonia Baney said this is untrue. She said 300,000 copies of the Urantia Book have been sold and it is widely available in bookstores throughout the world. Since 1994, the foundation also has sold the book on computer with an index. (END OF ARTICLE)

So after years of conflicts within the Urantian community of readers, primarily over how to spread the celestial revelation, and after the acrimony from many lawsuits against believers, the movement was clearly at a crossroads in this Battle of Boulder, circa 1997. As the case progressed it seemed pivotal to the Papers' fate into the next century.

The situation prompted a thought-provoking essay by LARRY MULLINS in Colorado, a longtime Urantia movement leader, writer and artist. He sums up this critical celestial contentiousness from the base of a timely question:

Where are we now?

This is a most critical period. In my judgment we are in much the same position as the apostles were in the period between the crucifixion and Pentecost, when the Spirit of Truth was be-

stowed. Even the miracle of a risen Jesus did not impact the lives of the apostles so much as did the Spirit of Truth. In a similar way, for many of us, it is not the miracle of this revelation that will change lives, it is the Spirit of Truth and the living religion of Jesus - the New and Everlasting Religion - that will transform the world.

The Urantia movement has developed a kind of social and philosophical nucleus that has sincere reverence for the Urantia Papers at its core. Generally, we have shared a belief system about a book. Our small movement has long been inbred and, in some ways, unhealthy so. A tiny, self-appointed central group of five has dominated and controlled the revelation for over forty years. These humans believe they are entitled to unquestioned authority on matters of the Urantia Papers, and their dominance over "readers" has resulted in a cult which is complete with mysteries, secrets, sacred places, high priests, saints, and most of all: a doctrine of fear. Among other things, the "R" word has been forbidden.

Something important was missing. A void developed among Urantians, a vacuum wherein the New and Everlasting Religion of Jesus was to have naturally unfolded and flourished. Into this emptiness has rushed a series of very strange characters - some of whom have created untold havoc. But, although religions are not made, they do develop over time. And that is what is happening to Urantians.

Slowly, in rich and exquisite variety, something very healthy and remarkable is now emerging from the genius of the people.

Meredith Sprunger has stood virtually alone for four decades in his advocacy of his ideas about a New and Everlasting Religion of Jesus. He was scorned, ridiculed, and virtually driven from the ranks of the "official" leadership.

Now, from all over the movement, religious advocates are developing forms of group worship for the Urantian religion as they see it. A

A New and Everlasting Religion of Jesus (continued)

revolving team of three develops regular religious worship services in a small western city, where anyone is welcome to offer a talk, sing, or present ideas. Children's programs are springing up. In a West Coast city, quiet and tactful evangelists are going forth to help inner city children.

Some Urantians also attend private meetings wherein the inner religious life is discussed, and they can strive to do better at living the teachings of the Master. The Urantian Religion is here, and it is manifesting in many ways.

For decades we have seen the symbol of the new and everlasting religion of Jesus developing. We see the sacred emblem of Michael, the three concentric circles, in many forms of religious expression for: "Although every new revelation of truth has given rise to a new cult, even a restatement of the religion of Jesus must develop new and appropriate symbolism." [966]

The Urantia Book declares that our planet is "quivering on the very brink of one of its most amazing and enthralling epochs." Those words were materialized in 1936. We have been quivering away for sixty years now, and at last we can see authentic movement toward taking the plunge.

What more can we Urantians do? Though some thinking people eschew the formalization of various forms of the New and Everlasting Religion of Jesus, events have made this necessary to some extent. The selective religious repression of Urantia Foundation has included using secular laws, such as copyright and trademark. At least some of our new breed of religious leaders should register their various Urantia religious organizations with the government so that it will become clear to judges that significant numbers of Urantians are organizing as religionists, and we are not all simply "readers" of the Urantia Papers. Many, many of us are Urantian Believ-

ers, and for an important number of us our religion is the New and Everlasting Religion of Jesus.

Teachers and leaders were to be trained to teach the revelation. The fact is, great numbers of Urantians who are reading these words are qualified now to be the spirit-dominated teachers and leaders that the planet needs. We are stale as a movement because we are inbred. Too often we have chosen the easier, softer way. If we preach at all, we preach to the choir. We do not attract new believers because we have generally postured as boring and, at times, pedantic social-philosophical clubs. Our study groups are generally intellectual, male-dominated, controlled, and impersonal.

When we evolve more fully into the New and Everlasting Religion of Urantian Believers, when our fresh new leaders and teachers begin to more fearlessly spread their wings, then the electricity will truly begin to flow.

Are the teachings of the Urantia Papers so "far-out" that we will attract negative reactions? Without a doubt. Just as the apostles taught a "far out" religion about a risen Christ, and attracted violent reactions. For those who have no taste for this, there is much else to do.

The Boulder Case -- For six years now this unfortunate family (Kristen and Eric) has been hammered by Urantian Foundation litigation. Their "crimes"? [1]. They passed out free computer disks, indexes they had developed as study aids for Urantians. [2]. They used the banner of Michael, the three concentric circles, to attract readers to a free Urantian informational web site. Kristen and Eric received nothing for these services, and actually incurred debt to pay for them. Though the "offenses" have long since been stopped and the family is now \$30,000 in personal debt due to the litigation, the

Foundation's relentless team of lawyers continues to seek yet another "pound of flesh."

Do Eric & Kristen Deserve a Trial?

Eric and Kristen can no longer afford an attorney. They have never been allowed to present their witnesses nor their evidence to the court, including thousands of signatures of Urantians who declare that the Urantia Papers are the basis of their religious beliefs. If the Federal Judge in Denver is not convinced that there are Urantian believers out there, he may decide this fall not to allow Eric and Kristen a fair trial.

Denial of a fair trial in the United States is the most radical of all court expediencies. So clever and ruthless are Urantia Foundation attorneys, that they could win the banner of Michael without a shred of evidence being presented!

Not all agree that there should be a trial. I have seen a Urantian hold up a Fellowship edition of the Urantia Papers and declare: "I am not political. All I care about is my Urantia Book." Yet the low priced book he held up would not exist but for the struggle of Kristen and Eric.

Another gentleman, a counselor for the Fellowship, recently declared that: "What do I care about Kristen and Eric? They don't affect my life." Perhaps this is true - at this time. Yet, many Germans said similar things while Jews were being dragged off to concentration camps and their belongings confiscated. Religious freedom is precious to us all. Loss of religious freedom to one Urantian affects us all.

If Urantia Foundation wins this case without a trial, they will have secured a legal precedent. This is like a secular hammer that will permit the crushing of anyone they may select to persecute and punish - without a trial - for using the sacred symbol of Michael, or the words Urantia or Urantian in religious expression. But the Foundation cannot prevail if Urantians stand up and be counted. Recently we posted a suggested affidavit on the Internet, and the response has

been amazing from all over the Americas and across the Atlantic.

Long time believers will understand the meaning of the affidavit. It is not a statement of creed, but rather statement of facts. The affidavit belies the Foundation attorneys who claim the Forum wrote the Urantia Papers, and that they are not a religious work. The affidavit refutes the claim of Urantia Foundation that they coined the word "Urantian," and they do not know any other "agencies" using it. Through this deception Urantia Foundation changes the sacred banner of Michael and the material emblem of the Paradise Trinity into secular trademarks, which they have declared they will own "in perpetuity."

If Foundation attorneys succeed in blocking a fair trial, Urantia Foundation can continue to enjoy all the benefits of a tax-exempt organization while profitably selling a religious revelation on one hand, and on the other hand continue to use secular, for-profit copyright and trademark laws to selectively persecute those Urantian religionists who dare to believe that this revelation was a gift to all the people of the world - and that if one Urantian has a right to use the sacred circles, then all Urantians do. Urantia Foundation can, on one hand, continue to ignore a popular foreign writer who has plagiarized the Urantia Papers for over a decade and grown wealthy doing so, and on the other - without a warning - continue to devastate the lives of an impoverished family for giving out free study aids.

In Urantian love to all, The URF Committee
URANTIANS for RELIGIOUS FREEDOM
PO BOX 11227, BOULDER, CO. 80301

With the glare of publicity and the determination of readers aligned against them, as well as the unfavorable image of a well-heeled foundation battling a poor religious couple, the suit against Kristen and Eric was ultimately dropped. At approximately the same time, two Foundation directors and two staff members abruptly resigned. Why? Read on for Kristen's comments.

Religionists lay claim to Urantia text with court deal

Here's the email from Kristen reporting the settlement of the case.

It's Over! Colorado Lawsuit Settled!

Friday (December 12), Eric and I showed up at a Hearing before Magistrate Judge Abram. (Judge Abram is the judge in the Colorado lawsuit who is in charge of discovery.) Judge Abram had ordered this Hearing because I had objected to the protective order the Foundation had put on documents that were to be handed over to us from the Arizona lawsuit.

We've been in the middle of answering Interrogatories from the Foundation; trying to get the Foundation to answer interrogatories to them (they objected to my asking over 100 questions); setting up a deposition schedule (we'd asked to take 10 depositions, the Foundation had asked to take 4); answering a summary judgment motion from the Foundation concerning one of my affirmative defenses, etc. So the hearing seemed like a "normal" business-as-usual continuation of the lawsuit.

At the end of the hearing, Judge Abram asked if there was any chance this lawsuit might be settled. Steve Hill, attorney for the Foundation, said that he was hoping to talk with us about settlement right after the hearing. Judge Abram offered us a conference room nearby and said he'd be free soon if we needed him.

In September, Mo Siegel sent us an e-mail message inviting us to lunch. He wrote, "I would really like to understand your issues with Urantia Foundation." I was cranky and cryptic, replying to Mo something like, "Our issue is, they're suing us!"

Well, anyhow, Mo had been talking with the trustees and with Steve Hill. Apparently, Steve had been given permission to settle the lawsuit, whatever it took, right now. This was the first time in the year and a half of the Colorado lawsuit that either of us had ever been offered a settlement with the Foundation. (Eric had been (maybe) offered a Consent Order last fall — which is completely different).

The two Foundation lawyers and Mo left while Eric and I discussed the offer. Eric and I prayed about it. It felt right. We took it.

Two trustees Tom Burns and Pat Mundelius and two of the Foundation office staff resigned last week. Was this settlement offer a PR attempt to make the remaining

trustees "look good?" Was this settlement possible because Mo got interested in the lawsuit for the first time? Was this settlement possible because the Foundation has the first decent lawyer I've ever known them to have?

You know what? I don't care what the reasons are, "political" or otherwise. I don't know why they sued us in the first place, and I don't know why they suddenly decided to settle. I'm just glad it's over.

The Internet is the cutting edge of trademark law, and we can't do this lawsuit without a lawyer.

As you can see by the enclosed Mutual Dismissal With Prejudice, the lawsuit is gone, (almost) as if it never was.

Does this mean the Foundation's trademarks and copyright are gone? No, it doesn't.

Does this mean the Foundation won't sue believers in the future? I hope so.

Foundation lawyer Steve Hill has been working on some "safe harbor" assurances for Urantians. He is not interested in stopping our religion. He is not interested in any "non-commercial" use of the word Urantia and the Banner of Michael. Eric and I were not expected to "admit" the Foundation has valid trademarks.

Non-commercial use includes:

- leaflets or handouts that invite people to a worship service;
- wearing any clothing or jewelry bearing the concentric circles symbol;
- using the symbol to identify with Jesus on personal checks;
- using the symbol in the course of any wedding or religious ceremony;
- using "Urantian" to refer to yourself as an adherent to the teachings of the Urantia Papers;
- using "Urantia" as a geographical reference to earth.

An example Steve Hill gave us as being fine with him was, "The First Church of the Urantia Papers of Colorado."

Eric keeps his Internet Domain Name "urantia-papers.org" under this settlement agreement. My e-mail address is OK.

Steve Hill said his phone line is always open. If Urantia believers are not sure of something, just ask. Perhaps the Foundation really has changed. I'll ask Steve Hill about my CD project when it's done.

After we'd signed everything, we went before Magistrate Judge Abram again, and "went on record" with the Mutual Dismissal.

Eric and I are bankrupt, and I still owe Joe Lewis over \$20,000 for his involvement in the Colorado lawsuit for the first months — but I've seldom felt so great! Free! I have my time again!

Thank you, each of you, for your prayers and well-wishing, for your donations and moral support through these last years.

Thank you for signing affidavits and declarations about your religious belief.

Thank you for sending photos and examples of your uses of the banner of Michael and the word Urantia.

Thank you for sending your Urantia wedding ceremonies, baptism ceremonies, and memorial services. Thank you for showing up in court.

I believe that the leverage of outrage provided by all of us, the community of believers, has caused the Foundation to review its litigious attitude. It is not right to "dare to persecute believers." (from the Urmia lectures, p.1486).

The Arizona lawsuit, I guess, won't be "settled," as there's just one more hearing to go in front of Judge Urbom. I'll let you know what happens.

Meanwhile, thank you again, and God bless you,

Kristen Maaherra
152 California Gulch
Jamestown, CO 80455
e-mail: urantian@concentric.net

Following are excerpts from a letter released on email discussion groups from Kristen to Mo Siegel, a longtime Urantia community leader who sought to help mediate a settlement.

December 29, 1997

Dear Mo,

..... The trademark settlement offer was basically that the Foundation not try to shut down the Urantia religion. The "safe harbors" were not only for Eric, but for all Urantians

(believer-evangelists). That was a settlement in line with trademark law, and we think it was more than we could have gained in court without a lawyer.

The Foundation has trademarks on books; believers freely use the words Urantia and Urantian and the Banner of Michael to identify their religion. (This is a trademark situation similar to Apple Records and Apple Computers existing peacefully, each with a valid trademark on the word "apple" and using a picture of an apple to identify their products. Or it's like Arley Grubb owning a trademark on three concentric blue circles for commercial jewelry, while the Foundation owns a trademark on three concentric blue circles for commercial books. I'm using commercial examples because names and symbols of religions can't be trademarked.)

Copyright law is different from trademark law. The situation in the Arizona (basically copyright) case is different from the Colorado (basically trademark) case. You mentioned on the phone that I lost the copyright case; that the Foundation owns the copyright to the Urantia Book. "That's the law." And, of course, the implication is that we all must follow "the law." The way I see it is that it is also "the law" to tell the truth in court. In fact, the American justice system doesn't work if you don't tell the truth. And, simply put, the Foundation would not have a copyright if they told the truth.

The Foundation has said, in court, that the sleeping subject wrote the Urantia Book, and gave a common law copyright to the Foundation. (That's how the Foundation won the Burton case). The Foundation has said, in court, that Bill Sadler wrote "parts" of the Urantia Book, and that's how they came to have a copyright. (That story was how they obtained a preliminary injunction on me and the Folio disks). The Foundation has said, in court, that the forum wrote the Urantia Book. (When I asked forum members to give me permission to create an Index, the Foundation changed that story). The Foundation has said, in court, that the contact commission hired the revelators to write the Urantia Book. In one set of interrogatories, they even claimed that midwayers and thought adjusters are human!

As I see it, there is no way the Foundation can be sincere in believing the Urantia Papers have human authorship. These are simply "stories" they tell in an attempt to satisfy copyright law. Copyright law is clear on the point that copyright law does not cover superhuman authorship.

Because of the many different types of human authorship the Foundation has attributed to the Urantia Papers, I believe the Foundation has denied the superhuman authorship of the Urantia Papers as clearly as Peter denied knowing Jesus in the courtyard.

The parallel implication here is, of course, that the

Foundation COULD declare to the world that they believe the Urantia Papers are exactly what they say they are, and go on to lead believers to disseminate the revelation “into all the world.”

But, to date, they haven’t done that. Do you honestly think the Foundation is sincere in saying that when the revelators told the forum to ask questions, that constituted “human authorship”? That’s like saying that when a first-grade teacher, drawing upon her years of classroom experience, writes a textbook, all the first-graders in all her classes own the copyright on her textbook.

And even if the forum, by virtue of asking questions, owned a copyright on the Urantia Papers, what does that do for the Foundation? The forum is not the Foundation. There is no chain of title there. To create a legal chain of title, every single forum member would have had to sign over a copyright to the Foundation. And even with all those titles in hand, the Foundation could not RENEW the copyright. The title goes back to the forum members at time of renewal.

Mo, I believe that the Urantia Papers are exactly what they say they are. I believe that the authors of the Urantia Papers are exactly those beings listed at the end of each Paper. I believe that the Urantia Papers are the fifth epochal revelation to the planet. I believe the Urantia Papers were MATERIALIZED by superhuman beings, our unseen friends. I believe that the Urantia Papers were authorized by the Ancients of Days as a gift from God to every person on our planet.

I believe that the believer’s one battle is against doubt. I believe that if the Urantia Papers had human authorship, the revelators would have told us so. (“If it were so, I would have told you,” Jesus says.)

The Urantia Papers describe three levels of “a shadow of a hair’s turning” that constitutes falseness: evil, sin, and iniquity. Simple ignorance of the truth is evil. Deliberate falsehood constitutes sin. There is no way the Foundation could, time after time, tell believers that the origin of the Urantia Papers is exactly that which is described in the Papers themselves, that the whole story of superhuman authorship is contained in the Papers “in passages scattered throughout,” (see Book Jacket references for page number references of the story of origin, they say) and then turn around and tell the legal system a completely different story. (Rather, stories.) That is deliberate falsehood. And it’s not just one little slip of the tongue; the Foundation has been claiming human authorship in courts for years. They have denied the revelatory nature of the Urantia Papers over a long period of time.

.... Perhaps you think that it’s adult, or sophisticated, or a “different level” of understanding for the Foundation to lie.

The rank and file believer, such as myself, gets milk; the inner-bubble movers and shakers get the inside information, the meat of the situation. Perhaps you think that saying the Urantia Book has human authorship is just speaking in “legalese,” a language not everyone needs to know.

The core belief at Foundation headquarters seems to be that it’s OK to lie for a (perceived) “greater good.” (Such as keeping the copyright. Or, like saying in a newsletter that the Foundation “regretfully accepted” Martin Myers’ resignation, when, in fact, he was voted off the board and later sued to get his position back).

And, of course, because the Foundation has been composed of many, many individuals, (as well as their many, many lawyers) so “the Foundation” itself has complete deniability. Oh, we don’t know what Root meant by that Affidavit; he’s no longer our lawyer. Oh, we don’t know what Scott Wharton meant when he told the court, “It’s not a religious book;” he’s no longer our lawyer. Oh, we don’t know what Craig Fochler meant when he told the court, “Bill Sadler wrote, authored, however you want to look at it, parts of the Urantia Book;” he’s no longer our lawyer. Oh, we don’t know who wrote the trademark examiner, “Urantia is not a geographical term and has no meaning other than appellant Foundation.” Oh, we don’t know who wrote the trademark examiner, “Urantian is a coined word, stemming directly from the name of appellant Foundation.” Oh, we don’t know what Mo and Steve Hill meant . . .

Perhaps the Foundation calls its people “readers” instead of “believers” because that is really true for them. How can one have “faith” in just another book with human authorship? The Foundation reads the Urantia Book just like I read Shakespeare. Great reading, what use of the language, etc., but hardly something to base your life and your survival on, as some of us do with the Urantia Papers.

Mo. I would love to enter the New Year with a “litigation free Urantia Movement.” And I do appreciate your efforts to make that happen. Our Folio version going free into the world sure sounds good, too. However, to accept a license from the Foundation means I tacitly honor the Foundation’s “right” to grant me a license. When actually, I do not believe they hold any such right. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, the Urantia Papers are a revelation, authored by superhumans, a gift from God, freely given to every person on this planet. The Foundation trustees are God’s children, just as I am God’s child. They have no more right over the revelation than I do, or any other of God’s children.

In fact, since they have denied the revelation over and over, I believe they actually have earned themselves LESS rights. To sign a license with the Foundation, I believe, is to compromise with this evil they have done in lying to

obtain a copyright in order to control the sacred scriptures of my religion.

While a license appeals to something in me (the part of me that could rationalize that at least I can keep giving away the Folio Index without worrying about Foundation lawsuits), and this other part about licensing others with websites to have Folio free for download, too, appeals to a more altruistic desire that everyone can not only use but give away the Index—

And the part about working on a CD-ROM team sounds exciting, too—

But I still have a problem about signing a license with folks who have repeatedly claimed that our beloved Urantia Papers have human authorship. I'm not comfortable doing that.

Mo, you believe the Foundation is different now. Do you

A New ESPERANZA for Urantians

[Adapted by Larry Mullins from the words of Jesus, Urantia Book, p. 2044]

There will come a time, I know, when Urantians will go forth into the world to establish a religion that belongs not to a race, a nation, nor to a special group of teachers or preachers.

These Urantian Leaders of the New Spiritual Renaissance will teach a gospel of the kingdom that belongs to both Jew and gentile, to rich and poor, to free and bond, to male and female, even to the little children.

And Urantians will proclaim this gospel of love and truth by the lives which they live, for Jesus shall live again through them.

By observing these new Urantians, those who have not heard, shall hear, and those who have not seen, shall see the Master, and they will learn of his life-giving teachings.

There will come a time, I know, when Urantians shall love one another with a new and startling affection, even as Jesus loved when he walked among us.

think they would issue a public statement of belief in the superhuman authorship of the Urantia Papers? Do you think they'd go on record, FOR ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS TO WITNESS, that the Urantia Papers are exactly what they claim to be, and that the Foundation believes in the superhuman authorship of the Urantia Papers?

That would be a Foundation I could align with, work with, get behind. I would begin to tithe again to such a Foundation. I do believe that it's important for believers to be on the same side, working to evangelize (not control) the world. I would like to see it happen. I would like to see public records reflect the truth about the revelation. And, since the Foundation is different now, I'm sure they want truth and nothing but truth in all public records concerning the revelation.

Love, and God bless you,
Kristen.

And these new Urantians will serve humankind with a new and amazing devotion, even as Jesus served men and women when he lived in the flesh.

And when this hour has come, the new and everlasting religion of Jesus will at last blaze across the earth in the lives of the men and women who believe it.

And when men, women and children see how Urantians so love them, and when they behold how fervently Urantians serve them, they will perceive that Urantians are the vanguard of the faithful brothers and sisters of the kingdom of heaven.

And the people will be inspired to follow after the Spirit of Truth, which they see manifested by the way Urantians live their lives, and by the rich fruits which are yielded by those lives, which are lives made great by their goodness.

Then will humankind be indeed free, and, for its long suffering and interminable delay, greater will be gathered glory of the shrine of Michael*

*Urantia Papers believers see Jesus as a human incarnation of Michael, Creator Son of God and ruler of our local universe.

Finding God; Founding A New Religion

A spiritual seeker in Boulder echoes what millions have felt in searching for a personal God, then reviews some first efforts toward developing a new and better, God-encompassing religion.

by ERIC JOHNSON

When I was growing up, God always seemed so far away. I think others encouraged me to feel that way because that's what was true for them too. All the information about God I received from church always seemed so third hand by its nature. Moses was the one who had talked to God. Jesus was his only son and had talked to him. These were the folks who seemed like they had gotten a reply.

When one talks to someone, and one doesn't hear a reply, the impression is that one is talking to one's self. That was the way it was with me when I would pray to God.

The stories I heard of Jesus when I was growing up depicted a man impossible to fathom. Who was this guy? Did he really exist? or was he the product of so much storytelling? How did he get to know so much about God when others were so much in the dark? He didn't seem human, he was so above all our limitations.

The bit about him dying for our sins didn't make any sense to me. Why would he do that? As a child, what "sins" had I committed in the first place for him to die for? I could sense deep down inside that there was something important about religion, but what I saw on the surface was a bunch of hypocrisy.

"They" say we should love each other, but when looking at people who were supposed to be my role models, "they" didn't. People, especially "religious" people, always seemed so bigoted about other people's religions, that their actions never matched their words. What was I to believe?



If one broke down religions into categories, there seemed to be two choices: 1) the stuffy, quiet, somber even, dull, dry and boring kind, or 2) the super emotional Southern Baptist or Black church with people wailing to beat the band. (They, at least, seemed to be connecting with something...)

But what were we really doing there? Why go to all this effort for no apparent reason? Where was the pay-off? Both Heaven and Hell seemed to be imaginary places, where nobody had actually ever been to or could report on from first hand experience, so why should I believe in them? And while Hell seemed like a most unpleasant place to be, Heaven wasn't exactly to most exciting place in the world either. Sit on a cloud and play the harp? Beats Hell I suppose, but not by much.

Nobody seemed willing to admit that they didn't know what they were doing, but it was obvious from what they said, that they didn't. They would pass on Jesus' teachings, but don't try to hold them to it. It made me furious to hear people talk their talk, but not walk their walk. Perhaps that's why I liked the story of Jesus driving out the "money changers" the most. I

wanted him to come back and drive these people out as well.

Now there's talk of creating a new religion. One based on The Urantia Book. Given that most readers are still only in their heads, and satisfied with the intellectual exercise, what hope was there that we would be much different from what's currently available. I want people sharing their first hand experiences of God, not more of this "pass on the teachings" shit. Where's the star of the show? How do we make God real and palatable? What's the secret?

The closest I've come to any realization of that, has been through music. I'd like to throw in some of the responsiveness from the audience that one finds in a black church, as well. But first, we need to do something about "the fear of God" and divorce it from the beginning of wisdom. When the Striders used to put on the Gathering here in Boulder, they did a great job of adding humor to the soup. But for me, I want people sharing what they know of God from their first hand experiences. I want everyone to get it that knowing God is a sublime experience.

I've been to Bliss and back. It's incredible! I now talk with Jesus and feel like I get a reply. When we do communion, I want the leader to speak from a place of knowing, saying "as we do this, Jesus is here with us, can you feel him? He's here, do you feel any difference in the energy in the room or in yourselves? Can you sense his Peace?... Welcome him into your hearts, now and always."

The Light and Life Journal asked Eric about the unfolding of a Urantian "church" in the Boulder area:

First off, the word "church" is inextricably tied to Christianity. If we want to attract non-Christians as well, we need a different term. But a Urantian Worship service is the real subject here.

Why create a new religion?

- 1) We are approaching critical mass (here in Boulder) and the other available worship services just don't quite cut it for a lot of us. We want the terminology we've come to know and love.
- 2) Study Groups don't contain enough worshipful experiences in them.
- 3) Attempts to mix the two have not been successful (between study and worship, worship always gets the short end of the stick).
- 4) Group worship feels good.
- 5) Regular worship services serve as a reminder to engage in that activity more often.
- 6) Most of us crave a new religious identity. We are Urantians, not Christians or Jews or whatever.
- 7) And for the politicians among us, creating an organized religion gives us the right to use the three concentric azure blue circles on a white background and the word "Urantia" as religious symbols without fear of violating trademark restrictions.

To be sure, our efforts at creating a new religion are still in their nascent stages. We've used the format of a Protestant service as our starting point, but it's unlikely to stay there. We pick a theme for each service, and apply it to the passages read, personal experiences shared, music played/sung, etc. We usually do a form of communion, and some minimal amount of other rituals. We're in the process of creating a culture from scratch.

We also have a lot of talent within our group. The format of our leadership is in flux. We know we don't want just one person running the whole show. At the moment, those available to do the work get to make the decisions.

Do we want a creed? What do we want in it? What don't we want in it? What do we want to present to others as our belief system? These are questions we're asking ourselves. We have not formalized any answers yet. We're in the pro-

cess of experimenting with what works and what doesn't. (But if we don't come up with a way of including what the other religions are missing, genuine fellowship with God, we might as well pack it all in.) And I want us to be truthful about our lack of having all-the-answers when others inquire about us. I want us to extend the invitation to others to join us in our search, our quest for spirit fire.

We have the desire to become infected with that benign virus of love. We must be creative in our efforts to germinate it, and nurse it into a full blown infection! And I want us to welcome the assistance of our teachers(*) in achieving that goal.

To be continued ...

* Eric refers to celestial teachers in the Teaching Mission.

Religion and Hamburgers: Fast-Fooders Walk on Water .. or Thin Ice

by DON TYLER

From: mindful@sprynet.com

Organization: MINDFUL WORKS

Attending a family reunion this weekend, I had more contact with modern so-called civilization than is usual in my life.

There was some kind of athletic competition on the idiot box in the background, for example. And there I caught part of a commercial advertisement for some restaurant chain or other. It appeared to involve God taking a peculiar interest in some mortal's fried rendered mammal meat sandwich.

God did not actually appear, but the burger was wafted off into the heavens in a ray of light and returned partially consumed. God is apparently not only carnivorous, or at least omnivorous, but also a mooch.

Then, on our return trip, we stopped in at a restaurant whose sign was supported by a double yellow arch similar to the one in Saint Louis. All the employees of this establishment

were wearing shirts which said (and as Dave Barry says, I am not making this up) "We'd walk on water for you."

I read this aloud from the shirt of our server, and she immediately, with good humor, covered it up and apologized that she was not responsible for her own apparel but was following the dictates of her corporate employer, another purveyor of fried rendered mammal carcass sandwiches.

Apparently we were not the first to find it in poor taste to so use this reference to the episode which one Gospel portrays as real and which was fifth epochally revealed to have been a dream of Peter's. She was apologetic and we had a nice talk about it.

She said a lot of people have cussed her out for wearing that. I reassured her that while mortals may not be as forgiving as they might ideally wish that the Almighty is not lacking in mercy or humor.

Urantia certainly is an unusual planet.

IN COMING ISSUES: Kundalini; Making of the Supreme God; Holy (Cannabis) Smoke!; Tapping Celestial Creativity; Sufism; Bahai; Getting Over Scripture and Apocalyptic Visions; Spiritual Starvation and Salvation in the Prisons; ACIM devil-inspired? Yes and No; Secrets that hurt; The Nature of Light; Vices and Virtues in Gardening; Lightshift 2000; Paganism; Humanism; and more net surfings, TeaM lessons, planetary evacuation-reclamation reports, songs, verse and episodes in the Battle for Urantia.

HEALING: Medicine, Energy, and Alchemy

As holistic health care surges in today's society, the author speaks up on behalf of the ancient practice of alchemy and discusses its role in our new age.

by E.J. LIGHT

We are witnessing today the restoration of natural medicine, Homeopathy, Oriental methods of medicine, Acupuncture, Ayurvedic practices, and finally Alchemy as the former arts blossom and mature once again, bringing new hope into view for the future as Holistic alternative health care.

All disciplines of "Holistic" methodology, will eventually incorporate true Spagyric, Alchemic, and other preparations of medicine, which address this fine point at last. Then we will see a vital reform in health care and realize long needed changes in the general practice of medicine in this country.

Like all difficult changes, this reformation will not occur in America overnight, but only after much human thought, experimentation, and lawful demonstration. The great Paracelsus has said, "Man body is bound up with medicine and ruled by it." So it follows that we need excellently prepared medicines that restore vitality to our bodies.

The American Medical Association, which is genuinely skilled in technical surgery today, and is proficient at emergency and life saving procedures, is challenged by strong contenders to withdraw all synthetic and harmful drugs, to replace these problem drugs with natural holistic preventatives, and nutritional supplements. The A.M.A. is charged to provide preparations which cure and heal, rather than treat only symptoms. Doctor intervention, removing organs, and tissues from bodies by many unnecessary surgeries, must be checked and controlled.

LIFE AND MATTER

The alchemical concept of life and matter lies at the opposite pole of that of the current scientific community. Science is trying to find out how matter created life. Alchemy affirms that, at the origin, there is consciousness. Consciousness is the need to Be of the Absolute. In order to satisfy this need, consciousness created life, and in order to evolve life, created matter.

This "vital pressure" is omnipresent in the universe and if a situation is created or a product that is favorable to it, it concentrates and brings matter to life in a form suitable to the three kingdoms, mineral, animal and vegetable.

The power of this contribution is a function of both the quality of the vessel "resonance" and its purity. This vital energy will be used by man for healing of his body in spagyrics and if, through alchemy, this energy is brought to a higher level, it will heal the subtle bodies of man, who will then be initiated in the highest sense of the word.

The alchemical and spagyric healing principle is based on the following principle: The cause of the illness, whether animal, vegetable or, to a lesser degree, mineral comes from the fact that the animating, original energy progressively becomes corrupt and loses its purity and its primitive power through its relation, its incorporation into matter."

It is the alchemist's goal in the scheme of evolution, to transform the work of Nature beyond the point of her departure in raising substance to the various degrees she brings them to. In alchemy, we are acting in accordance with natural law by raising the vibrational numbers of substance to

new heights. This raising of vibrations in substance includes ourselves as consciousness evolves through the intaking of purified and elevated substances. Since all disease originates in the blood, purification of the blood is essential for excellent health, as well as the reestablishment of its delicate bio-electrochemical balance. Trace elements of minerals (salts) and metals are in our

blood, which act as resistors to the energy of the life forces. This resistance creates a field of force emanating its composite spectrum (from the ionic stage to the molecular stage) of resonate frequencies. This field is known as a person "fundamental aura."

Communicate with the author at:
ejlight@earthlink.net

CELESTIAL SURFING: Overcoming the Fear of Love

by CAROL HERREN

Hi everyone,

When I look at the world around me I believe many of the problems we have are rooted in a fundamental fear of love. People often seem to embrace the more base emotions of our human nature - fear, intolerance, anger, jealousy, suspicion.

I think part of the problem is that love hurts. To give oneself totally to others in this day and time can be very painful. So many people are ignorant about love that they don't know how to be responsible when love is given to them.

We are so fortunate to have the teachings of the Urantia Papers. Jesus was such a great example of how to love with strength in such difficult circumstances. He was teaching us, by example, the power of God in our lives. All we have to do is have faith.

"When my children once become self-conscious of the assurance of the divine presence, such a faith will expand the mind, ennoble the soul, reinforce the personality, augment the happiness, deepen the spirit perception, and enhance the power to love and be loved." -- pg 1766

I feel the most powerful act of faith is forgiveness. A Christian writer wrote a song that I feel expresses the forgiveness of Jesus in a wonderful way:



She has a reputation
like the woman at the well
the only love she ever knew
was the kind she buys and sells
but a thirsty heart is searching
for a love that will be true

Who will be Jesus to her?
who'll show the love
that's commanded in his word?
Will she see in us the mighty God we serve?
Who will be Jesus to her?

Wounded people everywhere
and when they look at us
do they see Jesus there?
Who will be Jesus to them?
Who'll show the love that
restores them again
They do not need a judge
They need a friend
Who will be Jesus to them?

THE MILLENNIUM QUESTION: When Does the New One Arrive?

by **KEN KALB**

When does the Third Millennium really begin?!

April 6, 1997 marked day one of the one thousand-day countdown to January 1, 2000. There is a lot of confusion as to whether January 1, 2000 is indeed the dawning of the new Millennium, the end of the Millennium — or if January 1, 2001 is really the beginning. We offer this clarification to this frequently asked question.

The official answer: January 1, 2001

This date is officially endorsed by The Greenwich Observatory, the Encyclopedia Britannica, The U.S. Naval Observatory, Webster's New Third International Dictionary, and the World Almanac.

The roots of this official clarification may be traced to a Scythian monk by the name of Dennis the Diminutive, who tried to establish a fixed date for Easter Sunday in what was to become the year 526 A.D.

Dionysius Exiguus, alias Dennis the Diminutive, a sixth century abbot of a Roman monastery, worked exhaustively in Roman numerals to calculate a solid basis for the church calendar to arrive at the proper day for Easter. He declared Anno Domini as 1 A.D., "year of our Lord," rather than 0, as there is no zero in Roman numerals.

The modern calendar thus started with a one, so logically, every decade and century must, in turn, begin with a one, i.e. 1211, 1951, 2001.

Thus began the "millennial quirk" causing 2001 to be officially acknowledged as the beginning of the bimillennium.

The popular answer: January 1, 2000

Regardless of calendrical technicalities, people

around the world will be heralding the new millennium when the 000's roll over on January 1, 2000.

The year 2000 will be a landmark milestone for all humanity. It promises to be a turning point when we reevaluate the direction of our life and human civilization, and envision new beginnings. Numerous celebrations and events are being planned all over the world for this day of century's end and commencement of the bimillennium.

The LightShift 2000 answer: Both!

Oftentimes the technical and official is not the practical or popular. January 1, 2000 may not be the official bimillennial date, but it might as well be. For a thousand years, people have been writing three digits after a one, but no more. January 1, 2000 will be the most powerful date in human history.

Our vision is for the human community to band together in a silent, unified wave of elevated consciousness to set the tone for the future — and continue to beam this signal on the first of each month through January 1, 2001 — bridging the unofficial and official millennium from the pure light within us all.

What about the other cultures?

On the Islamic calendar, the year 2000 translates to 1420, on the Jewish calendar it will be 5760, and the Chinese calendar calculates it to be the year 4698. But most humans will be fully absorbed in the amplified emotional potency of January 1, 2000.

For more information on LightShift 2000:
www.lightshift.com
lightserver@lightshift.com

or write: LightShift 2000, Box 5769, Santa Barbara, CA 93150.

THE TEACHING MISSION: **Light and Life and Jesus**

ELECTROCHEMICAL - LIKE JESUS **Daniel/Pocatello, Idaho/1997**

My friends, you are keenly aware at times of the reality of your physical mechanism being electrochemical in nature. All of the material of your bodies swims in a salt ocean, as it were. Your entire organism is constantly changing chemically, electrically, and interacting with your mindal circuitry.

In the matrix of this web of interaction there is also constant change. Only your personality persists unmoved, unaltered. Your personality unifies your physical-mindal mechanism and permits the effective contact with your divine Indweller; and together your mind and your Indwelling Spirit weave the warp and woof of your morontial soul.

This is all old information to most of you, but I mention it because it should not be a source of surprise or distress when you become more acutely aware of the fluidity of your existence.

I would commend you for all the ways that you are striving to bring this ever-changing matrix of your mortal existence into greater and greater symmetrical balance. For indeed you are becoming steadier, and the wobble which was characteristic of your early spiritual life is diminishing so that from our perspective you appear to be more solid, as there is less wobble and variation in your patterning.

As your balance improves, so does your control over your interactions with other personalities, and the abrasive contacts are fewer because you are stable.

Our Master achieved ultimate stability and His

touch with others was soft, delicate which caused others to respond eagerly to His presence.

This is your mortal goal, to become like Jesus, as a mortal, even though for the most part this goal remains a high ideal. However, its emulation is your greatest prize, your fondest endeavor.

THE LIGHT AND LIFE QUEST **Will/Tallahassee, Florida/1997**

The light of the Father, whether bright as a thousand suns or a single candle, is always as bright as it needs to be to illuminate the way to Him. His love is never-ending and surrounds us at all time. Wherever we gather, He is. Good evening, beloved students, this is Will, your teacher who loves you.

The goal of light and life is many, many years away, but the glimmer has begun and the light will grow. There are many variations of paths to this goal; many religions seek this, but this world is far from the time of a single religion.

This will take many generations of people who are able to understand the real meaning of God's love and accept that love without restrictions or rules or qualifications.

The Master took a giant step toward this goal of light in His life on this planet. His message has been followed obediently, and ignored, and stretched, yet it still holds the power to propel this world toward light and life.

This group, and others like it in this teaching mission, and other enlightened souls and groups throughout the world, serve as a sort of turbo charger, serve to give an extra push toward the path to light.

Harmonic Connections & Deep Friendships

CONNECTEDNESS

VERONICA - March 4, 1995

Volcano, Hawaii - No. 65. TR-Arlene.

Creative collaborators of harmonic alignment,

Separateness is the mirage of detachment that appears above the arid desert of exclusion and fear. The parched souls of ignorance thirst for the sparkling oasis of divine love but cannot see beyond the imagined dunes of judgment and derision.

Once you recognize your intrinsic supreme alliance to others in the divine symbiosis of your origin, you will linger in the lush valleys of fraternal harmony that will perpetually refresh your spirit with the kinship of cherished cooperation and the tender solidarity of brotherhood.

Understand that unconditional love will attune your continual affinity of cohesive grace that softly merges into the beauty of your awareness of Supreme Oneness. Only through loving tolerance and understanding will you begin to achieve the clarity of comprehension that interjoins diversity and unity in the perfection of His Supreme Plan that connects us all throughout the wonder of eternity.

FRIENDSHIPS AND REPERCUSSIONS

HAM/Nashville, Tennessee/1997

It is said that friendship is the greatest treasure, that a man is truly wealthy who is wealthy in friendship-love. As you grow in the spirit, so do you learn to value love ever more highly. You value your friendships increasingly.

Friendship is valuable as it is the human reflection of Deity relations. God the Father shares

everything possible with God the Son and the two share everything possible with God the Spirit. Yet, God the Son is an independent personality with his own volition. God the Father never dominates or coerces God the Son.

As you grow in your awareness of Deity relations, you grow in your ability to have bonding friendships. You instantly recognize the other person as your brother, your sister, your son or your daughter. When Jesus said, who is my mother, who is my father, he was expressing this understanding of the total bondedness between people that should be recognized.

Being all the equally beloved children of God the Father, you have no business with criticizing, coercing, or dominating each other. You must understand that the proper attitude of each person to another is to honor the Father who lives within them and in doing this honor to the Father, you must love the personality of the son or daughter.

We want you all to lessen the protective walls that each of you carries, we want you to open yourselves to one another in a way that allows honor and love to pass between you. We know that you each have little wounded pride spots, and should anyone even accidentally poke at that bruise, you immediately react with irritation. Now I want you to think about what this does, it puts a barrier between you and your brethren that blocks off the love and support and help that would undoubtedly come to you. Don't be so casual with the Father. You all know his desire is that you bring down these barriers and open your hearts to love for each other.

Friendship will become your greatest asset, most valuable possession, and you will marvel that you once would toss it away without a second

thought. A foolish man says I do not need my fellows. I say to you, they are the way to eternal life, they are the path. The wise may delight in serving his friends. The God-like man knows nothing but friends.

As you grow in the spirit, you become aware that only the very foolish presume to judge one another. The wise man loves all, and offers his friendship and service to all. The foolish man judges his neighbor and withdraws into isolation. The wise man is on the path to God with the help of his neighbors. He recognizes and understands how great his need for them is. The foolish man says to himself, I don't need any one, I can find God by myself in my own way."

A Visit from Christ Michael (incarnated as Jesus) and RANTARASON to the Coeur d'Alene-Spokane Urantia and TeaM Study Group -- 29 Sept. 1997

[Preceding this session we had discussion of last week's assignment, sharing our satisfactions and desires surrounding the Teaching Mission.]

MICHAEL (Jonathan TR): I bring you my peace; I am Michael. I have chosen to open our meeting. I have my three close associates with me today who will be speaking as I have had my early and human associates, Peter, James, and John. And, yes, we have the young lad, Elyon.

My beloved, some of you have sought me because of a sense of duty, to find who I am and to fulfill the will of our Father as I have portrayed this to you. In the course of your sense of selfless obligation you have been richly rewarded with personal gifts and gains in wisdom and light and love. Others of you have approached me because of the hunger to know who you are, your place in life, to be fulfilled in the sense of belonging, and you have been richly rewarded with a relationship with the Father and with many other beings.

This two-way avenue of seeking and receiving will always be the result even when you perchance are oriented with but a single intention. There will always be reflective ramifications that will not merely fulfill your needs but amply rebound to establishing in you abilities and further curiosity that will propel you into broader, deeper, and higher potentials for not only self growth, but for universe action.

RANTARASON (A Melchizedek): If I might encapsulate our hopes for you as individuals, it might be something along the line that we hope for you to become prototypes for individual light and life. You may understand that light and life on a global level functions in many diverse ways. As your country is also being developed as a prototype for social, economic, scientific, and all areas of progressive

evolution, it is important to have a foundation of actual living beings to be the ideal, or at least striving to be close to the ideal.

This means for each of you a certain sense of responsibility. This means that you would take it upon yourself to uplift those smaller situations where you do have influence. If you look at your world today, it is obvious that the body of humanity has areas of distress along with its peaks of beauty, but this distressed situation pervades. There are focal points, but the problem runs throughout all areas.

We would ask you to become as aware as possible when you perceive circumstances that could be better aligned towards the direction of light and life. This means that you must be strong enough to look at the sores of humanity, and infuse not only your compassion, but ask, "Is there an action that I can perform right here and right now that will reveal the path to light and life?" You will find all around you the need; you will find everywhere the outlet that you search for. As you become more developed in these areas, greater responsibilities will present themselves.

We are proud that our efforts are manifesting as beautifully as you are.

TEACHING MISSION PURPOSE by AARON, Spokane and Coeur 'd Alene

This mission, as you see it and as we see it, has many goals on successive levels. The first, is to orient yourselves with the reality of the possibility of this communication with spirit, that each and every creature of moral will status has the potential to be contacted and led by spirit. This is the first goal.

As you establish this reality and procedure within your being, you then find the goals shifting. After orientation begins the class, the studies. You listen to the lessons. You hear and try to understand. You ask question, try to clarify. We aid you in this. This is the second goal; enlightenment for yourselves in the relationship with spirit. Knowing now that you can communicate, then the successful steps for achieving this create the achievement of the second goal and this goal is overlapping with other goals, for this one really does not end any time that you can foresee.

Somewhere along in your progression, you recognize the stirring, the desire to teach, to share, to offer what you have learned and to more successfully join in fellowship with those who are sharing your pursuit. This is the third goal; to take and branch those desires into the potential for reality, to step out to your less illuminated fellows and, in fellowshiping, in sharing time and understanding with them, they, by having association with you, begin to feel the stirring within themselves and they may find that goal number one is coming within their grasp.

These goals continue, although at this point we would not clarify in actuality what specifically they are, for you, as a mission, have come into level three, which is the first phase of apostleship, sharing the good news, creating the universal family from the material perspective.

I encourage you to seek out and find each level for yourselves. Often there is a general goal which encompasses a smorgasbord of specific pursuits.

Create level three to its limits and you may have the opportunity to see level four begin in your life. This is my talk with you tonight.

**Earlier statement from teacher
VERONICA on Phase 4:**

... The involvement of the Melchizedeks to bring about the fullest development of man's highest powers. This fourth phase of transformation will impart profound wisdom that will overcome complex problems of uncertainty and usher the collective consciousness on a rapid track towards light and life.

ANDREW in Cincinnati Taking Life in Spiritual Stride

In time, yes, you will learn to take all in stride, to find the eyes in front of you, the hurting, the askance, the suffering, the need of those who would find your kind words, find your kind touch. And you will minister pure and simple love to them.

And in time, as teachers, you will be able to take all in stride that lies before you and look in the face of your fellows who may be criticizing you or berating you, full of acrimony, full of whatever. You will be able to look in their eyes, unperturbed, unshaken, confident in the loving faith that you can help this person overcome the suffering, the need for love that they may express in bizarre ways.

You know it is a call for love. Your feelings are no longer wounded and hurt, for you stand secure, sturdy, in the light of the Father. And you will give love and you will influence many so favorably. It would be a minority who would truly seek to attack or defend needlessly, for the vast majority that will come to you will be in great hunger.

Adversities will come. You will overcome them readily, for you will be strong in the love of the Father.

From the lesson tonight, it was said that humans are influenced by their genetics and by their environmental growth. And there is a mediating influence that would render any damage from these factors to little avail, or even traumatic experiences of hurt and suffering and anger, deeply embedded within the psyche. They can all be overcome, and human balance brought to center through the daily Stillness, the attunement with God, the alignment with God's will. In this way, all humans, no matter their circumstance, have an excellent opportunity to continue their ascension.

PATIENCE TO PARADISE

by Jim Cleveland

Paradise comes finally to those who would wait
In patience and faith that God won't forsake
Will spread love within you each footstep you take
And reward you for faith every effort you make.

For patience is more than resistance to bear
It allows for the time our Creator put there
And makes sure our vessel can handle each share
And then that we give it around us with care.

Paradise must wait for that love deep inside
To shine forth in knowledge that hasn't been tried
To live God within us with Christ by our side
No harm can now touch us in our Paradise stride.

The Paradise you're seeking is part of your head
Not in the brain, but deeper instead
Not in the body which stubbornly likes
Too many things that can mess up your life
It's there in the soul, no physical mass
Rich in the spirit which God made to last.

SPIRIT CAME

by Jim Cleveland

I once saw the world as a great big hill,
a place to forge ahead and find some thrills.
I once saw the people here as not too much
whom I would ever want to love or even touch.

Then I opened up my heart for a better view,
saw all the things we thought that were never true.
Now I can see each child of God in holy light
Like me they struggle with all those fears inside.

People would like to turn to good, same as me,
let it be a part of daily serendipity.
And if I smile at them and give them half a chance
I can help them rise above poor circumstance.

Life is dark. Some have little chance to shine.
Bells without a sound or place to chime.
We'll make a better world, a place of peace and cheer
We can help each other reach this new frontier.

In My Own Eyes

by Delores Dinsmore

I would love that you know me,
All Knowing One.
In stillness I reflect upon the Truth
That You have been with me
All this whole long time,
And it is I who have not been able to be with
You.

In my short-run rhapsodies of joy,
In my common confusion of chaos,
Through my ache of struggle and discouragement,
I would love to know that you love me.

I am sorry, Holy One,
That Your Grace and Your Supreme, sustaining,
point of view so often escapes me.
So blind still, as I begin to navigate
The turbulent human patterns that kalaidoscope
my life.
I would love to know what beauty you see here:
Bestow upon me your Eyes of Truth
That I may discern what to foster and what to
release.

With every single second of my life,
As close as breath,
As thought follows thought,
Is your whisper, in each heartbeat, to me.

Bless me with ears for hearing
The Songs and Sounds of Your Promised Presence
to me.
So close!
I would love to know You,
Better, deeper, wiser, truer,
Oh Intimate Allegiance,

And to know You
would be to love me....
Because I can not yet accept myself
In my own eyes.
Permission for this must be wrestled from a

world that grants it not,
From a past I lived, where love of self was
stamped, as evil.

And so, scorned and shamed and guilty,
I come to you, Oh Author of Love.
I am prepared with the courage to grow, to edit,
to rewrite my life in Your Eyes,
I desire to strengthen myself in Your Ways,
For I would embrace Your love if I could,
For I would love to know the love you hold for
me.

I reach for the beauty of the love of myself in
you,
Which you carry for me as if it means all the
world,
This alone is enough to set me weeping, that I
should mean so much, to You.

Why does feeling Love come with such liberation
of tears?
Why does touching Love cause heart-quakes that
shake my very foundations?

Give me the way
To hold open my trembling hands, Oh My God,
Teach me the power of Heart,
To receive this Life of Your Love.

Amen

Integral Insights from Rick Giles

Fact is like air. Wind is like truth. The moment
we close the doors and windows to our soul,
truth goes stale and ends up merely fact.

Angels use the "air" of human thinking to convey
the "wind" of spiritual realities.

In essence we're a chip off the old block; when
my chip comes from where your chip was we
seem so similar.

If my chip was from the other side of the block
we might find ourselves to be quite different.

THE CHURCH WITHIN: Your Life's Motivations

Greetings my Dearest Siblings, and welcome once again to The Church Within.

Come in, make yourself comfortable and take a few minutes to relax in mental stillness while listening intently for that “still small voice” within you. When you feel at peace within yourself, proceed.

Quotes

from the Urantia Papers -- Paper-100 Section-4

In the mind's eye conjure up a picture of one of your primitive ancestors of cave-dwelling times—a short, misshapen, filthy, snarling hulk of a man standing, legs spread, club upraised, breathing hate and animosity as he looks fiercely just ahead. Such a picture hardly depicts the divine dignity of man. But allow us to enlarge the picture. In front of this animated human crouches a saber-toothed tiger. Behind him, a woman and two children. Immediately you recognize that such a picture stands for the beginnings of much that is fine and noble in the human race, but the man is the same in both pictures. Only in the second sketch you are favored with a widened horizon. You therein discern the motivation of this evolving mortal. His attitude becomes praiseworthy because you understand him. If you could only fathom the motives of your associates, how much better you would understand them. If you could only know your fellows, you would eventually fall in love with them.

You cannot truly love your fellows by a mere act of the will. Love is only born of thoroughgoing understanding of your neighbor's motives and sentiments. It is not so important to love all men today as it is that each day you learn to love one more human being. If each day or each week you

achieve an understanding of one more of your fellows, and if this is the limit of your ability, then you are certainly socializing and truly spiritualizing your personality. Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious. If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man.

from: The King James Bible -- Isaiah 38:16)

O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these is the life of my spirit. Oh, restore me to health and make me live!

The Sermon

What is it that motivates your life? Really.

For some, it would seem that it is the accumulation of possessions that motivate them ... or appearances ... or power. For others, you might think that their job is their true motivation. But look deeper. These are but the surface motivations.

OK then, how about a spouse or partner, or your children, family, friends. Worthy motivators, each of them. But again, look deeper. Deeper you say? Well... yeah... There IS a deeper motivation ya know... we haven't yet reached the core.

Church?... deeper. Scriptures?... deeper. Beliefs?... deeper. Faith?... even deeper yet. The I AM?... well, yes of course, but for today's

purposes let's go back up one notch.

The universal motivation for "all of the above" is truly Love. The desire to BE Loved, and the desire to Give Love and to have it be accepted by others. Many might tend to partially disagree with this, but while were down here, really deep, let's look at it for a minute.

Why is it that so many strive for power, position, titles, or for things or possessions, or for good appearances? Is it basically because they are power hungry or greedy or vain? I don't think so! I believe they strive for these things because they mistakenly think deep down that having those things will make people love them or accept the love that they so desperately need to share. Look at the subversive message given in most commercials today. "If you look like this... or, "If you buy one of these... then you will be able to have that... people will like you more... you'll be respected and loved. Sure sells a lot of products, and sure, those things may get you noticed, but Loved? "Oh, if only I looked like so and so... If only I had such and such... I'd be..." What?

Is there anything wrong with having these things? No. of course not. But they are not the true goal, are they?

Job? A means of survival, yes... a way for getting things, yes... or of providing for family, most definitely... receiving or giving Love? Bingo!

Husband or wife? Girlfriend or boy friend? Child or children? Family or friends? The real motivation again? Love... pure and simple Love.

So OK, desiring to Love and be Loved is the underlying universal motivator. How does it help to recognize this? In all of your personal strivings, consciously be motivated by Love. Love of God, of others, of yourself. Be aware of this motivation. Look for this motive in the actions of others. Know that God loves YOU! No matter what you may have done in the past,

God loves YOU! Regardless of how unworthy you may feel, God loves YOU! And God also Loves Everyone else.

God is the Source of ALL Love. Let God be the Source of all your motivation, and let Love be always your true and conscious Motive. It's the only road to true and peaceful happiness, and everything else that you've always really wanted.

As Jesus once said: "Love one another as I have Loved You."

What is it that motivates your life? Really.

The Prayer

Dearest Father [please fill in your own favorite name for the Universal Source], Help me to see Your Love in myself and in all others. Show me Your way of seeing Your children so that I may learn more and more to Love them. Help me to freely love in spite of any possibility that it may seem to be rejected. Teach me to Love Unconditionally as You do. This I pray today.

You ALL are Within the Infinitely Loving Embrace of our Universal Parent,

The Creator's Infinite Love, through me, to all of You, Pastor Daniel Megow

We each are unique strands of color in God's rainbow of Light... Which when blended together shine Brilliantly White.
(Daniel 11/97)

Your donations make possible the growth of this Ministry and are greatly appreciated by all whom they serve.

Please visit our ALL NEW Web Site at:
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E-Mail: danielm@cet.com

PATIENCE: *A Greater Understanding*

by BONNIE SIMRELL

Patience is a state of being, a quality of existence without fear: the allowance of what is, of the operation of natural law without regard for mankind's perception of "time" and "space." Observation of nature in all its forms is one of the ways to study patience at work. Another term for patience is "Living in the Now."

Until recently, when humankind invented "time" and "space" as means of controlling individuals and societies, nature—including humans — proceeded to unfold in an orderly fashion, according to natural laws, the creative powers of the universe: To each its own measure, in its own time.

And so the planets moved in accord with their orbits, the seasons unfolded according to their purpose, and nature gave to humans what was needed to sustain them, always in the moment of need and always in the amounts required.

And man and woman, for their part, knew through observation by and beyond the physical senses, when it was appropriate to work with nature in the sowing and harvesting, sharing and storing, resting and laboring, dancing and praying, and giving thanks.

The smaller the increments and the greater the precision with which man dissects "time" the greater his separation, in a symbolic as well as physical sense, from nature and the natural laws of harmony and abundance.

The greater his dependence on time in his daily personal and collective affairs, the greater the conflict with the natural rhythms of life and the more intense the disharmony among and within societies and individuals.

This disharmony manifests not only in the open conflicts between peoples around the planet, but also in the imbalance and disease of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual bodies of individuals throughout the world.

"Space," too, has been allocated a slot in man's adaptation of nature to his own whim. While eyeing, with the respect that comes with uncertainty, "outer space" as a possibly unlimited arena for his own activities, he continues to devise infinitely complex formulas for measuring and defining physical space in the material realm of Earth.

And he creates definitions of, and other limitations on, what is increasingly being acknowledged as the inner space, the quiet space, within the individual. To what end?

Again, although not the stated intent, as a means of control, placing limits upon the freedom and creativity not only of humankind, but of all nature.

By these two devices, "linear time" and "dimensional space," man has found the means for controlling production and distribution of natural resources, including the fruits of inventive creativity, intended to sustain and give pleasure to all life upon the planet.

And as man continues to alter the natural order of things, removing himself further from it, we see the speeding of these processes through the dynamics of technology toward that instant when the disharmony thus generated will manifest in a revolution of nature far beyond the tidal waves, earthquakes, drought and famine, and other responses of Earth to the practices and mindsets

of its human populations. It has happened many times before, and it can happen again.

And so, let us speak of patience, the dimension of global and universal co-existence and harmony that poses such a challenge to mankind.

Patience is a state of being; it is love and compassion for all of creation, and acceptance, accordingly, of the inherent right of all life to be and to do in accord with its own spiritual path and mission.

It does not presume to confer rights; it assumes them. It acknowledges the creative balance among all beings: plant, animal, mineral, avian; the four life-sustaining elements of air, fire, earth, and water; the living Earth herself; and all life in the solar systems, galaxies, and universes beyond.

Patience is a fearless, dynamic, vibrant, living energy that flows with change. It does not imply inaction, but encompasses action without judgment: to effect change in accord with universal purposes of love and harmony, not to right a perceived wrong.

Unlike tolerance, patience is effortless: it has no object, no intolerable requiring conversion.

In relation to the individual, patience occurs as both an external and an internal context, a nurturing and nonjudgmental environment for change.

Savoring the present instant, it has no attachment to a particular outcome, knowing of a certainty that whatever evolves through the operation of natural law, including patience itself (!), will be for the higher good of all involved.

Accordingly, patience simply allows all possibilities without limitation and thus makes no attempt to control.

Let it Be

i am not lost, of that i'm sure
yet being found, i'm still not pure...
my life spins on - a shadowed dream
the steps i've walked create the scene.....
the twists i turn reflect my gleam....

your words fall soft, like summer rains
help ease my cares and soothe my pains....
foot trodden paths which cross my gaze
portray a mingling of our ways....
announcing purpose to these days....
upholding truths of which we praise....

yet now and then on fated skies...
your feelings flash before my eyes....
your anger, doubt, and inward glance
belie some inward circumstance -
where musics song but ends the dance....
and binds the mind to a demons trance....

oh God of greatness seen within
exclaimed by "those" and "theys" and "thems"
defined by words in books revealed
in visions bringing knees to kneal
unleash within these minds about
your love which breaches every doubt -

i can't, it won't, we'll never see" -
such words are not of you and me
such caustic crimes against what's real
aren't meant for folks like us to feel
such downward thoughts are not the feed -
the source of strength your soul must need....

gird up your knowing thinking being
with eyes warmed loving kindly seeing
drink in the God which walks within
each soul you meet from now till then
waste not the shell the chick is growing
accept the life your heart is showing....

i am your brother tried and true
a bit of me resides in you
a bit of you upholds what's me
a bit of us creates the "be" -
as in what will?.....well let us see....
perhaps just once, we might all agree....

no not on matter, rule, or fact -
i am not speaking this or that -
i mean perhaps we might agree
to simply let each other be....
to allow that thought is always free -
to accept that each in their own way see.....
too much to ask?.....to strong a task.....
perhaps...perhaps...
but i thought i'd ask....

-- jim mccallon

JEST THE FACTS: Oops! I didn't mean to say that

“Now, like, I’m President. It would be pretty hard for some drug guy to come into the White House and start offering it up, you know? ... I bet if they did, I hope I would say, ‘Hey, get lost. We don’t want any of that.’” —George Bush, talking about drug abuse to a group of students

“Hawaii has always been a very pivotal role in the Pacific. It is in the Pacific. It is a part of the United States that is an island that is right here.” —Dan Quayle during a visit to Hawaii in 1989

“What a waste it is to lose one’s mind—or not to have a mind. How true that is.” —Dan Quayle addressing the United Negro College Fund

“The caribou love it. They rub against it and they have babies. There are more caribou in Alaska than you can shake a stick at.” —George Bush, on the Alaska pipeline

“If I listened to Michael Dukakis long enough I would be convinced that we’re in an economic downturn and people are homeless and going without food and medical attention and that we’ve got to do something about the unemployed.” —Ronald Reagan

FOREIGN GOOFS:

“Bite the wax tadpole.” — Coca-Cola as originally translated into Chinese

“Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the grave.” — ad slogan “Pepsi Comes Alive” as originally translated into Chinese

“I am a jelly doughnut” —English translation of John F. Kennedy speaking at the Berlin Wall

“We pray for MacArthur’s erection.” — sign

erected by Japanese citizens in Tokyo, when MacArthur was considering a run for President.

“It takes a virile man to make a chicken pregnant.” — Perdue chicken ad, as mistranslated abroad

FAMOUS SPORTS PLAYS:

“Winfield goes back to the wall. He hits his head on the wall and it rolls off! It’s rolling all the way back to second base! This is a terrible thing for the Padres!” —Jerry Coleman, San Diego Padres radio announcer.

The World According to Student Bloopers

by Richard Lederer
St. Paul’s School

One of the fringe benefits of being an English or History teacher is receiving the occasional jewel of a student blooper in an essay. I have pasted together the following “history” of the world from certifiably genuine student bloopers collected by teachers throughout the United States, from eighth grade through college level. Read carefully, and you will learn a lot.

The inhabitants of Egypt were called mummies. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and traveled by Camelot. The climate of the Sarah is such that the inhabitants have to live elsewhere, so certain areas of the dessert are cultivated by irritation. The Egyptians built the Pyramids in the shape of a huge triangular cube. The Pramids are a range of mountains between France and Spain.

The Bible is full of interesting caricatures. In the first book of the Bible, Guinnesses, Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. One of their children, Cain, asked “Am I my brother’s son?” God asked Abraham to sacrifice Issac on Mount Montezuma. Jacob, son of Issac, stole his brother’s birthmark. Jacob was a partiarich who brought up his twelve sons to be partiarichs, but they did not take to it. One of Jacob’s sons, Joseph, gave refuse to the Israelites.

Pharaoh forced the Hebrew slaves to make bread without straw. Moses led them to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Afterwards, Moses went up on Mount Sinai to get the ten commandments. David was a Hebrew king skilled at playing the lute. He fought with the Philistines, a race of people who lived in Biblical times. Solomon, one of David's sons, had 700 wives and 700 concubines.

Without the Greeks, we wouldn't have history. The Greeks invented three kinds of columns - Corinthian, Doric and Ionic. They also had myths. A myth is a female moth. One myth says that the mother of Achilles dipped him in the River Styx until he became invulnerable. Achilles appears in "The Iliad", by Homer. Homer also wrote the "Odyssey", in which Penelope was the last hardship that Ulysses endured on his journey. Actually, Homer was not written by Homer but by another man of that name.

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of hemlock.

In the Olympic Games, Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled the javelin, and threw the discus. The reward to the victor was a laurel wreath. The government of Athens was democratic because the people took the law into their own hands. There were no wars in Greece, as the mountains were so high that they couldn't climb over to see what their neighbors were doing. When they fought the Persians, the Greeks were outnumbered because the Persians had more men. Eventually, the Romans conquered the Greeks. History calls people Romans because they never stayed in one place for very long. At Roman banquets, the guests wore garlands in their hair. Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March killed him because they thought he was going to be made king. Nero was a cruel tyrant who would torture his poor subjects by playing the fiddle to them.

Then came the Middle Ages. King Alfred conquered the Danes, King Arthur lived in the Age of Chivalry, King Harold mustered his troops before the Battle of Hastings, Joan of Arc was canonized by George Bernard Shaw, and the victims of the Black Death grew boils on their necks. Finally, the Magna Carta provided that no free man should be hanged twice for the same offense.

In medieval times most of the people were illiterate. The greatest writer of the time was Chaucer, who wrote many poems and verse and also wrote literature. Another tale tells of William Tell, who shot an arrow through an apple while standing on his son's head.

The Renaissance was an age in which more individuals felt the value of their human being. Martin Luther was nailed

to the church door at Wittenberg for selling papal indulgences. He died a horrible death, being excommunicated by a bull. It was the painter Donatello's interest in the female nude that made him the father of the Renaissance. It was an age of great inventions and discoveries. Gutenberg invented the printing press. Sir Walter Raleigh is a historical figure because he invented cigarettes. Another important invention was the circulation of blood. Sir Francis Drake circumnavigated the world with a 100-foot clipper.

The government of England was a limited monarchy. Henry VIII found walking difficult because he had an abscess on his knee. Queen Elizabeth was the "Virgin Queen." As a queen she was a success. When Elizabeth exposed herself before her troops, they all shouted "hurrah." Then her navy went out and defeated the Spanish Armada.

The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. Shakespeare never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He lived in Windsor with his merry wives, writing tragedies, comedies and errors. In one of Shakespeare's famous plays, Hamlet ratiocinated his situation by relieving himself in a long soliloquy. In another, Lady Macbeth tries to convince Macbeth to kill the King by attacking his manhood. Romeo and Juliet are an example of a heroic couplet. Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote "Don Quixote". The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote "Paradise Lost." Then his wife dies and he wrote "Paradise Regained."

During the Renaissance America began. Christopher Columbus was a great navigator who discovered America while cursing about the Atlantic. His ships were called the Nina, the Pinta, and the Santa Fe. Later the Pilgrims crossed the Ocean, and they were called the Pilgrim's Progress. When they landed at Plymouth Rock, they were greeted by Indians, who came down the hill rolling their war hoes before them. The Indian squaws carried porpoises on their back. Many of the Indian heroes were killed, along with their captives, which proved very fatal to them. The winter of 1620 was a hard one for the settlers. Many people died and many babies were born. Captain John Smith was responsible for all this.

One of the causes of the Revolutionary Wars was the English put taxes in their tea. Also, the colonists would send their parcels through the post without stamps. During the War, Red Coats and Paul Revere was throwing balls over stone walls. The dogs were barking and the peacocks crowing. Finally, the colonists won the War and no longer had to pay for taxes.

Delegates from the original thirteen states formed the Continental Congress. Thomas Jefferson, a Virginian, and Benjamin Franklin were two signers of the Declaration of Independence. Franklin had gone to Boston carrying all his

clothes in his pocket and a loaf of bread under each arm. He invented electricity by rubbing cats backwards and declared "a horse divided against itself cannot stand." Franklin died in 1790 and is still dead.

George Washington married Matha Curtis and in due time became the Father of Our Country. Then the Constitution of the United States was adopted to secure domestic hostility. Under the Constitution the people enjoyed the right to keep bare arms.

Abraham Lincoln became America's greatest Precedent. Lincoln's mother died in infancy, and he was born in a log cabin which he built with his own hands. When Lincoln was President, he wore only a tall silk hat. He said, "In onion there is strength." Abraham Lincoln write the Gettysburg address while traveling from Washington to Gettysburg on the back of an envelope. He also signed the Emasculation Proclamation, and the Fourteenth Amendment gave the ex-Negroes citizenship. But the Clue Clux Clan would torcher and lynch the ex-Negroes and other innocent victims. On the night of April 14, 1865, Lincoln went to the theater and got shot in his seat by one of the actors in a moving picture show. The believed assassin was John Wilkes Booth, a supposedl insane actor. This ruined Booth's career.

Meanwhile in Europe, the enlightenment was a reasonable time. Voltare invented electricity and also wrote a book called "Candy". Gravity was invented by Issac Walton. It is chiefly noticeable in the Autumn, when the apples are fling off the trees.

Bach was the most famous composer in the world, and so was Handel. Handel was half German, half Italian and half English. He was very large. Bach died from 1750 to the present. Beethoven wrote music even though he was deaf. He was so deaf he wrote loud music. He took long walks in the forest even when everyone was calling for him. Beethoven expired in 1827 and later died for this.

France was in a very serious state. The French Revolution was accomplished before it happened. The Marseillaise was the theme song of the French Revolution, and it catapulted into Napoleon. During the Napoleonic Wars, the crowned heads of Europe were trembling in their shoes. Then the Spanish gorillas came down from the hills and nipped at Napoleon's flanks. Napoleon became ill with bladder problems and was very tense and unrestrained. He wanted an heir to inheret his power, but since Josephine was a baroness, she couldn't bear him any children.

The sun never set on the British Empire because the British Empire is in the East and the sun sets in the West. Queen Victoria was the longest queen. She sat on a thorn for 63 years. Her reclining years and finally the end of her life were exemplary of a great personality. Her death was

the final event which ended her reign.

The nineteenth century was a time of many great inventions and thoughts. The invention of the steamboat caused a network of rivers to spring up. Cyrus McCormick invented the McCormick Raper, which did the work of a hundred men. Samuel Morse invented a code for telepathy. Louis Pastuer discovered a cure for rabbis. Charles Darwin was a naturailst who wrote the "Organ of the Species". Madman Curie discovered radium. And Karl Marx became one of the Marx Brothers.

The First World War, cause by the assignation of the Arch-Duck by a surf, ushered in a new error in the anals of human history.

Bloopers from Children

from the book "The Joy Of Lex" by Gyles Brandreth.

The inhabitants of Paris are called Parisites.

A Fjord is a Swedish automobile.

The Gorgons had long snakes in their hair. They looked like women only more horrible.

The plural of spouse is spice.

Henry VIII found walking difficult because he had an abess on his knee.

An optimist is a man who looks after your eyes and a pessimist looks after your feet.

The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.

A hostage is a nice lady on an airplane.

Jacob had a brother called Seesaw.

Psychology is a fairly modern disease discovered by a man named Floyd.

The future of "I give" is "you take."

Kosher is Jewish pork.

It was the painter Donatello's interest in the female nude that made him the father of the Renaissance.

A passive verb is when the subject is the sufferer, as "I am loved."

Having only one wife is called monotony.

In "Mrs. Warren's Profession", her profession is the oldest profession, but she is not really a lost woman. She is just mislaid.

ESCAPE FROM SEDONA: Or You'll Never Die On My Screen Again

by Jim Cleveland

SCENE: The Hollywood offices of Globus, Gorbus, and Goofus Productions. A pitch is being made; the name of Kurt Russell bandied freely. Puffy, a sweaty and amply-bellied press agent, stands and swirls like Dumbo, with wide eyes and sweeping gestures. Behind a Mahogany airport, mayhem mogul J.B. sits stolid, puffing methodically, as if on a timer, upon a huge cigar. His beady eyes squinted at inner nothingness, seeking vainly to find a crevice wherein to make a dollar, a vision to complement Puffy's usual overwrought rhetoric, engulfed, as usual, in his own smoke ... and that of others.

Puffy speaks. "I tell ya J.B., it's a natural. A third sequel in a series just getting settled in, like Jason and Freddie. They've had *Escape from New York*, I mean, who wouldn't? Ha! Uh-h. Snake Pleskin gets established as a character there. Then *Escape from L.A.*, with the newest pyrotechnics and minimalist script techniques. And now the Snake looms again!"

Puffy's fat fingers spun and waved upward, not like the dancing cobra he would emulate but more like link sausages ascending to Heaven.

"Well, the new one takes us to the mysterious center of the New Age — Ezzzz-Cape from Sedona! Eerie red rocks, dead spirits floating, doing deep echoes, lots of dry ice, shadows,

sharp objects. We do a gory murder or two before the credits, of course, just to set the stage, gag some old farts walking their poodle or something. And then, in the midst of this mystical mayhem comes Snake Pleskin. He's vacationing with a buxom girl friend, a blonde since she needs to get captured later by dark-skinned devil cultists.

"Yeah? Which girl is that? I got some contracts from the day bed I gotta do sumpin' on," said J.B. "I'm gonna need some executive input, hah! input ... on this one."

"Well, you know, somebody who looks good naked. She'll have to get tied up and laid out on a stone slab at some point," Puffy reasoned. "But anyway, Kurt and the girl get sucked into a powerful scenario of otherworldly stuff, hidden caves ... "

"Wait a sec," J.B. grunted. "Gimme a minute to consider this load so far. I'm shakin' out my boots heah." This was always the cue for Puffy to shut up and give rapt attention.

Puffy looked like Thomas Gomez on a bad day. On a good day, he could do no better than Dane Clark. He listened now, lips and brow pursed as if anticipating great wisdom, while in truth anticipating something truly stupid. He waited before the gnomish semi-mogul before him.

J.B. had reared back and looked upward to the ceiling, fingers joined, cagelike, puffing and watching his

wafting and twisted ringlets. Like smoke off a manure pile, groused Puffy to himself.

J.B. finally shifted his squeaking recliner and dusted the cigar ceremoniously. "In the first place, Puffy, new age ain't shit for a market. Too much God business. They ain't gonna come see this pix. They're goin' for angels and elevator music. And our base adolescent market. You'll drive them away in droves. They don't know Sedona from Baloney. And they don't know Yahweh from Maui Wowie! May I say ... they don't know religion from perdition. So let's blow this one off and keep givin' 'em what they want, decadence and the F-word screamed loud and frequently. Give 'em hard-core revenge. Give 'em a golden calf; that's where the money is. How about ... Tijuana?"

Puffy was deflated, mind buzzing with alternative arguments or ways to kiss J.B.'s ass and soften his view.

"Great idea!" Puffy exclaimed. "That's how we can make it real. A Pagan Idol Snake Cult from Mexico. Snake Pleskin! What a tie-in! You're uncanny J.B. We were gonna use Colombian drug dealers or a devil cult but they've been done to death."

"Sure as hell have," J.B. enthused. His great ideas were taking hold. "But we gotta stay in the muscle and action category. Can't go into the horror category. It'll cannibalize our Chainsaw Bimbos series and the Children of the Corn. By the way, where are we on that one? The Corn Kids doing the devil shit."

"Puked out finally with No. 13, I

think," said Puffy, "the one where Morgan Fairchild and Godzilla, transported through time, came to the cornfields to confront Karo, the giant syrup blob. I'm sure you remember spending all that money engulfing Dubuque and Cedar Rapids, J.B.? And the day somebody put the syrup in Morgan's shampoo!"

"Sure," said J.B., "and we got sued by the chinks over that hunk of rubber lizard they claimed rights too. Godzilla, jeez, how can you copyright a name like that? It's kinda sacrilegious in a way."

Puffy recalled that Rubbermaid of Japan, which had bought the rights in 1999, had sued them and won over the Godzilla image. Putting a pencil-thin mustache on the behemoth had been cute but ineffective, at least from a copyright infringement point of view.

"But the Corn Kids. That was a great series, J.B.," Puffy spinned, "but it was really time to put it in the crib - Ha! corn crib, get it? - uhh-h. Anyway, especially after making only \$75 on the last one, and, of course, after the attempted suicide of the head scriptwriter and the severe damages to the cafeteria awning and everything ... it just kind of soured the scene, you know, but! All the more reason we need to ... Escape to Sedona." Puffy rallied.

"Wide screen this one, J.B. Evil new agers made into zombies, running amok. Helpless flower children get squashed by them big red rocks that come alive and attack them. It's the dark side to all this spiritual whoo-whoohoo stuff in the market. You know,

them Angel books that are flying out of the stores. But all that means is that the bottom third of the taste test market, the one we've carefully cultivated with cool explosions, property damage, vengeance and fornication, is going to need our pictures more than ever as kind of an ... antidote to all that warm honey at the top of the market, the Yech! market. So, ironically, we tap the good vibes to fuel the bad vibes. For every action, a reaction; for every good idea a bad one...for every mature thought an adolescent pimple of a micro-thought that proves, nonetheless ... profitable!"

"It can't miss," Puffy enthused. "And make it now, before those friggin' yellow perils over at Sony sign up Kurt for Escape from Tokyo or Yokahama or some other Pacific Pooh-Pooh. Let's pitch some good 'ol American escapism here."

"Hey, give it a rest, Puffy," J.B. grunted sourly. "I gotta think here." Puffy wiped sweat from his brow and wondered if the deodorant was holding, pouring a glass of water from J.B.'s pitcher messily, and worrying silently about the next absurdity that might come stumbling out of J.B.'s mind, which often seemed to be a transplant from an oversexed ogre. Had to be ready slurp, slurp.

"Of course! " boomed J.B. momentarily, as if he had just accepted the reins of planetary government. "Rocks! that come alive! That's new. Isn't it?"

"Why hell yes!" Puffy agreed in a loud, whispering rasp, as if he had just discovered the secret of life and

also the lottery. "An incredible insight, J.B. Live boulders, real big nasty ones! They'll come at you with levitation! You know. The guys up in Santa Barbara are good at that. They can float in and then socko! He banged his fat fist. And rockslides, we'll have a big one at the end, with all kinds of noise and miniatures."

"Yeah," rasped J.B., "and then the real story underneath, in a giant cave we'll have a lost tribe of Amazon-like women. They wear string bikinis and shoot laser pistols. That'll give us some more explosions and things to threaten Snake with."

"String bikinis! In Sedona? You'd do better to save them for the next high seas adventure," blurted Puffy. "I was thinking about a bunch of big ugly hairy underground shits. You've got all those costumes left over from the The Monkey Shining."

"Babes in Bikinis!" J.B. insisted. "I've got to deal with those couch contracts. Marlene's been out of town. Besides Kurt can't kiss ugly hairy things. Except on his own time. But we can use the hairies too, in supporting roles. That'll help Accounting get their dollars out of that buy. And work in that pit of animated vipers I paid big bucks for, remember, for the Hydra in Hot Pants deal."

"It's gonna be great, J.B. A blockbuster. But remember, when we start doing those rock squeezes, we can't get over three barrels of blood per segment on official requisition or they'll put us out of Action and over in the Horror category. I learned that on the Mummy Princess from Mars trilogy. Plus Action's the genre

Kurt is looking for right now, unless Goldie talks him into one of those comedy, feel-good crappers she's always doing. Too bad she don't come around to our thinking. She'd look damned good lying naked on a slab."

"Well, let me remind you," said J.B., "this one can't sound anything like 'Big Trouble In Little China,' or we'll be flushed before we can pitch it. That was one of Kurt's major floppos. The mumbo was too jumbo in that one. And there were a lot of bad orientals in it. You know ... I don't think you could make that picture in Hollywood today."

"Don't worry. We'll write it like 'Die Hard' vs. 'Road Warrior' and he'll snap at it. You gonna use Dennis Hopper for the mad villain again? He always has good weed."

"Why not? He's still the best whacko in the business for the money," asserted J.B., "but remember that contract clause, where he always gets a dying scene and gets to write his own, as it says, 'wry and comical last words.'"

"Yeah, I thought that last one, where he drank kerosene and killed the canary with his final breath was a bit much. I don't think it symbolized the fate of mankind at all, like he said. It was just ... so much halitosis."

"Better to have halitosis than no breath at all," mumbled J.B. "I just want to see the statement beforehand this time. It better be funny, or he's never going to die on my screen again."

In subsequent weeks, Kurt and Goldie were approached about a third sequel in the "Escape From" action series. Kurt appeared aloof. But in time a sum of money was mentioned to Globus, Gorbis and Goofus that sent J.B. into a tantrum. He railed loudly of greed, dictating a letter to certain of the stockholders and confidantes while walking about and puffing voraciously into the smoke-laden room.

And there, down the street, waited the Japanese.

Sony made the third picture in the series and it hit theaters in time for Christmas business. "Escape from Mars" featured the continued exploits of Snake Pleskin, scruffy anti-hero with a patch over one eye and a demonstrated and oft-used proficiency with a variety of firearms.

Mars has been turned into yet another penal colony where every scumbag of the universe has again been incarcerated. As an established icon, Snake is again heroic in that kind of lovable, twisted, cynical, nasty way and he eventually rescues the Venusian nurse hostages with the push-up bras from a fate worse than exposure.

The seeming billions of miscreants which Snake is called upon to dispatch bloodily in three barrels or less are made even more evil in this celluloid incarnation because they have been enslaved here on this miserable space rock for nearly a millennium, in a kind of horrific tupperware party that goes on forever. It is hosted by Joan Rivers, and is punctuated with frequent intermis-

sions in which the prisoners are forced to eat tiny finger sandwiches on rye bread and drink an exceedingly pale herb tea.

Once unleashed by an unthinking janitor, the galactic cretins take vicious bloodletting revenge to new depths of dementia. Hapless victims are thrown into pits of molten, smoking tupperware, which bubbles vulgarly while claiming its ludicrously screaming and rapidly-descending bodies — a kind of modern-day version of the Pagan firepit.

Kurt, of course, once sufficiently irritated by atrocities and loaded with clever remarks, wreaks havoc upon all evil each day, working up a good appetite and usually meeting Goldie and friends for dinner.

They never did do an Escape from Sedona picture, and into the 21st century they were making features centered in Hong Kong, Peking, Sumatra, and even Berlin, in a timedrop where Kurt is able to single-handedly wipe out a division of Nazi storm troopers, including the octogenerian terror icon, Max Von Sydow. In a clever plot twist, the prisoners were the good guys this time, American fliers shot down by scantily clad alien nazi women and a mob of big, ugly hairy things.

As I reflect upon these writings, I am told that this man, Von Sydow, once portrayed Jesus. But was deemed to be much better cast in the role of devils and hit men. Aren't we all.

Now I am part of Puffy's memoirs. He has retired to Sedona and speaks on my pages now and then. Lying here

upon his desk, I know there remains just a little bitterness about the Big Picture Puffy never made. Despite his enormous wealth and girth, he is often moodily reflective.

At moonlight he walks a tiny Chihuahua on a bike path under the enormous red rocks and often imagines that massive crimson bulk coming alive to burp guturally and smother joggers, meditators and backseat lovebirds alike in its horrific, beyond-granite grip. It doesn't happen.

Now, in hindsight, he realizes their mistake. They were off-base from the beginning. There's no doubt that Sedona should have been established, from the outset, as an intergalactic penal colony.

Puffy stands and waits patiently for Gomez, the Chihuahua, to leave a cigar-like turd at the base of the big red rock.

Letting kids talk:

CONCERNING WHY LOVE HAPPENS BETWEEN TWO PARTICULAR PEOPLE

"No one is sure why it happens, but I heard it has something to do with how you smell ... That's why perfume and deodorant are so popular." - Mae, age 9

"I think you're supposed to get shot with an arrow or something, but the rest of it isn't supposed to be so painful. Manuel, age 8

ON WHAT FALLING IN LOVE IS LIKE

"Like an avalanche where you have to run for your life." - John, age 9

"If falling in love is anything like learning how to spell, I don't want to do it. It takes too long." - Glenn, age 7

ON THE ROLE OF BEAUTY AND HANDSOMENESS IN LOVE

"If you want to be loved by somebody who isn't already in your family, it doesn't hurt to be beautiful." - Anita C., age 8

THE EVOLUTION OF GOD ... In the Mind of Humans

**From a series of Urantia Book Study Papers
by Michelle Klimesh**

Jesus and the Apostles taught daily in the Jerusalem temple during the month of April. They also worked personally with people who later carried their message to other areas of the Roman empire and the East.

A wealthy Jewish trader, Jacob, asked Jesus to explain the difference between the angry God described by Moses, and the loving God of Jesus. Jesus said,

“Our Father in Paradise is changeless. But the concept of his nature has enlarged and grown from the days of Moses... When your children are very young and immature, and when you must chastise them, they may reflect that their father is angry and filled with resentful wrath. Their immaturity cannot penetrate beyond the punishment to discern the father’s farseeing and corrective affection. But when these same children become grown-up men and women, would it not be folly for them to cling to these earlier and misconceived notions regarding their father? ... And should not mankind, as the centuries pass, come the better to understand the true nature and loving character of the Father in heaven?”

Jesus instructed the apostles about the evolution of the concept of Deity in the Jewish faith. The growth of the idea of God included:

Yahweh, a primitive concept which Moses exalted to the God of Israel

The Most High, a merge of Melchizedek teachings with Mesopotamian concepts

El Shaddai, the Egyptian concept learned during the Hebrew captivity

Elohim, three Gods in one

The Supreme Yahweh, a universe Creator, all-powerful and all-merciful

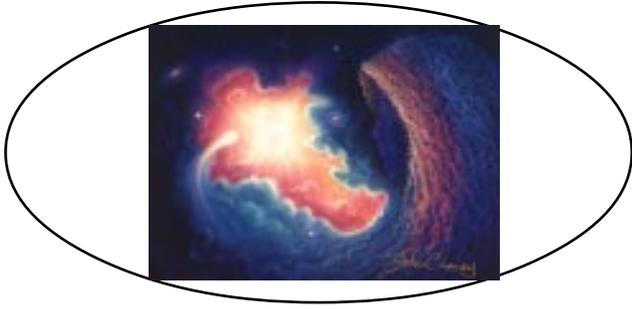
The Father in heaven, the God described by Jesus.

The apostles were bewildered by these teachings. Jesus tried to explain that God himself does not change, but awareness of Him evolves from generation to generation. Jesus also described the evolution of versions of the ten commandments into one law of loving God and serving man.

Jesus was invited to visit the home of another wealthy Greek Jew, Flavius. He was nervous about inviting the Master because he had collected many works of art, and feared Jesus would take offense at them. Jesus showed great interest in the art. Sensing Flavius’ discomfort, he said:

“Why should you expect to be rebuked? Moses’ children have misunderstood him, and now do they make false gods of even his prohibitions of images and the likeness of things in heaven and on earth... I declare that in the coming kingdom they shall no longer teach, Do not worship this and do not worship that’; no longer shall they concern themselves with commands to refrain from this and take care not to do that; but rather shall all be concerned with one supreme duty ... sincere worship of ... the paradise Father, and loving service bestowed on one’s fellow men.”

A man from Damascus asked how he could know for certain that Jesus was sent by God; Jesus said that his message and his disciples should be judged by their fruits. Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, requested a private conference with the master, during which Jesus said that children of God are born again, “born of the spirit”. Nicodemus asked, “How can a



A Short History of Medicine

From: Sharlene Lindstrom
posted on the Light Mission email discussion

I have an earache:

man be born again when he is old?" Jesus spoke of the task of entering the spiritual kingdom, saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." This same Nicodemus later went with Joseph of Arimathea to claim the body of Jesus after his death.

2000 B.C. -Here, eat this root.

1000 A.D. -That root is heathen. Here, say this prayer.

1850 A.D. -That prayer is superstition. Here, drink this potion.

Jesus taught the apostles that the concept of "kingdom" was not the best way to illustrate our relationship with God. He employed such words because the Jewish people were expecting a new kingdom to appear. Jesus said, "The people of another age will better understand the gospel of the kingdom when it is presented in terms expressive of the family..." A true family is founded on the following seven facts:

1940 A.D. -That potion is snake oil. Here, swallow this pill.

1985 A.D. -That pill is ineffective. Here, take this antibiotic.

1. The fact of existence
2. Security and pleasure
3. Education and training
4. Discipline and restraint
5. Companionship and loyalty
6. Love and mercy
7. Provision for the future

2000 A.D. -That antibiotic is artificial. Here, eat this root.

"Let There Be Light — Always in All Ways" e.j.
<http://home.earthlink.net/~ejlight/index1.html>

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## Celestial Quotes

From: Sonny Schneider <sonny@ilhawaii.net>

Thomas asked, "Master, we do not find that the Father in heaven always deals kindly and mercifully with us. Many times we grievously suffer on earth, and not always are our prayers answered."

### The Teaching Mission:

Your main task is to love each other.—Linel

Jesus answered, "Thomas, Thomas, how long before you will acquire the ability to listen with the ear of the spirit? ... cannot you separate the spiritual realities of the kingdom from the material, social, economic, and political problems of the age?"

### The Urantia Book, p.1945:

"You have not merely chosen me, but I have also chosen you, and I have ordained you to go forth into the world to yield the fruit of loving service to your fellows even as I have lived among you and revealed the Father to you. The Father and I will both work with you, and you shall experience the divine fullness of joy if you will only obey my command to love one another, even as I have loved you."—Jesus

# GODINSIDE: The Deeper Reality of Happiness

by MICKI FRAZIER

(Editor's Introduction: *A friend and fellow spiritual seeker in California, also a superb spiritual song stylist, produced this poignant, stream-of-consciousness sharing in a recent email.*

Hi there!

I thought I'd send a few thoughts from a letter I wrote to a friend. Many of these thoughts have been inspired to me from reading or hearing the teachers on the subject of happiness. I hope these words will bless you as I was trying to bless my friend.

**Just how many spiritually minded people** do we know that are living truly happy lives?? Now I'm not talking about sober, or settled, or contented, or saying and doing all the right things. ("Praise De Lorda, I'm FINE ... Frustrated, Insecure, Nervous and Excitable.") Or engaging in the politically correct religious undertakings.

I have to say that I've known few if any people who are really HAPPY. Every time I talk to ANYONE, there seems to be this plethora (how's THAT for a word!) of rhymes, whines, reasons and chimes as to why they are not happy. But there IS so much very real hardship, suffering, hunger, pain, tragedy, betrayal, anger, rage, frustration, selfishness, bigotry, insensitivity, etc....augggghhhh! in the world.

Does this mean I don't care ... of course not! I care very much. I not only care that not one but TWO very beautiful lights have gone out of this world, I also care that a lot of beautiful lights are being snuffed out every day by war, disease, poverty, and hatred. It's a pretty grim picture.

**It's ironic that it takes the death** of a young princess, and of an old and beautiful saint to call to mind that the life of a Bosnian or African or Tibetan, or any baby, child or adult matters just as much. At least to God, if not to us.

As to the topic of finding Happiness... The bona fide REAL thing ... no additives, just perfectly preserved because it's so powerful. A life lived in an incredible way ... I'm talking about honestly and truly sincerely ECSTATIC, ENTHUSIASTIC, BRIMMING OVER, COLORFUL (as opposed to "black and white"), ADVENTUROUS, SERENE, Definitely NOT BORED...The kind of living that makes your face hurt from smiling so much. It's like being in love, not with just a WHO but with the whole picture, the whole huge scenario with it's joys and sorrows .... It's the UNCONSCIOUS happiness that is a constant state of mind ... like no matter what time of day it is, or how much money one has, or whether you're with somebody or not, or got enough sleep, or whatever ... there's still that buzzing feeling of GRATITUDE that wells up because you can always think of something wonderful to be grateful for, like just being alive.

Right there beneath the surface of our daily lives, a bubbling spring ceaselessly available to quench our thirst, or a flame always lighting our way, each moment, each day ... as soon as we think of it.

See what I mean?? I've been "working out my salvation" this way for a while. Am I there yet ... hell no! BUT! I think I've been given some "still, small" divinely inspired words that are so simple yet profound in their implications. So profound in fact, that I'm reeling from what they imply.

It's like a jewel shining brilliantly, and it's right here, right now .... it's a matter of tuning in to it. Seeing God ... everywhere and in everyone.

Please! This is not some new-agey gobbledy gook .... I can't begin to tell you how real this is! Shit happens, Sorrow happens, Death will happen to us all and then, more Life of a kind we can scarcely imagine ... .but in the meantime: How do we get from point "A"(the valley of the shadow of death) to point "B"( the summit of our own personal Everest)?? On a wing and a prayer ..... Magic Words .... meditation, mindfulness, compassion for ourselves and everyone, mercy, forgiveness, release, relationship, realization, Reality.

So how do we work out this aspect of "saving our souls"?? Here's a start: Just Sit. I'll say it again in case you didn't believe what you just read: Just Sit. Sit and think...nope Sit and worry...nah aah Sit and feel guilty...absolutely not Sit and be aware...yes, aware of Now.

God is here and now  
You and I are here and now  
Life is here and now  
This is what meditation is; what Stillness is.  
Mindfulness is meditation when you're not meditating.  
It's paying full attention to what you're doing or who you're talking to, or being in the present moment whilst keeping abreast of daily living.

Compassion is getting into our own skin and then being able to be in the shoes of the fisherman, or housewife, or homeless person, or anyone. We're all in this together. Jesus was so good at this when He was here in the flesh. He's still the best at it.

I ask you to think deeply about this as I have so many times thought and continue to think about this. If you are truly present in the Presence ... there's no time for insecurity or narcissism. If you are paying full attention to whoever may be speaking to you, there is no room to consider a witty retort. Being fully present creates in us on an ongoing basis .... kindness, unselfishness, no "pasting" or "futuring".

Think of it!!  
Being able to be fully right here and now ... paying loving attention because you are seeing God in people, in every conversation, in every encounter .... and you can truly enjoy your encounters .... after practicing this for a little while, you find yourself feeling lighter, more joyful, more able to tackle life's inevitables .... the day to day things that of a necessity we must responsibly pay attention to.

I've been seeing a few results in my

own life .... little ones, one day at a time .... of course I'm still working on some BIG questions like .... will I ever really do music again, and will I ever be able to figure out and attain the skills I need for a reasonably lucrative occupation. At least I'm getting better with my adverbs!!

**“Christian” in its truest sense** of the word means “little Christ”.... NOT sinner, worm, unworthy, scum, defective, dysfunctional, co-dependent, addicted .... it means “little Christ” .... a piece of the Prince of Peace. It's a potential for each of us that no amount of religious activity, or cajoling from those we give away our personal power to, or weight of guilt, can materialize for us ... why? Because it's already here in all of us.

All means all, not just some small and very vocal (albeit obnoxious) group .... it means every single person on this planet ... regardless of belief or non-belief, or whether they recited some dictated prayer, or live in a way that is acceptable to certain individuals. It is regardless of race or culture or, dare I say it?... gender identification or preference, or total annual income.

Ask your own heart ... as “deceitful and wicked” as some say our hearts are, Who would YOU like to send to hell?? And if you couldn't, how much less would God who is much more capable of love and forgiveness?? Think of the precious people you meet (and we meet so many in so many places) ... they're all kinds!! Full of Joy or not, full of their own worries and cares .... some will lie like crazy to you, others will be true and loyal at least to a certain extent ...

some will hurt you without thinking, some will be meaning every bit of it ... striking out in their own anger and hurt.

Everybody we have ever known or heard about was once a little helpless and innocent baby .... I've never known any bad babies ... only those who needed a little attention. A little love. Hitler and Manson were once babies. There are former babies sitting on death row. So many babies have grown down to do so many horrible things ..... so many circumstances and reasons.... none of it black and white, or remotely easy to rationalize away.

We have to turn the tide somehow ... gotta start somewhere. When we strip away all the cultures, superstitions, lifestyles, mindsets, what have we got left: What the world needs now is.... Love.

**Love means you try and treat others and yourself kindly.** So the question is not: “Have you said the ‘sinner's prayer?’” or Are you living in obedience?? It's: How much have we loved today?

Love is like dropping a pebble in a pond and watching the ripples grow and become larger and larger. It seems so small and ineffectual to just be kind ... but God! the far reaching effects that could come as a result!! People who love aren't greedy, don't pass unjust laws, don't keep the poor poor, don't steal, don't mug or rape you, don't start wars, don't seduce you and then lead you on, don't lie to you or cheat on you, don't play games with your head, don't enslave people, don't condemn, don't judge,

don't bomb abortion clinics, don't leave people to be homeless in the street. People who love are responsible, pay their rent, apologize if it's needed, are kind, friendly, accepting of others' differences.

So .... Let's take the pressure off and say.... AAAAAHHHHHHH! Living with the Mind of Christ is release, not pressure. Thinking with the Mind of Christ is the application of love and good common sense to almost every situation.

I like the term: Praying as if it all depends on God, but taking action as if it all depends on you. Wouldn't it be nice not to have to go looking for demons and bad guys under every rock or in every nook and cranny?? I remember something Kathryn Kuhlman said at this huge rally a couple of years before she died .... She said she was too busy looking at God and seeing God everywhere and in everyone to pay any attention to the devil.

It's too easy and too superstitious to keep blaming the devil for the ups and downs of our lives. I know this may seem heretical to some, but I don't believe in a personal devil ... I believe that we humans are always looking for someone to scapegoat ... interesting that one of the popular symbols of the devil is a goat ... goats aren't bad ... but they've been used for a very very long time as a target of blame.

To me demons are real but they're not beings who possess you ... rather, they are mirrors reflecting back to us the dark sides of ourselves .... the ignorance, hatred and evil we are all

very capable of .... we don't need a devil ... many people have or are their own larger than life facsimilie.

This "Devil" is harder to overcome ... it's so much easier and "safer" to tow the party line and point fingers at a "being" rather than surmount the enormous task of tackling our demons of selfishness, ego, fear, bigotry, etc. Like climbing Everest ... ahhhh! it's point B!!

But this Everest is not a mountain strewn with the frozen dead bodies of those who tried and failed. There is no failing or turning back from this Everest. It's only a matter of how long it takes. This Everest stands alone. This Everest is different for each person. The only dead bodies we will walk over trying to get to the top are our own ... every time we take one more step to being more loving, more kind, more generous .... we shed another hunk of dead weight .... we get lighter and lighter .... light as the feather on an angel's wing, light as air, light as light, warm and real as the sun shining. Only the sun is now shining out from our own hearts .... because God is there and love has made us transparent.

Can you grasp the implications of this? Can you taste it? It's more pure than the purest glacial water. Can you feel it like a chilling refreshing breeze off the back of chair 3?? It can give us wings and set us flying. So start by ... Just sitting. A little time every day, like a little game you play with your own head ... a quiet time to remember your sense of humor, to remember to love... and to know beyond a shadow of doubt that you and I and everyone we meet are

loved UNCONDITIONALLY.

No strings attached.

Rather, it's a snipping away of the strings of our puppethood ...

attachments, cravings, pain, to make us more human. Pinocchio's dream come true. It's twooo, it's twooo!

Blessings,  
micki

## CELESTIAL SURFING: **Avoiding Living by Fallacious Standards**

**From: mindful@sprynet.com (Don Tyler)**

**Organization: MINDFUL WORKS**

chiding his followers in stern terms,  
interfering with commerce in the courtyard,

In conflict, do you pray that you or your side will win, or do you pray for the triumph of God's will?

But he was always right.

Do you presume that they are one and the same?

Besides wealth and a sociable facade, erroneous standards include  
venerableness of age or innocence of youth,  
relationship to a dominant or oppressed group,  
and ... popularity.

In terms of US American sociopolitical stereotypes:

Stereotypically, the Conservative thinks,  
this person is wealthy, and therefore admirable.  
this person is poor, and therefore despicable.

Not aptitude nor ineptitude,  
wealth nor poverty,  
apparent niceness nor seeming meanness,  
wit nor slowness,  
solitariness nor alignment,  
support of the crowd, nor rejection thereby,

Stereotypically, the Liberal thinks,  
this person is wealthy, therefore despicable.  
this person is poor, therefore admirable.

**None of these are a measure of the fruits of the spirit.** They are the measures of the kingdoms of the world, but not of the kingdom of heaven.

Wealth, like a display of specialized skill, does not signify possession of spiritual capacity, nor does it obviate same. Likewise poverty.

You probably knew this.

Similarly, some think,  
these people are nice people and therefore in the right.  
these people are not so nice and therefore in the wrong.

I find sometimes it helps to reflect anew upon what we already know.

Adam and Eve were among the nicest people ever, I'm sure. And they erred, seriously, to our detriment three dozen millennia later.

This is my fault:

Sometimes Jesus wasn't nice in the socially approved manner,  
saying unkind things about local authorities,

UB Comix—insights and in-jokes for those familiar with the fifth epochal revelation and its associated social repercussions

<http://home.sprynet.com/sprynet/mindful/ubcomix.htm>

## EXPLORER ENDNOTES for Issue no. 2: The *Light and Life* Journal

**Fellow Explorers ...** As we conclude another exploration of the spiritual universe, we have all hopefully gained more clarity about the vast interworkings of our amazing time and space world and its relation to the universe.

Often your editor does not necessarily agree with our writers. It is also true that I don't necessarily disagree with them either. So many fascinating subjects are ours for exploration without the demand for complete understanding. We do not have to rapidly form a hard-and-fast stance on that which will be further revealed when we are able to assimilate more enlightened layers of perspective. Beliefs I once cherished I have later found to be shallow for I was understanding as a child. And I would never be so presumptuous now as to say that I do not still understand many things as a child. I will avoid making unknowing judgments on things I still do not fully understand. After all, there will be both truth and error in all things human.

The critical understanding is that we are all children of the One God. God loves us all. If we seek God, we can be assured that God has already found us. If we seek Truth, Beauty and Goodness and try to manifest them in our lives, we will be blessed with incremental gifts of additional Truth, Beauty and Goodness -- as we are open and ready to receive them. We will not be penalized for ignorance alone. So let us be open-minded and explore this vast spiritual universe, evaluating our findings based on inner guidance, the spirit of truth, with continuing advice from our closest friend whom we talk to daily -- God, the Father -- knowing there are truths to be gleaned in many places, perhaps in the next person you meet.

**Which brings us to comment** on one of our principal sections in this anthology -- about Pauline Christianity.

What more might be said? Only this. That humankind's worshipful exaltation of so-called Holy Scripture is an unconscious exaltation of Man over God. How could we dare call a book written and assembled by men to be holy and true in its every word? The truth is, those men were no more or less inspired than we all can be if we choose to live in the presence of God's love. This has always been true. And we don't have to embrace the Bible to embrace God.

Universe spiritual reality is found in the personal relationship between God and child, or else the souls of those millions who did not read a certain book or join a certain church were doomed from their beginnings. Reality is that each soul is a lamb of Jesus, a child of God, no matter his scriptural affiliation. Each, from pope to pauper, has the opportunity for spiritual salvation.

Those who canonized certain works and excluded others did well in constructing an anthology of major significance, worthy of reading and study. But to deem it holy because church fathers exalted themselves to this decision-making role and then put themselves in charge of its continued interpretation is a bit much.

The role of the church should be socialization, not control. Who are these people who would dare include such outrageous Jewish puffery, mythology and political propaganda? Who are they to exalt Paul's letters to congregations as holy writ? He never intended that. Since Abner knew and worked with Jesus, why weren't his ideas included? I'd say it was politics as usual.

It's time for Christianity to rise above its allegiance to scripture and to begin operating from the heart -- writing and speaking new messages that come from each soul's desires for truth, beauty and goodness. A lot of beautifully instructive spiritual books are being written right now -- and increasingly will be..

One day we will look back in wonder that we had to sanctify something ancient and altogether human in order to bring God and spirituality into our limited realm of understanding. Better to reach for and aspire to new frontiers of spiritual understanding -- not stagnated by reverence to ancient axioms and attendant misunderstandings. Why should people of modern and more enlightened times have to rely on primitive superstitions and fears? A direct link to God, our Father, is available daily in the Stillness time -- in worship, prayer, love, and forgiveness, and by simply asking for clarity, understanding, greater measures of truth, beauty and goodness. God will provide.

It is ours for the asking, and it isn't found in some church that is seeking to dictate to us what is spiritually true. It is found in the inner presence of God, which we can make into a reliable Bible for our daily lives. God will provide far more illuminating answers and guidance to you than a church preaching out of some ancient book. True religion is a personal experience.

The human who puts his spiritual growth in the hands of a particular church will not be open to many other truths and will sacrifice far greater understandings. It is our wonderfully challenging human quest to take charge of discovering our own personal levels of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. It is as personal as a newborn baby. And babes we all are. May we struggle to learn and grow in love, not fear, and to rise in love, not judgment, above what we used to believe and found to be only one layer of perspective.

**Love to all until L&L 3 ..... Jim Cleveland**