

# UNIVERSAL ETHICS

## CONCEPTS FROM *THE URANTIA BOOK*

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*Universal Ethics* is a study guide of 100 short papers from the four parts of *The Urantia Book*, a revelation of epochal significance to the world. The Book has 196 Papers in 2,097 pages. The excerpts are sequenced here as follows:

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### The Study of *The Urantia Book*

There are a number of on-line educational centers. They offer a comprehensive range of subjects to students based on the teachings, information, and revelations found in *The Urantia Book*.

They facilitate the search for self knowledge and the discovery of truth. They have links to introductory and advanced courses, and direct access to the best available supporting resources.

There are also study groups world wide, and international conferences. Their purpose is to encourage personal and spiritual development, increase the awareness and study of the Urantia Papers, foster education, encourage research, and enhance cross-cultural communication.

The Urantia Papers present to the modern world a new and integrated view of science, philosophy, God, cosmology, and history. These enlarged concepts of advanced truth endeavor to expand religious and philosophical perception. They give greater understanding to life and to universal destiny.

Except for the general descriptions of the topics, this is a compilation of selected quotations from *The Urantia Book*, first published in 1955 by Urantia Foundation, Chicago, U.S.A. The Book has been translated into the main languages of the world.



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*Universal Ethics*

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## INTRODUCTION

In this collection of short papers, the study of ethics is taken to a universal level. They apply to the highest forms of behavior relative to progress for each of us in realms ahead. They go beyond the application of ethics at the mortal level of functioning where they are the basis of our way of life.

In particular, they consider ethics in the context of true religion. True religion is the personal and spiritual relationship of the individual to a personal and loving God as contrasted to the religion of fear, ecclesiastical authority, ritual, and conformity to dogma. The individual needs to be free to practice beliefs that lead to friendship with God.

By considering true religion, we place upon ourselves the highest expectation. In order to live a life that strives to be Godlike, we need to live by the highest of ethical standards. Here, these standards and how they can be best applied are studied. And the question of why we should do so, is also considered.

By selecting appropriate quotations from the Urantia Papers, by directing study to a particular topic, an aspect of the mortal and spiritual natures of man can be addressed. By studying carefully chosen excerpts, related new ideas and insights can be formulated. New understandings can be generated.

Spiritual ethics, post-mortal ethics, universally effect mortal life in transforming ways for society and for the individual. The highest ethics, as truth, impact on personal and group habits and behaviors. And as such, they contribute to the mores, and potentially usher in elevated levels of civil society.

This evolutionary process of revelation is not new. It is in fact, the very way that we have progressed to our current status.

These modules can be used in a teacher facilitated group setting, or used as a self paced personal study. They are designed to be used in conjunction with the full text of *The Urantia Book*.

While the quotations have relevance to the overall study of ethics, they also take us on a journey that illustrates the wondrous life of an ascending mortal, one who strives to find the eternal God. In the process, we are introduced to the spiritual perspective of an unfolding ascension career. The ongoing life is increasingly based on those spirit realities.

It takes time to appreciate the scope of God's creation and our personality attributes. It takes our full commitment to live a life according to his will. In *The Urantia Book*, we are given those guidelines and practices that lead us to the discovery of personal spiritual experiences.

And these are powerful indications of our potential. It is hoped the study format presented here assists in that ongoing and ultimate quest.

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## **PART 1 THE CENTRAL AND SUPERUNIVERSES**

### **1. WE CAN BE GUIDED BY THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD**

The starting point is to have a basic awareness of a divine Creator. This is the context of our origin and destiny. It also presents the guidelines for behavior if indeed we are to be God like. If we are aware of his attributes, then we can know the qualities we need to follow and the aspirations we need to have.

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#### **What is the highest personal decision?**

The Universal Father never imposes any form of arbitrary recognition, formal worship, or slavish service upon the intelligent will creatures of the universes. The evolutionary inhabitants of the worlds of time and space must of themselves - in their own hearts - recognize, love, and voluntarily worship him. The Creator refuses to coerce or compel the submission of the spiritual free wills of his material creatures. The affectionate dedication of the human will to the doing of the Father's will is man's choicest gift to God; in fact, such a consecration of creature will constitutes man's only possible gift of true value to the Paradise Father. In God, man lives, moves, and has his being; there is nothing which man can give to God except this choosing to abide by the Father's will... (22.5)

#### **God is not provable, but logically reasonable**

The existence of God can never be proved by scientific experiment or by the pure reason of logical deduction. God can be realized only in the realms of human experience; nevertheless, the true concept of the reality of God is reasonable to logic, plausible to philosophy, essential to religion, and indispensable to any hope of personality survival. (24.5)

I know the truth of the great declarations: "God is spirit" and "God is love"... (26.2)

Viewed as an unspiritual phenomenon, God is energy. (47.1)

Notwithstanding that God is an eternal power, a majestic presence, a

transcendent ideal, and a glorious spirit, though he is all these and infinitely more, nonetheless, he is truly and everlastingly a perfect Creator personality, a person who can "know and be known," who can "love and be loved," and one who can befriend us... (28.5)

### **When two or more are gathered ...**

Some degree of moral affinity and spiritual harmony is essential to friendship between two persons; a loving personality can hardly reveal himself to a loveless person. (30.4)

The more completely man understands himself and appreciates the personality values of his fellows, the more he will crave to know the Original Personality, and the more earnestly such a God-knowing human will strive to become like the Original Personality. You can argue over opinions about God, but experience with him and in him exists above and beyond all human controversy and mere intellectual logic. The God-knowing man describes his spiritual experiences, not to convince unbelievers, but for the edification and mutual satisfaction of believers. (30.5)

Interactions can be had between nonpersonal things, but not fellowship. The fellowship relation of father and son, as between God and man, cannot be enjoyed unless both are persons. (31.1)

The concept of truth might possibly be entertained apart from personality, the concept of beauty may exist without personality, but the concept of divine goodness is understandable only in relation to personality. Only a *person* can love and be loved. (31.3)

### **Status in the eyes of God**

How futile to make puerile appeals to such a God to modify his changeless decrees so that we can avoid the just consequences of the operation of his wise natural laws and righteous spiritual mandates! (36.7)

In any universe contest between actual levels of reality, the personality of the higher level will ultimately triumph over the personality of the lower level. This

inevitable outcome of universe controversy is inherent in the fact that divinity of quality equals the degree of reality or actuality of any will creature. Undiluted evil, complete error, willful sin, and unmitigated iniquity are inherently and automatically suicidal. (37.3)

God is inherently kind, naturally compassionate, and everlastingly merciful. And never is it necessary that any influence be brought to bear upon the Father to call forth his loving-kindness. The creature's need is wholly sufficient to insure the full flow of the Father's tender mercies and his saving grace. Since God knows all about his children, it is easy for him to forgive. The better man understands his neighbor, the easier it will be to forgive him, even to love him. (38.2)

## 2. AND WE ARE GUIDED BY THE NATURE OF GOD

The universe is based on mercy and truth. It could not be upheld by lesser qualities. We can be sure of its consistency. We can rely on ultimate justice. God's divine nature applies to his entire family. It is applied for the greater good based on ultimate time frames.

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### **Goodness and fairness to all**

Mercy is the natural and inevitable offspring of goodness and love. The good nature of a loving Father could not possibly withhold the wise ministry of mercy to each member of every group of his universe children. Eternal justice and divine mercy together constitute what in human experience would be called *fairness*. (38.4)

Divine mercy represents a fairness technique of adjustment between the universe levels of perfection and imperfection. Mercy is the justice of Supremacy adapted to the situations of the evolving finite, the righteousness of eternity modified to meet the highest interests and universe welfare of the children of time. (38.5)

I think I would love God just as much if he were not so great and powerful, as long as he is so good and merciful. We all love the Father more because of his nature than in recognition of his amazing attributes. (39.6)

When man loses sight of the love of a personal God, the kingdom of God becomes merely the kingdom of good. (40.4)

Religion implies that the superworld of spirit nature is cognizant of, and responsive to, the fundamental needs of the human world. Evolutionary religion may become ethical, but only revealed religion becomes truly and spiritually moral. (40.6)

God as a father transcends God as a judge. (41.4)

Love identifies the volitional will of God. The goodness of God rests at the bottom of the divine free-willness - the universal tendency to love, show mercy, manifest patience, and minister forgiveness. (42.1)

## **The application of truth**

Philosophers commit their gravest error when they are misled into the fallacy of abstraction, the practice of focusing the attention upon one aspect of reality and then of pronouncing such an isolated aspect to be the whole truth. The wise philosopher will always look for the creative design which is behind, and pre-existent to, all universe phenomena. The creator thought invariably precedes creative action. (42.6)

Happiness ensues from the recognition of truth because it can be *acted out*; it can be lived. Disappointment and sorrow attend upon error because, not being a reality, it cannot be realized in experience. Divine truth is best known by its *spiritual flavor*. (42.7)

Health, sanity, and happiness are integrations of truth, beauty, and goodness as they are blended in human experience. Such levels of efficient living come about through the unification of energy systems, idea systems, and spirit systems. (43.4)

Even in wrongdoing you torment the indwelling gift of God, for the Thought Adjuster must needs go through the consequences of evil thinking with the human mind of its incarceration. (45.3)

## **The path to the greater good for the greater number**

...it is almost impossible to formulate generalizations of law adequately expressive of the Father's infinite attributes and at the same time to any degree comprehensible to these created intelligences. Therefore, to you the creature, many of the acts of the all-powerful Creator seem to be arbitrary, detached, and not infrequently heartless and cruel. But again I assure you that this is not true. God's doings are all purposeful, intelligent, wise, kind, and eternally considerate of the best good, not always of an individual being, an individual race, an individual planet, or even an individual universe; but they are for the welfare and best good of all concerned, from the lowest to the highest. In the epochs of time the welfare of the part may sometimes appear to differ from the welfare of the whole; in the circle of eternity such apparent differences are nonexistent. (47.6)

We are all a part of the family of God, and we must therefore sometimes share in

the family discipline. Many of the acts of God which so disturb and confuse us are the result of the decisions and final rulings of all-wisdom, empowering the Conjoint Actor to execute the choosing of the infallible will of the infinite mind, to enforce the decisions of the personality of perfection, whose survey, vision, and solicitude embrace the highest and eternal welfare of all his vast and far-flung creation. (48.1)

Thus it is that your detached, sectional, finite, gross, and highly materialistic viewpoint and the limitations inherent in the nature of your being constitute such a handicap that you are unable to see, comprehend, or know the wisdom and kindness of many of the divine acts which to you seem fraught with such crushing cruelty, and which seem to be characterized by such utter indifference to the comfort and welfare, to the planetary happiness and personal prosperity, of your fellow creatures. It is because of the limits of human vision, it is because of your circumscribed understanding and finite comprehension, that you misunderstand the motives, and pervert the purposes, of God. But many things occur on the evolutionary worlds which are not the personal doings of the Universal Father. (48.2)

### **We need the receptivity for God's divine nature**

Mortal man cannot possibly know the infinitude of the heavenly Father. Finite mind cannot think through such an absolute truth or fact. But this same finite human being can actually *feel* - literally experience - the full and undiminished impact of such an infinite Father's LOVE. Such a love can be truly experienced, albeit while quality of experience is unlimited, quantity of such an experience is strictly limited by the human capacity for spiritual receptivity and by the associated capacity to love the Father in return. (50.4)

It is enough of a reach of the material mind of the children of time to conceive of the Father in eternity. We know that any child can best relate himself to reality by first mastering the relationships of the child-parent situation and then by enlarging this concept to embrace the family as a whole. Subsequently the growing mind of the child will be able to adjust to the concept of family relations, to relationships of the community, the race, and the world, and then to those of the universe, the superuniverse, even the universe of universes. (92.1)

### 3. REWARDS DIRECTLY RELATE TO CHOICES

We are growing gradually by our decisions. The design and adventure of living requires it. We are making ourselves complete and in turn becoming a unit of the whole. We need to accept that inevitabilities are part of our freedom and we need to take them into account for their inescapable consequences.

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#### Take this nine point test:

The uncertainties of life and the vicissitudes of existence do not in any manner contradict the concept of the universal sovereignty of God. All evolutionary creature life is beset by certain *inevitabilities*. Consider the following: (51.4 -13)

1. **Is courage** - strength of character - desirable? Then must man be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments.

2. **Is altruism** - service of one's fellows - desirable? Then must life experience provide for encountering situations of social inequality.

3. **Is hope** - the grandeur of trust - desirable? Then human existence must constantly be confronted with insecurities and recurrent uncertainties.

4. **Is faith** - the supreme assertion of human thought - desirable? Then must the mind of man find itself in that troublesome predicament where it ever knows less than it can believe.

5. **Is the love of truth** and the willingness to go wherever it leads, desirable? Then must man grow up in a world where error is present and falsehood always possible.

6. **Is idealism** - the approaching concept of the divine - desirable? Then must man struggle in an environment of relative goodness and beauty, surroundings stimulative of the irrepressible reach for better things.

7. **Is loyalty** - devotion to highest duty - desirable? Then must man carry on amid the possibilities of betrayal and desertion. The valor of devotion to duty consists in

the implied danger of default.

8. **Is *unselfishness*** - the spirit of self-forgetfulness - desirable? Then must mortal man live face to face with the incessant clamoring of an inescapable self for recognition and honor. Man could not dynamically choose the divine life if there were no self-life to forsake. Man could never lay saving hold on righteousness if there were no potential evil to exalt and differentiate the good by contrast.

9. **Is *pleasure*** - the satisfaction of happiness - desirable? Then must man live in a world where the alternative of pain and the likelihood of suffering are ever-present experiential possibilities.

Throughout the universe, every unit is regarded as a part of the whole. Survival of the part is dependent on co-operation with the plan and purpose of the whole, the wholehearted desire and perfect willingness to do the Father's divine will. The only evolutionary world without error (the possibility of unwise judgment) would be a world without *free* intelligence. In the Havona universe there are a billion perfect worlds with their perfect inhabitants, but evolving man must be fallible if he is to be free. Free and inexperienced intelligence cannot possibly at first be uniformly wise. The possibility of mistaken judgment (evil) becomes sin only when the human will consciously endorses and knowingly embraces a deliberate immoral judgment. (52.1)

#### **4. WE GROW, WE EVOLVE, AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A GROUP**

We have art, morality, ethics, the greater good, and social service. But they pale into insignificance against the recognition of the unified universe of the one creator God, and the true worship of that God as a Father.

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##### **One God, the only conclusion**

All religious philosophy, sooner or later, arrives at the concept of unified universe rule, of one God. Universe causes cannot be lower than universe effects. The source of the streams of universe life and of the cosmic mind must be above the levels of their manifestation. The human mind cannot be consistently explained in terms of the lower orders of existence. Man's mind can be truly comprehended only by recognizing the reality of higher orders of thought and purposive will. Man as a moral being is inexplicable unless the reality of the Universal Father is acknowledged. (53.1)

##### **The greater good**

Throughout all these millenniums Providence has been working out the plan of progressive evolution. The two thoughts are not opposed in practice, only in man's mistaken concepts. Divine providence is never arrayed in opposition to true human progress, either temporal or spiritual. Providence is always consistent with the unchanging and perfect nature of the supreme Lawmaker. (54.5)

I am inclined to believe that it is this far-flung and generally unrecognizable control of the co-ordination and interassociation of all phases and forms of universe activity that causes such a variegated and apparently hopelessly confused medley of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual phenomena so unerringly to work out to the glory of God and for the good of men and angels. (56.3)

Nature is the perfection of Paradise divided by the incompleteness, evil, and sin of the unfinished universes. This quotient is thus expressive of both the perfect and the partial, of both the eternal and the temporal. Continuing evolution modifies nature by augmenting the content of Paradise perfection and by diminishing the content of the evil, error, and disharmony of relative reality. (57.1)

Spirit-gravity pull and response thereto operate not only on the universe as a whole but also even between individuals and groups of individuals. There is a spiritual cohesiveness among the spiritual and spiritized personalities of any world, race, nation, or believing group of individuals. There is a direct attractiveness of a spirit nature between spiritually minded persons of like tastes and longings. The term *kindred spirits* is not wholly a figure of speech. (82.5)

### **Worship, the ultimate practice**

Worship is for its own sake; prayer embodies a self- or creature-interest element; that is the great difference between worship and prayer. There is absolutely no self-request or other element of personal interest in true worship; we simply worship God for what we comprehend him to be. Worship asks nothing and expects nothing for the worshiper. We do not worship the Father because of anything we may derive from such veneration; we render such devotion and engage in such worship as a natural and spontaneous reaction to the recognition of the Father's matchless personality and because of his lovable nature and adorable attributes. (65.5)

The moment the element of self-interest intrudes upon worship, that instant devotion translates from worship to prayer... (65.6)

The mind of material limitations can never become highly conscious of the real significance of true worship. (66.3)

True worship, in the last analysis, becomes an experience realized on four cosmic levels: the intellectual, the morontial, the spiritual, and the personal - the consciousness of mind, soul, and spirit, and their unification in personality. (66.4)

### **Values take us to our eventual destiny**

God is not only the determiner of destiny; he *is* man's eternal destination. All nonreligious human activities seek to bend the universe to the distorting service of self; the truly religious individual seeks to identify the self with the universe and then to dedicate the activities of this unified self to the service of the universe family of fellow beings, human and superhuman. (67.1)

Through art and philosophy the material-minded man is inveigled into the contemplation of the spiritual realities and universe values of eternal meanings. (67.2)

Morality has its origin in the reason of self-consciousness; it is superanimal but wholly evolutionary. ...But the attainment of levels of morality does not deliver man from the real struggles of mortal living. Man's physical environment entails the battle for existence; the social surroundings necessitate ethical adjustments; the moral situations require the making of choices in the highest realms of reason; the spiritual experience (having realized God) demands that man find him and sincerely strive to be like him. (68.4)

Moral conduct is always an antecedent of evolved religion and a part of even revealed religion, but never the whole of religious experience. Social service is the result of moral thinking and religious living. Morality does not biologically lead to the higher spiritual levels of religious experience. (68.7)

## 5. JUSTICE IN A UNIVERSAL ARRANGEMENT

We are given every chance to be God like to the limit of our current capabilities. The potential for people to interassociate and form groups multiplies the resultant values and understanding. And we do well to remember that we cannot fathom seemingly harsh outcomes as we have but a finite perspective.

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### **Distributive justice**

It would seem that the Father, back in eternity, inaugurated a policy of profound self-distribution. There is inherent in the selfless, loving, and lovable nature of the Universal Father something which causes him to reserve to himself the exercise of only those powers and that authority which he apparently finds it impossible to delegate or to bestow. (108.4)

The Universal Father all along has divested himself of every part of himself that was bestowable on any other Creator or creature. He has given away, actually bestowed, with the dignity and sanctity of personality possession, all of himself and all of his attributes, everything he possibly could divest himself of, in every way, in every age, in every place, and to every person, and in every universe except that of his central indwelling. (108.5)

The Trinity association of the three Paradise Deities results in the evolution, eventuation, and deitization of new meanings, values, powers, and capacities for universal revelation, action, and administration. Living associations, human families, social groups, or the Paradise Trinity are not augmented by mere arithmetical summation. The group potential is always far in excess of the simple sum of the attributes of the component individuals. (113.3)

### **Divine justice and fairness**

*Justice* is inherent in the universal sovereignty of the Paradise Trinity, but goodness, mercy, and truth are the universe ministry of the divine personalities, whose Deity union constitutes the Trinity. Justice is not the attitude of the Father, the Son, or the Spirit. Justice is the Trinity attitude of these personalities of love, mercy, and ministry. No one of the Paradise Deities fosters the administration of

justice. Justice is never a personal attitude; it is always a plural function. (114.3)

*Evidence*, the basis of fairness (justice in harmony with mercy), is supplied by the personalities of the Third Source and Center, the conjoint representative of the Father and the Son to all realms and to the minds of the intelligent beings of all creation. (114.4)

*Judgment*, the final application of justice in accordance with the evidence submitted by the personalities of the Infinite Spirit, is the work of the Stationary Sons of the Trinity, beings partaking of the Trinity nature of the united Father, Son, and Spirit. (114.5)

The Ancients of Days and their Trinity-origin associates mete out the just judgment of supreme fairness to the seven superuniverses. In the central universe such functions exist in theory only; there fairness is self-evident in perfection, and Havona perfection precludes all possibility of disharmony. (115.1)

Justice is the collective thought of righteousness; mercy is its personal expression. Mercy is the attitude of love; precision characterizes the operation of law; divine judgment is the soul of fairness, ever conforming to the justice of the Trinity, ever fulfilling the divine love of God. (115.2)

### **Ultimate good rather than retributive justice**

The mortal mind can immediately think of a thousand and one things - catastrophic physical events, appalling accidents, horrific disasters, painful illnesses, and world-wide scourges - and ask whether such visitations are correlated in the unknown maneuvering of this probable functioning of the Supreme Being. Frankly, we do not know; we are not really sure. But we do observe that, as time passes, all these difficult and more or less mysterious situations *always* work out for the welfare and progress of the universes. It may be that the circumstances of existence and the inexplicable vicissitudes of living are all interwoven into a meaningful pattern of high value by the function of the Supreme and the overcontrol of the Trinity. (115.7)

Many truths and facts pertaining to the Paradise Trinity can only be even partially comprehended by recognizing a function that transcends the finite. (116.2)

## 6. WIDENING THE ETHICAL CIRCLE

Perhaps the starting point is to acknowledge the eventual and certain triumph of God's evolutionary design. It is based on a pattern of perfect harmony and wisdom. And unless we choose otherwise, we are all going there interdependently as each universe is required to be settled in light and life.

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### **A universal framework. With flexibility.**

Unspiritual animals know only the past and live in the present. Spirit-indwelt man has powers of prevision (insight); he may visualize the future. Only forward-looking and progressive attitudes are personally real. Static ethics and traditional morality are just slightly superanimal. Nor is stoicism a high order of self-realization. Ethics and morals become truly human when they are dynamic and progressive, alive with universe reality. (135.9)

The human personality is not merely a concomitant of time-and-space events; the human personality can also act as the cosmic cause of such events. (135.10)

In all his dealings with all his beings it is true that the laws of God are not inherently arbitrary. ...therefore does infinite wisdom always order it done in that precise and perfect manner. You should also remember that nature is not the exclusive act of Deity; other influences are present in those phenomena which man calls nature. (137.5)

...if the demands of perfection might for any reason dictate another method of reaction, a better one, then and there would the all-wise God function in that better and more suitable way. That would be the expression of a higher law, not the reversal of a lower law. (137.6)

God is not a habit-bound slave to the chronicity of the repetition of his own voluntary acts. There is no conflict among the laws of the Infinite; they are all perfections of the infallible nature; they are all the unquestioned acts expressive of faultless decisions. Law is the unchanging reaction of an infinite, perfect, and divine mind. The acts of God are all volitional notwithstanding this apparent sameness. (137.7)

### **Positive non discrimination. The greater good.**

There is operative throughout all time and space and with regard to all reality of whatever nature an inexorable and impersonal law which is equivalent to the function of a cosmic providence. Mercy characterizes God's attitude of love for the individual; impartiality motivates God's attitude toward the total. The will of God does not necessarily prevail in the part - the heart of any one personality - but his will does actually rule the whole, the universe of universes. (137.4)

The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man present the paradox of the part and the whole on the level of personality. God loves *each* individual as an individual child in the heavenly family. Yet God thus loves *every* individual; he is no respecter of persons, and the universality of his love brings into being a relationship of the whole, the universal brotherhood. (138.3)

Brotherhood constitutes a fact of relationship between every personality in universal existence. No person can escape the benefits or the penalties that may come as a result of relationship to other persons. The part profits or suffers in measure with the whole. The good effort of each man benefits all men; the error or evil of each man augments the tribulation of all men. As moves the part, so moves the whole. As the progress of the whole, so the progress of the part. The relative velocities of part and whole determine whether the part is retarded by the inertia of the whole or is carried forward by the momentum of the cosmic brotherhood. (138.6)

Only in the realms of creature volition has there been deviation from the divine paths and the original plans. (139.6)

### **A blueprint for ethical perfection**

There has never been an instance of misconduct by any creature of any group of personalities ever created in, or admitted to, the central Havona universe. So perfect and so divine are the methods and means of selection in the universes of time that never in the records of Havona has an error occurred; no mistakes have ever been made; no ascendant soul has ever been prematurely admitted to the central universe. (155.3)

As mortal man strives to do the will of God, these beings of the central universe live to gratify the ideals of the Paradise Trinity. In their very nature they *are* the will of God. Man rejoices in the goodness of God, Havoners exult in the divine beauty, while you both enjoy the ministry of the liberty of living truth. (157.5)

The regulations of the central universe are fittingly and inherently natural; the rules of conduct are not arbitrary. In every requirement of Havona there is disclosed the reason of righteousness and the rule of justice. And these two factors, combined, equal what on Urantia would be denominated *fairness*. (158.6)

Havona exhibits finality of spirit values existing as living will creatures of supreme and perfect self-control; mind existing as ultimately equivalent to spirit; reality and unity of intelligence with an unlimited potential. (162.1)

Never have I known of a disagreement between the Orvonton executives and the Uversa assembly. Never yet, in the history of our superuniverse, has the deliberative body ever passed a recommendation that the executive division of the supergovernment has even hesitated to carry out. There always has prevailed the most perfect harmony and working agreement, all of which testifies to the fact that evolutionary beings can really attain the heights of perfected wisdom which qualifies them to consort with the personalities of perfect origin and divine nature. The presence of the deliberative assemblies on the superuniverse headquarters reveals the wisdom, and foreshadows the ultimate triumph, of the whole vast evolutionary concept of the Universal Father and his Eternal Son. (180.1)

## 7. THE COSMIC ETHIC OF RESPONSE

Here is presented a simplistic approach to a complex arrangement. With kindred souls, we can consider our effect upon the cosmic mind from three levels. It is in those arenas that we can conduct our reflective thinking, while ever mindful that we are seeking to correlate and unify each of those aspects. From that esteemed realm we find the confirmation of values from an objective reality.

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### Basic factors in reflective thinking

The Master Spirits are the sevenfold source of the cosmic mind, the intellectual potential of the grand universe. (191.4)

The fact of the cosmic mind explains the kinship of various types of human and superhuman minds. Not only are kindred spirits attracted to each other, but kindred minds are also very fraternal and inclined towards co-operation the one with the other. Human minds are sometimes observed to be running in channels of astonishing similarity and inexplicable agreement. (191.6)

The cosmic mind unfailingly responds (recognizes response) on three levels of universe reality. These responses are self-evident to clear-reasoning and deep-thinking minds. These levels of reality are: (192.1 – 4)

1. **Causation** - the reality domain of the physical senses, the scientific realms of logical uniformity, the differentiation of the factual and the nonfactual, reflective conclusions based on cosmic response.
2. **Duty** - the reality domain of morals in the philosophic realm, the arena of reason, the recognition of relative right and wrong.
3. **Worship** - the spiritual domain of the reality of religious experience, the personal realization of divine fellowship, the recognition of spirit values, the assurance of eternal survival, the ascent from the status of servants of God to the joy and liberty of the sons of God.

These three basic factors in reflective thinking may be unified and co-ordinated in personality development, or they may become disproportionate and virtually

unrelated in their respective functions. But when they become unified, they produce a strong character consisting in the correlation of a factual science, a moral philosophy, and a genuine religious experience. And it is these three cosmic intuitions that give objective validity, reality, to man's experience in and with things, meanings, and values. (192.6)

## 8. MORALS, VIRTUE, AND ULTIMATE DUTY

Beyond mores, beyond intelligence, beyond the greater good, virtue is part of our God given personality. From such an understanding we can apply a new concept of ethics and values. Righteousness conforms to the cosmos. Morality comes from striving to be God like. And supreme virtue is wholeheartedly choosing to do the will of the Father in heaven.

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### **The moral nature**

Intelligence alone cannot explain the moral nature. Morality, virtue, is indigenous to human personality. Moral intuition, the realization of duty, is a component of human mind endowment and is associated with the other inalienables of human nature: scientific curiosity and spiritual insight. (192.8)

The selective response of an animal is limited to the motor level of behavior. Man is able to exercise scientific, moral, and spiritual insight prior to all exploration or experimentation. (193.1)

... a personality can also examine the goal itself and pass judgment on its worthwhileness, its value. Intelligence alone can discriminate as to the best means of attaining indiscriminate ends, but a moral being possesses an insight which enables him to discriminate between ends as well as between means. (193.3)

When man fails to discriminate the ends of his mortal striving, he finds himself functioning on the animal level of existence. (193.4)

Virtue is righteousness - conformity with the cosmos. Virtue is not mere knowledge nor yet wisdom but rather the reality of progressive experience in the attainment of ascending levels of cosmic achievement. (193:5)

Man's choosing between good and evil is influenced, not only by the keenness of his moral nature, but also by such influences as ignorance, immaturity, and delusion. A sense of proportion is also concerned in the exercise of virtue because evil may be perpetrated when the lesser is chosen in the place of the greater as a result of distortion or deception. The art of relative estimation or comparative measurement enters into the practice of the virtues of the moral

realm. (193.6)

Morality can never be advanced by law or by force. It is a personal and freewill matter and must be disseminated by the contagion of the contact of morally fragrant persons with those who are less morally responsive, but who are also in some measure desirous of doing the Father's will. (193.8)

Moral acts are those human performances which are characterized by the highest intelligence, directed by selective discrimination in the choice of superior ends as well as in the selection of moral means to attain these ends. Such conduct is virtuous. Supreme virtue, then, is wholeheartedly to choose to do the will of the Father in heaven. (193.9)

## **9. MORTAL STRIVING AND PERFECTION OF DECISION MAKING**

Firstly, we look at the mortal attributes that we can develop. Here is scope for practical application of our potentially divine self-consciousness. Then we are introduced to the attributes of Trinity-origin beings and the judgment processes that will be applied to our strivings. Finally we are given cause to appreciate such lowly origins.

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### **Highest mortal attributes**

The relative free will which characterizes the self-consciousness of human personality is involved in: (194.7 – 13; 195.1)

1. Moral decision, highest wisdom.
2. Spiritual choice, truth discernment.
3. Unselfish love, brotherhood service.
4. Purposeful co-operation, group loyalty.
5. Cosmic insight, the grasp of universe meanings.
6. Personality dedication, wholehearted devotion to doing the Father's will.
7. Worship, the sincere pursuit of divine values and the wholehearted love of the divine Value-Giver.

Self-consciousness is in essence a communal consciousness: God and man, Father and son, Creator and creature. In human self-consciousness four universe-reality realizations are latent and inherent: (196.5 – 9)

1. The quest for knowledge, the logic of science.
2. The quest for moral values, the sense of duty.
3. The quest for spiritual values, the religious experience.
4. The quest for personality values, the ability to recognize the reality of God as a personality and the concurrent realization of our fraternal relationship with fellow personalities.

### **Divine attributes**

All Trinity-origin beings are created in Paradise perfection in all their divine attributes. Only in the realms of experience has the passing of time added to their equipment for cosmic service. There is never any danger of default or risk of

rebellion with Trinity-origin beings. They are of divinity essence, and they have never been known to depart from the divine and perfect path of personality conduct. (207.11)

In power, scope of authority, and extent of jurisdiction the Ancients of Days are the most powerful and mighty of any of the direct rulers of the time-space creations. In all the vast universe of universes they alone are invested with the high powers of final executive judgment concerning the eternal extinction of will creatures. And all three Ancients of Days must participate in the final decrees of the supreme tribunal of a superuniverse. (210.1)

### **Divine judgments**

One Perfector of Wisdom, seven Divine Counselors, and one Universal Censor constitute a tribunal of Trinity divinity, the highest mobile advisory body in the universes of time and space. Such a group of nine is known either as a fact-finding or as a truth-revealing tribunal, and when it sits in judgment upon a problem and renders a decision, it is just as if an Ancient of Days had adjudicated the matter, for in all the annals of the superuniverses such a verdict has never been reversed by the Ancients of Days. (217.3)

Whenever and wherever a Universal Censor is present, then and there is the judgment of Deity. And since the Censors always render their verdicts in liaison with Perfectors of Wisdom and Divine Counselors, such decisions embrace the united wisdom, counsel, and judgment of the Paradise Trinity. In this juridical trio the Perfector of Wisdom would be the "I was", the Divine Counselor the "I will be", but the Universal Censor is always "I am". (218.2)

The Censors are universe totaling personalities. When a thousand witnesses have given testimony - or a million - when the voice of wisdom has spoken and the counsel of divinity has recorded, when the testimony of ascendant perfection has been added, then the Censor functions, and there is immediately revealed an unerring and divine totaling of all that has transpired; and such a disclosure represents the divine conclusion, the sum and substance of a final and perfect decision. Therefore, when a Censor has spoken, no one else may speak, for the Censor has depicted the true and unmistakable total of all that has gone before. When he speaks, there is no appeal. (218.3)

### **The personhood of Havona natives. The combination of attributes.**

During your long sojourn on the billion worlds of Havona culture you will develop an eternal friendship for these superb beings. And how deep is that friendship which grows up between the lowest personal creature from the worlds of space and these high personal beings native to the perfect spheres of the central universe! Ascending mortals, in their long and loving association with the Havona natives, do much to compensate for the spiritual impoverishment of the earlier stages of mortal progression. At the same time, through their contacts with ascending pilgrims, the Havoners gain an experience which to no small extent overcomes the experiential handicap of having always lived a life of divine perfection. The good to both ascending mortal and Havona native is great and mutual. (221.4)

## **10. THE UNIVERSAL SYSTEM IS ORDERLY, EFFICIENT, ACCURATE**

There will always be opportunities to display our true character. We have to choose between good and evil, we have to take sides in rebellions, and we have to accept the judgments of the courts when they have been presented with irrefutable evidence. The right to choose gives rise to dissent. We maximize the benefits of the journey by becoming rebellion tested and passing on the hard won learning to those who follow us. Our highest realizations are not specifically considered in the light of any material successes or quantitative achievements.

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### **Prevention is the greater virtue**

Virtue is volitional with personality; righteousness is not automatic in freewill creatures. (238.8)

When the provisions of endless mercy and nameless patience have been exhausted in an effort to win the loyalty and devotion of the will creatures of the realms, justice and righteousness will prevail. That which mercy cannot rehabilitate justice will eventually annihilate. (241.1)

Every ascendant mortal of insurrectionary experience who functions loyally in the face of rebellion is eventually destined to become a Mighty Messenger of the superuniverse service. Likewise is any ascendant creature who effectively prevents such upheavals of error, evil, or sin; for action designed to prevent rebellion or to effect higher types of loyalty in a universe crisis is regarded as of even greater value than loyalty in the face of actual rebellion. (245.3)

Having superb administrative wisdom and unusual executive skill, these brilliant beings assume to present the cause of justice in behalf of the superuniverse tribunals; they foster the execution of justice and the rectification of misadaptations in the evolutionary universes. Therefore, if you should ever be cited for errors of judgment while you are ascending the worlds and spheres of your ordained cosmic progression, it is hardly likely that you would suffer injustice since your prosecutors would be onetime ascendant creatures who are personally familiar with every step of the career you have traversed and are traversing. (246.5)

## **Evidence is presented to the courts**

The satisfying joy of high duty is the eclipsing emotion of spiritual beings. Sorrow cannot exist in the face of the consciousness of divine duty faithfully performed. And when man's ascending soul stands before the Supreme Judge, the decision of eternal import will not be determined by material successes or quantitative achievements; the verdict reverberating through the high courts declares: "Well done, good and *faithful* servant; you have been faithful over a few essentials; you shall be made ruler over universe realities." (274.3)

The conciliators are of great value in keeping the universe of universes running smoothly. Traversing space at the seraphic rate of triple velocity, they serve as the traveling courts of the worlds, commissions devoted to the quick adjudication of minor difficulties. Were it not for these mobile and eminently fair commissions, the tribunals of the spheres would be hopelessly overspread with the minor misunderstandings of the realms. (276.4)

These referee trios do not pass upon matters of eternal import; the soul, the eternal prospects of a creature of time, is never placed in jeopardy by their acts. Conciliators do not deal with questions extending beyond the temporal existence and the cosmic welfare of the creatures of time. But when a commission has once accepted jurisdiction of a problem, its rulings are final and always unanimous; there is no appeal from the decision of the judge-arbiter. (276.5)

## **The reason for the journey**

The moment the Creators bring into existence evolving individuals with the power of choice, that moment a departure is made from the smooth working of divine perfection; misunderstandings are certain to arise, and provision for the fair adjustment of these honest differences of viewpoint must be made. We should all remember that the all-wise and all-powerful Creators could have made the local universes just as perfect as Havona. No conciliating commissions need function in the central universe. But the Creators did not choose in their all-wisdom to do this. And while they have produced universes which abound in differences and teem with difficulties, they have likewise provided the mechanisms and the means for composing all these differences and for harmonizing all this seeming confusion. (277.4)

### **A method to maximize the benefits of the journey**

The higher a creature's education, the more respect he has for the knowledge, experience, and opinions of others. (278.3)

Those mortals and midwayers who serve transiently with the advisers are chosen for such work because of their expertness in the concept of universal law and supreme justice. As you journey toward your Paradise goal, constantly acquiring added knowledge and enhanced skill, you are continuously afforded the opportunity to give out to others the wisdom and experience you have already accumulated; all the way in to Havona you enact the role of a pupil-teacher. You will work your way through the ascending levels of this vast experiential university by imparting to those just below you the new-found knowledge of your advancing career. In the universal regime you are not reckoned as having possessed yourself of knowledge and truth until you have demonstrated your ability and your willingness to impart this knowledge and truth to others. (279.13)

### **Efficiency leads to fairness**

Technical Advisers are dedicated to the work of preventing delay, facilitating progress, and counseling achievement. There is always a *best* and *right* way to do things; there is always the technique of perfection, a divine method, and these advisers know how to direct us all in the finding of this better way. (280.5)

Technical Advisers are selected and tested beings; I have never known one of them to go astray. We have no records on Uversa of their ever having been adjudged in contempt of the divine laws they so effectively interpret and so eloquently expound. There is no known limit to the domain of their service, neither has any been placed upon their progress. They continue as advisers even to the portals of Paradise; the whole universe of law and experience is open to them. (281.1)

## 11. THE CERTAINTY OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU DO

Here we introduce you to some of your teachers.

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### **Interpreters of ethics**

The higher you ascend in the scale of life, the more attention must be paid to universe ethics. Ethical awareness is simply the recognition by any individual of the rights inherent in the existence of any and all other individuals. But spiritual ethics far transcends the mortal and even the morontia concept of personal and group relations. (300.4)

Ethics has been duly taught and adequately learned by the pilgrims of time in their long ascent to the glories of Paradise. As this inward-ascending career has unfolded from the nativity worlds of space, the ascenders have continued to add group after group to their ever-widening circle of universe associates. Every new group of colleagues met with adds one more level of ethics to be recognized and complied with until, by the time the mortals of ascent reach Paradise, they really need someone to provide helpful and friendly counsel regarding ethical interpretations. They do not need to be taught ethics, but they do need to have what they have so laboriously learned properly *interpreted* to them as they are brought face to face with the extraordinary task of contacting with so much that is new. (300.5)

The interpreters of ethics are of inestimable assistance to the Paradise arrivals in helping them to adjust to numerous groups of majestic beings during that eventful period extending from the attainment of residential status to formal induction into the Corps of Mortal Finaliters. (300.6)

### **Directors of conduct**

Having already been fully instructed in the ethics of Paradise relationships - neither meaningless formalities nor the dictations of artificial castes but rather the inherent proprieties - the ascendant mortals find it helpful to receive the counsel of the superaphic directors of conduct, who instruct the new members of Paradise society in the usages of the perfect conduct of the high beings who sojourn on the central Isle of Light and Life. (301.2)

Harmony is the keynote of the central universe, and detectable order prevails on Paradise. Proper conduct is essential to progress by way of knowledge, through philosophy, to the spiritual heights of spontaneous worship. (301.3)

All Paradise conduct is wholly spontaneous, in every sense natural and free. But there still is a proper and perfect way of doing things on the eternal Isle, and the directors of conduct are ever by the side of the "strangers within the gates" to instruct them and so guide their steps as to put them at perfect ease... (301.4)

### **The custodians of knowledge**

The superaphic custodians of knowledge are the higher "living epistles" known and read by all who dwell on Paradise. They are the divine records of truth, the living books of real knowledge. You have heard about records in the "book of life". The custodians of knowledge are just such living books, records of perfection imprinted upon the eternal tablets of divine life and supreme surety. They are in reality living, automatic libraries. The facts of the universes are inherent in these primary supernaphim, actually recorded in these angels; and it is also inherently impossible for an untruth to gain lodgment in the minds of these perfect and replete repositories of the truth of eternity and the intelligence of time. (301.6)

### **The Census Directors**

These beings always have been, and always will be, Census Directors. They would be comparatively useless in any other division of universe labor. But they are infallible in function; they never default, neither do they falsify. And notwithstanding their marvelous powers and unbelievable prerogatives, they are persons; they have recognizable spirit presence and form. (267.7)

### **The Celestial Recorders**

... are a tested and tried corps. Never have I known of the defection of a Celestial Recorder, and never has there been discovered a falsification in their records. They are subjected to a dual inspection, their records being scrutinized by their exalted fellows from Uversa and by the Mighty Messengers, who certify to the correctness of the quasi-physical duplicates of the original spirit records. (282.1)

## 12. GREATEST HAPPINESS FOR THE GREATEST NUMBER REDEFINED

Again, we see a higher concept that requires us to redefine our theories. And instead of being given an arbitrary and isolated claim, the reasons for worship and its ramifications are presented in detail. And all is consistent with the integrated teachings in the Urantia Papers.

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### **The results of the conduct of worship**

Worship is the highest privilege and the first duty of all created intelligences. Worship is the conscious and joyous act of recognizing and acknowledging the truth and fact of the intimate and personal relationships of the Creators with their creatures. The quality of worship is determined by the depth of creature perception; and as the knowledge of the infinite character of the Gods progresses, the act of worship becomes increasingly all-encompassing until it eventually attains the glory of the highest experiential delight and the most exquisite pleasure known to created beings. (303.5)

While the Isle of Paradise contains certain places of worship, it is more nearly one vast sanctuary of divine service. Worship is the first and dominant passion of all who climb to its blissful shores - the spontaneous ebullition of the beings who have learned enough of God to attain his presence. Circle by circle, during the inward journey through Havona, worship is a growing passion until on Paradise it becomes necessary to direct and otherwise control its expression. (303.6)

...such homage achieves the creature goal of supreme pleasure and attains the heights of the perfection of sublime self-expression and personal enjoyment. All primary supernaphim crave to be conductors of worship; and all ascendant beings would enjoy forever remaining in the attitude of worship did not the chiefs of assignment periodically disperse these assemblages. (304.1)

All the arts of all the beings of the entire universe which are capable of intensifying and exalting the abilities of self-expression and the conveyance of appreciation, are employed to their highest capacity in the worship of the Paradise Deities. *Worship is the highest joy of Paradise existence*; it is the refreshing play of Paradise. What play does for your jaded minds on earth, worship will do for your perfected souls on Paradise. The mode of worship on Paradise is utterly beyond

mortal comprehension, but the spirit of it you can begin to appreciate even down here on Urantia, for the spirits of the Gods even now indwell you, hover over you, and inspire you to true worship. (304.3)

Always is there an excess of worshipfulness as gauged by the preparation therefor. And this is because personalities of inherent perfection never can fully appreciate the tremendous reactions of the spiritual emotions of beings who have slowly and laboriously made their way upward to Paradise glory from the depths of the spiritual darkness of the lower worlds of time and space. (304.4)

Sometimes all Paradise becomes engulfed in a dominating tide of spiritual and worshipful expression. ... What a triumph of technique! What a fruition of the eternal plan and purpose of the Gods that the intelligent love of the creature child should give full satisfaction to the infinite love of the Creator Father! (304.5)

### 13. TRUTHFULNESS WITHOUT COMPROMISE

Delight in the exhilaration of receiving previously unrevealed knowledge.

---

#### **What you see is what you are**

The primary seconaphim, of assignment to the Ancients of Days, are living mirrors in the service of these triune rulers. Think what it means in the economy of a superuniverse to be able to turn, as it were, to a living mirror and therein to see and therewith to hear the certain responses of another being a thousand or a hundred thousand light-years distant and to do all this instantly and unerringly. Records are essential to the conduct of the universes, broadcasts are serviceable, the work of the Solitary and other messengers is very helpful, but the Ancients of Days from their position midway between the inhabited worlds and Paradise - between man and God - can instantly look both ways, hear both ways, and *know* both ways. (307.5)

If the Ancients of Days would like to know - really know - the attitude of Michael of Nebadon regarding some matter under consideration, they do not have to call him on the lines of space; they need only call for the Chief of Nebadon Voices, who, upon request, will present the Michael seconaphim of record; ...then and there the Ancients of Days will perceive the voice of the Master Son of Nebadon. (308.5)

No other order of sonship is thus "reflectible," and no other order of angel can thus function. We do not fully understand just how this is accomplished, and I doubt very much that the Creator Sons themselves fully understand it. (309.1)

Though apparently deprived of the personal presence of the Master Spirits above and of the Creator Sons below, the Ancients of Days have at their command living beings attuned to cosmic mechanisms of reflective perfection and ultimate precision whereby they may enjoy the reflective presence of all those exalted beings whose personal presence is denied them. By and through these means, and others unknown to you, God is potentially present on the headquarters of the superuniverses. (309.3)

The Ancients of Days perfectly deduce the Father's will by equating the Spirit voice-flash from above and the Michael voice-flashes from below. Thus may they be unerringly certain in calculating the Father's will concerning the administrative affairs of the local universes. (309.4)

## 14. JOY, MOTIVES, KINDNESS, TRUST, SERVICE, GOODNESS

There seem to be mechanisms for reflecting ethical perfection. All we can recommend is that you enjoy reading about these superb teachers and marvel at the processes that await us.

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**There is nowhere to hide. What you see is what you can be.**

***The Soul of Philosophy.*** These wonderful teachers are also attached to the Perfectors of Wisdom and, when not otherwise directionized, remain in focal synchrony with the masters of philosophy on Paradise. Think of stepping up to a huge living mirror, as it were, but instead of beholding the likeness of your finite and material self, of perceiving a reflection of the wisdom of divinity and the philosophy of Paradise. And if it becomes desirable to "incarnate" this philosophy of perfection, so to dilute it as to make it practical of application to, and assimilation by, the lowly peoples of the lower worlds, these living mirrors have only to turn their faces downward to reflect the standards and needs of another world or universe. (311.3)

By these very techniques do the Perfectors of Wisdom adapt decisions and recommendations to the real needs and actual status of the peoples and worlds under consideration, and always do they act in concert with the Divine Counselors and the Universal Censors. (311.4)

***The Joy of Existence.*** Their principal activities are directed toward promoting reactions of joy among the various orders of the angelic hosts and the lower will creatures. ...they function as joy clearinghouses, seeking to upstep the pleasure reactions of the realms while trying to improve the humor taste, to develop a superhumor among mortals and angels. They endeavor to demonstrate that there is inherent joy in freewill existence, independent of all extraneous influences; and they are right, although they meet with great difficulty in inculcating this truth in the minds of primitive men. The higher spirit personalities and the angels are more quickly responsive to these educational efforts. (312.3)

***The Discerner of Spirits.*** Regardless of the source or channel of information, no matter how meager the evidence at hand, when it is subjected to their reflective scrutiny, these discerners will forthwith inform us as to the true motive, the actual

purpose, and the real nature of its origin. I marvel at the superb functioning of these angels, who so unerringly reflect the actual moral and spiritual character of any individual concerned in a focal exposure. (313.1)

The Discerners of Spirits carry on these intricate services by virtue of inherent "spiritual insight," if I may use such words in an endeavor to convey to the human mind the thought that these reflective angels thus function intuitively, inherently, and unerringly. When the Universal Censors behold these presentations, they are face to face with the naked soul of the reflected individual; and this very certainty and perfection of portraiture in part explains why the Censors can always function so justly as righteous judges. (313.2)

The beings of every newly created order, immediately upon receiving the breath of life, are instantly reflected on high; a living portrayal of the creature nature and potential is flashed to the superuniverse headquarters. Thus, by means of the discerners, are the Censors made fully cognizant of exactly "what manner of spirit" has been born on the worlds of space. (313.3)

So it is with mortal man ... (313.4)

**The Significance of Origins.** The ascendant Trinitized Sons of a superuniverse government are charged with the responsibility of dealing with all issues growing out of the origin of any individual, race, or world; and the significance of origin is the paramount question in all our plans for the cosmic advancement of the living creatures of the realm. All relationships and the application of ethics grow out of the fundamental facts of origin. Origin is the basis of the relational reaction of the Gods. Always does the Conjoint Actor "take note of the man, in what manner he was born". (314.1)

With the higher descendant beings, origin is simply a fact to be ascertained; but with the ascending beings, including the lower orders of angels, the nature and circumstances of origin are not always so clear... (314.2)

**The Memory of Mercy** is a living trial balance, a current statement of your account with the supernatural forces of the realms. These are the living records of mercy ministrations which are read into the testimony of the courts of Uversa when each individual's right to unending life comes up for adjudication... (314:5)

The Memory of Mercy must show that the saving credit established by the Sons of God has been fully and faithfully paid out in the loving ministry of the patient personalities of the Third Source and Center. But when mercy is exhausted, when the "memory" thereof testifies to its depletion, then does justice prevail and righteousness decree. For mercy is not to be thrust upon those who despise it; mercy is not a gift to be trampled under foot by the persistent rebels of time. Nevertheless, though mercy is thus precious and dearly bestowed, your individual drawing credits are always far in excess of your ability to exhaust the reserve if you are sincere of purpose and honest of heart. (314.6)

While the spirit techniques of mercy ministry are beyond your concept, you should even now understand that mercy is a quality of growth. You should realize that there is a great reward of personal satisfaction in being first just, next fair, then patient, then kind. And then, on that foundation, if you choose and have it in your heart, you can take the next step and really show mercy; but you cannot exhibit mercy in and of itself. These steps must be traversed; otherwise there can be no genuine mercy. There may be patronage, condescension, or charity - even pity - but not mercy. True mercy comes only as the beautiful climax to these preceding adjuncts to group understanding, mutual appreciation, fraternal fellowship, spiritual communion, and divine harmony. (315.1)

***The Solemnity of Trust.*** Trust is the crucial test of will creatures. Trustworthiness is the true measure of self-mastery, character. These seconaphim accomplish a double purpose in the economy of the superuniverses: They portray to all will creatures the sense of the obligation, sacredness, and solemnity of trust. At the same time they unerringly reflect to the governing authorities the exact trustworthiness of any candidate for confidence or trust. (315.6)

On Urantia, you grotesquely essay to read character and to estimate specific abilities, but on Uversa we actually do these things in perfection. These seconaphim weigh trustworthiness in the living scales of unerring character appraisal, and when they have looked at you, we have only to look at them to know the limitations of your ability to discharge responsibility, execute trust, and fulfill missions. Your assets of trustworthiness are clearly set forth alongside your liabilities of possible default or betrayal. (316.1)

***The Sanctity of Service.*** The privilege of service immediately follows the discovery of trustworthiness. Nothing can stand between you and opportunity for

increased service except your own untrustworthiness, your lack of capacity for appreciation of the solemnity of trust. (316.3)

Service - purposeful service, not slavery - is productive of the highest satisfaction and is expressive of the divinest dignity. Service - more service, increased service, difficult service, adventurous service, and at last divine and perfect service - is the goal of time and the destination of space. But ever will the play cycles of time alternate with the service cycles of progress. And after the service of time there follows the superservice of eternity. During the play of time you should envision the work of eternity, even as you will, during the service of eternity, reminisce the play of time. (316.4)

The universal economy is based on intake and output; throughout the eternal career you will never encounter monotony of inaction or stagnation of personality. Progress is made possible by inherent motion, advancement grows out of the divine capacity for action, and achievement is the child of imaginative adventure. But inherent in this capacity for achievement is the responsibility of ethics, the necessity for recognizing that the world and the universe are filled with a multitude of differing types of beings. All of this magnificent creation, *including yourself*, was not made just for you. This is not an egocentric universe. (316.5)

Mortals may employ words to conceal their thoughts, but these high seconaphim lay bare the deep motives of the human heart and of the angelic mind. (316.6)

***The Secret of Greatness and the Soul of Goodness.*** The ascending pilgrims having awakened to the import of time, the way is prepared for the realization of the solemnity of trust and for the appreciation of the sanctity of service. While these are the moral elements of greatness, there are also secrets of greatness. When the spiritual tests of greatness are applied, the moral elements are not disregarded, but the quality of unselfishness revealed in disinterested labor for the welfare of one's earthly fellows, particularly worthy beings in need and in distress, that is the real *measure* of planetary greatness. And the *manifestation* of greatness on a world like Urantia is the exhibition of self-control. The great man is not he who "takes a city" or "overthrows a nation," but rather "he who subdues his own tongue". (317.1)

**UNIVERSAL ETHICS**  
**CONCEPTS FROM *THE URANTIA BOOK***

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## **PART 2 THE LOCAL UNIVERSE**

### **15. INTERCONNECTEDNESS AND RESPONSIBILITY**

There is a complementary function between the evolutionary and the perfect beings. One learns from the other and at some point we all become equal in our potential to attain ultimate destiny. From Urantia to Havona, the well ordered universe ensures we will not be denied well meant efforts to fulfill that potential.

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#### **We are not all created equal**

The divinely perfect creature and the evolutionary perfected creature are equal in degree of divinity potential, but they differ in kind. Each must depend on the other to attain supremacy of service. The evolutionary superuniverses depend on perfect Havona to provide the final training for their ascending citizens, but so does the perfect central universe require the existence of the perfecting superuniverses to provide for the full development of its descending inhabitants. (362.3)

The two prime manifestations of finite reality, innate perfection and evolved perfection, be they personalities or universes, are co-ordinate, dependent, and integrated. Each requires the other to achieve completion of function, service, and destiny. (362.4)

God has full understanding of the need of every intelligent creature for function and experience, and therefore, in every situation, be it concerned with the destiny of a universe or the welfare of the humblest of his creatures, God retires from activity in favor of the galaxy of creature and Creator personalities who inherently intervene between himself and any given universe situation or creative event. But notwithstanding this retirement, this exhibition of infinite co-ordination, there is on God's part an actual, literal, and personal participation in these events by and through these ordained agencies and personalities. The Father is working in and through all these channels for the welfare of all his far-flung creation. (362.6)

#### **Justice and the limits of responsibility**

The administration of the local universe is concerned with creation, evolution, maintenance, and ministry. The universe tribunals are, therefore, denied the right to pass upon those cases involving the question of eternal life and death. This has no reference to natural death as it obtains on Urantia, but if the question of the right of continued existence, life eternal, comes up for adjudication, it must be referred to the tribunals of Orvonton, and if decided adversely to the individual, all sentences of extinction are carried out upon the orders, and through the agencies, of the rulers of the supergovernment. (372.8)

However unfairly human contentions may sometimes appear to be adjudicated on Urantia, in the universe justice and divine equity do prevail. You are living in a well-ordered universe, and sooner or later you may depend upon being dealt with justly, even mercifully. (373.2)

Thought Adjusters, the bestowals of the Universal Father, are comparatively isolated; they indwell human minds but have no discernible connection with the ethical affairs of a local creation. (363.4)

## **16. THE ORIGIN AND APPLICATION OF IDEALS**

Spirit domination, even for us lowly mortals, allows faith to operate with morals unachievable by doctrine. Some insights about new teaching methods are given.

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### **Appreciate our lowly origins and divine potentials**

On the inhabited worlds the Spirit begins the work of evolutionary progression, starting with the lifeless material of the realm, first endowing vegetable life, then the animal organisms, then the first orders of human existence; and each succeeding impartation contributes to the further unfolding of the evolutionary potential of planetary life from the initial and primitive stages to the appearance of will creatures. This labor of the Spirit is largely effected through the seven adjutants, the spirits of promise, the unifying and co-ordinating spirit-mind of the evolving planets, ever and unitedly leading the races of men towards higher ideas and spiritual ideals. (379.2)

Mortal man first experiences the ministry of the Spirit in conjunction with mind when the purely animal mind of evolutionary creatures develops reception capacity for the adjutants of worship and of wisdom. (379.3)

Spiritual forces unerringly seek and attain their own original levels. Having gone out from the Eternal, they are certain to return thereto, bringing with them all those children of time and space who have espoused the leading and teaching of the indwelling Adjuster, those who have been truly "born of the Spirit", the faith sons of God. (380.5)

### **Ethical behavior is elevated by the influence of spirit**

The dead theory of even the highest religious doctrines is powerless to transform human character or to control mortal behavior. The seed of theoretical truth is dead, the highest moral concepts without effect, unless and until the divine Spirit breathes upon the forms of truth and quickens the formulas of righteousness. (380.7)

... the divine Spirit must dominate and control every phase of human experience. (381.1)

Even though you must live your material life through, even though you cannot escape the body and its necessities, nonetheless, in purpose and ideals you are empowered increasingly to subject the animal nature to the mastery of the Spirit. There truly exists within you a conspiracy of spiritual forces, a confederation of divine powers, whose exclusive purpose is to effect your final deliverance from material bondage and finite handicaps. (381.3)

The consciousness of the spirit domination of a human life is presently attended by an increasing exhibition of the characteristics of the Spirit in the life reactions of such a spirit-led mortal, "for the fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance". (381.7)

The Urantia peoples are suffering the consequences of a double deprivation of help in this task of progressive planetary spiritual attainment. The Caligastia upheaval precipitated world-wide confusion and robbed all subsequent generations of the moral assistance which a well-ordered society would have provided. But even more disastrous was the Adamic default in that it deprived the races of that superior type of physical nature which would have been more consonant with spiritual aspirations. (382.4)

Faith sons work on intellectual levels and live on spiritual planes far above the conflicts produced by unrestrained or unnatural physical desires. The normal urges of animal beings and the natural appetites and impulses of the physical nature are not in conflict with even the highest spiritual attainment except in the minds of ignorant, mistaught, or unfortunately overconscientious persons. (383.1)

### **The art of teaching truth accommodates the differences**

Every possible provision is made to qualify the various personalities of the universe for advancing service and improving function. The entire universe is one vast school. (412.2)

The methods employed in many of the higher schools are beyond the human concept of the art of teaching truth, but this is the keynote of the whole educational system: character acquired by enlightened experience. The teachers provide the enlightenment; the universe station and the ascender's status afford the opportunity for experience; the wise utilization of these two augments character. (412.3)

## **Quickeners of Morality**

On the mansion worlds you begin to learn self-government for the benefit of all concerned. Your mind learns co-operation, learns how to plan with other and wiser beings. On the system headquarters the seraphic teachers will further quicken your appreciation of cosmic morality - of the interactions of liberty and loyalty. (435.3)

## **What is loyalty?**

It is the fruit of an intelligent appreciation of universe brotherhood; one could not take so much and give nothing. As you ascend the personality scale, first you learn to be loyal, then to love, then to be filial, and then may you be free; but not until you are a finaliter, not until you have attained perfection of loyalty, can you self-realize finality of liberty. (435.4)

## **Our decisions determine how we act**

It is not so much what you learn in this first life; it is the experience of living this life that is important. Even the *work* of this world, paramount though it is, is not nearly so important as the *way* in which you do this work. There is no material reward for righteous living, but there is profound satisfaction - consciousness of achievement - and this transcends any conceivable material reward. (435.6)

The keys of the kingdom of heaven are: sincerity, more sincerity, and more sincerity. All men have these keys. Men use them - advance in spirit status - by decisions, by more decisions, and by more decisions. The highest moral choice is the choice of the highest possible value, and always - in any sphere, in all of them - this is to choose to do the will of God. If man thus chooses, he *is* great, though he be the humblest citizen of Jerusem or even the least of mortals on Urantia. (435.7)

The Gods who ordained that mortal man should climb to higher levels of spiritual intelligence through long ages of evolutionary trials and tribulations, take note of his status and needs at every stage of the ascent; and always are they divinely fair and just, even charmingly merciful, in the final judgments of these struggling mortals of the early days of the evolving races. (446.2)

## **17. MASTERY OF GROUP ETHICS**

Particular emphasis is given to the socialization of our personalities. And we are given various environments beyond the time-space zone to master ethical group interaction. Seven achievement levels are presented for consideration.

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### **Patience is a virtue**

The attempt to secure equal good for the self and for the greatest number of other selves presents a problem which cannot always be satisfactorily resolved in a time-space frame. Given an eternal life, such antagonisms can be worked out, but in one short human life they are incapable of solution. (1134.4)

### **The multiplier effect**

Mathematics asserts that, if one person stands for a certain unit of intellectual and moral value, ten persons would stand for ten times this value. But in dealing with human personality it would be nearer the truth to say that such a personality association is a sum equal to the square of the number of personalities concerned in the equation rather than the simple arithmetical sum. A social group of human beings in co-ordinated working harmony stands for a force far greater than the simple sum of its parts. (1477.1)

### **The real progress will come in time**

Your sojourn on Edentia and its associated spheres will be chiefly occupied with the mastery of group ethics, the secret of pleasant and profitable interrelationship between the various universe and superuniverse orders of intelligent personalities. (494.2)

On the mansion worlds you completed the unification of the evolving mortal personality; on the system capital you attained Jerusem citizenship and achieved the willingness to submit the self to the disciplines of group activities and co-ordinated undertakings; but now on the constellation training worlds you are to achieve the real socialization of your evolving morontia personality. This supernal cultural acquirement consists in learning how to: (494.3 - 10)

1. Live happily and work effectively with ten diverse fellow morontians, while ten such groups are associated in companies of one hundred and then federated in corps of one thousand.
2. Abide joyfully and co-operate heartily with ten univitatia, who, though similar intellectually to morontia beings, are very different in every other way. And then must you function with this group of ten as it co-ordinates with ten other families, which are in turn confederated into a corps of one thousand univitatia.
3. Achieve simultaneous adjustment to both fellow morontians and these host univitatia. Acquire the ability voluntarily and effectively to co-operate with your own order of beings in close working association with a somewhat dissimilar group of intelligent creatures.
4. While thus socially functioning with beings like and unlike yourself, achieve intellectual harmony with, and make vocational adjustment to, both groups of associates.
5. While attaining satisfactory socialization of the personality on intellectual and vocational levels, further perfect the ability to live in intimate contact with similar and slightly dissimilar beings with ever-lessening irritability and ever-diminishing resentment. The reversion directors contribute much to this latter attainment through their group-play activities.
6. Adjust all of these various socialization techniques to the furtherance of the progressive co-ordination of the Paradise-ascension career; augment universe insight by enhancing the ability to grasp the eternal goal-meanings concealed within these seemingly insignificant time-space activities.
7. And then, climax all of these procedures of multisocialization with the concurrent enhancement of spiritual insight as it pertains to the augmentation of all phases of personal endowment through group spiritual association and morontia co-ordination. Intellectually, socially, and spiritually two moral creatures do not merely double their personal potentials of universe achievement by partnership technique; they more nearly quadruple their attainment and accomplishment possibilities.

## **18. INTERRELATEDNESS OF VALUES**

There is a transition stage between the material and spiritual stages of existence. Unifying the realities of truth, beauty, and goodness, is part of the achievement of this stage as well as deficiency correction. Our teachers will make sure we truly enjoy our dematerializing stage.

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### **We can experience the unified effect of values**

Beauty, rhythm, and harmony are intellectually associated and spiritually akin. Truth, fact, and relationship are intellectually inseparable and associated with the philosophic concepts of beauty. Goodness, righteousness, and justice are philosophically interrelated and spiritually bound up together with living truth and divine beauty. (507.3)

Cosmic concepts of true philosophy, the portrayal of celestial artistry, or the mortal attempt to depict the human recognition of divine beauty can never be truly satisfying if such attempted creature progression is ununified. These expressions of the divine urge within the evolving creature may be intellectually true, emotionally beautiful, and spiritually good; but the real soul of expression is absent unless these realities of truth, meanings of beauty, and values of goodness are unified in the life experience of the artisan, the scientist, or the philosopher. (507.4)

These divine qualities are perfectly and absolutely unified in God. And every God-knowing man or angel possesses the potential of unlimited self-expression on ever-progressive levels of unified self-realization by the technique of the never-ending achievement of Godlikeness - the experiential blending in the evolutionary experience of eternal truth, universal beauty, and divine goodness. (507.5)

### **From the first mansion world ...**

Almost the entire experience of mansion world number one pertains to deficiency ministry. Survivors arriving on this first of the detention spheres present so many and such varied defects of creature character and deficiencies of mortal experience that the major activities of the realm are occupied with the correction

and cure of these manifold legacies of the life in the flesh on the material evolutionary worlds of time and space. (533.7)

### **... to the seventh**

The experience on this sphere is the crowning achievement of the immediate postmortal career. During your sojourn here you will receive the instruction of many teachers, all of whom will co-operate in the task of preparing you for residence on Jerusem. Any discernible differences between those mortals hailing from the isolated and retarded worlds and those survivors from the more advanced and enlightened spheres are virtually obliterated during the sojourn on the seventh mansion world. Here you will be purged of all the remnants of unfortunate heredity, unwholesome environment, and unspiritual planetary tendencies. (538.6)

You will greatly enjoy your progress through the seven dematerializing worlds; they are really demortalizing spheres. (539.2)

## **19. PROGRESSIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION**

The humanities and social sciences feature in the post mortal schools of learning. Within certain limits we can choose our most advantageous future direction of study. But we will need to be model students for we will no longer be allowed to defer our studies. Truth and the study of truth are timely and dynamic.

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### **Higher thinking to deal with problems in a timely manner**

In the schools of the morontia life these teachers engage in individual, group, class, and mass teaching. On the mansion worlds such schools are organized in three general groups of one hundred divisions each: the schools of thinking, the schools of feeling, and the schools of doing. When you reach the constellation, there are added the schools of ethics, the schools of administration, and the schools of social adjustment. On the universe headquarters worlds you will enter the schools of philosophy, divinity, and pure spirituality. (551.1)

One of the purposes of the morontia career is to effect the permanent eradication from the mortal survivors of such animal vestigial traits as procrastination, equivocation, insincerity, problem avoidance, unfairness, and ease seeking. The mansonia life early teaches the young morontia pupils that postponement is in no sense avoidance. After the life in the flesh, time is no longer available as a technique of dodging situations or of circumventing disagreeable obligations. (551.3)

### **The ascending career path**

On the mansion worlds the seraphic evangels will help you to choose wisely among the optional routes to Edentia, Salvington, Uversa, and Havona. If there are a number of equally advisable routes, these will be put before you, and you will be permitted to select the one that most appeals to you. These seraphim then make recommendations to the four and twenty advisers on Jerusem concerning that course which would be most advantageous for each ascending soul. (552.3)

You are not given unrestricted choice as to your future course; but you may choose within the limits of that which the transition ministers and their superiors

wisely determine to be most suitable for your future spirit attainment. The spirit world is governed on the principle of respecting your freewill choice provided the course you may choose is not detrimental to you or injurious to your fellows. (552.4)

### **The conservation of truth**

These seraphic evangels are dedicated to the proclamation of the gospel of eternal progression, the triumph of perfection attainment. On the mansion worlds they proclaim the great law of the conservation and dominance of goodness: No act of good is ever wholly lost; it may be long thwarted but never wholly annulled, and it is eternally potent in proportion to the divinity of its motivation. (552.5)

But sometimes error is so great that its rectification by revelation would be fatal to those slowly emerging truths which are essential to its experiential overthrow. When children have their ideals, do not dislodge them; let them grow. And while you are learning to think as men, you should also be learning to pray as children. (554.6)

### **But truth must be dynamic**

Law is life itself and not the rules of its conduct. Evil is a transgression of law, not a violation of the rules of conduct pertaining to life, which is the law. Falsehood is not a matter of narration technique but something premeditated as a perversion of truth. The creation of new pictures out of old facts, the restatement of parental life in the lives of offspring - these are the artistic triumphs of truth. The shadow of a hair's turning, premeditated for an untrue purpose, the slightest twisting or perversion of that which is principle - these constitute falseness. But the fetish of factualized truth, fossilized truth, the iron band of so-called unchanging truth, holds one blindly in a closed circle of cold fact. One can be technically right as to fact and everlastingly wrong in the truth. (555.1)

*Mortal man is not an evolutionary accident.* There is a precise system, a universal law, which determines the unfolding of the planetary life plan on the spheres of space. (560.5)

## 20. THE STAGES OF EARTHLY DEVELOPMENT

At times the revelators summarize teachings and give an easily understood listing. In the following seven point list, we can relate to the first three stages and possibly the fourth for they are of historical fact and experience. Are then the latter stages equally acceptable of having a basis in fact?

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### From survival to ethical and spiritual striving

... the mortal races on an average world of time and space will successively pass through the following seven developmental epochs: (576.6 – 8; 577.1- 5.)

1. **The nutrition epoch.** The prehuman creatures and the dawn races of primitive man are chiefly concerned with food problems.
2. **The security age.** More and more attention is devoted to the technique of war. Homes are fortified, and the clans are solidified by mutual fear and by the inculcation of hate for foreign groups. Self-preservation is a pursuit which always follows self-maintenance.
3. **The material-comfort era.** Luxury vies with necessity in occupying the center of the stage of human activities. Such an age is all too often characterized by tyranny, intolerance, gluttony, and drunkenness.
4. **The quest for knowledge and wisdom.** Food, security, pleasure, and leisure provide the foundation for the development of culture and the spread of knowledge.
5. **The epoch of philosophy and brotherhood.** When mortals learn to think and begin to profit by experience, they become philosophical - they start out to reason within themselves and to exercise discriminative judgment. The society of this age becomes ethical, and the mortals of such an era are truly becoming moral beings. Wise moral beings are capable of establishing human brotherhood on such a progressing world. Ethical and moral beings can learn how to live in accordance with the golden rule.
6. **The age of spiritual striving.** When evolving mortals have passed through

the physical, intellectual, and social stages of development, sooner or later they attain those levels of personal insight which impel them to seek for spiritual satisfactions and cosmic understandings. Religion is completing the ascent from the emotional domains of fear and superstition to the high levels of cosmic wisdom and personal spiritual experience. Education aspires to the attainment of meanings, and culture grasps at cosmic relationships and true values. Such evolving mortals are genuinely cultured, truly educated, and exquisitely God-knowing.

7. ***The era of light and life.*** This is the flowering of the successive ages of physical security, intellectual expansion, social culture, and spiritual achievement. These human accomplishments are now blended, associated, and co-ordinated in cosmic unity and unselfish service.

## 21. THE STAGES OF SOCIAL BROTHERHOOD

Perhaps we are enjoying aspects of each of these transformations to a better quality of life. How much we have achieved, and our rate of progress, are questions we need to address. Again, we are given excellent and succinct guidelines. Are they really that difficult to accomplish?

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### **Essential factors for peaceful living. Beyond a civil society.**

... the realization of social brotherhood on your world depends much on the achievement of the following personal transformations and planetary adjustments: (597.3 - 6; 598.1 - 2)

1. ***Social fraternity.*** Multiplication of international and interracial social contacts and fraternal associations through travel, commerce, and competitive play. Development of a common language and the multiplication of multilinguists. The racial and national interchange of students, teachers, industrialists, and religious philosophers.
2. ***Intellectual cross-fertilization.*** Brotherhood is impossible on a world whose inhabitants are so primitive that they fail to recognize the folly of unmitigated selfishness. There must occur an exchange of national and racial literature. Each race must become familiar with the thought of all races; each nation must know the feelings of all nations. Ignorance breeds suspicion, and suspicion is incompatible with the essential attitude of sympathy and love.
3. ***Ethical awakening.*** Only ethical consciousness can unmask the immorality of human intolerance and the sinfulness of fratricidal strife. Only a moral conscience can condemn the evils of national envy and racial jealousy. Only moral beings will ever seek for that spiritual insight which is essential to living the golden rule.
4. ***Political wisdom.*** Emotional maturity is essential to self-control. Only emotional maturity will insure the substitution of international techniques of civilized adjudication for the barbarous arbitrament of war. Wise statesmen will sometime work for the welfare of humanity even while they strive to

promote the interest of their national or racial groups.

5. ***Spiritual insight.*** The brotherhood of man is, after all, predicated on the recognition of the fatherhood of God. The quickest way to realize the brotherhood of man on Urantia is to effect the spiritual transformation of present-day humanity. The only technique for accelerating the natural trend of social evolution is that of applying spiritual pressure from above, thus augmenting moral insight while enhancing the soul capacity of every mortal to understand and love every other mortal. Mutual understanding and fraternal love are transcendent civilizers and mighty factors in the world-wide realization of the brotherhood of man.

## **22. TRUE AND FALSE LIBERTY**

Relative free will can be used respectfully or for outright and unregulated self will. We are free to choose and in doing so reveal out true motives. We move towards higher values or away from them. There is no escape however, from ethical obligations that are universal and immutable.

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### **Sin, error, and iniquity**

The Gods neither create evil nor permit sin and rebellion. Potential evil is time-existent in a universe embracing differential levels of perfection meanings and values. Sin is potential in all realms where imperfect beings are endowed with the ability to choose between good and evil. The very conflicting presence of truth and untruth, fact and falsehood, constitutes the potentiality of error. The deliberate choice of evil constitutes sin; the willful rejection of truth is error; the persistent pursuit of sin and error is iniquity. (613.2)

There are many ways of looking at sin, but from the universe philosophic viewpoint sin is the attitude of a personality who is knowingly resisting cosmic reality. Error might be regarded as a misconception or distortion of reality. Evil is a partial realization of, or maladjustment to, universe realities. But sin is a purposeful resistance to divine reality - a conscious choosing to oppose spiritual progress - while iniquity consists in an open and persistent defiance of recognized reality and signifies such a degree of personality disintegration as to border on cosmic insanity. (754.5)

... when sin has so many times been chosen and so often been repeated, it may become habitual. Habitual sinners can easily become iniquitous, become wholehearted rebels against the universe and all of its divine realities. While all manner of sins may be forgiven, we doubt whether the established iniquiter would ever sincerely experience sorrow for his misdeeds or accept forgiveness for his sins. (755.2)

### **Explanation of true and false liberties**

True liberty is the quest of the ages and the reward of evolutionary progress.

False liberty is the subtle deception of the error of time and the evil of space. Enduring liberty is predicated on the reality of justice - intelligence, maturity, fraternity, and equity. (613.4)

Liberty is a self-destroying technique of cosmic existence when its motivation is unintelligent, unconditioned, and uncontrolled. True liberty is progressively related to reality and is ever regardful of social equity, cosmic fairness, universe fraternity, and divine obligations. (613.5)

Liberty is suicidal when divorced from material justice, intellectual fairness, social forbearance, moral duty, and spiritual values. Liberty is nonexistent apart from cosmic reality, and all personality reality is proportional to its divinity relationships. (613.6)

Unbridled self-will and unregulated self-expression equal unmitigated selfishness, the acme of ungodliness. Liberty without the associated and ever-increasing conquest of self is a figment of egoistic mortal imagination. Self-motivated liberty is a conceptual illusion, a cruel deception. License masquerading in the garments of liberty is the forerunner of abject bondage. (613.7)

True liberty is the associate of genuine self-respect; false liberty is the consort of self-admiration. True liberty is the fruit of self-control; false liberty, the assumption of self-assertion. Self-control leads to altruistic service; self-admiration tends towards the exploitation of others for the selfish aggrandizement of such a mistaken individual as is willing to sacrifice righteous attainment for the sake of possessing unjust power over his fellow beings. (614.1)

### **The right to choose is a gift from God**

There is no error greater than that species of self-deception which leads intelligent beings to crave the exercise of power over other beings for the purpose of depriving these persons of their natural liberties. The golden rule of human fairness cries out against all such fraud, unfairness, selfishness, and unrighteousness. Only true and genuine liberty is compatible with the reign of love and the ministry of mercy. (614.3)

How dare the self-willed creature encroach upon the rights of his fellows in the name of personal liberty when the Supreme Rulers of the universe stand back in

merciful respect for these prerogatives of will and potentials of personality! No being, in the exercise of his supposed personal liberty, has a right to deprive any other being of those privileges of existence conferred by the Creators and duly respected by all their loyal associates, subordinates, and subjects. (614.4)

### **The liberty to choose is a gift from God**

No being in all the universe has the rightful liberty to deprive any other being of true liberty, the right to love and be loved, the privilege of worshiping God and of serving his fellows. (615.2)

The moral will creatures of the evolutionary worlds are always bothered with the unthinking question as to why the all-wise Creators permit evil and sin. They fail to comprehend that both are inevitable if the creature is to be truly free. The free will of evolving man or exquisite angel is not a mere philosophic concept, a symbolic ideal. Man's ability to choose good or evil is a universe reality. This liberty to choose for oneself is an endowment of the Supreme Rulers, and they will not permit any being or group of beings to deprive a single personality in the wide universe of this divinely bestowed liberty--not even to satisfy such misguided and ignorant beings in the enjoyment of this misnamed personal liberty. (615.3)

### **Liberty, and ethical obligations, are our divine inheritance**

Most of the liberties which Lucifer sought he already had; others he was to receive in the future. All these precious endowments were lost by giving way to impatience and yielding to a desire to possess what one craves now and to possess it in defiance of all obligation to respect the rights and liberties of all other beings composing the universe of universes. Ethical obligations are innate, divine, and universal. (616.3)

## **23. MERCY CAN BE LAVISH, JUSTICE IS PRECISE**

The passage of time is a technique for mercy and justice to prevail. It allows for righteousness to ultimately triumph as people expand their concepts of meanings and values. While situational and group ethics hold sway in given situations, be assured that the worth of the individual will never be unmeasured or overlooked.

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### **All things work together for eventual universe goodness**

Supreme justice can act instantly when not restrained by divine mercy. But the ministry of mercy to the children of time and space always provides for this time lag, this saving interval between seedtime and harvest. If the seed sowing is good, this interval provides for the testing and upbuilding of character; if the seed sowing is evil, this merciful delay provides time for repentance and rectification. This time delay in the adjudication and execution of evildoers is inherent in the mercy ministry of the seven superuniverses. This restraint of justice by mercy proves that God is love, and that such a God of love dominates the universes and in mercy controls the fate and judgment of all his creatures. (616.5)

The mercy delays of time are by the mandate of the free will of the Creators. There is good to be derived in the universe from this technique of patience in dealing with sinful rebels. While it is all too true that good cannot come of evil to the one who contemplates and performs evil, it is equally true that all things (including evil, potential and manifest) work together for good to all beings who know God, love to do his will, and are ascending Paradiseward according to his eternal plan and divine purpose. (616.6)

### **Situation Ethics**

If an affectionate father of a large family chooses to show mercy to one of his children guilty of grievous wrongdoing, it may well be that the extension of mercy to this misbehaving child will work a temporary hardship upon all the other and well-behaved children. Such eventualities are inevitable; such a risk is inseparable from the reality situation of having a loving parent and of being a member of a family group. Each member of a family profits by the righteous conduct of every other member; likewise must each member suffer the immediate time-

consequences of the misconduct of every other member. Families, groups, nations, races, worlds, systems, constellations, and universes are relationships of association which possess individuality; and therefore does every member of any such group, large or small, reap the benefits and suffer the consequences of the rightdoing and the wrongdoing of all other members of the group concerned. (618.6)

### **The consequences wrought by the actions of another**

But one thing should be made clear: If you are made to suffer the evil consequences of the sin of some member of your family, some fellow citizen or fellow mortal, even rebellion in the system or elsewhere - no matter what you may have to endure because of the wrongdoing of your associates, fellows, or superiors - you may rest secure in the eternal assurance that such tribulations are transient afflictions. None of these fraternal consequences of misbehavior in the group can ever jeopardize your eternal prospects or in the least degree deprive you of your divine right of Paradise ascension and God attainment. (619.1)

And there is compensation for these trials, delays, and disappointments which invariably accompany the sin of rebellion. Of the many valuable repercussions of the Lucifer rebellion which might be named, I will only call attention to the enhanced careers of those mortal ascenders, the Jerusem citizens, who, by withstanding the sophistries of sin, placed themselves in line for becoming future Mighty Messengers, fellows of my own order. Every being who stood the test of that evil episode thereby immediately advanced his administrative status and enhanced his spiritual worth. (619.2)

### **The wisdom of delay**

With the passing of twenty-five thousand years of system time (twenty thousand years of Urantia time), the Melchizedeks began to teach that the good resulting from Lucifer's folly had come to equal the evil incurred. The sum of evil had by that time become almost stationary, continuing to increase only on certain isolated worlds, while the beneficial repercussions continued to multiply and extend out through the universe and superuniverse, even to Havona. The Melchizedeks now teach that the good resulting from the Satania rebellion is more than a thousand times the sum of all the evil. (619.3)

The passing of time has enhanced the consequential good to be derived from the Lucifer folly; and since the evil to be penalized was quite fully developed within a comparatively short time, it is apparent that the all-wise and farseeing universe rulers would be certain to extend the time in which to reap increasingly beneficial results. Regardless of the many additional reasons for delaying the apprehension and adjudication of the Satania rebels, this one gain would have been enough to explain why these sinners were not sooner interned, and why they have not been adjudicated and destroyed. (619.4)

Shortsighted and time-bound mortal minds should be slow to criticize the time delays of the farseeing and all-wise administrators of universe affairs. (619.5)

As you ascend in the survival experience, you will broaden your universe concepts and extend your horizon of meanings and values... You will also better comprehend how ultimate (if not immediate) good can be derived from time-limited evil. ...As you ascend Paradiseward, you will increasingly learn that many problematic features of universe administration can only be comprehended subsequent to the acquirement of increased experiential capacity and to the achievement of enhanced spiritual insight. Cosmic wisdom is essential to the understanding of cosmic situations. (620.2)

## 24. COSMIC THOUGHT IN QUEST OF THE HIGHEST BEAUTY

The mind interfaces between the material and the spiritual. Our thought processes then are paramount to self-creation, the realization of potential. Cosmic thinking includes three simple arenas that we can understand and apply.

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### **Divine goodness occurs on all levels of reality**

Philosophy you somewhat grasp, and divinity you comprehend in worship, social service, and personal spiritual experience, but the pursuit of beauty - cosmology - you all too often limit to the study of man's crude artistic endeavors. Beauty, art, is largely a matter of the unification of contrasts. Variety is essential to the concept of beauty. The supreme beauty, the height of finite art, is the drama of the unification of the vastness of the cosmic extremes of Creator and creature. Man finding God and God finding man - the creature becoming perfect as is the Creator - that is the supernal achievement of the supremely beautiful, the attainment of the apex of cosmic art. (646.4 – 9)

Hence materialism, atheism, is the maximation of ugliness, the climax of the finite antithesis of the beautiful. Highest beauty consists in the panorama of the unification of the variations which have been born of pre-existent harmonious reality.

The attainment of cosmologic levels of thought includes:

1. **Curiosity.** Hunger for harmony and thirst for beauty. Persistent attempts to discover new levels of harmonious cosmic relationships.
2. **Aesthetic appreciation.** Love of the beautiful and ever-advancing appreciation of the artistic touch of all creative manifestations on all levels of reality.
3. **Ethic sensitivity.** Through the realization of truth the appreciation of beauty leads to the sense of the eternal fitness of those things which impinge upon the recognition of divine goodness in Deity relations with all beings; and thus even cosmology leads to the pursuit of divine reality values - to God-consciousness.

## **25. TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND GOODNESS**

The revelators endeavor to communicate to the level of the human mind to ensure maximum comprehension. They often refer to truth, beauty and goodness as the basis of love, universe reality, and Deity comprehension. When their unity is realized, a supreme ideal is defined in living experience.

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### **Defining the attributes of each**

The meanings of eternal truth make a combined appeal to the intellectual and spiritual natures of mortal man. Universal beauty embraces the harmonious relations and rhythms of the cosmic creation; this is more distinctly the intellectual appeal and leads towards unified and synchronous comprehension of the material universe. Divine goodness represents the revelation of infinite values to the finite mind, therein to be perceived and elevated to the very threshold of the spiritual level of human comprehension. (646.10)

Truth is the basis of science and philosophy, presenting the intellectual foundation of religion. Beauty sponsors art, music, and the meaningful rhythms of all human experience. Goodness embraces the sense of ethics, morality, and religion - experiential perfection-hunger. (647.1)

Goodness is the mental recognition of the relative values of the diverse levels of divine perfection. The recognition of goodness implies a mind of moral status, a personal mind with ability to discriminate between good and evil. But the possession of goodness, greatness, is the measure of real divinity attainment. (647.3)

### **They unify to define a divine and supreme ideal**

Every impulse of every electron, thought, or spirit is an acting unit in the whole universe. Only sin is isolated and evil gravity resisting on the mental and spiritual levels. The universe is a whole; no thing or being exists or lives in isolation. Self-realization is potentially evil if it is antisocial. It is literally true: "No man lives by himself." Cosmic socialization constitutes the highest form of personality unification. (647.5)

Even truth, beauty, and goodness - man's intellectual approach to the universe of mind, matter, and spirit - must be combined into one unified concept of a divine and supreme *ideal*. As mortal personality unifies the human experience with matter, mind, and spirit, so does this divine and supreme ideal become power-unified in Supremacy and then personalized as a God of fatherly love. (647.6)

To finite man truth, beauty, and goodness embrace the full revelation of divinity reality. As this love-comprehension of Deity finds spiritual expression in the lives of God-knowing mortals, there are yielded the fruits of divinity: intellectual peace, social progress, moral satisfaction, spiritual joy, and cosmic wisdom. The advanced mortals on a world in the seventh stage of light and life have learned that love is the greatest thing in the universe - and they know that God is love. (648.3)

Love is the desire to do good to others. (648.4)

**UNIVERSAL ETHICS**  
**CONCEPTS FROM *THE URANTIA BOOK***

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## **PART 3 THE HISTORY OF URANTIA**

### **26. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR HUMAN RACE DEVELOPMENT**

These views expressed in the Papers are highly controversial in terms of today's attitude towards eugenics. This is all the more reason for them to be considered for their foresight or otherwise, value to the debate, and their validity. Have the revelators based their comments on first hand experience with other inhabited planets?

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#### **Impact of the physical on mind and spirit development**

And thus it has ever been on Urantia. Civilizations of great promise have successively deteriorated and have finally been extinguished by the folly of allowing the superior freely to procreate with the inferior. (719.3)

Mankind on Urantia must solve its problems of mortal development with the human stocks it has - no more races will evolve from prehuman sources throughout all future time. But this fact does not preclude the possibility of the attainment of vastly higher levels of human development through the intelligent fostering of the evolutionary potentials still resident in the mortal races. That which we, the Life Carriers, do toward fostering and conserving the life strains before the appearance of human will, man must do for himself after such an event and subsequent to our retirement from active participation in evolution. In a general way, man's evolutionary destiny is in his own hands, and scientific intelligence must sooner or later supersede the random functioning of uncontrolled natural selection and chance survival. (734.3)

As mind evolution is dependent on, and delayed by, the slow development of physical conditions, so is spiritual progress dependent on mental expansion and unflinchingly delayed by intellectual retardation. But this does not mean that spiritual evolution is dependent on education, culture, or wisdom. The soul may evolve regardless of mental culture but not in the absence of mental capacity and desire - the choice of survival and the decision to achieve ever-increasing perfection - to do the will of the Father in heaven. Although survival may not depend on the possession of knowledge and wisdom, progression most certainly does. (739.8)

When physical conditions are ripe, *sudden* mental evolutions may take place; when mind status is propitious, *sudden* spiritual transformations may occur; when spiritual values receive proper recognition, then cosmic meanings become discernible, and increasingly the personality is released from the handicaps of time and delivered from the limitations of space. (740.2)

### **Social Contract Theory revisited**

It is the false sentiment of your partially perfected civilizations that fosters, protects, and perpetuates the hopelessly defective strains of evolutionary human stocks. (592.4)

It is neither tenderness nor altruism to bestow futile sympathy upon degenerated human beings, unsalvable abnormal and inferior mortals. There exist on even the most normal of the evolutionary worlds sufficient differences between individuals and between numerous social groups to provide for the full exercise of all those noble traits of altruistic sentiment and unselfish mortal ministry without perpetuating the socially unfit and the morally degenerate strains of evolving humanity. There is abundant opportunity for the exercise of tolerance and the function of altruism in behalf of those unfortunate and needy individuals who have not irretrievably lost their moral heritage and forever destroyed their spiritual birthright. (592.5)

## **27. THE ONUS OF TRUST – LOYALTY AND BETRAYAL**

The mind is subject to subtleties that can lead to habitual thinking. This can lead to the involvement of the whole being. Therefore are we cautioned to be wary of sin and embrace the attitude of always trying to do the will of the Father. Disloyalty to friends and loss of trust are dire consequences at personal and collective levels.

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### **Two opposing examples**

It should be noted that both Lucifer and Caligastia had been patiently instructed and lovingly warned respecting their critical tendencies and the subtle development of their pride of self and its associated exaggeration of the feeling of self-importance. But all of these attempts to help had been misconstrued as unwarranted criticism and as unjustified interference with personal liberties. Both Caligastia and Lucifer judged their friendly advisers as being actuated by the very reprehensible motives which were beginning to dominate their own distorted thinking and misguided planning. They judged their unselfish advisers by their own evolving selfishness. (752.3)

In all the administrative work of a local universe no high trust is deemed more sacred than that reposed in a Planetary Prince who assumes responsibility for the welfare and guidance of the evolving mortals on a newly inhabited world. And of all forms of evil, none are more destructive of personality status than betrayal of trust and disloyalty to one's confiding friends. In committing this deliberate sin, Caligastia so completely distorted his personality that his mind has never since been able fully to regain its equilibrium. (754.4)

Throughout the seven crucial years of the Caligastia rebellion, Van was wholly devoted to the work of ministry to his loyal army of men, midwayers, and angels. The spiritual insight and moral steadfastness which enabled Van to maintain such an unshakable attitude of loyalty to the universe government was the product of clear thinking, wise reasoning, logical judgment, sincere motivation, unselfish purpose, intelligent loyalty, experiential memory, disciplined character, and the unquestioning dedication of his personality to the doing of the will of the Father in Paradise. (756.7)

### **Personal repercussions of sin**

The personal (centripetal) consequences of the creature's willful and persistent rejection of light are both inevitable and individual and are of concern only to Deity and to that personal creature. Such a soul-destroying harvest of iniquity is the inner reaping of the iniquitous will creature. (760.6)

### **Collective repercussions of sin**

But not so with the external repercussions of sin: The impersonal (centrifugal) consequences of embraced sin are both inevitable and collective, being of concern to every creature functioning within the affect-range of such events. (761.1)

Sin is never purely local in its effects. The administrative sectors of the universes are organismal; the plight of one personality must to a certain extent be shared by all. Sin, being an attitude of the person toward reality, is destined to exhibit its inherent negativistic harvest upon any and all related levels of universe values. But the full consequences of erroneous thinking, evil-doing, or sinful planning are experienced only on the level of actual performance. The transgression of universe law may be fatal in the physical realm without seriously involving the mind or impairing the spiritual experience. Sin is fraught with fatal consequences to personality survival only when it is the attitude of the whole being, when it stands for the choosing of the mind and the willing of the soul. (761.3)

Sin on Urantia did very little to delay biologic evolution, but it did operate to deprive the mortal races of the full benefit of the Adamic inheritance. Sin enormously retards intellectual development, moral growth, social progress, and mass spiritual attainment. But it does not prevent the highest spiritual achievement by any individual who chooses to know God and sincerely do his divine will. (761.5)

Sin is wholly personal as to moral guilt or spiritual consequences, notwithstanding its far-flung repercussions in administrative, intellectual, and social domains. (761.6)

While we cannot fathom the wisdom that permits such catastrophes, we can always discern the beneficial outworking of these local disturbances as they are reflected out upon the universe at large. (761.7)

## **28. SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

The simplicity of living, uncomplicated civilization, becomes more complex as we look for new ways of self expression. Society needs to guard against the excesses of vanity and greed with the propensity for overpopulation and war. Have there been instances of superhuman intervention to assist us in the past when society breaks down under the strain of change?

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### **Needs becoming wants**

Civilization is a racial acquirement; it is not biologically inherent; hence must all children be reared in an environment of culture, while each succeeding generation of youth must receive anew its education. The superior qualities of civilization - scientific, philosophic, and religious - are not transmitted from one generation to another by direct inheritance. These cultural achievements are preserved only by the enlightened conservation of social inheritance. (763.2)

But today society is top-heavy with the overgrowth of supposed human needs. Occidental civilization of the twentieth century groans wearily under the tremendous overload of luxury and the inordinate multiplication of human desires and longings. Modern society is enduring the strain of one of its most dangerous phases of far-flung interassociation and highly complicated interdependence. (765.2)

Vanity contributed mightily to the birth of society; but at the time of these revelations the devious strivings of a vainglorious generation threaten to swamp and submerge the whole complicated structure of a highly specialized civilization. Pleasure-want has long since superseded hunger-want; the legitimate social aims of self-maintenance are rapidly translating themselves into base and threatening forms of self-gratification. Self-maintenance builds society; unbridled self-gratification unfailingly destroys civilization. (766.1)

### **Social continuity resolves, adapts, and improves the mores**

Hunger and love drove men together; vanity and ghost fear held them together. But these emotions alone, without the influence of peace-promoting revelations,

are unable to endure the strain of the suspicions and irritations of human interassociations. Without help from superhuman sources the strain of society breaks down upon reaching certain limits, and these very influences of social mobilization - hunger, love, vanity, and fear - conspire to plunge mankind into war and bloodshed. (766.5)

But these customs are not an unmitigated evil; their evolution should continue. It is nearly fatal to the continuance of civilization to undertake their wholesale modification by radical revolution. Custom has been the thread of continuity which has held civilization together. The path of human history is strewn with the remnants of discarded customs and obsolete social practices; but no civilization has endured which abandoned its mores except for the adoption of better and more fit customs. (767.6)

### **Population and Social Contract Theory**

From a world standpoint, overpopulation has never been a serious problem in the past, but if war is lessened and science increasingly controls human diseases, it may become a serious problem in the near future. At such a time the great test of the wisdom of world leadership will present itself. Will Urantia rulers have the insight and courage to foster the multiplication of the average or stabilized human being instead of the extremes of the supernormal and the enormously increasing groups of the subnormal? The normal man should be fostered; he is the backbone of civilization and the source of the mutant geniuses of the race. The subnormal man should be kept under society's control; no more should be produced than are required to administer the lower levels of industry, those tasks requiring intelligence above the animal level but making such low-grade demands as to prove veritable slavery and bondage for the higher types of mankind. (770.8)

### **The contribution of work**

In the spiritual world there is no such thing as menial work; all service is sacred and exhilarating; neither do the higher orders of beings look down upon the lower orders of existence. (273.10)

While the ideal of society is universal freedom, idleness should never be tolerated. All able-bodied persons should be compelled to do at least a self-sustaining

amount of work. (780.2)

### **The genesis of war**

War is the natural state and heritage of evolving man; peace is the social yardstick measuring civilization's advancement. Before the partial socialization of the advancing races man was exceedingly individualistic, extremely suspicious, and unbelievably quarrelsome. Violence is the law of nature, hostility the automatic reaction of the children of nature, while war is but these same activities carried on collectively. And wherever and whenever the fabric of civilization becomes stressed by the complications of society's advancement, there is always an immediate and ruinous reversion to these early methods of violent adjustment of the irritations of human interassociations. (783.4)

War has had a certain evolutionary and selective value, but like slavery, it must sometime be abandoned as civilization slowly advances. Olden wars promoted travel and cultural intercourse; these ends are now better served by modern methods of transport and communication. Olden wars strengthened nations, but modern struggles disrupt civilized culture. Ancient warfare resulted in the decimation of inferior peoples; the net result of modern conflict is the selective destruction of the best human stocks. Early wars promoted organization and efficiency, but these have now become the aims of modern industry. During past ages war was a social ferment which pushed civilization forward; this result is now better attained by ambition and invention. Ancient warfare supported the concept of a God of battles, but modern man has been told that God is love. War has served many valuable purposes in the past, it has been an indispensable scaffolding in the building of civilization, but it is rapidly becoming culturally bankrupt - incapable of producing dividends of social gain in any way commensurate with the terrible losses attendant upon its invocation. (785.14)

## 29. HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL AUTHORITY, AND STATEHOOD

The methods and quality of representative government is evolving as the citizenry, the voters, demand. However, their claims are not necessarily altruistic or for the greater good. The ideals of statehood will reflect a just society. Or perhaps the leaders of a just society bring about the ideals of statehood through a well informed public?

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### **Should rights be administered with equity rather than equality?**

Nature confers no rights on man, only life and a world in which to live it. (793.11)

When rights are old beyond knowledge of origin, they are often called *natural rights*. But human rights are not really natural; they are entirely social. They are relative and ever changing, being no more than the rules of the game - recognized adjustments of relations governing the ever-changing phenomena of human competition. (794.8)

What may be regarded as right in one age may not be so regarded in another. The survival of large numbers of defectives and degenerates is not because they have any natural right thus to encumber twentieth-century civilization, but simply because the society of the age, the mores, thus decrees. (794.9)

The weak and the inferior have always contended for equal rights; they have always insisted that the state compel the strong and superior to supply their wants and otherwise make good those deficiencies which all too often are the natural result of their own indifference and indolence. (794.11)

The sudden and nonevolutionary realization of supposed natural equality would quickly throw civilized man back to the crude usages of primitive ages. Society cannot offer equal rights to all, but it can promise to administer the varying rights of each with fairness and equity. It is the business and duty of society to provide the child of nature with a fair and peaceful opportunity to pursue self-maintenance, participate in self-perpetuation, while at the same time enjoying some measure of self-gratification, the sum of all three constituting human happiness. (794.12)

## **Civil authority to be administered intelligently**

If men would maintain their freedom, they must, after having chosen their charter of liberty, provide for its wise, intelligent, and fearless interpretation to the end that there may be prevented: (798.5 – 17)

1. Usurpation of unwarranted power by either the executive or legislative branches.
2. Machinations of ignorant and superstitious agitators.
3. Retardation of scientific progress.
4. Stalemate of the dominance of mediocrity.
5. Domination by vicious minorities.
6. Control by ambitious and clever would-be dictators.
7. Disastrous disruption of panics.
8. Exploitation by the unscrupulous.
9. Taxation enslavement of the citizenry by the state.
10. Failure of social and economic fairness.
11. Union of church and state.
12. Loss of personal liberty.

These are the purposes and aims of constitutional tribunals acting as governors upon the engines of representative government on an evolutionary world. (798.18)

Mankind's struggle to perfect government on Urantia has to do with perfecting channels of administration, with adapting them to ever-changing current needs, with improving power distribution within government, and then with selecting such administrative leaders as are truly wise. While there is a divine and ideal form of government, such cannot be revealed but must be slowly and laboriously discovered by the men and women of each planet throughout the universes of time and space. (799.1)

Public opinion, common opinion, has always delayed society; nevertheless, it is valuable, for, while retarding social evolution, it does preserve civilization. Education of public opinion is the only safe and true method of accelerating civilization; force is only a temporary expedient, and cultural growth will increasingly accelerate as bullets give way to ballots. Public opinion, the mores, is the basic and elemental energy in social evolution and state development, but to be of state value it must be nonviolent in expression. (802.1)

The measure of the advance of society is directly determined by the degree to which public opinion can control personal behavior and state regulation through

nonviolent expression. The really civilized government had arrived when public opinion was clothed with the powers of personal franchise. Popular elections may not always decide things rightly, but they represent the right way even to do a wrong thing. Evolution does not at once produce superlative perfection but rather comparative and advancing practical adjustment. (802.2)

### **A word of caution**

Men have also made a fetish of democracy, the exaltation and adoration of the common man's ideas when collectively called "public opinion". One man's opinion, when taken by itself, is not regarded as worth much, but when many men are collectively functioning as a democracy, this same mediocre judgment is held to be the arbiter of justice and the standard of righteousness. (970.5)

### **The ideals of statehood**

The political or administrative form of a government is of little consequence provided it affords the essentials of civil progress - liberty, security, education, and social co-ordination. It is not what a state is but what it does that determines the course of social evolution. And after all, no state can transcend the moral values of its citizenry as exemplified in their chosen leaders. Ignorance and selfishness will insure the downfall of even the highest type of government. (803.1)

The ideal state functions under the impulse of three mighty and co-ordinated drives: (803.3 – 6)

1. Love loyalty derived from the realization of human brotherhood.
2. Intelligent patriotism based on wise ideals.
3. Cosmic insight interpreted in terms of planetary facts, needs, and goals.

The laws of the ideal state are few in number, and they have passed out of the negativistic taboo age into the era of the positive progress of individual liberty consequent upon enhanced self-control. The exalted state not only compels its citizens to work but also entices them into profitable and uplifting utilization of the increasing leisure which results from toil liberation by the advancing machine age. Leisure must produce as well as consume. (803.7)

No society has progressed very far when it permits idleness or tolerates poverty.

But poverty and dependence can never be eliminated if the defective and degenerate stocks are freely supported and permitted to reproduce without restraint. (803.8)

A moral society should aim to preserve the self-respect of its citizenry and afford every normal individual adequate opportunity for self-realization. Such a plan of social achievement would yield a cultural society of the highest order. Social evolution should be encouraged by governmental supervision which exercises a minimum of regulative control. That state is best which co-ordinates most while governing least. (803.9)

The ideals of statehood must be attained by evolution, by the slow growth of civic consciousness, the recognition of the obligation and privilege of social service. At first men assume the burdens of government as a duty, following the end of the administration of political spoilsmen, but later on they seek such ministry as a privilege, as the greatest honor. The status of any level of civilization is faithfully portrayed by the caliber of its citizens who volunteer to accept the responsibilities of statehood. (803.10)

In advanced states, political service is esteemed as the highest devotion of the citizenry. The greatest ambition of the wisest and noblest of citizens is to gain civil recognition, to be elected or appointed to some position of governmental trust, and such governments confer their highest honors of recognition for service upon their civil and social servants. Honors are next bestowed in the order named upon philosophers, educators, scientists, industrialists, and militarists. Parents are duly rewarded by the excellency of their children, and purely religious leaders, being ambassadors of a spiritual kingdom, receive their real rewards in another world. (803.12)

### **30. PROGRESSIVE CIVILIZATION**

There are many steps to a worthy and expansive civilization. This twelve point list is an example. Yet again, these ideals, when taken to their highest expression, are exemplified in the recurring teaching about the social acceptance of the brotherhood of man along with the personal status of God consciousness.

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#### **Simplifying the definition of a Civil Society**

Economics, society, and government must evolve if they are to remain. Static conditions on an evolutionary world are indicative of decay; only those institutions which move forward with the evolutionary stream persist. (804.1)

The progressive program of an expanding civilization embraces: (804.2 - 14)

1. Preservation of individual liberties.
2. Protection of the home.
3. Promotion of economic security.
4. Prevention of disease.
5. Compulsory education.
6. Compulsory employment.
7. Profitable utilization of leisure.
8. Care of the unfortunate.
9. Race improvement.
10. Promotion of science and art.
11. Promotion of philosophy - wisdom.
12. Augmentation of cosmic insight - spirituality.

And this progress in the arts of civilization leads directly to the realization of the highest human and divine goals of mortal endeavor - the social achievement of the brotherhood of man and the personal status of God-consciousness, which becomes revealed in the supreme desire of every individual to do the will of the Father in heaven. (804.15)

The appearance of genuine brotherhood signifies that a social order has arrived in which all men delight in bearing one another's burdens; they actually desire to practice the golden rule. But such an ideal society cannot be realized when either the weak or the wicked lie in wait to take unfair and unholy advantage of those who are chiefly actuated by devotion to the service of truth, beauty, and

goodness. In such a situation only one course is practical: The "golden rulers" may establish a progressive society in which they live according to their ideals while maintaining an adequate defense against their benighted fellows who might seek either to exploit their pacific predilections or to destroy their advancing civilization. (804.16)

Idealism can never survive on an evolving planet if the idealists in each generation permit themselves to be exterminated by the baser orders of humanity. And here is the great test of idealism: Can an advanced society maintain that military preparedness which renders it secure from all attack by its war-loving neighbors without yielding to the temptation to employ this military strength in offensive operations against other peoples for purposes of selfish gain or national aggrandizement? National survival demands preparedness, and religious idealism alone can prevent the prostitution of preparedness into aggression. Only love, brotherhood, can prevent the strong from oppressing the weak. (804.17)

### **The profit motive is replaced by the service motive**

Present-day profit-motivated economics is doomed unless profit motives can be augmented by service motives. Ruthless competition based on narrow-minded self-interest is ultimately destructive of even those things which it seeks to maintain. Exclusive and self-serving profit motivation is incompatible with Christian ideals - much more incompatible with the teachings of Jesus. (805.5)

In economics, profit motivation is to service motivation what fear is to love in religion. But the profit motive must not be suddenly destroyed or removed; it keeps many otherwise slothful mortals hard at work. It is not necessary, however, that this social energy arouser be forever selfish in its objectives. (805.6)

The profit motive of economic activities is altogether base and wholly unworthy of an advanced order of society; nevertheless, it is an indispensable factor throughout the earlier phases of civilization. Profit motivation must not be taken away from men until they have firmly possessed themselves of superior types of nonprofit motives for economic striving and social serving - the transcendent urges of superlative wisdom, intriguing brotherhood, and excellency of spiritual attainment. (805.7)

## **31. CULTURAL SOCIETY**

The ongoing development of education and social interaction need to show progress in values. The seven point list below firstly mentions the knowledge of things. The next six levels of mortal wisdom embrace values that culminate in the spiritual stage of cosmic insight. Our learnings need to head in that direction.

---

### **The supreme role of education and the search for wisdom**

In the ideal state, education continues throughout life, and philosophy sometimes becomes the chief pursuit of its citizens. The citizens of such a commonwealth pursue wisdom as an enhancement of insight into the significance of human relations, the meanings of reality, the nobility of values, the goals of living, and the glories of cosmic destiny. (806.2)

Urantians should get a vision of a new and higher cultural society. Education will jump to new levels of value with the passing of the purely profit-motivated system of economics. Education has too long been localistic, militaristic, ego exalting, and success seeking; it must eventually become world-wide, idealistic, self-realizing, and cosmic grasping. (806.3)

Education recently passed from the control of the clergy to that of lawyers and businessmen. Eventually it must be given over to the philosophers and the scientists. Teachers must be free beings, real leaders, to the end that philosophy, the search for wisdom, may become the chief educational pursuit. (806.4)

### **Life long learning, and increasing wisdom to the moral ultimate**

Education is the business of living; it must continue throughout a lifetime so that mankind may gradually experience the ascending levels of mortal wisdom, which are: (806.5 – 12))

1. The knowledge of things.
2. The realization of meanings.
3. The appreciation of values.
4. The nobility of work - duty.
5. The motivation of goals - morality.

6. The love of service - character.
7. Cosmic insight - spiritual discernment.

And then, by means of these achievements, many will ascend to the mortal ultimate of mind attainment, God-consciousness. (806.13)

### **Social association and the determinants**

While a good environment cannot contribute much toward really overcoming the character handicaps of a base heredity, a bad environment can very effectively spoil an excellent inheritance, at least during the younger years of life. Good social environment and proper education are indispensable soil and atmosphere for getting the most out of a good inheritance. (848.6)

Biologic evolution and cultural civilization are not necessarily correlated; organic evolution in any age may proceed unhindered in the very midst of cultural decadence. But when lengthy periods of human history are surveyed, it will be observed that eventually evolution and culture become related as cause and effect. Evolution may advance in the absence of culture, but cultural civilization does not flourish without an adequate background of antecedent racial progression. (905.6)

But cultural society is no great and beneficent club of inherited privilege into which all men are born with free membership and entire equality. Rather is it an exalted and ever-advancing guild of earth workers, admitting to its ranks only the nobility of those toilers who strive to make the world a better place in which their children and their children's children may live and advance in subsequent ages. And this guild of civilization exacts costly admission fees, imposes strict and rigorous disciplines, visits heavy penalties on all dissenters and nonconformists, while it confers few personal licenses or privileges except those of enhanced security against common dangers and racial perils. (906.1)

Social association is a form of survival insurance which human beings have learned is profitable; therefore are most individuals willing to pay those premiums of self-sacrifice and personal-liberty curtailment which society exacts from its members in return for this enhanced group protection. In short, the present-day social mechanism is a trial-and-error insurance plan designed to afford some degree of assurance and protection against a return to the terrible and antisocial conditions which characterized the early experiences of the human race. (906.2)

## **Rights and social duty**

*Might does not make right, but it does enforce the commonly recognized rights of each succeeding generation.* The prime mission of government is the definition of the right, the just and fair regulation of class differences, and the enforcement of equality of opportunity under the rules of law. Every human right is associated with a social duty; group privilege is an insurance mechanism which unfailingly demands the full payment of the exacting premiums of group service. And group rights, as well as those of the individual, must be protected, including the regulation of the sex propensity. (906.4)

Liberty subject to group regulation is the legitimate goal of social evolution. Liberty without restrictions is the vain and fanciful dream of unstable and flighty human minds. (906.5)

Thus did Jesus teach the dangers and illustrate the unfairness of sitting in personal judgment upon one's fellows. Discipline must be maintained, justice must be administered, but in all these matters the wisdom of the brotherhood should prevail. Jesus invested legislative and judicial authority in the *group*, not in the *individual*. Even this investment of authority in the group must not be exercised as personal authority. There is always danger that the verdict of an individual may be warped by prejudice or distorted by passion. Group judgment is more likely to remove the dangers and eliminate the unfairness of personal bias. Jesus sought always to minimize the elements of unfairness, retaliation, and vengeance. (1764.1)

## **Knowledge, wisdom and intelligence**

But the continent richest in natural deposits and the most advanced mechanical equipment will make little progress if the intelligence of its people is on the decline. Knowledge can be had by education, but wisdom, which is indispensable to true culture, can be secured only through experience and by men and women who are innately intelligent. Such a people are able to learn from experience; they may become truly wise. (908.2)

## **32. ETHICS AND THE PACE OF CHANGE**

The ethically aware society will see its pace of spiritual enlightenment quicken. Then will all other aspects of a material society enliven and upgrade. It takes the benefit of time to learn and grow from experience.

---

### **Civilization requires broad moral and spiritual momentum**

Might does not make right, but might does make what is and what has been in history. Only recently has Urantia reached that point where society is willing to debate the ethics of might and right. (908.4)

The greatest twentieth-century influences contributing to the furtherance of civilization and the advancement of culture are the marked increase in world travel and the unparalleled improvements in methods of communication. But the improvement in education has not kept pace with the expanding social structure; neither has the modern appreciation of ethics developed in correspondence with growth along more purely intellectual and scientific lines. And modern civilization is at a standstill in spiritual development and the safeguarding of the home institution. (909.6)

The homes, churches, and schools of one generation predetermine the character trend of the succeeding generation. The moral and spiritual momentum of a race or a nation largely determines the cultural velocity of that civilization. (909.7)

The driving power of even the most material aspects of a cultural civilization is resident in the least material of society's achievements. Intelligence may control the mechanism of civilization, wisdom may direct it, but spiritual idealism is the energy which really uplifts and advances human culture from one level of attainment to another. (909.8)

Social, artistic, technical, and industrial specialists will continue to multiply and increase in skill and dexterity. And this diversification of ability and dissimilarity of employment will eventually weaken and disintegrate human society if effective means of co-ordination and co-operation are not developed. (910.3)

High civilizations are born of the sagacious correlation of material wealth,

intellectual greatness, moral worth, social cleverness, and cosmic insight. (911.3)

**Effective change also needs the qualities of time and leadership**

*No great social or economic change should be attempted suddenly.* Time is essential to all types of human adjustment - physical, social, or economic. Only moral and spiritual adjustments can be made on the spur of the moment, and even these require the passing of time for the full outworking of their material and social repercussions. The ideals of the race are the chief support and assurance during the critical times when civilization is in transit from one level to another. (911.5)

Leadership is vital to progress. Wisdom, insight, and foresight are indispensable to the endurance of nations. Civilization is never really jeopardized until able leadership begins to vanish. And the quantity of such wise leadership has never exceeded one per cent of the population. (911.7)

### **33. FAMILY – THE MASTER CIVILIZER**

The significance of family is universally acknowledged. Their units add up to be civilization. Not everyone achieves the marital status and such deprivations need our empathy. However the main concern is reality avoidance, false expectations, and state interference. There is little education about marriage, child rearing, and the associated responsibilities.

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#### **The agency for social evolution**

While religious, social, and educational institutions are all essential to the survival of cultural civilization, *the family is the master civilizer*. A child learns most of the essentials of life from his family and the neighbors. (913.2)

Society itself is the aggregated structure of family units. Individuals are very temporary as planetary factors - only families are continuing agencies in social evolution. The family is the channel through which the river of culture and knowledge flows from one generation to another. (931.2)

The primitive family, growing out of the instinctive biologic blood bond of mother and child, was inevitably a mother-family; and many tribes long held to this arrangement. The mother-family was the only possible transition from the stage of group marriage in the horde to the later and improved home life of the polygamous and monogamous father-families. The mother-family was natural and biologic; the father-family is social, economic, and political. (932.8)

#### **Consequential, utilitarian, natural law? What about self control?**

No human emotion or impulse, when unbridled and overindulged, can produce so much harm and sorrow as this powerful sex urge. Intelligent submission of this impulse to the regulations of society is the supreme test of the actuality of any civilization. Self-control, more and more self-control, is the ever-increasing demand of advancing mankind. Secrecy, insincerity, and hypocrisy may obscure sex problems, but they do not provide solutions, nor do they advance ethics. (914.6)

Always have the unfortunate few had to suffer that the majority might advance under the developing mores of evolving civilization; but always should the favored majority look with kindness and consideration on their less fortunate fellows who must pay the price of failure to attain membership in the ranks of those ideal sex partnerships which afford the satisfaction of all biologic urges under the sanction of the highest mores of advancing social evolution. (927.6)

### **Marriage is celebrated and recognized around the world**

Pair marriage favors and fosters that intimate understanding and effective cooperation which is best for parental happiness, child welfare, and social efficiency. Marriage, which began in crude coercion, is gradually evolving into a magnificent institution of self-culture, self-control, self-expression, and self-perpetuation. (928.1)

The new and sudden substitution of the more ideal but extremely individualistic love motive in marriage for the older and long-established property motive, has unavoidably caused the marriage institution to become temporarily unstable. Man's marriage motives have always far transcended actual marriage morals, and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Occidental ideal of marriage has suddenly far outrun the self-centered and but partially controlled sex impulses of the races. The presence of large numbers of unmarried persons in any society indicates the temporary breakdown or the transition of the mores. (928.6)

The real test of marriage, all down through the ages, has been that continuous intimacy which is inescapable in all family life. Two pampered and spoiled youths, educated to expect every indulgence and full gratification of vanity and ego, can hardly hope to make a great success of marriage and home building - a life-long partnership of self-effacement, compromise, devotion, and unselfish dedication to child culture. (928.7)

The high degree of imagination and fantastic romance entering into courtship is largely responsible for the increasing divorce tendencies among modern Occidental peoples, all of which is further complicated by woman's greater personal freedom and increased economic liberty. Easy divorce, when the result of lack of self-control or failure of normal personality adjustment, only leads directly back to those crude societal stages from which man has emerged so recently and as the result of so much personal anguish and racial suffering.

(929.1)

### **The ideal needs to be tempered with reality**

But just so long as society fails to properly educate children and youths, so long as the social order fails to provide adequate premarital training, and so long as unwise and immature youthful idealism is to be the arbiter of the entrance upon marriage, just so long will divorce remain prevalent. And in so far as the social group falls short of providing marriage preparation for youths, to that extent must divorce function as the social safety valve which prevents still worse situations during the ages of the rapid growth of the evolving mores. (929.2)

Marriage always has been and still is man's supreme dream of temporal ideality. Though this beautiful dream is seldom realized in its entirety, it endures as a glorious ideal, ever luring progressing mankind on to greater strivings for human happiness. But young men and women should be taught something of the realities of marriage before they are plunged into the exacting demands of the interassociations of family life; youthful idealization should be tempered with some degree of premarital disillusionment. (930.2)

### **Not for the want of social ethics theories and public policy debate ...**

The great inconsistency of modern society is to exalt love and to idealize marriage while disapproving of the fullest examination of both. (929.3)

## **34. EQUALITY OF THE SEXES, AND STATUS OF THE CHILD**

The values of loyalty to duty, brotherhood, women's rights, and child rearing, have advanced as society progresses. The home evolves subsequent generations, and parents are faced with rapidly changing child and adolescent culture. While the complexities of the world require greater and greater adaption, child rearing should always be a parental responsibility.

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### **Advancing mores confer rightful entitlements**

The modern idea of sex equality is beautiful and worthy of an expanding civilization, but it is not found in nature. When might is right, man lords it over woman; when more justice, peace, and fairness prevail, she gradually emerges from slavery and obscurity. Woman's social position has generally varied inversely with the degree of militarism in any nation or age. (936.7)

But man did not consciously nor intentionally seize woman's rights and then gradually and grudgingly give them back to her; all this was an unconscious and unplanned episode of social evolution. When the time really came for woman to enjoy added rights, she got them, and all quite regardless of man's conscious attitude. Slowly but surely the mores change so as to provide for those social adjustments which are a part of the persistent evolution of civilization. The advancing mores slowly provided increasingly better treatment for females; those tribes which persisted in cruelty to them did not survive. (937.1)

### **Equally entitled to their different rights**

Woman is man's equal partner in race reproduction, hence just as important in the unfolding of racial evolution; therefore has evolution increasingly worked toward the realization of women's rights. But women's rights are by no means men's rights. Woman cannot thrive on man's rights any more than man can prosper on woman's rights. (938.1)

Each sex has its own distinctive sphere of existence, together with its own rights within that sphere. If woman aspires literally to enjoy all of man's rights, then, sooner or later, pitiless and emotionless competition will certainly replace that

chivalry and special consideration which many women now enjoy, and which they have so recently won from men. (938.2)

Civilization never can obliterate the behavior gulf between the sexes. From age to age the mores change, but instinct never. Innate maternal affection will never permit emancipated woman to become man's serious rival in industry. Forever each sex will remain supreme in its own domain, domains determined by biologic differentiation and by mental dissimilarity. (938.3)

Each sex will always have its own special sphere, albeit they will ever and anon overlap. Only socially will men and women compete on equal terms. (938.4)

### **Inequality in an evolutionary context**

Mankind is achieving emancipation from the bondage of the ghost-spirit explanation of ill luck. But while men are giving up the erroneous doctrine of a spirit cause of the vicissitudes of life, they exhibit a surprising willingness to accept an almost equally fallacious teaching which bids them attribute all human inequalities to political misadaptation, social injustice, and industrial competition. But new legislation, increasing philanthropy, and more industrial reorganization, however good in and of themselves, will not remedy the facts of birth and the accidents of living. Only comprehension of facts and wise manipulation within the laws of nature will enable man to get what he wants and to avoid what he does not want. Scientific knowledge, leading to scientific action, is the only antidote for so-called accidental ills. (956.7)

### **Family respect and the child**

It is civilization's protection of the child from the natural consequences of foolish conduct that contributes so much to modern insubordination. (941.1)

Modern problems of child culture are rendered increasingly difficult by: (941.2 – 5)

1. The large degree of race mixture.
2. Artificial and superficial education.
3. Inability of the child to gain culture by imitating parents - the parents are absent from the family picture so much of the time.

Civilization regards the parents as assuming all duties, the child as having all the rights. Respect of the child for his parents arises, not in knowledge of the obligation implied in parental procreation, but naturally grows as a result of the care, training, and affection which are lovingly displayed in assisting the child to win the battle of life. The true parent is engaged in a continuous service-ministry which the wise child comes to recognize and appreciate. (941.7)

In the present industrial and urban era the marriage institution is evolving along new economic lines. Family life has become more and more costly, while children, who used to be an asset, have become economic liabilities. But the security of civilization itself still rests on the growing willingness of one generation to invest in the welfare of the next and future generations. And any attempt to shift parental responsibility to state or church will prove suicidal to the welfare and advancement of civilization. (941.8)

The home is the natural social arena wherein the ethics of blood brotherhood may be grasped by the growing children. The family is the fundamental unit of fraternity in which parents and children learn those lessons of patience, altruism, tolerance, and forbearance which are so essential to the realization of brotherhood among all men. (941.9)

Family life is the progenitor of true morality, the ancestor of the consciousness of loyalty to duty. (942.1)

### **35. IDEAL PRAYER BRINGS ETHICAL EXCELLENCE TO ALL RELIGIONS**

What information is currently available to assist us in the understanding of the efficacy and ethics of prayer? Some guidelines would be extremely helpful as it is an integral part of religious practice. Thanks to revelation, help at last is at hand.

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#### **Ethical praying**

Prayer represents one technique associated with the natural religions of racial evolution which also forms a part of the experiential values of the higher religions of ethical excellence, the religions of revelation. (996.6)

No prayer can be ethical when the petitioner seeks for selfish advantage over his fellows. Selfish and materialistic praying is incompatible with the ethical religions which are predicated on unselfish and divine love. All such unethical praying reverts to the primitive levels of pseudo magic and is unworthy of advancing civilizations and enlightened religions. Selfish praying transgresses the spirit of all ethics founded on loving justice. (997.6)

Prayer must never be so prostituted as to become a substitute for action. All ethical prayer is a stimulus to action and a guide to the progressive striving for idealistic goals of superself-attainment. (997.7)

In all your praying be *fair*; do not expect God to show partiality, to love you more than his other children, your friends, neighbors, even enemies. But the prayer of the natural or evolved religions is not at first ethical, as it is in the later revealed religions. All praying, whether individual or communal, may be either egoistic or altruistic. That is, the prayer may be centered upon the self or upon others. When the prayer seeks nothing for the one who prays nor anything for his fellows, then such attitudes of the soul tend to the levels of true worship. Egoistic prayers involve confessions and petitions and often consist in requests for material favors. Prayer is somewhat more ethical when it deals with forgiveness and seeks wisdom for enhanced self-control. (998.1)

#### **The rewards**

Remember, even if prayer does not change God, it very often effects great and lasting changes in the one who prays in faith and confident expectation. Prayer has been the ancestor of much peace of mind, cheerfulness, calmness, courage, self-mastery, and fair-mindedness in the men and women of the evolving races. (998.3)

No matter how difficult it may be to reconcile the scientific doubtings regarding the efficacy of prayer with the ever-present urge to seek help and guidance from divine sources, never forget that the sincere prayer of faith is a mighty force for the promotion of personal happiness, individual self-control, social harmony, moral progress, and spiritual attainment. (999.6)

## **36. ETHICS, VALUES, AND THE EVOLVING MORES**

It is important to understand the basis of today's religious thought and practices. This perspective of origins gives a practical explanation of what is often portrayed as divine. While this overview is brief, it does allow a comparison to the basis of true religion as defined by the revelators.

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### **Conscience is an untrustworthy guide**

When modern man wonders at the presentation of so much in the scriptures of different religions that may be regarded as obscene, he should pause to consider that passing generations have feared to eliminate what their ancestors deemed to be holy and sacred. A great deal that one generation might look upon as obscene, preceding generations have considered a part of their accepted mores, even as approved religious rituals. A considerable amount of religious controversy has been occasioned by the never-ending attempts to reconcile olden but reprehensible practices with newly advanced reason, to find plausible theories in justification of creedal perpetuation of ancient and outworn customs. (1004.6)

Social, climatic, political, and economic conditions are all influential in determining the course and progress of religious evolution. Social morality is not determined by religion, that is, by evolutionary religion; rather are the forms of religion dictated by the racial morality. (1005.0)

Religion has at one time or another sanctioned all sorts of contrary and inconsistent behavior, has at some time approved of practically all that is now regarded as immoral or sinful. Conscience, untaught by experience and unaided by reason, never has been, and never can be, a safe and unerring guide to human conduct. Conscience is not a divine voice speaking to the human soul. It is merely the sum total of the moral and ethical content of the mores of any current stage of existence; it simply represents the humanly conceived ideal of reaction in any given set of circumstances. (1005.2)

### **The mores and the development of religion**

The study of human religion is the examination of the fossil-bearing social strata

of past ages. The mores of the anthropomorphic gods are a truthful reflection of the morals of the men who first conceived such deities. Ancient religions and mythology faithfully portray the beliefs and traditions of peoples long since lost in obscurity. These olden cult practices persist alongside newer economic customs and social evolutions and, of course, appear grossly inconsistent. The remnants of the cult present a true picture of the racial religions of the past. Always remember, the cults are formed, not to discover truth, but rather to promulgate their creeds. (1005.3)

Religion has always been largely a matter of rites, rituals, observances, ceremonies, and dogmas. It has usually become tainted with that persistently mischief-making error, the chosen-people delusion. The cardinal religious ideas of incantation, inspiration, revelation, propitiation, repentance, atonement, intercession, sacrifice, prayer, confession, worship, survival after death, sacrament, ritual, ransom, salvation, redemption, covenant, uncleanness, purification, prophecy, original sin - they all go back to the early times of primordial ghost fear. (1005.4)

### **Early beliefs generated values**

Primitive man viewed the spirits and ghosts as having almost unlimited rights but no duties; the spirits were thought to regard man as having manifold duties but no rights. The spirits were believed to look down upon man as constantly failing in the discharge of his spiritual duties. (962.2)

And thus there grew up a new and expanded world philosophy consisting in: (963.5-8)

1. **Duty** - those things which must be done to keep the spirits favorably disposed, at least neutral.
2. **Right** - the correct conduct and ceremonies designed to win the spirits actively to one's interests.
3. **Truth** - the correct understanding of, and attitude toward, spirits, and hence toward life and death.

And even today the civilized races are cursed with the belief in signs, tokens, and other superstitious remnants of the advancing ghost cult of old. (963.9)

## Relative truth needs constant revision

But when tempted to criticize evolutionary religion, be careful. Remember, that is *what happened*; it is a historical fact. And further recall that the power of any idea lies, not in its certainty or truth, but rather in the vividness of its human appeal. (1005.5)

Evolutionary religion makes no provision for change or revision; unlike science, it does not provide for its own progressive correction. Evolved religion commands respect because its followers believe it is *The Truth*; “the faith once delivered to the saints” must, in theory, be both final and infallible. The cult resists development because real progress is certain to modify or destroy the cult itself; therefore must revision always be forced upon it. (1006.1)

Religion has hampered industrial activities and economic development; it has been wasteful of labor and has squandered capital; it has not always been helpful to the family; it has not adequately fostered peace and good will; it has sometimes neglected education and retarded science; it has unduly impoverished life for the pretended enrichment of death. Evolutionary religion, human religion, has indeed been guilty of all these and many more mistakes, errors, and blunders; nevertheless, it did maintain cultural ethics, civilized morality, and social coherence, and made it possible for later revealed religion to compensate for these many evolutionary shortcomings. (1006.4)

Primitive religion was largely a material-value consciousness, but civilization elevates religious values, for true religion is the devotion of the self to the service of meaningful and supreme values. As religion evolves, ethics becomes the philosophy of morals, and morality becomes the discipline of self by the standards of highest meanings and supreme values - divine and spiritual ideals. And thus religion becomes a spontaneous and exquisite devotion, the living experience of the loyalty of love. (1012.6)

## 37. BASIS AND HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS THINKING

The progress of religion is now considered. Early influences, the blending of cultural differences, and the evolution of religious philosophies, all contributed to development. However, the main influences were religious teachers and the spirit indwelling each of us.

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### The overriding concepts to keep in mind

The quality of a religion is indicated by: (1013.1 – 5)

1. Level of values - loyalties.
2. Depth of meanings - the sensitization of the individual to the idealistic appreciation of these highest values.
3. Consecration intensity - the degree of devotion to these divine values.
4. The unfettered progress of the personality in this cosmic path of idealistic spiritual living, realization of sonship with God and never-ending progressive citizenship in the universe.

### Various early teachings and their influences

This covenant of Melchizedek with Abraham represents the great Urantian agreement between divinity and humanity whereby God agrees to do everything; man only agrees to *believe* God's promises and follow his instructions. Heretofore it had been believed that salvation could be secured only by works - sacrifices and offerings; now, Melchizedek again brought to Urantia the good news that salvation, favor with God, is to be had by *faith*. But this gospel of simple faith in God was too advanced; the Semitic tribesmen subsequently preferred to go back to the older sacrifices and atonement for sin by the shedding of blood. (1020.7)

The teachings of Lao have been lost to all but a few in the Orient, but the writings of Confucius have ever since constituted the basis of the moral fabric of the culture of almost a third of Urantians. These Confucian precepts, while perpetuating the best of the past, were somewhat inimical to the very Chinese spirit of investigation that had produced those achievements which were so venerated. The influence of these doctrines was unsuccessfully combated both by the imperial efforts of Ch'in Shih Huang Ti and by the teachings of Mo Ti, who proclaimed a brotherhood founded not on ethical duty but on the love of God. He

sought to rekindle the ancient quest for new truth, but his teachings failed before the vigorous opposition of the disciples of Confucius. (1034.6)

Buddhism is a living, growing religion today because it succeeds in conserving many of the highest moral values of its adherents. It promotes calmness and self-control, augments serenity and happiness, and does much to prevent sorrow and mourning. (1038.4)

Moral evolution is not wholly dependent on revelation. High moral concepts can be derived from man's own experience. Man can even evolve spiritual values and derive cosmic insight from his personal experiential living because a divine spirit indwells him. Such natural evolutions of conscience and character were also augmented by the periodic arrival of teachers of truth, in ancient times from the second Eden, later on from Melchizedek's headquarters at Salem. (1045.5)

The Hellenes became so impregnated with the antipriestcraft doctrines of the earlier Salem teachers that no priesthood of any importance ever arose in Greece. Even the making of images to the gods became more of a work in art than a matter of worship. (1078.3)

The Olympian gods illustrate man's typical anthropomorphism. But the Greek mythology was more aesthetic than ethic. The Greek religion was helpful in that it portrayed a universe governed by a deity group. But Greek morals, ethics, and philosophy presently advanced far beyond the god concept, and this imbalance between intellectual and spiritual growth was as hazardous to Greece as it had proved to be in India. (1078.4)

### **The influence of the sixth century**

This was the situation when, during the sixth century before Christ, the Orient and the Levant experienced a revival of spiritual consciousness and a new awakening to the recognition of monotheism. But the West did not share in this new development; neither Europe nor northern Africa extensively participated in this religious renaissance. The Greeks, however, did engage in a magnificent intellectual advancement. They had begun to master fear and no longer sought religion as an antidote therefor, but they did not perceive that true religion is the cure for soul hunger, spiritual disquiet, and moral despair. They sought for the solace of the soul in deep thinking - philosophy and metaphysics. They turned from the contemplation of self-preservation - salvation - to self-realization and self-

understanding. (1078.6)

By rigorous thought the Greeks attempted to attain that consciousness of security which would serve as a substitute for the belief in survival, but they utterly failed. (1078.7)

The evolution of religious philosophy among the Hellenic and Hebrew peoples affords a contrastive illustration of the function of the church as an institution in the shaping of cultural progress. In Palestine, human thought was so priest-controlled and scripture-directed that philosophy and aesthetics were entirely submerged in religion and morality. In Greece, the almost complete absence of priests and "sacred scriptures" left the human mind free and unfettered, resulting in a startling development in depth of thought. (1079.4)

Religions have long endured without philosophical support, but few philosophies, as such, have long persisted without some identification with religion. Philosophy is to religion as conception is to action. But the ideal human estate is that in which philosophy, religion, and science are welded into a meaningful unity by the conjoined action of wisdom, faith, and experience. (1080.2)

In the end the nominal Christian faith dominated the Occident. Greek philosophy supplied the concepts of ethical value; Mithraism, the ritual of worship observance; and Christianity, as such, the technique for the conservation of moral and social values. (1083.5)

## **38. TRANSITION TO HIGHER VALUES THROUGH RELIGION**

The dangers and limitations of institutional religion can now be considered. It has produced goodness but it is partial and therefore struggles to elevate our spiritual nature. Revelation endeavors to compare the secular and materialistic aspects of prevailing religions as compared to true religion. And it takes religion from a separate event of life to a total and integrated mode of living.

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### **Progress and inherent risk**

The religionist is not unsympathetic with social suffering, not unmindful of civil injustice, not insulated from economic thinking, neither insensible to political tyranny. Religion influences social reconstruction directly because it spiritualizes and idealizes the individual citizen. Indirectly, cultural civilization is influenced by the attitude of these individual religionists as they become active and influential members of various social, moral, economic, and political groups. (1088.4)

Man's greatest spiritual jeopardy consists in partial progress, the predicament of unfinished growth: forsaking the evolutionary religions of fear without immediately grasping the revelatory religion of love. Modern science, particularly psychology, has weakened only those religions which are so largely dependent upon fear, superstition, and emotion. (1090.4)

Transition is always accompanied by confusion, and there will be little tranquility in the religious world until the great struggle between the three contending philosophies of religion is ended: (1090.5 – 8)

1. The spiritistic belief (in a providential Deity) of many religions.
2. The humanistic and idealistic belief of many philosophies.
3. The mechanistic and naturalistic conceptions of many sciences.

And these three partial approaches to the reality of the cosmos must eventually become harmonized by the revelatory presentation of religion, philosophy, and cosmology which portrays the triune existence of spirit, mind, and energy proceeding from the Trinity of Paradise and attaining time-space unification within the Deity of the Supreme. (1090.8)

### **Civil injustice is to be avoided**

A godless humanitarianism is, humanly speaking, a noble gesture, but true religion is the only power which can lastingly increase the responsiveness of one social group to the needs and sufferings of other groups. In the past, institutional religion could remain passive while the upper strata of society turned a deaf ear to the sufferings and oppression of the helpless lower strata, but in modern times these lower social orders are no longer so abjectly ignorant nor so politically helpless. (1087.2)

Religion must not become organically involved in the secular work of social reconstruction and economic reorganization. But it must actively keep pace with all these advances in civilization by making clear-cut and vigorous restatements of its moral mandates and spiritual precepts, its progressive philosophy of human living and transcendent survival. The spirit of religion is eternal, but the form of its expression must be restated every time the dictionary of human language is revised. (1087.3)

### **The socialization of institutional religion**

There is a real purpose in the socialization of religion. It is the purpose of group religious activities to dramatize the loyalties of religion; to magnify the lures of truth, beauty, and goodness; to foster the attractions of supreme values; to enhance the service of unselfish fellowship; to glorify the potentials of family life; to promote religious education; to provide wise counsel and spiritual guidance; and to encourage group worship. And all live religions encourage human friendship, conserve morality, promote neighborhood welfare, and facilitate the spread of the essential gospel of their respective messages of eternal salvation. (1092.2)

But as religion becomes institutionalized, its power for good is curtailed, while the possibilities for evil are greatly multiplied. The dangers of formalized religion are:

- fixation of beliefs and crystallization of sentiments;
- accumulation of vested interests with increase of secularization;
- tendency to standardize and fossilize truth; diversion of religion from the service of God to the service of the church;
- inclination of leaders to become administrators instead of ministers;
- tendency to form sects and competitive divisions;
- establishment of oppressive ecclesiastical authority;
- creation of the aristocratic "chosen-people" attitude;

fostering of false and exaggerated ideas of sacredness;  
the routinizing of religion and the petrification of worship;  
tendency to venerate the past while ignoring present demands;  
failure to make up-to-date interpretations of religion;  
entanglement with functions of secular institutions;  
it creates the evil discrimination of religious castes;  
it becomes an intolerant judge of orthodoxy;  
it fails to hold the interest of adventurous youth and gradually loses the saving message of the gospel of eternal salvation. (1092.3)

Evolutionary religions and revelatory religions may differ markedly in method, but in motive there is great similarity. Religion is not a specific function of life; rather is it a mode of living. True religion is a wholehearted devotion to some reality which the religionist deems to be of supreme value to himself and for all mankind. And the outstanding characteristics of all religions are: unquestioning loyalty and wholehearted devotion to supreme values. (1100.3)

### **39. CONCEPTS OF SUPREME VALUE**

When we decide what has meaning, we can grow by adding to that value. And such growth occurs in all cosmic interrelatedness. We can create favorable conditions for growth by elevating our thinking into superconscious levels. This elevated state takes us beyond standard levels of thought, and is totally differentiated from the theoretical subconscious level of thinking.

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#### **Consider: What *is* value and what *has* value?**

In the contemplation of values you must distinguish between that which *is* value and that which *has* value. You must recognize the relation between pleasurable activities and their meaningful integration and enhanced realization on ever progressively higher and higher levels of human experience. (1096.8)

Meaning is something which experience adds to value; it is the appreciative consciousness of values. An isolated and purely selfish pleasure may connote a virtual devaluation of meanings, a meaningless enjoyment bordering on relative evil. Values are experiential when realities are meaningful and mentally associated, when such relationships are recognized and appreciated by mind. (1097.1)

#### **In human terms, what *is* value and what *has* value will change**

Values can never be static; reality signifies change, growth. Change without growth, expansion of meaning and exaltation of value, is valueless - is potential evil. The greater the quality of cosmic adaptation, the more of meaning any experience possesses. Values are not conceptual illusions; they are real, but always they depend on the fact of relationships. Values are always both actual and potential - not what was, but what is and is to be. (1097.2)

The supreme value of human life consists in growth of values, progress in meanings, and realization of the cosmic interrelatedness of both of these experiences. And such an experience is the equivalent of God-consciousness. (1097.3)

Man cannot cause growth, but he can supply favorable conditions. Growth is always unconscious, be it physical, intellectual, or spiritual. Love thus grows; it

cannot be created, manufactured, or purchased; it must grow. Evolution is a cosmic technique of growth. Social growth cannot be secured by legislation, and moral growth is not had by improved administration. Man may manufacture a machine, but its real value must be derived from human culture and personal appreciation. Man's sole contribution to growth is the mobilization of the total powers of his personality - living faith. (1097.4)

If one is disposed to recognize a theoretical subconscious mind as a practical working hypothesis in the otherwise unified intellectual life, then, to be consistent, one should postulate a similar and corresponding realm of ascending intellectual activity as the superconscious level, the zone of immediate contact with the indwelling spirit entity, the Thought Adjuster. (1099.4)

... intense striving for the attainment of supermortal ideals is always characterized by increasing patience, forbearance, fortitude, and tolerance. (1100.6)

## **40. RELIGION'S CONTRIBUTION TO ETHICS**

The prompting by God through his mechanism of a spiritual connection to the mortal mind, assures us that the highest values are resonating within our hearts at all times. Our voice is mere conscience, but God's voice is to the inner self, if we can but hear it.

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### **True religion is beyond ethics and morals**

Religion is the ancestor of the advanced ethics and morals of progressive social evolution. But religion, as such, is not merely a moral movement, albeit the outward and social manifestations of religion are mightily influenced by the ethical and moral momentum of human society. Always is religion the inspiration of man's evolving nature, but it is not the secret of that evolution. (1104.2)

Religion, the conviction-faith of the personality, can always triumph over the superficially contradictory logic of despair born in the unbelieving material mind. There really is a true and genuine inner voice, that "true light which lights every man who comes into the world". And this spirit leading is distinct from the ethical prompting of human conscience. The feeling of religious assurance is more than an emotional feeling. The assurance of religion transcends the reason of the mind, even the logic of philosophy. Religion *is* faith, trust, and assurance. (1104.3)

### **Is the right to believe the same as no right not to believe? Or is it just that we ought to believe?**

Faith unites moral insight with conscientious discriminations of values, and the pre-existent evolutionary sense of duty completes the ancestry of true religion. The experience of religion eventually results in the certain consciousness of God and in the undoubted assurance of the survival of the believing personality. (1105.3)

Thus it may be seen that religious longings and spiritual urges are not of such a nature as would merely lead men to *want* to believe in God, but rather are they of such nature and power that men are profoundly impressed with the conviction that they *ought* to believe in God. The sense of evolutionary duty and the obligations consequent upon the illumination of revelation make such a profound impression upon man's moral nature that he finally reaches that position of mind and that

attitude of soul where he concludes that he *has no right not to believe in God*.  
(1105.4)

Science ends its reason-search in the hypothesis of a First Cause. Religion does not stop in its flight of faith until it is sure of a God of salvation. The discriminating study of science logically suggests the reality and existence of an Absolute. Religion believes unreservedly in the existence and reality of a God who fosters personality survival. What metaphysics fails utterly in doing, and what even philosophy fails partially in doing, revelation does; that is, affirms that this First Cause of science and religion's God of salvation are *one and the same Deity*.  
(1106.6)

## 41. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RELIGION

Are there any indicators of genuine spiritual faith? Various religious beliefs may mislead us into thinking we have a strong faith. Will those beliefs serve us well in dealing with the difficulties of life? Here is a checklist to test the resolve of the most ardent practitioner of any religion.

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### **Religion ever prescribes ...**

Religion is so vital that it persists in the absence of learning. It lives in spite of its contamination with erroneous cosmologies and false philosophies; it survives even the confusion of metaphysics. In and through all the historic vicissitudes of religion there ever persists that which is indispensable to human progress and survival: the ethical conscience and the moral consciousness. (1107.8)

Through religious faith the soul of man reveals itself and demonstrates the potential divinity of its emerging nature by the characteristic manner in which it induces the mortal personality to react to certain trying intellectual and testing social situations. Genuine spiritual faith (true moral consciousness) is revealed in that it: (1108.3 – 15)

1. Causes ethics and morals to progress despite inherent and adverse animalistic tendencies.
2. Produces a sublime trust in the goodness of God even in the face of bitter disappointment and crushing defeat.
3. Generates profound courage and confidence despite natural adversity and physical calamity.
4. Exhibits inexplicable poise and sustaining tranquility notwithstanding baffling diseases and even acute physical suffering.
5. Maintains a mysterious poise and composure of personality in the face of maltreatment and the rankest injustice.
6. Maintains a divine trust in ultimate victory in spite of the cruelties of seemingly blind fate and the apparent utter indifference of natural forces to human welfare.
7. Persists in the unswerving belief in God despite all contrary demonstrations

of logic and successfully withstands all other intellectual sophistries.

8. Continues to exhibit undaunted faith in the soul's survival regardless of the deceptive teachings of false science and the persuasive delusions of unsound philosophy.
9. Lives and triumphs irrespective of the crushing overload of the complex and partial civilizations of modern times.
10. Contributes to the continued survival of altruism in spite of human selfishness, social antagonisms, industrial greeds, and political maladjustments.
11. Steadfastly adheres to a sublime belief in universe unity and divine guidance regardless of the perplexing presence of evil and sin.
12. Goes right on worshiping God in spite of anything and everything.

## 42. OUR PERCEPTION OF TRUTH IS EXPANDED BY REVELATION

Values coordinate and correlate as they all derive from the same singular source. As we achieve greater symmetry in our character the more we are augmented by increased capacity for faith, and therein lies spirit status.

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### **Faith from evolved religion combines with truth of revelation**

Scientists assemble facts, philosophers co-ordinate ideas, while prophets exalt ideals. (1110.12)

Evolutionary religion is the outworking of the endowment of the local universe mind adjutant charged with the creation and fostering of the worship trait in evolving man. Such primitive religions are directly concerned with ethics and morals, the sense of human *duty*. Such religions are predicated on the assurance of conscience and result in the stabilization of relatively ethical civilizations. (1110.13)

Personally revealed religions are sponsored by the bestowal spirits representing the three persons of the Paradise Trinity and are especially concerned with the expansion of *truth*. Evolutionary religion drives home to the individual the idea of personal duty; revealed religion lays increasing emphasis on loving, the golden rule. (1111.1)

Evolved religion rests wholly on faith. Revelation has the additional assurance of its expanded presentation of the truths of divinity and reality and the still more valuable testimony of the actual experience which accumulates in consequence of the practical working union of the faith of evolution and the truth of revelation. (1111.2)

### **The ascending life confirms faith with fact**

The morontia phase of revealed religion has to do with the *experience of survival*, and its great urge is the attainment of spirit perfection. There also is present the higher urge of worship, associated with an impelling call to increased ethical service. (1111.5)

Moral will embraces decisions based on reasoned knowledge, augmented by wisdom, and sanctioned by religious faith. Such choices are acts of moral nature and evidence the existence of moral personality, the forerunner of morontia personality and eventually of true spirit status. (1111.7)

The co-ordination of idea-decisions, logical ideals, and divine truth constitutes the possession of a righteous character, the prerequisite for mortal admission to the ever-expanding and increasingly spiritual realities of the morontia worlds. (1112:3)

### **43. REVELATION BUILDS ON ANTECEDENT CONCEPTS**

Revelation provides the ethical techniques to engage with the challenges of living. A moral consciousness aids in the discovery of truth and guides conduct. The spiritual urge mobilizes the entire personality for consecrated service. It liberates and inspires the eternal adventurer to find and worship God the Father.

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#### **The enlargement of the ethical horizon**

No professed revelation of religion could be regarded as authentic if it failed to recognize the duty demands of ethical obligation which had been created and fostered by preceding evolutionary religion. Revelation unfailingly enlarges the ethical horizon of evolved religion while it simultaneously and unfailingly expands the moral obligations of all prior revelations. (1115.2)

The enlightened spiritual consciousness of civilized man is not concerned so much with some specific intellectual belief or with any one particular mode of living as with discovering the truth of living, the good and right technique of reacting to the ever-recurring situations of mortal existence. Moral consciousness is just a name applied to the human recognition and awareness of those ethical and emerging morontial values which duty demands that man shall abide by in the day-by-day control and guidance of conduct. (1115.6)

Though recognizing that religion is imperfect, there are at least two practical manifestations of its nature and function: (1115.7 – 9)

1. The spiritual urge and philosophic pressure of religion tend to cause man to project his estimation of moral values directly outward into the affairs of his fellows - the ethical reaction of religion.
2. Religion creates for the human mind a spiritualized consciousness of divine reality based on, and by faith derived from, antecedent concepts of moral values and co-ordinated with superimposed concepts of spiritual values. Religion thereby becomes a censor of mortal affairs, a form of glorified moral trust and confidence in reality, the enhanced realities of time and the more enduring realities of eternity.

#### **Consequently we expand the personal quest**

The certainties of science proceed entirely from the intellect; the certitudes of religion spring from the very foundations of the *entire personality*. Science appeals to the understanding of the mind; religion appeals to the loyalty and devotion of the body, mind, and spirit, even to the whole personality. (1119.3)

The hungry soul of man refuses to be satisfied with anything less than the personal realization of the living God. Whatever more God may be than a high and perfect moral personality, he cannot, in our hungry and finite concept, be anything less. (1119.5)

Material feelings, human emotions, lead directly to material actions, selfish acts. Religious insights, spiritual motivations, lead directly to religious actions, unselfish acts of social service and altruistic benevolence. (1121.5)

Real religion leads to increased social service. (1121.6)

### **Accumulated consciousness of fact leads to consciousness of self**

Science, knowledge, leads to fact consciousness; religion, experience, leads to value consciousness; philosophy, wisdom, leads to co-ordinate consciousness; revelation (the substitute for morontia mota) leads to the consciousness of true reality; while the co-ordination of the consciousness of fact, value, and true reality constitutes awareness of personality reality, maximum of being, together with the belief in the possibility of the survival of that very personality. (1122.1)

Knowledge leads to placing men, to originating social strata and castes. Religion leads to serving men, thus creating ethics and altruism. Wisdom leads to the higher and better fellowship of both ideas and one's fellows. Revelation liberates men and starts them out on the eternal adventure. (1122.2)

### **The will to believe can become the will that believes**

In science, the idea precedes the expression of its realization; in religion, the experience of realization precedes the expression of the idea. There is a vast difference between the evolutionary will-to-believe and the product of enlightened reason, religious insight, and revelation - the will that believes. (1122.9)

Evolution tends to make God manlike; revelation tends to make man Godlike.

(1122.10)

The element of error present in human religious experience is directly proportional to the content of materialism which contaminates the spiritual concept of the Universal Father. Man's prespirit progression in the universe consists in the experience of divesting himself of these erroneous ideas of the nature of God and of the reality of pure and true spirit. Deity is more than spirit, but the spiritual approach is the only one possible to ascending man. (1123.4)

Prayer is indeed a part of religious experience, but it has been wrongly emphasized by modern religions, much to the neglect of the more essential communion of worship. The reflective powers of the mind are deepened and broadened by worship. Prayer may enrich the life, but worship illuminates destiny. (1123.5)

Revealed religion is the unifying element of human existence. Revelation unifies history, co-ordinates geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology, and psychology. Spiritual experience is the real soul of man's cosmos. (1123.6)

#### **44. THE CERTAINTY OF RELIGIOUS FAITH**

Ideas suggesting the reality of God are presented. All limitations to such a truth are overcome only with faith that is real and living in a God knowing person.

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##### **Respect the conviction of a person's faith experience**

Faith transforms the philosophic God of probability into the saving God of certainty in the personal religious experience. Skepticism may challenge the theories of theology, but confidence in the dependability of personal experience affirms the truth of that belief which has grown into faith. (1124.6)

Convictions about God may be arrived at through wise reasoning, but the individual becomes God-knowing only by faith, through personal experience. In much that pertains to life, probability must be reckoned with, but when contacting with cosmic reality, certainty may be experienced when such meanings and values are approached by living faith. The God-knowing soul dares to say, "I know", even when this knowledge of God is questioned by the unbeliever who denies such certitude because it is not wholly supported by intellectual logic. To every such doubter the believer only replies, "How do you know that I do not know?" (1124.7)

Though reason can always question faith, faith can always supplement both reason and logic. Reason creates the probability which faith can transform into a moral certainty, even a spiritual experience. God is the first truth and the last fact; therefore does all truth take origin in him, while all facts exist relative to him. God is absolute truth. As truth one may know God, but to understand - to explain - God, one must explore the fact of the universe of universes. The vast gulf between the experience of the truth of God and ignorance as to the fact of God can be bridged only by living faith. Reason alone cannot achieve harmony between infinite truth and universal fact. (1125.1)

Belief may not be able to resist doubt and withstand fear, but faith is always triumphant over doubting, for faith is both positive and living. The positive always has the advantage over the negative, truth over error, experience over theory, spiritual realities over the isolated facts of time and space. (1125.2)

##### **Limitations and powers of logic and reason**

To science God is a possibility, to psychology a desirability, to philosophy a probability, to religion a certainty, an actuality of religious experience. Reason demands that a philosophy which cannot find the God of probability should be very respectful of that religious faith which can and does find the God of certitude. Neither should science discount religious experience on grounds of credulity, not so long as it persists in the assumption that man's intellectual and philosophic endowments emerged from increasingly lesser intelligences the further back they go, finally taking origin in primitive life which was utterly devoid of all thinking and feeling. (1125.3)

The facts of evolution must not be arrayed against the truth of the reality of the certainty of the spiritual experience of the religious living of the God-knowing mortal. Intelligent men should cease to reason like children and should attempt to use the consistent logic of adulthood, logic which tolerates the concept of truth alongside the observation of fact. Scientific materialism has gone bankrupt when it persists, in the face of each recurring universe phenomenon, in refunding its current objections by referring what is admittedly higher back into that which is admittedly lower. Consistency demands the recognition of the activities of a purposive Creator. (1125.4)

### **To those who say: I am a good person and have no need to believe ...**

Those who would invent a religion without God are like those who would gather fruit without trees, have children without parents. You cannot have effects without causes; only the I AM is causeless. The fact of religious experience implies God, and such a God of personal experience must be a personal Deity. You cannot pray to a chemical formula, supplicate a mathematical equation, worship a hypothesis, confide in a postulate, commune with a process, serve an abstraction, or hold loving fellowship with a law. (1126.3)

True, many apparently religious traits can grow out of nonreligious roots. Man can, intellectually, deny God and yet be morally good, loyal, filial, honest, and even idealistic. Man may graft many purely humanistic branches onto his basic spiritual nature and thus apparently prove his contentions in behalf of a godless religion, but such an experience is devoid of survival values, God-knowingness and God-ascension. In such a mortal experience only social fruits are forthcoming, not spiritual. The graft determines the nature of the fruit, notwithstanding that the living sustenance is drawn from the roots of original divine endowment of both mind and spirit. (1126.4)

## **45. ETHICS AS THE MEASURE OF RELIGION**

While civilization is reflected in the nobility of its religion, institutionalized religion retards the mores yet criticizes the prevailing morality. An improving ethical culture will demonstrate that progress is being made in people's spiritual and religious thinking. The application of ethics enhances our concepts about God.

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### **Civilization is measured by its religion**

Regarding the status of any religion in the evolutionary scale, it may best be judged by its moral judgments and its ethical standards. The higher the type of any religion, the more it encourages and is encouraged by a constantly improving social morality and ethical culture. We cannot judge religion by the status of its accompanying civilization; we had better estimate the real nature of a civilization by the purity and nobility of its religion. Many of the world's most notable religious teachers have been virtually unlettered. The wisdom of the world is not necessary to an exercise of saving faith in eternal realities. (1127.6)

Ethics is the external social or racial mirror which faithfully reflects the otherwise unobservable progress of internal spiritual and religious developments. Man has always thought of God in the terms of the best he knew, his deepest ideas and highest ideals. Even historic religion has always created its God conceptions out of its highest recognized values. Every intelligent creature gives the name of God to the best and highest thing he knows. (1127.8)

### **Organized religion can retard both ethics and civilization**

Religion, when reduced to terms of reason and intellectual expression, has always dared to criticize civilization and evolutionary progress as judged by its own standards of ethical culture and moral progress. (1128.1)

While personal religion precedes the evolution of human morals, it is regretfully recorded that institutional religion has invariably lagged behind the slowly changing mores of the human races. Organized religion has proved to be conservatively tardy. The prophets have usually led the people in religious development; the theologians have usually held them back. Religion, being a matter of inner or personal experience, can never develop very far in advance of the intellectual evolution of the races. (1128.2)

## **46. VALUES ARE SUBJECT TO INTERPRETATIONS**

The pursuit of religion is a natural predisposition. It resides in our origins, it is part of our culture. But it is not paramount in our awareness and it can take an upheaval in our personal quests to bring us to a point of accepting that change to a value based life is required. We sense that we need to head in a new direction.

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### **Religious beliefs are sustaining, divisive, and changeable**

Rationalism is wrong when it assumes that religion is at first a primitive belief in something which is then followed by the pursuit of values. Religion is primarily a pursuit of values, and then there formulates a system of interpretative beliefs. It is much easier for men to agree on religious values - goals - than on beliefs - interpretations. And this explains how religion can agree on values and goals while exhibiting the confusing phenomenon of maintaining a belief in hundreds of conflicting beliefs - creeds. This also explains why a given person can maintain his religious experience in the face of giving up or changing many of his religious beliefs. Religion persists in spite of revolutionary changes in religious beliefs. Theology does not produce religion; it is religion that produces theologic philosophy. (1130.3)

### **But spiritual milestones have their own dimensions**

The realization of the recognition of spiritual values is an experience which is superideational. There is no word in any human language which can be employed to designate this "sense," "feeling," "intuition," or "experience" which we have elected to call God-consciousness. (1130.5)

Many spiritual births are accompanied by much anguish of spirit and marked psychological perturbations, as many physical births are characterized by a "stormy labor" and other abnormalities of "delivery." Other spiritual births are a natural and normal growth of the recognition of supreme values with an enhancement of spiritual experience, albeit no religious development occurs without conscious effort and positive and individual determinations. Religion is never a passive experience, a negative attitude. (1130.6)

## **The development of a social consciousness**

The evolutionary soil in the mind of man in which the seed of revealed religion germinates is the moral nature that so early gives origin to a social consciousness. The first promptings of a child's moral nature have not to do with sex, guilt, or personal pride, but rather with impulses of justice, fairness, and urges to kindness - helpful ministry to one's fellows. And when such early moral awakenings are nurtured, there occurs a gradual development of the religious life which is comparatively free from conflicts, upheavals, and crises. (1131.2)

Every human being very early experiences something of a conflict between his self-seeking and his altruistic impulses, and many times the first experience of God-consciousness may be attained as the result of seeking for superhuman help in the task of resolving such moral conflicts. (1131.3)

This idea-ideal of doing good to others — the impulse to deny the ego something for the benefit of one's neighbor — is very circumscribed at first. Primitive man regards as neighbor only those very close to him, those who treat him neighborly; as religious civilization advances, one's neighbor expands in concept to embrace the clan, the tribe, the nation. And then Jesus enlarged the neighbor scope to embrace the whole of humanity, even that we should love our enemies. And there is something inside of every normal human being that tells him this teaching is moral — right. Even those who practice this ideal least, admit that it is right in theory. (1133.7)

It is fatal to man's idealism when he is taught that all of his altruistic impulses are merely the development of his natural herd instincts. But he is ennobled and mightily energized when he learns that these higher urges of his soul emanate from the spiritual forces that indwell his mortal mind. (1134.6)

## **47. THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

What gives meaning to life? Answers evolve with the passing of years, as ego gives way to altruism. A child is mightily impressed by loyalty. And a real education about the ethical nature of living produces a unified ego along with a unified approach to the highest values.

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### **It's all about loyalty**

While religion produces growth of meanings and enhancement of values, evil always results when purely personal evaluations are elevated to the levels of absolutes. A child evaluates experience in accordance with the content of pleasure; maturity is proportional to the substitution of higher meanings for personal pleasure, even loyalties to the highest concepts of diversified life situations and cosmic relations. (1094.3)

Give every developing child a chance to grow his own religious experience; do not force a ready-made adult experience upon him. Remember, year-by-year progress through an established educational regime does not necessarily mean intellectual progress, much less spiritual growth. Enlargement of vocabulary does not signify development of character. Growth is not truly indicated by mere products but rather by progress. Real educational growth is indicated by enhancement of ideals, increased appreciation of values, new meanings of values, and augmented loyalty to supreme values. (1094.5)

Children are permanently impressed only by the loyalties of their adult associates; precept or even example is not lastingly influential. Loyal persons are growing persons, and growth is an impressive and inspiring reality. Live loyally today - grow - and tomorrow will attend to itself. The quickest way for a tadpole to become a frog is to live loyally each moment as a tadpole. (1094.6)

### **In search of the altruistic impulse**

Moral choosing is usually accompanied by more or less moral conflict. And this very first conflict in the child mind is between the urges of egoism and the impulses of altruism. The Thought Adjuster does not disregard the personality values of the egoistic motive but does operate to place a slight preference upon

the altruistic impulse as leading to the goal of human happiness and to the joys of the kingdom of heaven. (1131.6)

But before a child has developed sufficiently to acquire moral capacity and therefore to be able to choose altruistic service, he has already developed a strong and well-unified egoistic nature. And it is this factual situation that gives rise to the theory of the struggle between the “higher” and the “lower” natures, between the “old man of sin” and the “new nature” of grace. Very early in life the normal child begins to learn that it is “more blessed to give than to receive.” (1131.8)

### **The transition has to keep pace with capacity**

Man tends to identify the urge to be self-serving with his ego - himself. In contrast he is inclined to identify the will to be altruistic with some influence outside himself - God. And indeed is such a judgment right, for all such nonself desires do actually have their origin in the leadings of the indwelling Thought Adjuster, and this Adjuster is a fragment of God. The impulse of the spirit Monitor is realized in human consciousness as the urge to be altruistic, fellow-creature minded. At least this is the early and fundamental experience of the child mind. When the growing child fails of personality unification, the altruistic drive may become so overdeveloped as to work serious injury to the welfare of the self. A misguided conscience can become responsible for much conflict, worry, sorrow, and no end of human unhappiness. (1131.9)

Remember that in the religion of all ages the experience which is paramount is the feeling regarding moral values and social meanings, not the thinking regarding theologic dogmas or philosophic theories. Religion evolves favorably as the element of magic is replaced by the concept of morals. (1132.4)

The hunger and thirst for righteousness leads to the discovery of truth, and truth augments ideals, and this creates new problems for the individual religionists, for our ideals tend to grow by geometrical progression, while our ability to live up to them is enhanced only by arithmetical progression. (1133.2)

## **48. THOUGHTS ON THE HIGHEST HAPPINESS**

Our natural emotional impulses lead us to experience happiness in many forms, some not so permanent. It takes spiritual progress to produce genuine and lasting happiness. It requires the dedication of the self to the quality of thought, the lure of worthy goals, and the appreciation of values. All unified by the dominance of love.

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### **It requires the unification of our powers and attributes**

Human happiness is achieved only when the ego desire of the self and the altruistic urge of the higher self (divine spirit) are co-ordinated and reconciled by the unified will of the integrating and supervising personality. The mind of evolutionary man is ever confronted with the intricate problem of refereeing the contest between the natural expansion of emotional impulses and the moral growth of unselfish urges predicated on spiritual insight - genuine religious reflection. (1134.3)

... the highest happiness is linked with the intelligent and enthusiastic pursuit of worthy goals, and that such achievements constitute true progress in cosmic self-realization. (1037.1)

But the great problem of religious living consists in the task of unifying the soul powers of the personality by the dominance of LOVE. Health, mental efficiency, and happiness arise from the unification of physical systems, mind systems, and spirit systems. Of health and sanity man understands much, but of happiness he has truly realized very little. The highest happiness is indissolubly linked with spiritual progress. Spiritual growth yields lasting joy, peace which passes all understanding. (1097.7)

Happiness and joy take origin in the inner life. You cannot experience real joy all by yourself. A solitary life is fatal to happiness. Even families and nations will enjoy life more if they share it with others. (1220.6)

Although the divine indwellers are chiefly concerned with your spiritual preparation for the next stage of the never-ending existence, they are also deeply interested in your temporal welfare and in your real achievements on earth. They are delighted to contribute to your health, happiness, and true prosperity. They are not indifferent to your success in all matters of planetary advancement which are not inimical to your future life of eternal progress. (1204.1)

## 49. THE RATIONALE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The harmony in the universe responds to the pursuit of truth and the acceptance thereof in the face of our poor logic, inadequate science, or maturing philosophies. Facts will eventually demonstrate truths for it could not otherwise be true. Reason deals with facts as does spiritual experience which also becomes a known fact of existence. Denial of facts, material and spiritual, and the acceptance of error, is an integral aspect of our long term ascension careers.

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### Current limitations

When the philosophy of man leans heavily toward the world of matter, it becomes rationalistic or *naturalistic*. When philosophy inclines particularly toward the spiritual level, it becomes *idealistic* or even mystical. When philosophy is so unfortunate as to lean upon metaphysics, it unfailingly becomes *skeptical*, confused. In past ages, most of man's knowledge and intellectual evaluations have fallen into one of these three distortions of perception. Philosophy dare not project its interpretations of reality in the linear fashion of logic; it must never fail to reckon with the elliptic symmetry of reality and with the essential curvature of all relation concepts. (1137.4)

### Logic and the inclusion of revelation

The highest attainable philosophy of mortal man must be logically based on the reason of science, the faith of religion, and the truth insight afforded by revelation. By this union man can compensate somewhat for his failure to develop an adequate metaphysics and for his inability to comprehend the mota of the morontia. (1137.5)

Science is sustained by reason, religion by faith. Faith, though not predicated on reason, is reasonable; though independent of logic, it is nonetheless encouraged by sound logic. Faith cannot be nourished even by an ideal philosophy; indeed, it is, with science, the very source of such a philosophy. Faith, human religious insight, can be surely instructed only by revelation, can be surely elevated only by personal mortal experience with the spiritual Adjuster presence of the God who is spirit. (1137.6)

The union of the scientific attitude and the religious insight by the mediation of experiential philosophy is part of man's long Paradise-ascension experience. The approximations of mathematics and the certainties of insight will always require the harmonizing function of mind logic on all levels of experience short of the maximum attainment of the Supreme. (1138.2)

But logic can never succeed in harmonizing the findings of science and the insights of religion unless both the scientific and the religious aspects of a personality are truth dominated, sincerely desirous of following the truth wherever it may lead regardless of the conclusions which it may reach. (1138.3)

### **From the logical perspective ...**

Logic is the technique of philosophy, its method of expression. Within the domain of true science, reason is always amenable to genuine logic; within the domain of true religion, faith is always logical from the basis of an inner viewpoint, even though such faith may appear to be quite unfounded from the inlooking viewpoint of the scientific approach. From outward, looking within, the universe may appear to be material; from within, looking out, the same universe appears to be wholly spiritual. Reason grows out of material awareness, faith out of spiritual awareness, but through the mediation of a philosophy strengthened by revelation, logic may confirm both the inward and the outward view, thereby effecting the stabilization of both science and religion. Thus, through common contact with the logic of philosophy, may both science and religion become increasingly tolerant of each other, less and less skeptical. (1138.4)

### **... to the factual certitude. Or at least a correlation.**

Science and religion can only be self-critical of their *facts*. The moment departure is made from the stage of facts, reason abdicates or else rapidly degenerates into a consort of false logic. (1138.5)

The science of the material world enables man to control, and to some extent dominate, his physical environment. The religion of the spiritual experience is the source of the fraternity impulse which enables men to live together in the complexities of the civilization of a scientific age. Metaphysics, but more certainly revelation, affords a common meeting ground for the discoveries of both science and religion and makes possible the human attempt logically to correlate these separate but interdependent domains of thought into a well-balanced philosophy

of scientific stability and religious certainty. (1139.1)

Science discovers the material world, religion evaluates it, and philosophy endeavors to interpret its meanings while co-ordinating the scientific material viewpoint with the religious spiritual concept. But history is a realm in which science and religion may never fully agree. (1139.7)

### **All the while, reason reaches upwards**

*Reason* is the act of recognizing the conclusions of consciousness with regard to the experience in and with the physical world of energy and matter. *Faith* is the act of recognizing the validity of spiritual consciousness - something which is incapable of other mortal proof. *Logic* is the synthetic truth-seeking progression of the unity of faith and reason and is founded on the constitutive mind endowments of mortal beings, the innate recognition of things, meanings, and values. (1139.5)

When reason once recognizes right and wrong, it exhibits wisdom; when wisdom chooses between right and wrong, truth and error, it demonstrates spirit leading. And thus are the functions of mind, soul, and spirit ever closely united and functionally interassociated. Reason deals with factual knowledge; wisdom, with philosophy and revelation; faith, with living spiritual experience. Through truth man attains beauty and by spiritual love ascends to goodness. (1142.1)

When it comes to the sharp and well-defined conflicts between the higher and lower tendencies of the races, between what *really is* right or wrong (not merely what you may call right and wrong), you can depend upon it that the Adjuster will always participate in some definite and active manner in such experiences. The fact that such Adjuster activity may be unconscious to the human partner does not in the least detract from its value and reality. (1192.4)

## **50. ULTIMATE ETHICAL BEHAVIOR**

Co-operation with our indwelling spirit needs to occur as we accept and practice meanings and values that spirit will present to us through all eternity. Our real concern is to distinguish between genuine leadings and those which possibly arise from within our own conscience or from our dream state. Here are four ways we can facilitate harmonious functioning with our Adjuster.

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### **Ethical behavior arises in harmony with the indwelling spirit**

You must not regard co-operation with your Adjuster as a particularly conscious process, for it is not; but your motives and your decisions, your faithful determinations and your supreme desires, do constitute real and effective co-operation. You can consciously augment Adjuster harmony by: (1206.4 - 8)

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

### **Erroneous concepts of spirit guidance**

Do not confuse and confound the mission and influence of the Adjuster with what is commonly called conscience; they are not directly related. Conscience is a human and purely psychic reaction. It is not to be despised, but it is hardly the voice of God to the soul, which indeed the Adjuster's would be if such a voice

could be heard. Conscience, rightly, admonishes you to do right; but the Adjuster, in addition, endeavors to tell you what truly is right; that is, when and as you are able to perceive the Monitor's leading. (1207.7)

It is extremely dangerous to postulate as to the Adjuster content of the dream life. The Adjusters do work during sleep, but your ordinary dream experiences are purely physiologic and psychologic phenomena. Likewise, it is hazardous to attempt the differentiation of the Adjusters' concept registry from the more or less continuous and conscious reception of the dictations of mortal conscience. These are problems which will have to be solved through individual discrimination and personal decision. But a human being would do better to err in rejecting an Adjuster's expression through believing it to be a purely human experience than to blunder into exalting a reaction of the mortal mind to the sphere of divine dignity. Remember, the influence of a Thought Adjuster is for the most part, though not wholly, a superconscious experience. (1208.4)

But it will require an eternity of the future for an Adjuster ever completely to endow the personality partnership with the meanings and values which the divine Monitor carries forward from the eternity of the past. (1212.6)

## **51. MIND. THE POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH**

The study of the mind is a new frontier. Psychology has identified patterns of behavior but mind remains mysterious. The revelation assists in introducing us to the wondrous intricacies of mind and explaining them in a credulous manner. Mind plays a magnificent role in safeguarding our thoughts and identity. Enjoy this superb outline and extend not only your appreciation but also your consciousness.

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### **It all depends on the decisions we make**

Material mind is the arena in which human personalities live, are self-conscious, make decisions, choose God or forsake him, eternalize or destroy themselves. (1216.4)

Material evolution has provided you a life machine, your body; the Father himself has endowed you with the purest spirit reality known in the universe, your Thought Adjuster. But into your hands, subject to your own decisions, has been given mind, and it is by mind that you live or die. It is within this mind and with this mind that you make those moral decisions which enable you to achieve Adjusterlikeness, and that is Godlikeness. (1216.5)

Mortal mind is a temporary intellect system loaned to human beings for use during a material lifetime, and as they use this mind, they are either accepting or rejecting the potential of eternal existence. Mind is about all you have of universe reality that is subject to your will, and the soul - the morontia self - will faithfully portray the harvest of the temporal decisions which the mortal self is making. (1216.6)

Mind is the cosmic instrument on which the human will can play the discords of destruction, or upon which this same human will can bring forth the exquisite melodies of God identification and consequent eternal survival. The Adjuster bestowed upon man is, in the last analysis, impervious to evil and incapable of sin, but mortal mind can actually be twisted, distorted, and rendered evil and ugly by the sinful machinations of a perverse and self-seeking human will. Likewise can this mind be made noble, beautiful, true, and good - actually great - in accordance with the spirit-illuminated will of a God-knowing human being. (1217.1)

### **Give consent to the power of eternal survival**

Mind is your ship, the Adjuster is your pilot, the human will is captain. The master of the mortal vessel should have the wisdom to trust the divine pilot to guide the ascending soul into the morontia harbors of eternal survival. Only by selfishness, slothfulness, and sinfulness can the will of man reject the guidance of such a loving pilot and eventually wreck the mortal career upon the evil shoals of rejected mercy and upon the rocks of embraced sin. With your consent, this faithful pilot will safely carry you across the barriers of time and the handicaps of space to the very source of the divine mind and on beyond, even to the Paradise Father of Adjusters. (1217.4)

### **The indestructible combination of mind and spirit**

Throughout the mind functions of cosmic intelligence, the totality of mind is dominant over the parts of intellectual function. Mind, in its essence, is functional unity; therefore does mind never fail to manifest this constitutive unity, even when hampered and hindered by the unwise actions and choices of a misguided self. And this unity of mind invariably seeks for spirit co-ordination on all levels of its association with selves of will dignity and ascension prerogatives. (1217.5)

This supernal transaction of evolving the immortal soul is made possible because the mortal mind is first personal and second is in contact with superanimal realities; it possesses a supermaterial endowment of cosmic ministry which insures the evolution of a moral nature capable of making moral decisions, thereby effecting a bona fide creative contact with the associated spiritual ministries and with the indwelling Thought Adjuster. (1218.7)

Mind knows quantity, reality, meanings. But quality - values - is *felt*. That which feels is the mutual creation of mind, which knows, and the associated spirit, which reality-izes. (1219.5)

In so far as man's evolving morontia soul becomes permeated by truth, beauty, and goodness as the value-realization of God-consciousness, such a resultant being becomes indestructible. If there is no survival of eternal values in the evolving soul of man, then mortal existence is without meaning, and life itself is a tragic illusion. But it is forever true: What you begin in time you will assuredly finish in eternity - if it is worth finishing. (1219.6)

Mind and spirit, when fully united, are potential for the creation of superhuman values, even morontia realities. (757.2)

## **52. THE CREATIVITY OF THE INNER LIFE**

We express into the physical world our ideas that spring from our creative inner world. Are our ideals manifesting at a commensurate pace? Are we adequately guided by the ethics and values of a superior and lasting civilization? Where do we find such a master pattern?

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### **Human frames, master patterns, and creating the link**

Meanings and values are only perceived in the inner or supermaterial spheres of human experience. (1220.1)

The advances of true civilization are all born in this inner world of mankind. It is only the inner life that is truly creative. (1220.2)

The inner and the outer worlds have a different set of values. Any civilization is in jeopardy when three quarters of its youth enter materialistic professions and devote themselves to the pursuit of the sensory activities of the outer world. Civilization is in danger when youth neglect to interest themselves in ethics, sociology, eugenics, philosophy, the fine arts, religion, and cosmology. (1220.3)

Only in the higher levels of the superconscious mind as it impinges upon the spirit realm of human experience can you find those higher concepts in association with effective master patterns which will contribute to the building of a better and more enduring civilization. (1220.4)

### **Identifying the problems and the reasons**

Since this inner life of man is truly creative, there rests upon each person the responsibility of choosing as to whether this creativity shall be spontaneous and wholly haphazard or controlled, directed, and constructive. How can a creative imagination produce worthy children when the stage whereon it functions is already preoccupied by prejudice, hate, fears, resentments, revenge, and bigotries? (1220.8)

Ideas may take origin in the stimuli of the outer world, but ideals are born only in the creative realms of the inner world. Today the nations of the world are directed

by men who have a superabundance of ideas, but they are poverty-stricken in ideals. That is the explanation of poverty, divorce, war, and racial hatreds. (1220.9)

This is the problem: If freewill man is endowed with the powers of creativity in the inner man, then must we recognize that freewill creativity embraces the potential of freewill destructivity. And when creativity is turned to destructivity, you are face to face with the devastation of evil and sin - oppression, war, and destruction. Evil is a partiality of creativity which tends toward disintegration and eventual destruction. All conflict is evil in that it inhibits the creative function of the inner life - it is a species of civil war in the personality. (1220.10)

Inner creativity contributes to ennoblement of character through personality integration and selfhood unification. It is forever true: The past is unchangeable; only the future can be changed by the ministry of the present creativity of the inner self. (1221.1)

## 53. THE HUMAN PARADOX

We need to be practical in the application of the many powers at our disposal. Can we utilize spiritual power in a material environment? Can we differentiate between living a life for others and living a life for self? We are free to make moral decisions but they may be conditioned by nature and the mores.

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### **Material and spirit, finite and infinite**

Many of the temporal troubles of mortal man grow out of his twofold relation to the cosmos. Man is a part of nature - he exists in nature - and yet he is able to transcend nature. Man is finite, but he is indwelt by a spark of infinity. Such a dual situation not only provides the potential for evil but also engenders many social and moral situations fraught with much uncertainty and not a little anxiety. (1221.8)

The courage required to effect the conquest of nature and to transcend one's self is a courage that might succumb to the temptations of self-pride. The mortal who can transcend self might yield to the temptation to deify his own self-consciousness. The mortal dilemma consists in the double fact that man is in bondage to nature while at the same time he possesses a unique liberty - freedom of spiritual choice and action. On material levels man finds himself subservient to nature, while on spiritual levels he is triumphant over nature and over all things temporal and finite. Such a paradox is inseparable from temptation, potential evil, decisional errors, and when self becomes proud and arrogant, sin may evolve. (1222.1)

### **Putting values to the ruthless testing of practical living**

The problem of sin is not self-existent in the finite world. The fact of finiteness is not evil or sinful. The finite world was made by an infinite Creator - it is the handiwork of his divine Sons - and therefore it must be *good*. It is the misuse, distortion, and perversion of the finite that gives origin to evil and sin. (1222.2)

The expansion of material knowledge permits a greater intellectual appreciation of the meanings of ideas and the values of ideals. A human being can find truth in his inner experience, but he needs a clear knowledge of facts to apply his

personal discovery of truth to the ruthlessly practical demands of everyday life. (1222.6)

It is only natural that mortal man should be harassed by feelings of insecurity as he views himself inextricably bound to nature while he possesses spiritual powers wholly transcendent to all things temporal and finite. Only religious confidence - living faith - can sustain man amid such difficult and perplexing problems. (1222.7)

Of all the dangers which beset man's mortal nature and jeopardize his spiritual integrity, pride is the greatest. Courage is valorous, but egotism is vainglorious and suicidal. Reasonable self-confidence is not to be deplored. Man's ability to transcend himself is the one thing which distinguishes him from the animal kingdom. (1223.1)

Pride is deceitful, intoxicating, and sin-breeding whether found in an individual, a group, a race, or a nation. It is literally true, "Pride goes before a fall". (1223.2)

## 54. THE SUPREME BEING AND RELATIVITY OF CONCEPT FRAMES

Our frame of reference for meanings is forever subject to an expanding capacity.

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### **Is your universe frame serving you well?**

Partial, incomplete, and evolving intellects would be helpless in the master universe, would be unable to form the first rational thought pattern, were it not for the innate ability of all mind, high or low, to form a *universe frame* in which to think. If mind cannot fathom conclusions, if it cannot penetrate to true origins, then will such mind unfailingly postulate conclusions and invent origins that it may have a means of logical thought within the frame of these mind-created postulates. And while such universe frames for creature thought are indispensable to rational intellectual operations, they are, without exception, erroneous to a greater or lesser degree. (1260.2)

Conceptual frames of the universe are only relatively true; they are serviceable scaffolding which must eventually give way before the expansions of enlarging cosmic comprehension. The understandings of truth, beauty, and goodness, morality, ethics, duty, love, divinity, origin, existence, purpose, destiny, time, space, even Deity, are only relatively true. God is much, much more than a Father, but the Father is man's highest concept of God... (1260.3)

### **If not, here is one reason, though somewhat insoluble for now**

Value is a unique element in universe reality. We do not comprehend how the value of anything infinite and divine could possibly be increased. But we discover that *meanings* can be modified if not augmented even in the relations of infinite Deity. To the experiential universes even divine values are increased as actualities by enlarged comprehension of reality meanings. (1261.2)

The absolute cosmos is conceptually without limit; to define the extent and nature of this primal reality is to place qualifications upon infinity and to attenuate the pure concept of eternity. ...Man, a finite creature in an infinite cosmos, must content himself with distorted reflections and attenuated conceptions of that limitless, boundless, never-beginning, never-ending existence the comprehension of which is really beyond his ability. (1261.5)

## **55. EXPERIENTIAL RECIPROCAL REVEAL GOD'S INFINITE FAIRNESS**

The descent of God to the time-space counterpart of the Supreme Being is a logical and natural phenomenon of inherent causation. It allows God to live experientially with us. It provides the counterbalance between perfection and imperfection, and allows the synthesis between ascending and descending personalities.

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### **The consistency of creation is inherent**

If man recognized that his Creators - his immediate supervisors - while being divine were also finite, and that the God of time and space was an evolving and nonabsolute Deity, then would the inconsistencies of temporal inequalities cease to be profound religious paradoxes. No longer would religious faith be prostituted to the promotion of social smugness in the fortunate while serving only to encourage stoical resignation in the unfortunate victims of social deprivation. (1268.1)

When viewing the exquisitely perfect spheres of Havona, it is both reasonable and logical to believe they were made by a perfect, infinite, and absolute Creator. But that same reason and logic would compel any honest being, when viewing the turmoil, imperfections, and inequities of Urantia, to conclude that your world had been made by, and was being managed by, Creators who were subabsolute, preinfinite, and other than perfect. (1268.2)

### **Elimination of the ethical dilemma**

The parts and individuals of the grand universe evolve as a reflection of the total evolution of the Supreme, while in turn the Supreme is the synthetic cumulative total of all grand universe evolution. From the mortal viewpoint both are evolutionary and experiential reciprocals. (1278.4)

In the persons of the Supreme Creators the Gods have descended from Paradise to the domains of time and space, there to create and to evolve creatures with Paradise-attainment capacity who can ascend thereto in quest of the Father. This universe procession of descending God-revealing Creators and ascending God-seeking creatures is revelatory of the Deity evolution of the Supreme, in whom both descenders and ascenders achieve mutuality of understanding, the

discovery of eternal and universal brotherhood. The Supreme Being thus becomes the finite synthesis of the experience of the perfect-Creator cause and the perfecting-creature response. (1278.6)

The union of Paradise perfection and time-space experience yields a new meaning value on deity levels of reality. (1279:3)

Truth, beauty, and goodness are correlated in the ministry of the Spirit, the grandeur of Paradise, the mercy of the Son, and the experience of the Supreme. God the Supreme *is* truth, beauty, and goodness, for these concepts of divinity represent finite maximums of ideational experience. The eternal sources of these triune qualities of divinity are on superfinite levels, but a creature could only conceive of such sources as supertruth, superbeauty, and supergoodness. (1279.5)

## **56. THE SOURCE OF EVOLUTIONARY GROWTH**

All finite experience contributes to the composite experiential totality of the Supreme Being. The power of mind, the spirit influences, and the emergence of a new reality, apply for the Supreme Being in a similar pattern to that prescribed by God for each individual.

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### **The Supreme can see both ways. Something to reflect upon.**

The Supreme is God-in-time; his is the secret of creature growth in time; his also is the conquest of the incomplete present and the consummation of the perfecting future. And the final fruits of all finite growth are: power controlled through mind by spirit by virtue of the unifying and creative presence of personality. The culminating consequence of all this growth is the Supreme Being. (1280.1)

One of the most intriguing questions in finite philosophy is this: Does the Supreme Being actualize in response to the evolution of the grand universe, or does this finite cosmos progressively evolve in response to the gradual actualization of the Supreme? Or is it possible that they are mutually interdependent for their development? That they are evolutionary reciprocals, each initiating the growth of the other? Of this we are certain: Creatures and universes, high and low, are evolving within the Supreme, and as they evolve, there is appearing the unified summation of the entire finite activity of this universe age. And this is the appearance of the Supreme Being, to all personalities the evolution of the almighty power of God the Supreme. (1281.2)

### **Be a worthy contributor to self, soul, and Supreme**

Mortal man is more than figuratively made in the image of God. From a physical standpoint this statement is hardly true, but with reference to certain universe potentialities it is an actual fact. In the human race, something of the same drama of evolutionary attainment is being unfolded as takes place, on a vastly larger scale, in the universe of universes. Man, a volitional personality, becomes creative in liaison with an Adjuster, an impersonal entity, in the presence of the finite potentialities of the Supreme, and the result is the flowering of an immortal soul. In the universes the Creator personalities of time and space function in liaison with the impersonal spirit of the Paradise Trinity and become thereby creative of a new

power potential of Deity reality. (1281.7)

Mortal man, being a creature, is not exactly like the Supreme Being, who is deity, but man's evolution does in some ways resemble the growth of the Supreme. Man consciously grows from the material toward the spiritual by the strength, power, and persistency of his own decisions; he also grows as his Thought Adjuster develops new techniques for reaching down from the spiritual to the morontial soul levels; and once the soul comes into being, it begins to grow in and of itself. (1282.1)

The Supreme Being evolves by virtue of his liaison with the Paradise Trinity and in consequence of the divinity successes of the creator and administrator children of that Trinity. Man's immortal soul evolves its own eternal destiny by association with the divine presence of the Paradise Father and in accordance with the personality decisions of the human mind. What the Trinity is to God the Supreme, the Adjuster is to evolving man. (1282.5)

## 57. THE SUPREME DUTY OF MAN

Spirit dominates mind, and mind dominates the energy circuits, not only in the emergence of the seven superuniverses, but also in man's personal relationship with God. The singular lesson contained in this narrative is that each person's contribution to the Supreme is irreplaceable. No one else can contribute each individual's aspect of God's function and personality to the scheme of the Grand Universe. Their sum is generating a personality.

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### **Our singular and irreplaceable contribution to infinite reality**

Throughout the grand universe the Supreme struggles for expression. His divine evolution is in measure predicated on the wisdom-action of every personality in existence. When a human being chooses eternal survival, he is cocreating destiny; and in the life of this ascending mortal the finite God finds an increased measure of personality self-realization and an enlargement of experiential sovereignty. But if a creature rejects the eternal career, that part of the Supreme which was dependent on this creature's choice experiences inescapable delay, a deprivation which must be compensated by substitutional or collateral experience; as for the personality of the nonsurvivor, it is absorbed into the oversoul of creation, becoming a part of the Deity of the Supreme. (1283.4)

The human personality can truly destroy individuality of creaturehood, and though all that was worth while in the life of such a cosmic suicide will persist, *these qualities will not persist as an individual creature*. The Supreme will again find expression in the creatures of the universes but never again as that particular person; the unique personality of a nonascender returns to the Supreme as a drop of water returns to the sea. (1283.6)

Any isolated action of the personal parts of the finite is comparatively irrelevant to the eventual appearance of the Supreme Whole, but the whole is nonetheless dependent on the total acts of the manifold parts. The personality of the individual mortal is insignificant in the face of the total of Supremacy, but the personality of each human being represents an irreplaceable meaning-value in the finite; personality, having once been expressed, never again finds identical expression except in the continuing existence of that living personality. (1284.1)

The temporal relation of man to the Supreme is the foundation for cosmic

morality, the universal sensitivity to, and acceptance of, *duty*. This is a morality which transcends the temporal sense of relative right and wrong; it is a morality directly predicated on the self-conscious creature's appreciation of experiential obligation to experiential Deity. Mortal man and all other finite creatures are created out of the living potential of energy, mind, and spirit existent in the Supreme. It is upon the Supreme that the Adjuster-mortal ascender draws for the creation of the immortal and divine character of a finaliter. It is out of the very reality of the Supreme that the Adjuster, with the consent of the human will, weaves the patterns of the eternal nature of an ascending son of God. (1284.4)

**The great challenge that has been given to mortal man is this:** Will you decide to personalize the experiential value meanings of the cosmos into your own evolving selfhood? Or by rejecting survival, will you allow these secrets of Supremacy to lie dormant, awaiting the action of another creature at some other time who will in *his* way attempt a creature contribution to the evolution of the finite God? But that will be his contribution to the Supreme, not yours. (1284.6)

Mortal man cannot destroy the supreme values of human existence, but he can very definitely prevent the evolution of these values in his own personal experience. To the extent that the human self thus refuses to take part in the Paradise ascent, to just that extent is the Supreme delayed in achieving divinity expression in the grand universe. (1284.7)

### **This then is the Supreme decision**

And so the decision awaits each of you as it once awaited each of us: Will you fail the God of time, who is so dependent upon the decisions of the finite mind? Will you fail the Supreme personality of the universes by the slothfulness of animalistic retrogression? Will you fail the great brother of all creatures, who is so dependent on each creature? Can you allow yourself to pass into the realm of the unrealized when before you lies the enchanting vista of the universe career - the divine discovery of the Paradise Father and the divine participation in the search for, and the evolution of, the God of Supremacy? (1285.2)

What man himself takes with him as a personality possession are the character consequences of the experience of having used the mind and spirit circuits of the grand universe in his Paradise ascent. When man decides, and when he consummates this decision in action, man experiences, and the meanings and the values of this experience are forever a part of his eternal character on all levels, from the finite to the final. Cosmically moral and divinely spiritual character

represents the creature's capital accumulation of personal decisions which have been illuminated by sincere worship, glorified by intelligent love, and consummated in brotherly service. (1287.4)

### **This is the cosmic goal ...**

The present goal of the superuniverses is to become, as they are and within their potentials, perfect, even as is Havona. This perfection pertains to physical and spiritual attainment, even to administrative, governmental, and fraternal development. It is believed that, in the ages to come, the possibilities for disharmony, maladjustment, and misadaptation will be eventually exhausted in the superuniverses. The energy circuits will be in perfect balance and in complete subjugation to mind, while spirit, in the presence of personality, will have achieved the dominance of mind. (1292.7)

### **... and this the personal goal**

The personality of the mortal creature may eternalize by self-identification with the indwelling spirit through the technique of choosing to do the will of the Father. Such a consecration of will is tantamount to the realization of eternity-reality of purpose. This means that the purpose of the creature has become fixed with regard to the succession of moments; stated otherwise, that the succession of moments will witness no change in creature purpose. A million or a billion moments makes no difference. (1295.2)

## **58. PAST AND FUTURE GIVE MEANING-VALUE TO THE PRESENT**

Beyond the confines of time, is the maturity of the past-future continuum. That totality contains the relationship between all truth, events, relationships, and perspectives. This emerging completeness of ourselves reveals more of the I WAS God and the I WILL BE God, thereby taking us to a greater understanding of the never beginning and never ending Father.

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### **Maturity and the past-future significance**

There is a direct relationship between maturity and the unit of time consciousness in any given intellect. The time unit may be a day, a year, or a longer period, but inevitably it is the criterion by which the conscious self evaluates the circumstances of life, and by which the conceiving intellect measures and evaluates the facts of temporal existence. (1295.3)

Experience, wisdom, and judgment are the concomitants of the lengthening of the time unit in mortal experience. As the human mind reckons backward into the past, it is evaluating past experience for the purpose of bringing it to bear on a present situation. As mind reaches out into the future, it is attempting to evaluate the future significance of possible action. And having thus reckoned with both experience and wisdom, the human will exercises judgment-decision in the present, and the plan of action thus born of the past and the future becomes existent. (1295.4)

In the maturity of the developing self, the past and future are brought together to illuminate the true meaning of the present. As the self matures, it reaches further and further back into the past for experience, while its wisdom forecasts seek to penetrate deeper and deeper into the unknown future. And as the conceiving self extends this reach ever further into both past and future, so does judgment become less and less dependent on the momentary present. In this way does decision-action begin to escape from the fetters of the moving present, while it begins to take on the aspects of past-future significance. (1295.5)

The time unit of immaturity concentrates meaning-value into the present moment in such a way as to divorce the present of its true relationship to the not-present - the past-future. The time unit of maturity is proportioned so to reveal the coordinate relationship of past-present-future that the self begins to gain insight into the wholeness of events, begins to view the landscape of time from the panoramic

perspective of broadened horizons, begins perhaps to suspect the nonbeginning, nonending eternal continuum, the fragments of which are called time. (1295.8)

**We then take this to its logical conclusion**

On the levels of the infinite and the absolute the moment of the present contains all of the past as well as all of the future. I AM signifies also I WAS and I WILL BE. And this represents our best concept of eternity and the eternal. (1296.1)

Things are time conditioned, but truth is timeless. The more truth you know, the more truth you *are*, the more of the past you can understand and of the future you can comprehend. (1297.3)

## **59. OUR CHOICES IDENTIFY WHO WE ARE**

Our range of free will choices regarding the numerous daily opportunities we encounter, is initially limited in relative terms. As we function more in accordance with the will of God, the range is increased but the propensity for distraction and error is concomitantly reduced. Trust in a universal sense is functioning.

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### **We apply our pattern except in one case**

All volition is relative. In the originating sense, only the Father-I AM possesses finality of volition; in the absolute sense, only the Father, the Son, and the Spirit exhibit the prerogatives of volition unconditioned by time and unlimited by space. Mortal man is endowed with free will, the power of choice, and though such choosing is not absolute, nevertheless, it is relatively final on the finite level and concerning the destiny of the choosing personality. (1299.7)

In the mortal life, paths of differential conduct are continually opening and closing, and during the times when choice is possible the human personality is constantly deciding between these many courses of action. (1300.2)

Volition, the act of choosing, must function within the universe frame which has actualized in response to higher and prior choosing. The entire range of human will is strictly finite-limited except in one particular: When man chooses to find God and to be like him, such a choice is superfinite; only eternity can disclose whether this choice is also superabsonite. (1300.3)

### **Self-determinism leads to self-perpetuity or self-destruction**

Sin in time-conditioned space clearly proves the temporal liberty - even license - of the finite will. Sin depicts immaturity dazzled by the freedom of the relatively sovereign will of personality while failing to perceive the supreme obligations and duties of cosmic citizenship. (1301.1)

Iniquity in the finite domains reveals the transient reality of all God-unidentified selfhood. Only as a creature becomes God identified, does he become truly real in the universes. Finite personality is not self-created, but in the superuniverse arena of choice it does self-determine destiny. (1301.2)

The bestowal of life renders material-energy systems capable of self-perpetuation, self-propagation, and self-adaptation. The bestowal of personality imparts to living organisms the further prerogatives of self-determination, self-evolution, and self-identification with a fusion spirit of Deity. (1301.3)

The possibility of cosmic self-destruction cannot be avoided if the evolving personality is to be truly free in the exercise of finite will. (1301.4)

### **If it is to be it is up to me**

Therefore is there increased safety in narrowing the limits of personality choice throughout the lower levels of existence. Choice becomes increasingly liberated as the universes are ascended; choice eventually approximates divine freedom when the ascending personality achieves divinity of status, supremacy of consecration to the purposes of the universe, completion of cosmic-wisdom attainment, and finality of creature identification with the will and the way of God. (1301.5)

Thus always it was and forever will be: Men must arrive at their own decisions. There is a certain range of the freedom of choice which mortals may exercise. The forces of the spiritual world will not coerce man; they allow him to go the way of his own choosing. (1802.4)

## **60. CHOICE: MECHANICAL CONTROL OR SPIRIT OVERCONTROL?**

The material world may be developing too quickly for the requisite wisdom and spirit leadings that are necessary to safely direct such progress. Unfettered liberty without a spiritual base may lead to a default and the mechanics of society will need reconstruction based on an ethical mindset in liaison with spirit.

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### **Ethics of choice based on mechanical dominance**

Mortal man is a machine, a living mechanism; his roots are truly in the physical world of energy. But man, a mechanism, is much more than a machine; he is mind endowed and spirit indwelt... (1301.7)

The spirit liberates, and the mechanism limits, the function of will. Imperfect choice, uncontrolled by mechanism, unidentified with spirit, is dangerous and unstable. Mechanical dominance insures stability at the expense of progress; spirit alliance liberates choice from the physical level and at the same time assures the divine stability produced by augmented universe insight and increased cosmic comprehension. (1301.8)

The great danger that besets the creature is that, in achieving liberation from the fetters of the life mechanism, he will fail to compensate this loss of stability by effecting a harmonious working liaison with spirit. Creature choice, when relatively liberated from mechanical stability, may attempt further self-liberation independent of greater spirit identification. (1302.1)

### **A pint cannot hold a quart**

The slowness of evolution, of human cultural progress, testifies to the effectiveness of that brake - material inertia - which so efficiently operates to retard dangerous velocities of progress. Thus does time itself cushion and distribute the otherwise lethal results of premature escape from the next-encompassing barriers to human action. For when culture advances overfast, when material achievement outruns the evolution of worship-wisdom, then does civilization contain within itself the seeds of retrogression; and unless buttressed by the swift augmentation of experiential wisdom, such human societies will recede from high but premature levels of attainment, and the "dark ages" of the

interregnum of wisdom will bear witness to the inexorable restoration of the imbalance between self-liberty and self-control. (1302.3)

Lucifer similarly sought to disrupt the time governor operating in restraint of the premature attainment of certain liberties in the local system. A local system settled in light and life has experientially achieved those viewpoints and insights which make feasible the operation of many techniques that would be disruptive and destructive in the presettled eras of that very realm. (1302.6)

## 61. FUNCTIONS OF PROVIDENCE

Fate, chance events, serendipity, fortuitous outcomes – how do they happen and why? It can be the result of the natural unfolding events of living. In rare circumstances it may involve the intervention of a higher personality. We can acknowledge natural providence and retain our connection to God through thanksgiving for all things.

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### **There is no arbitrary intervention**

Providence does not mean that God has decided all things for us and in advance. God loves us too much to do that, for that would be nothing short of cosmic tyranny. Man does have relative powers of choice. Neither is the divine love that shortsighted affection which would pamper and spoil the children of men. (1304.3)

God loves each creature as a child, and that love overshadows each creature throughout all time and eternity. Providence functions with regard to the total and deals with the function of any creature as such function is related to the total. Providential intervention with regard to any being is indicative of the importance of the *function* of that being as concerns the evolutionary growth of some total; such total may be the total race, the total nation, the total planet, or even a higher total. It is the importance of the function of the creature that occasions providential intervention, not the importance of the creature as a person. (1304.7)

Nevertheless, the Father as a person may at any time interpose a fatherly hand in the stream of cosmic events all in accordance with the will of God and in consonance with the wisdom of God and as motivated by the love of God. (1305.1)

But what man calls providence is all too often the product of his own imagination, the fortuitous juxtaposition of the circumstances of chance. (1305.2)

### **Luck is chance, providence is all things working together for good**

Some of the amazingly fortuitous conditions occasionally prevailing on the evolutionary worlds may be due to the gradually emerging presence of the

Supreme, the foretasting of his future universe activities. Most of what a mortal would call providential is not; his judgment of such matters is very handicapped by lack of farsighted vision into the true meanings of the circumstances of life. Much of what a mortal would call good luck might really be bad luck; the smile of fortune that bestows unearned leisure and undeserved wealth may be the greatest of human afflictions; the apparent cruelty of a perverse fate that heaps tribulation upon some suffering mortal may in reality be the tempering fire that is transmuting the soft iron of immature personality into the tempered steel of real character. (1305.4)

The love of the Father operates directly in the heart of the individual, independent of the actions or reactions of all other individuals; the relationship is personal - man and God. (1305.6)

To realize providence in time, man must accomplish the task of achieving perfection. But man can even now foretaste this providence in its eternity meanings as he ponders the universe fact that all things, be they good or evil, work together for the advancement of God-knowing mortals in their quest for the Father of all. (1306.7)

**UNIVERSAL ETHICS**  
**CONCEPTS FROM *THE URANTIA BOOK***

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## **PART 4 THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS**

### **62. WISDOM OFFERED IN TRUE FRIENDSHIP**

Friendships can produce the most touching examples of feeling, dedication, and love. Watching over someone is noble. However, the final example here, shows that friendship may also arouse strong words. When delivered with wisdom and love, they may equally show care and devotion.

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#### **Practical advice from three different real life situations**

1. And John made him this promise: “My Teacher, go about your business, do your work in the world; I will act for you in this or any other matter, and I will watch over your family even as I would foster my own mother and care for my own brothers and sisters. I will disburse your funds which my father holds as you have directed and as they may be needed, and when your money has been expended, if I do not receive more from you, and if your mother is in need, then will I share my own earnings with her. Go your way in peace. I will act in your stead in all these matters.” (1421.8)
2. ... “My friend, we are all Jonahs with lives to live in accordance with the will of God, and at all times when we seek to escape the present duty of living by running away to far-off enticements, we thereby put ourselves in the immediate control of those influences which are not directed by the powers of truth and the forces of righteousness. The flight from duty is the sacrifice of truth.” (1428:2)
3. Jesus said: “My brother, God is love; therefore he must be good, and his goodness is so great and real that it cannot contain the small and unreal things of evil. God is so positively good that there is absolutely no place in him for negative evil. Evil is the immature choosing and the unthinking misstep of those who are resistant to goodness, rejectful of beauty, and disloyal to truth. (1429.1)

#### **Why some reject the call to higher values**

... this young Greek, Anaxand, said: "If the Gods are interested in me, then why do they not remove the cruel and unjust foreman of this workshop?" He was startled when Jesus replied, "Since you know the ways of kindness and value justice, perhaps the Gods have brought this erring man near that you may lead him into this better way. Maybe you are the salt which is to make this brother more agreeable to all other men; that is, if you have not lost your savor. As it is, this man is your master in that his evil ways unfavorably influence you. Why not assert your mastery of evil by virtue of the power of goodness and thus become the master of all relations between the two of you? I predict that the good in you could overcome the evil in him if you gave it a fair and living chance. There is no adventure in the course of mortal existence more enthralling than to enjoy the exhilaration of becoming the material life partner with spiritual energy and divine truth in one of their triumphant struggles with error and evil. It is a marvelous and transforming experience to become the living channel of spiritual light to the mortal who sits in spiritual darkness. If you are more blessed with truth than is this man, his need should challenge you. Surely you are not the coward who could stand by on the seashore and watch a fellow man who could not swim perish! How much more of value is this man's soul floundering in darkness compared to his body drowning in water!" (1430.2)

Anaxand was mightily moved by Jesus' words. Presently he told his superior what Jesus had said, and that night they both sought Jesus' advice as to the welfare of their souls. (1430.3)

## **63. NEW STANDARDS FROM THE SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE**

When truth is discovered it resonates in the soul. Even material discoveries need to be applied to human welfare for them to be of true benefit to the material world. Goodness contains the spark of spirit as it illuminates our ideals and our ethics. And these values are reflected in our faith.

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### **A materialistic culture needs to apply true values**

The standard of true values must be looked for in the spiritual world and on divine levels of eternal reality. To an ascending mortal all lower and material standards must be recognized as transient, partial, and inferior. The scientist, as such, is limited to the discovery of the relatedness of material facts. Technically, he has no right to assert that he is either materialist or idealist, for in so doing he has assumed to forsake the attitude of a true scientist since any and all such assertions of attitude are the very essence of philosophy. (1457.1)

Unless the moral insight and the spiritual attainment of mankind are proportionately augmented, the unlimited advancement of a purely materialistic culture may eventually become a menace to civilization. A purely materialistic science harbors within itself the potential seed of the destruction of all scientific striving, for this very attitude presages the ultimate collapse of a civilization which has abandoned its sense of moral values and has repudiated its spiritual goal of attainment. (1457.2)

The materialistic scientist and the extreme idealist are destined always to be at loggerheads. This is not true of those scientists and idealists who are in possession of a common standard of high moral values and spiritual test levels. In every age scientists and religionists must recognize that they are on trial before the bar of human need. They must eschew all warfare between themselves while they strive valiantly to justify their continued survival by enhanced devotion to the service of human progress. If the so-called science or religion of any age is false, then must it either purify its activities or pass away before the emergence of a material science or spiritual religion of a truer and more worthy order. (1457.3)

### **Good and evil seen in the context of spirit**

My brother, good and evil are merely words symbolizing relative levels of human comprehension of the observable universe. If you are ethically lazy and socially indifferent, you can take as your standard of good the current social usages. If you are spiritually indolent and morally unprogressive, you may take as your standards of good the religious practices and traditions of your contemporaries. But the soul that survives time and emerges into eternity must make a living and personal choice between good and evil as they are determined by the true values of the spiritual standards established by the divine spirit which the Father in heaven has sent to dwell within the heart of man. This indwelling spirit is the standard of personality survival. (1457.5)

Goodness, like truth, is always relative and unfailingly evil-contrasted. It is the perception of these qualities of goodness and truth that enables the evolving souls of men to make those personal decisions of choice which are essential to eternal survival. (1457.6)

Goodness is always growing toward new levels of the increasing liberty of moral self-realization and spiritual personality attainment - the discovery of, and identification with, the indwelling Adjuster. An experience is good when it heightens the appreciation of beauty, augments the moral will, enhances the discernment of truth, enlarges the capacity to love and serve one's fellows, exalts the spiritual ideals, and unifies the supreme human motives of time with the eternal plans of the indwelling Adjuster, all of which lead directly to an increased desire to do the Father's will, thereby fostering the divine passion to find God and to be more like him. (1458.2)

Goodness is living, relative, always progressing, invariably a personal experience, and everlastingly correlated with the discernment of truth and beauty. Goodness is found in the recognition of the positive truth-values of the spiritual level, which must, in human experience, be contrasted with the negative counterpart - the shadows of potential evil. (1458.4)

The *possibility* of evil is necessary to moral choosing, but not the actuality thereof. A shadow is only relatively real. Actual evil is not necessary as a personal experience. Potential evil acts equally well as a decision stimulus in the realms of moral progress on the lower levels of spiritual development. Evil becomes a reality of personal experience only when a moral mind makes evil its choice. (1458.7)

**The highest truths are recognized through faith**

Truth cannot be defined with words, only by living. Truth is always more than knowledge. Knowledge pertains to things observed, but truth transcends such purely material levels in that it consorts with wisdom and embraces such imponderables as human experience, even spiritual and living realities. Knowledge originates in science; wisdom, in true philosophy; truth, in the religious experience of spiritual living. Knowledge deals with facts; wisdom, with relationships; truth, with reality values. (1459.2)

Revealed truth, personally discovered truth, is the supreme delight of the human soul; it is the joint creation of the material mind and the indwelling spirit. ...There may be conflict between knowledge and human beliefs, beliefs colored with prejudice, distorted by fear, and dominated by the dread of facing new facts of material discovery or spiritual progress. (1459.4)

But truth can never become man's possession without the exercise of faith. This is true because man's thoughts, wisdom, ethics, and ideals will never rise higher than his faith, his sublime hope. And all such true faith is predicated on profound reflection, sincere self-criticism, and uncompromising moral consciousness. Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination. (1459.5)

## **64. FAIRNESS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF WEALTH**

In matters of money, we can especially demonstrate that we recognize the Golden Rule and the brotherhood of man. These examples not only cover different situations, they also give the certain reasons and conditions for the wise stewardship of goods. All circumstances of life provide the opportunity to abide by the Father's will as opposed to self will.

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### **Another occasion to be faithful and just**

"You must approximately divide your wealth into these ten grand divisions, and then proceed to administer each portion in accordance with the wise and honest interpretation of the laws of justice, equity, fairness, and true efficiency. Let your decisions favor those who are in need, favor those who suffer the misfortune of undeserved hardships. I would advise you: (1463.7-10, 1464.1-4, 1465.1-3)

1. "As steward of inherited wealth you should consider its sources. You are under moral obligation to represent the past generation in the honest transmittal of legitimate wealth to succeeding generations after subtracting a fair toll for the benefit of the present generation.
2. "Everyone who enjoys wealth as a result of discovery should make adequate provision for the sharing of these discoveries in helpful ways by the largest possible number of fellow men.
3. "The honest trader should not hesitate to take the same profit which he would gladly accord his fellow trader in a similar transaction.
4. "No noble man will strive to accumulate riches and amass wealth-power by the enslavement or unfair exploitation of his brothers in the flesh. All such wealth should be restored to those who have thus been robbed or to their children and their children's children.
5. "That which is fair interest may be collected provided the capital lent was legitimate wealth. Do not become so small and grasping that you would stoop to the practice of usury.
6. "The genius owes something to both his ancestors and his progeny;

likewise is he under obligation to the race, nation, and circumstances of his inventive discoveries. It would be equally unjust to deprive the genius of all his increment of wealth.

7. "Accidental riches should be regarded somewhat in the light of a trust to be expended for the benefit of one's social or economic group. The possessors should be accorded the major voice in the determination of the wise and effective distribution of such unearned resources.
8. "If your riches are the product of unjust dealings with your fellows, make haste to restore all these ill-gotten gains to the rightful owners.
9. "Take for yourself of any trust only that which all honest men would allow.
10. "That part of your fortune which represents the earnings of your own mental and physical efforts - if your work has been done in fairness and equity - is truly your own. No man can gainsay your right to hold and use such wealth as you may see fit provided your exercise of this right does not work harm upon your fellows."

### **Further advice from Jesus**

Jesus never personally had anything to do with the apostolic finances except in the disbursement of alms. But there was one economic abuse which he many times condemned, and that was the unfair exploitation of the weak, unlearned, and less fortunate of men by their strong, keen, and more intelligent fellows. Jesus declared that such inhuman treatment of men, women, and children was incompatible with the ideals of the brotherhood of the kingdom of heaven. (1803.2)

## 65. EQUALITY AND SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

There are a limited number of role models in the world today and many fit a stereotype derived from popular culture. However, there is a different way in which we can view our leaders, authority figures, family members, and those successful in business. In the eyes of God we either do, or do not, strive to do his will.

---

### Example 1

One day while resting at lunch, about halfway to Tarentum, Ganid asked Jesus a direct question as to what he thought of India's caste system. Said Jesus: "Though human beings differ in many ways, the one from another, before God and in the spiritual world all mortals stand on an equal footing. There are only two groups of mortals in the eyes of God: those who desire to do his will and those who do not. As the universe looks upon an inhabited world, it likewise discerns two great classes: those who know God and those who do not. Those who cannot know God are reckoned among the animals of any given realm. Mankind can appropriately be divided into many classes in accordance with differing qualifications, as they may be viewed physically, mentally, socially, vocationally, or morally, but as these different classes of mortals appear before the judgment bar of God, they stand on an equal footing; God is truly no respecter of persons. Although you cannot escape the recognition of differential human abilities and endowments in matters intellectual, social, and moral, you should make no such distinctions in the spiritual brotherhood of men when assembled for worship in the presence of God." (1468.3)

### Example 2

And then, in bidding him farewell, Jesus said: "My brother, always remember that man has no rightful authority over woman unless the woman has willingly and voluntarily given him such authority. Your wife has engaged to go through life with you, to help you fight its battles, and to assume the far greater share of the burden of bearing and rearing your children; and in return for this special service it is only fair that she receive from you that special protection which man can give to woman as the partner who must carry, bear, and nurture the children. The loving

care and consideration which a man is willing to bestow upon his wife and their children are the measure of that man's attainment of the higher levels of creative and spiritual self-consciousness. Do you not know that men and women are partners with God in that they co-operate to create beings who grow up to possess themselves of the potential of immortal souls? The Father in heaven treats the Spirit Mother of the children of the universe as one equal to himself. It is Godlike to share your life and all that relates thereto on equal terms with the mother partner who so fully shares with you that divine experience of reproducing yourselves in the lives of your children. If you can only love your children as God loves you, you will love and cherish your wife as the Father in heaven honors and exalts the Infinite Spirit, the mother of all the spirit children of a vast universe." (1471.1)

## 66. HIGH DEMANDS AND PRACTICAL ETHICS

Religious teachers give a set of beliefs about a Deity, possibly a set of rules for living, and a ritual or two. It may apply to a race of people, for the times in which they are given, or as a means of attaining power and control. With Jesus, we are given reasons for his life, teachings about God and the pathway thereto, and something else as well. And that is wisdom. Below are excellent examples of it.

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### **From meetings with people in everyday situations**

To the Roman centurion he said: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's. The sincere service of God and the loyal service of Caesar do not conflict unless Caesar should presume to arrogate to himself that homage which alone can be claimed by Deity. Loyalty to God, if you should come to know him, would render you all the more loyal and faithful in your devotion to a worthy emperor." (1474.3)

To the Roman judge he said: "As you judge men, remember that you yourself will also some day come to judgment before the bar of the Rulers of a universe. Judge justly, even mercifully, even as you shall some day thus crave merciful consideration at the hands of the Supreme Arbiter. Judge as you would be judged under similar circumstances, thus being guided by the spirit of the law as well as by its letter. And even as you accord justice dominated by fairness in the light of the need of those who are brought before you, so shall you have the right to expect justice tempered by mercy when you sometime stand before the Judge of all the earth." (1474.7)

To the mistress of the Greek inn... "Minister your hospitality as one who entertains the children of the Most High. Elevate the drudgery of your daily toil to the high levels of a fine art through the increasing realization that you minister to God in the persons whom he indwells by his spirit which has descended to live within the hearts of men, thereby seeking to transform their minds and lead their souls to the knowledge of the Paradise Father of all these bestowed gifts of the divine spirit." (1475.1)

Jesus had many visits with a Chinese merchant. In saying good-bye, he admonished him: "Worship only God, who is your true spirit ancestor. Remember that the Father's spirit ever lives within you and always points your soul-direction heavenward. If you follow the unconscious leadings of this immortal spirit, you are

certain to continue on in the uplifted way of finding God. And when you do attain the Father in heaven, it will be because by seeking him you have become more and more like him.” (1475.2)

To the traveler from Britain he said: “My brother, I perceive you are seeking for truth, and I suggest that the spirit of the Father of all truth may chance to dwell within you. Did you ever sincerely endeavor to talk with the spirit of your own soul? Such a thing is indeed difficult and seldom yields consciousness of success; but every honest attempt of the material mind to communicate with its indwelling spirit meets with certain success, notwithstanding that the majority of all such magnificent human experiences must long remain as superconscious registrations in the souls of such God-knowing mortals.” (1475.3)

To the runaway lad Jesus said: “Remember, there are two things you cannot run away from - God and yourself. Wherever you may go, you take with you yourself and the spirit of the heavenly Father which lives within your heart. My son, stop trying to deceive yourself; settle down to the courageous practice of facing the facts of life; lay firm hold on the assurances of sonship with God and the certainty of eternal life, as I have instructed you. From this day on purpose to be a real man, a man determined to face life bravely and intelligently.” (1475.4)

### **In summary ...**

”I am absolutely assured that the entire universe is friendly to me - this all-powerful truth I insist on believing with a wholehearted trust in spite of all appearances to the contrary.” (1470:0)

## 67. FOUNDATION OF THE FAMILY

This brief parent training manual gives guidance in broad terms that can be implemented. Other teachings in the book deal with the more day to day matters.

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### The parental role has parallels to the Fatherhood of God

Jesus stated that a true family is founded on the following seven facts: (1603.6; 1604.1 - 7)

1. **The fact of existence.** The relationships of nature and the phenomena of mortal likenesses are bound up in the family: Children inherit certain parental traits. The children take origin in the parents; personality existence depends on the act of the parent. The relationship of father and child is inherent in all nature and pervades all living existences.
2. **Security and pleasure.** True fathers take great pleasure in providing for the needs of their children. Many fathers are not content with supplying the mere wants of their children but enjoy making provision for their pleasures also.
3. **Education and training.** Wise fathers carefully plan for the education and adequate training of their sons and daughters. When young they are prepared for the greater responsibilities of later life.
4. **Discipline and restraint.** Farseeing fathers also make provision for the necessary discipline, guidance, correction, and sometimes restraint of their young and immature offspring.
5. **Companionship and loyalty.** The affectionate father holds intimate and loving intercourse with his children. Always is his ear open to their petitions; he is ever ready to share their hardships and assist them over their difficulties. The father is supremely interested in the progressive welfare of his progeny.
6. **Love and mercy.** A compassionate father is freely forgiving; fathers do not hold vengeful memories against their children. Fathers are not like judges, enemies, or creditors. Real families are built upon tolerance, patience, and forgiveness.
7. **Provision for the future.** Temporal fathers like to leave an inheritance for their sons. The family continues from one generation to another. Death only ends one generation to mark the beginning of another. Death terminates an individual life but not necessarily the family.

## 68. WHAT OUGHT WE TO DO, WHO OUGHT WE TO BECOME?

Our prayer life can increase our capacity to receive the abundance of spiritual blessings. Here are truths differentiating between effective prayer and worship.

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### Teachings about prayer and worship

True religion is the act of an individual soul in its self-conscious relations with the Creator; organized religion is man's attempt to *socialize* the worship of individual religionists. (1616.4 – 10)

Worship - contemplation of the spiritual - must alternate with service, contact with material reality. Work should alternate with play; religion should be balanced by humor. Profound philosophy should be relieved by rhythmic poetry. The strain of living - the time tension of personality - should be relaxed by the restfulness of worship. The feelings of insecurity arising from the fear of personality isolation in the universe should be antidoted by the faith contemplation of the Father and by the attempted realization of the Supreme.

Prayer is designed to make man less thinking but more *realizing*; it is not designed to increase knowledge but rather to expand insight.

Worship is intended to anticipate the better life ahead and then to reflect these new spiritual significances back onto the life which now is. Prayer is spiritually sustaining, but worship is divinely creative.

Worship is the technique of looking to the *One* for the inspiration of service to the *many*. Worship is the yardstick which measures the extent of the soul's detachment from the material universe and its simultaneous and secure attachment to the spiritual realities of all creation.

Prayer is self-reminding - sublime thinking; worship is self-forgetting - superthinking. Worship is effortless attention, true and ideal soul rest, a form of restful spiritual exertion.

Worship is the act of a part identifying itself with the Whole; the finite with the Infinite; the son with the Father; time in the act of striking step with eternity. Worship is the act of the son's personal communion with the divine Father, the assumption of refreshing, creative, fraternal, and romantic attitudes by the human soul-spirit.

### More about prayer

The earnest and longing repetition of any petition, when such a prayer is the sincere expression of a child of God and is uttered in faith, no matter how ill-advised or impossible of direct answer, never fails to expand the soul's capacity for spiritual receptivity. (1621.1 – 8)

In all praying, remember that sonship is a *gift*. No child has aught to do with *earning* the status of son or daughter. The earth child comes into being by the will of its parents. Even so, the child of God comes into grace and the new life of the spirit by the will of the Father in heaven. Therefore must the kingdom of heaven - divine sonship - be *received* as by a little child. You earn righteousness - progressive character development - but you receive sonship by grace and through faith.

Prayer led Jesus up to the supercommunion of his soul with the Supreme Rulers of the universe of universes. Prayer will lead the mortals of earth up to the communion of true worship. The soul's spiritual capacity for receptivity determines the quantity of heavenly blessings which can be personally appropriated and consciously realized as an answer to prayer.

Prayer and its associated worship is a technique of detachment from the daily routine of life, from the monotonous grind of material existence. It is an avenue of approach to spiritualized self-realization and individuality of intellectual and religious attainment.

Prayer is an antidote for harmful introspection. At least, prayer as the Master taught it is such a beneficent ministry to the soul. Jesus consistently employed the beneficial influence of praying for one's fellows. Only in the great crises of his earth life did Jesus ever pray for himself.

Prayer is the breath of the spirit life in the midst of the material civilization of the races of mankind. Worship is salvation for the pleasure-seeking generations of mortals.

As prayer may be likened to recharging the spiritual batteries of the soul, so worship may be compared to the act of tuning in the soul to catch the universe broadcasts of the infinite spirit of the Universal Father.

Prayer is the sincere and longing look of the child to its spirit Father; it is a psychologic process of exchanging the human will for the divine will. Prayer is a part of the divine plan for making over that which is into that which ought to be.

## 69. PRAYER, THANKSGIVING, AND WORSHIP

These sixteen points show prayer at its highest universe levels. Pray, and listen.

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### Ethical prayer

1. The conscious and persistent regard for iniquity in the heart of man gradually destroys the prayer connection of the human soul with the spirit circuits of communication between man and his Maker. (1638.2–5; 1639.1–6; 1640.1–5; 1641.1)
2. That prayer which is inconsistent with the known and established laws of God is an abomination to the Paradise Deities.
3. By opening the human end of the channel of the God-man communication, mortals make immediately available the ever-flowing stream of divine ministry to the creatures of the worlds. ...God's forgiveness in *fact* is not conditioned upon your forgiving your fellows, but in *experience* it is exactly so conditioned.
4. There is a basic law of justice in the universe which mercy is powerless to circumvent. The unselfish glories of Paradise are not possible of reception by a thoroughly selfish creature of the realms of time and space.
5. They who would receive mercy must show mercy; judge not that you be not judged. With the spirit with which you judge others you also shall be judged. ... The sincerity of any prayer is the assurance of its being heard; the spiritual wisdom and universe consistency of any petition is the determiner of the time, manner, and degree of the answer.
6. When you have become wholly dedicated to the doing of the will of the Father in heaven, the answer to all your petitions will be forthcoming because your prayers will be in full accordance with the Father's will, and the Father's will is ever manifest throughout his vast universe.
7. The *motive* of the prayer gives it right of way to the divine ear, not the social, economic, or outward religious status of the one who prays.
8. Prayer may not be employed to avoid the delays of time or to transcend the handicaps of space. Prayer is not designed as a technique for aggrandizing self or for gaining unfair advantage over one's fellows.
9. "I have come forth from the Father; if, therefore, you are ever in doubt as to

what you would ask of the Father, ask in my name, and I will present your petition in accordance with your real needs and desires and in accordance with my Father's will." Guard against the great danger of becoming self-centered in your prayers. Avoid praying much for yourself; pray more for the spiritual progress of your brethren. Avoid materialistic praying; pray in the spirit and for the abundance of the gifts of the spirit.

10. When you pray for the sick and afflicted, do not expect that your petitions will take the place of loving and intelligent ministry to the necessities of these afflicted ones.
11. Many resort to prayer only when in trouble. Such a practice is thoughtless and misleading. ... Let your real petitions always be in secret.
12. All believers in this gospel should pray sincerely for the extension of the kingdom of heaven.
13. Jesus taught that the prayer for divine guidance over the pathway of earthly life was next in importance to the petition for a knowledge of the Father's will. ... prayer is a factor in the enlargement of one's capacity to receive the presence of the divine spirit.
14. Jesus warned his followers against thinking that their prayers would be rendered more efficacious by ornate repetitions, eloquent phraseology, fasting, penance, or sacrifices. But he did exhort his believers to employ prayer as a means of leading up through thanksgiving to true worship.
15. And then Jesus said: "Be not constantly overanxious about your common needs. Be not apprehensive concerning the problems of your earthly existence, but in all these things by prayer and supplication, with the spirit of sincere thanksgiving, let your needs be spread out before your Father who is in heaven."
16. Jesus taught his followers that, when they had made their prayers to the Father, they should remain for a time in silent receptivity to afford the indwelling spirit the better opportunity to speak to the listening soul. The spirit of the Father speaks best to man when the human mind is in an attitude of true worship. We worship God by the aid of the Father's indwelling spirit and by the illumination of the human mind through the ministry of truth. Worship, taught Jesus, makes one increasingly like the being who is worshiped. Worship is a transforming experience whereby the finite gradually approaches and ultimately attains the presence of the Infinite.

## 70. THE GOLDEN RULE

The Golden Rule has equivalents in all the major religions. It has been the basis of much religious understanding. It is readily understood in human terms. However, as we see here, it can be interpreted in spiritual terms as well. This is an excellent example of how Jesus' teachings generally can be extended to the spiritual dimension. And why they can be called a revelation.

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### **This beautiful rule can be applied to all levels of existence**

I am disappointed in that you all so often fail to put a genuinely spiritual interpretation upon my commonplace teachings, instruction which must be given you in human language and as men must speak. Let me now teach you concerning the differing levels of meaning attached to the interpretation of this rule of living, this admonition to 'do to others that which you desire others to do to you': (1650.4 – 7; 1651.1 – 3)

1. "***The level of the flesh.*** Such a purely selfish and lustful interpretation would be well exemplified by the supposition of your question.
2. "***The level of the feelings.*** This plane is one level higher than that of the flesh and implies that sympathy and pity would enhance one's interpretation of this rule of living.
3. "***The level of mind.*** Now come into action the reason of mind and the intelligence of experience. Good judgment dictates that such a rule of living should be interpreted in consonance with the highest idealism embodied in the nobility of profound self-respect.
4. "***The level of brotherly love.*** Still higher is discovered the level of unselfish devotion to the welfare of one's fellows. On this higher plane of wholehearted social service growing out of the consciousness of the fatherhood of God and the consequent recognition of the brotherhood of man, there is discovered a new and far more beautiful interpretation of this basic rule of life.
5. "***The moral level.*** And then when you attain true philosophic levels of interpretation, when you have real insight into the *rightness* and *wrongness* of things, when you perceive the eternal fitness of human relationships, you

will begin to view such a problem of interpretation as you would imagine a high-minded, idealistic, wise, and impartial third person would so view and interpret such an injunction as applied to your personal problems of adjustment to your life situations.

6. “***The spiritual level.*** And then last, but greatest of all, we attain the level of spirit insight and spiritual interpretation which impels us to recognize in this rule of life the divine command to treat all men as we conceive God would treat them. That is the universe ideal of human relationships. And this is your attitude toward all such problems when your supreme desire is ever to do the Father’s will. I would, therefore, that you should do to all men that which you know I would do to them in like circumstances.”

## 71. THE REASON FOR PLANETARY AFFLICTION

While we bring much suffering upon ourselves, we have also been disadvantaged by the accidents of time, and the unfortunate consequences of rebellion and incomplete revelation. Once again, we have been given an opportunity to correct some of the revelatory calamities. Will we be wise enough to do so?

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### **Natural order, divine aspects, and eventual justice**

At another of these private interviews in the garden Nathaniel asked Jesus: "Master, though I am beginning to understand why you refuse to practice healing indiscriminately, I am still at a loss to understand why the loving Father in heaven permits so many of his children on earth to suffer so many afflictions." The Master answered Nathaniel, saying: (1661.3)

"Nathaniel, you and many others are thus perplexed because you do not comprehend how the natural order of this world has been so many times upset by the sinful adventures of certain rebellious traitors to the Father's will. And I have come to make a beginning of setting these things in order. But many ages will be required to restore this part of the universe to former paths and thus release the children of men from the extra burdens of sin and rebellion. The presence of evil alone is sufficient test for the ascension of man - sin is not essential to survival. (1661.4)

"But, my son, you should know that the Father does not purposely afflict his children. Man brings down upon himself unnecessary affliction as a result of his persistent refusal to walk in the better ways of the divine will. Affliction is potential in evil, but much of it has been produced by sin and iniquity. Many unusual events have transpired on this world, and it is not strange that all thinking men should be perplexed by the scenes of suffering and affliction which they witness. But of one thing you may be sure: The Father does not send affliction as an arbitrary punishment for wrongdoing. The imperfections and handicaps of evil are inherent; the penalties of sin are inevitable; the destroying consequences of iniquity are inexorable. Man should not blame God for those afflictions which are the natural result of the life which he chooses to live; neither should man complain of those experiences which are a part of life as it is lived on this world. It is the Father's will that mortal man should work persistently and consistently toward the betterment of his estate on earth. Intelligent application would enable man to overcome much of his earthly misery. (1661.5)

Then Jesus made this final statement: "The Father in heaven does not willingly afflict the children of men. Man suffers, first, from the accidents of time and the imperfections of the evil of an immature physical existence. Next, he suffers the inexorable consequences of sin - the transgression of the laws of life and light. And finally, man reaps the harvest of his own iniquitous persistence in rebellion against the righteous rule of heaven on earth. But man's miseries are not a *personal* visitation of divine judgment. Man can, and will, do much to lessen his temporal sufferings. But once and for all be delivered from the superstition that God afflicts man at the behest of the evil one. (1664.3)

## **72. LESSON REGARDING CONTENTMENT, TRUE HAPPINESS**

The search for happiness through the ages continues to this day. To many, it remains elusive. Not surprisingly, there are answers for children of God.

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### **It's not to be found in the usual places**

Simon asked the Master: "Why are some persons so much more happy and contented than others? Is contentment a matter of religious experience?" Among other things, Jesus said in answer to Simon's question: (1674.3 - 4)

"Simon, some persons are naturally more happy than others. Much, very much, depends upon the willingness of man to be led and directed by the Father's spirit which lives within him. Have you not read in the Scriptures the words of the wise man, 'The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts'? And also that such spirit-led mortals say: 'The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places; yes, I have a goodly heritage.' 'A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked,' for 'a good man shall be satisfied from within himself.' 'A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance and is a continual feast. Better is a little with the reverence of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fatted ox and hatred therewith. Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without rectitude.' 'A merry heart does good like a medicine.' 'Better is a handful with composure than a superabundance with sorrow and vexation of spirit.'

### **However, sorrow is found in the usual places, and can be overcome**

"Much of man's sorrow is born of the disappointment of his ambitions and the wounding of his pride. Although men owe a duty to themselves to make the best of their lives on earth, having thus sincerely exerted themselves, they should cheerfully accept their lot and exercise ingenuity in making the most of that which has fallen to their hands. All too many of man's troubles take origin in the fear soil of his own natural heart. 'The wicked flee when no man pursues.' 'The wicked are like the troubled sea, for it cannot rest, but its waters cast up mire and dirt; there is no peace, says God, for the wicked.' (1674.5)

"Seek not, then, for false peace and transient joy but rather for the assurance of faith and the sureties of divine sonship which yield composure, contentment, and supreme joy in the spirit." (1674.6)

## **73. TRUE RELIGION**

The principles of organized religion are stated and compared with the somewhat opposing principles of the religion of the spirit. In accepting the descriptions of the former, by recognizing it for what it really is, we are opening our minds to a better belief system that resides in the latter.

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### **Religion of the mind compared to religion of the spirit**

Your religion shall change from the mere intellectual belief in traditional authority to the actual experience of that living faith which is able to grasp the reality of God and all that relates to the divine spirit of the Father. The religion of the mind ties you hopelessly to the past; the religion of the spirit consists in progressive revelation and ever beckons you on toward higher and holier achievements in spiritual ideals and eternal realities. (1731.2)

It is not required of you that your own sense of mercy, justice, and truth should be outraged by submission to an outworn system of religious forms and ceremonies. The religion of the spirit leaves you forever free to follow the truth wherever the leadings of the spirit may take you. And who can judge - perhaps this spirit may have something to impart to this generation which other generations have refused to hear? (1731.3)

### **The difference is based on personal religious experience. One can be lived.**

Every race of mankind has its own mental outlook upon human existence; therefore must the religion of the mind ever run true to these various racial viewpoints. Never can the religions of authority come to unification. Human unity and mortal brotherhood can be achieved only by and through the superendowment of the religion of the spirit. Racial minds may differ, but all mankind is indwelt by the same divine and eternal spirit. The hope of human brotherhood can only be realized when, and as, the divergent mind religions of authority become impregnated with, and overshadowed by, the unifying and ennobling religion of the spirit - the religion of personal spiritual experience. (1732.1)

### **Unity of spirit and not uniformity of views**

The religions of authority can only divide men and set them in conscientious array against each other; the religion of the spirit will progressively draw men together and cause them to become understandingly sympathetic with one another. The religions of authority require of men uniformity in belief, but this is impossible of realization in the present state of the world. The religion of the spirit requires only unity of experience - uniformity of destiny - making full allowance for diversity of belief. The religion of the spirit requires only uniformity of insight, not uniformity of viewpoint and outlook. The religion of the spirit does not demand uniformity of intellectual views, only unity of spirit feeling. The religions of authority crystallize into lifeless creeds; the religion of the spirit grows into the increasing joy and liberty of ennobling deeds of loving service and merciful ministrations. (1732.2)

## **74. WAYS TO LIVE THE ETHICS OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE**

Self-respect will influence how others see you. It requires the combination of practicality in living along with spirit identification. Experience generates requisite practicality that seems to be an important characteristic even to the spiritual realms. We need all such qualities to successfully traverse the universe.

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### **The good crowds out and destroys the evil**

“You know that men are all too often led into temptation by the urge of their own selfishness and by the impulses of their animal natures. When you are in this way tempted, I admonish you that, while you recognize temptation honestly and sincerely for just what it is, you intelligently redirect the energies of spirit, mind, and body, which are seeking expression, into higher channels and toward more idealistic goals. In this way may you transform your temptations into the highest types of uplifting mortal ministry while you almost wholly avoid these wasteful and weakening conflicts between the animal and spiritual natures. (1738.3)

“But let me warn you against the folly of undertaking to surmount temptation by the effort of supplanting one desire by another and supposedly superior desire through the mere force of the human will. If you would be truly triumphant over the temptations of the lesser and lower nature, you must come to that place of spiritual advantage where you have really and truly developed an actual interest in, and love for, those higher and more idealistic forms of conduct which your mind is desirous of substituting for these lower and less idealistic habits of behavior that you recognize as temptation. You will in this way be delivered through spiritual transformation rather than be increasingly overburdened with the deceptive suppression of mortal desires. The old and the inferior will be forgotten in the love for the new and the superior. Beauty is always triumphant over ugliness in the hearts of all who are illuminated by the love of truth. There is mighty power in the expulsive energy of a new and sincere spiritual affection. And again I say to you, be not overcome by evil but rather overcome evil with good.” (1738.4)

### **Respect for self and others**

Spiritual living mightily increases true self-respect. But self-respect is not self-admiration. Self-respect is always co-ordinate with the love and service of one's

fellows. It is not possible to respect yourself more than you love your neighbor; the one is the measure of the capacity for the other. (1740.1)

As the days pass, every true believer becomes more skillful in alluring his fellows into the love of eternal truth. Are you more resourceful in revealing goodness to humanity today than you were yesterday? Are you a better righteousness recommender this year than you were last year? Are you becoming increasingly artistic in your technique of leading hungry souls into the spiritual kingdom? (1740.2)

### **Can ideals be evaluated?**

Are your ideals sufficiently high to insure your eternal salvation while your ideas are so practical as to render you a useful citizen to function on earth in association with your mortal fellows? In the spirit, your citizenship is in heaven; in the flesh, you are still citizens of the earth kingdoms. Render to the Caesars the things which are material and to God those which are spiritual. (1740.3)

The measure of the spiritual capacity of the evolving soul is your faith in truth and your love for man, but the measure of your human strength of character is your ability to resist the holding of grudges and your capacity to withstand brooding in the face of deep sorrow. Defeat is the true mirror in which you may honestly view your real self. (1740.4)

### **Be sure to benefit from experience**

As you grow older in years and more experienced in the affairs of the kingdom, are you becoming more tactful in dealing with troublesome mortals and more tolerant in living with stubborn associates? Tact is the fulcrum of social leverage, and tolerance is the earmark of a great soul. If you possess these rare and charming gifts, as the days pass you will become more alert and expert in your worthy efforts to avoid all unnecessary social misunderstandings. Such wise souls are able to avoid much of the trouble which is certain to be the portion of all who suffer from lack of emotional adjustment, those who refuse to grow up, and those who refuse to grow old gracefully. (1740.5)

Seek no unearned recognition and crave no undeserved sympathy. Love, freely receive from both divine and human sources regardless of your deserts, and love freely in return. But in all other things related to honor and adulation seek only that which honestly belongs to you. (1740.6)

### **An example of the practice of ethics of the spirit**

...the Son of Man must presently go to Jerusalem, suffer many things, be rejected by the scribes, the elders, and the chief priests, and after all this be killed and raised from the dead. And I speak not a parable to you; I speak the truth to you that you may be prepared for these events when they suddenly come upon us." And while he was yet speaking, Simon Peter, rushing impetuously toward him, laid his hand upon the Master's shoulder and said: "Master, be it far from us to contend with you, but I declare that these things shall never happen to you." (1759.5)

Peter spoke thus because he loved Jesus; but the Master's human nature recognized in these words of well-meant affection the subtle suggestion of temptation that he change his policy of pursuing to the end his earth bestowal in accordance with the will of his Paradise Father. And it was because he detected the danger of permitting the suggestions of even his affectionate and loyal friends to dissuade him, that he turned upon Peter and the other apostles, saying: "Get you behind me. You savor of the spirit of the adversary, the tempter. When you talk in this manner, you are not on my side but rather on the side of our enemy. In this way do you make your love for me a stumbling block to my doing the Father's will. Mind not the ways of men but rather the will of God." (1760.1)

## **75. INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT MORAL CONDUCT**

If we are to introduce teachings about ethics to others, then ideally we need to exemplify such qualities in our own lives. So while Jesus gave unparalleled teachings about God, he did not overlook the need to instruct his key followers about their own conduct when teaching others.

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### **A specific talk by Jesus contains teachings about dealing with others**

Always respect the personality of man. Never should a righteous cause be promoted by force; spiritual victories can be won only by spiritual power. This injunction against the employment of material influences refers to psychic force as well as to physical force. Overpowering arguments and mental superiority are not to be employed to coerce men and women into the kingdom. Man's mind is not to be crushed by the mere weight of logic or overawed by shrewd eloquence. While emotion as a factor in human decisions cannot be wholly eliminated, it should not be directly appealed to in the teachings of those who would advance the cause of the kingdom. Make your appeals directly to the divine spirit that dwells within the minds of men. Do not appeal to fear, pity, or mere sentiment. In appealing to men, be fair; exercise self-control and exhibit due restraint; show proper respect for the personalities of your pupils. Remember that I have said: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, and if any man will open, I will come in." (1765.4)

In bringing men into the kingdom, do not lessen or destroy their self-respect. While overmuch self-respect may destroy proper humility and end in pride, conceit, and arrogance, the loss of self-respect often ends in paralysis of the will. It is the purpose of this gospel to restore self-respect to those who have lost it and to restrain it in those who have it. Make not the mistake of only condemning the wrongs in the lives of your pupils; remember also to accord generous recognition for the most praiseworthy things in their lives. Forget not that I will stop at nothing to restore self-respect to those who have lost it, and who really desire to regain it. (1765.5)

Take care that you do not wound the self-respect of timid and fearful souls. Do not indulge in sarcasm at the expense of my simple-minded brethren. Be not cynical with my fear-ridden children. Idleness is destructive of self-respect; therefore, admonish your brethren ever to keep busy at their chosen tasks, and put forth every effort to secure work for those who find themselves without employment. (1765.6)

In preaching the gospel of the kingdom, you are simply teaching friendship with God. And this fellowship will appeal alike to men and women in that both will find that which most truly satisfies their characteristic longings and ideals. Tell my children that I am not only tender of their feelings and patient with their frailties, but that I am also ruthless with sin and intolerant of iniquity. I am indeed meek and humble in the presence of my Father, but I am equally and relentlessly inexorable where there is deliberate evil-doing and sinful rebellion against the will of my Father in heaven. (1766.5)

You shall not portray your teacher as a man of sorrows. Future generations shall know also the radiance of our joy, the buoyance of our good will, and the inspiration of our good humor. We proclaim a message of good news which is infectious in its transforming power. Our religion is throbbing with new life and new meanings. Those who accept this teaching are filled with joy and in their hearts are constrained to rejoice evermore. Increasing happiness is always the experience of all who are certain about God. (1766.6)

Teach all believers to avoid leaning upon the insecure props of false sympathy. You cannot develop strong characters out of the indulgence of self-pity; honestly endeavor to avoid the deceptive influence of mere fellowship in misery. Extend sympathy to the brave and courageous while you withhold overmuch pity from those cowardly souls who only halfheartedly stand up before the trials of living. Offer not consolation to those who lie down before their troubles without a struggle. Sympathize not with your fellows merely that they may sympathize with you in return. (1766.7)

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. (1766.8)

### **And how devoted should we be?**

"Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Until seven times?" And Jesus answered Peter: "Not only seven times but even to seventy times and seven. (1763.1)

## **76. THE REWARDS OF POSITIVE THINKING, DOING, AND BEING**

Perhaps these teachings could prevent social dislocation and depression, encourage the acceptance of others, cultivate a positive attitude, and lead to decent friendships. If it all sounds a bit too good to be true, there is only one way to find out.

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### **A positive attitude to life**

Jesus did not hesitate to appropriate the better half of a Scripture while he repudiated the lesser portion. His great exhortation, "Love your neighbor as yourself," he took from the Scripture which reads: "You shall not take vengeance against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus appropriated the positive portion of this Scripture while rejecting the negative part. He even opposed negative or purely passive nonresistance. Said he: "When an enemy smites you on one cheek, do not stand there dumb and passive but in positive attitude turn the other; that is, do the best thing possible actively to lead your brother in error away from the evil paths into the better ways of righteous living." Jesus required his followers to react positively and aggressively to every life situation. The turning of the other cheek, or whatever act that may typify, demands initiative, necessitates vigorous, active, and courageous expression of the believer's personality. (1770.1)

Jesus did not advocate the practice of negative submission to the indignities of those who might purposely seek to impose upon the practitioners of nonresistance to evil, but rather that his followers should be wise and alert in the quick and positive reaction of good to evil to the end that they might effectively overcome evil with good. Forget not, the truly good is invariably more powerful than the most malignant evil. The Master taught a positive standard of righteousness: "Whosoever wishes to be my disciple, let him disregard himself and take up the full measure of his responsibilities daily to follow me." And he so lived himself in that "he went about doing good". (1770.2)

### **Act in a positive way towards others**

When Jesus instructed his apostles that they should, when one unjustly took away the coat, offer the other garment, he referred not so much to a literal second coat as to the idea of doing something *positive* to save the wrongdoer in the place of

the olden advice to retaliate - "an eye for an eye" and so on. Jesus abhorred the idea either of retaliation or of becoming just a passive sufferer or victim of injustice. On this occasion he taught them the three ways of contending with, and resisting, evil: (1770.3 – 6)

1. To return evil for evil - the positive but unrighteous method.
2. To suffer evil without complaint and without resistance - the purely negative method.
3. To return good for evil, to assert the will so as to become master of the situation, to overcome evil with good - the positive and righteous method.

One of the apostles once asked: "Master, what should I do if a stranger forced me to carry his pack for a mile?" Jesus answered: "Do not sit down and sigh for relief while you berate the stranger under your breath. Righteousness comes not from such passive attitudes. If you can think of nothing more effectively positive to do, you can at least carry the pack a second mile. That will of a certainty challenge the unrighteous and ungodly stranger." (1770.7)

When men dare to forsake a life of natural craving for one of adventurous art and uncertain logic, they must expect to suffer the consequent hazards of emotional casualties - conflicts, unhappiness, and uncertainties - at least until the time of their attainment of some degree of intellectual and emotional maturity. Discouragement, worry, and indolence are positive evidence of moral immaturity. Human society is confronted with two problems: attainment of the maturity of the individual and attainment of the maturity of the race. The mature human being soon begins to look upon all other mortals with feelings of tenderness and with emotions of tolerance. Mature men view immature folks with the love and consideration that parents bear their children. (1773.3)

### **The freedom of a positive and noble mind**

The wise and effective solution of any problem demands that the mind shall be free from bias, passion, and all other purely personal prejudices which might interfere with the disinterested survey of the actual factors that go to make up the problem presenting itself for solution. The solution of life problems requires courage and sincerity. Only honest and brave individuals are able to follow valiantly through the perplexing and confusing maze of living to where the logic of a fearless mind may lead. And this emancipation of the mind and soul can never

be effected without the driving power of an intelligent enthusiasm which borders on religious zeal. It requires the lure of a great ideal to drive man on in the pursuit of a goal which is beset with difficult material problems and manifold intellectual hazards. (1773.5)

Prejudice blinds the soul to the recognition of truth, and prejudice can be removed only by the sincere devotion of the soul to the adoration of a cause that is all-embracing and all-inclusive of one's fellow men. Prejudice is inseparably linked to selfishness. Prejudice can be eliminated only by the abandonment of self-seeking and by substituting therefor the quest of the satisfaction of the service of a cause that is not only greater than self, but one that is even greater than all humanity - the search for God, the attainment of divinity. The evidence of maturity of personality consists in the transformation of human desire so that it constantly seeks for the realization of those values which are highest and most divinely real. (1774.5)

Train your memory to hold in sacred trust the strength-giving and worth-while episodes of life, which you can recall at will for your pleasure and edification. Thus build up for yourself and in yourself reserve galleries of beauty, goodness, and artistic grandeur. But the noblest of all memories are the treasured recollections of the great moments of a superb friendship. And all of these memory treasures radiate their most precious and exalting influences under the releasing touch of spiritual worship. (1779.4)

### **And be honest with yourself**

But life will become a burden of existence unless you learn how to fail gracefully. There is an art in defeat which noble souls always acquire; you must know how to lose cheerfully; you must be fearless of disappointment. Never hesitate to admit failure. Make no attempt to hide failure under deceptive smiles and beaming optimism. It sounds well always to claim success, but the end results are appalling. Such a technique leads directly to the creation of a world of unreality and to the inevitable crash of ultimate disillusionment. (1779.5)

## 77. THE STORY OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

In addition to the lesson to be learned from this story, we learn of the wisdom of Jesus. The way he assigned responsibility for reasoning and conclusions to the individual, illustrates his great wisdom and compassion in his dealings with the people of his time. And for all people, on all planets, for all times.

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### **Who is really your neighbor?**

In the course of the evening a certain lawyer, seeking to entangle Jesus in a compromising disputation, said: "Teacher, I would like to ask you just what I should do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered, "What is written in the law and the prophets; how do you read the Scriptures?" The lawyer, knowing the teachings of both Jesus and the Pharisees, answered: "To love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor as yourself." Then said Jesus: "You have answered right; this, if you really do, will lead to life everlasting." (1809.3)

But the lawyer was not wholly sincere in asking this question, and desiring to justify himself while also hoping to embarrass Jesus, he ventured to ask still another question. Drawing a little closer to the Master, he said, "But, Teacher, I should like you to tell me just who is my neighbor?" The lawyer asked this question hoping to entrap Jesus into making some statement that would contravene the Jewish law which defined one's neighbor as "the children of one's people." The Jews looked upon all others as "gentile dogs." This lawyer was somewhat familiar with Jesus' teachings and therefore well knew that the Master thought differently; thus he hoped to lead him into saying something which could be construed as an attack upon the sacred law. (1809.4)

But Jesus discerned the lawyer's motive, and instead of falling into the trap, he proceeded to tell his hearers a story, a story which would be fully appreciated by any Jericho audience. Said Jesus: "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell into the hands of cruel brigands, who robbed him, stripped him and beat him, and departing, left him half dead. Very soon, by chance, a certain priest was going down that way, and when he came upon the wounded man, seeing his sorry plight, he passed by on the other side of the road. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came along and saw the man, passed by on the other side. Now, about this time, a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed down to Jericho, came across this wounded man; and when he saw how he had

been robbed and beaten, he was moved with compassion, and going over to him, he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine, and setting the man upon his own beast, brought him here to the inn and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out some money and, giving it to the host, said: 'Take good care of my friend, and if the expense is more, when I come back again, I will repay you.' Now let me ask you: Which of these three turned out to be the neighbor of him who fell among the robbers?" And when the lawyer perceived that he had fallen into his own snare, he answered, "He who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said, "Go and do likewise." (1810.1)

The lawyer answered, "He who showed mercy," that he might refrain from even speaking that odious word, Samaritan. The lawyer was forced to give the very answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" which Jesus wished given, and which, if Jesus had so stated, would have directly involved him in the charge of heresy. Jesus not only confounded the dishonest lawyer, but he told his hearers a story which was at the same time a beautiful admonition to all his followers and a stunning rebuke to all Jews regarding their attitude toward the Samaritans. And this story has continued to promote brotherly love among all who have subsequently believed the gospel of Jesus. (1810.2)

## 78. MORE ADVICE ABOUT WEALTH

Jesus advised people as he passed by. He took every opportunity to teach about the love of God, even when the subject concerned wealth as demonstrated here. He gave his full attention to the person he was dealing with, his words were relevant and clear, and gave the listener much to ponder.

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### Story number one

“Master, my father died leaving much property to me and my brother, but my brother refuses to give me that which is my own. Will you, then, bid my brother divide this inheritance with me?” Jesus was mildly indignant that this material-minded youth should bring up for discussion such a question of business; but he proceeded to use the occasion for the impartation of further instruction. Said Jesus: “Man, who made me a divider over you? Where did you get the idea that I give attention to the material affairs of this world?” And then, turning to all who were about him, he said: “Take heed and keep yourselves free from covetousness; a man’s life consists not in the abundance of the things which he may possess. Happiness comes not from the power of wealth, and joy springs not from riches. Wealth, in itself, is not a curse, but the love of riches many times leads to such devotion to the things of this world that the soul becomes blinded to the beautiful attractions of the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God on earth and to the joys of eternal life in heaven. (1821.1)

### Story number two

When Jesus had finished his story, another man rose up and asked him: “Master, I know that your apostles have sold all their earthly possessions to follow you, and that they have all things in common as do the Essenes, but would you have all of us who are your disciples do likewise? Is it a sin to possess honest wealth?” And Jesus replied to this question: “My friend, it is not a sin to have honorable wealth; but it is a sin if you convert the wealth of material possessions into *treasures* which may absorb your interests and divert your affections from devotion to the spiritual pursuits of the kingdom. There is no sin in having honest possessions on earth provided your *treasure* is in heaven, for where your treasure is there will your heart be also. There is a great difference between wealth which leads to covetousness and selfishness and that which is held and dispensed in the spirit of stewardship by those who have an abundance of this world’s goods, and who so

bountifully contribute to the support of those who devote all their energies to the work of the kingdom. (1821.5)

“But never forget that, after all, wealth is unenduring. The love of riches all too often obscures and even destroys the spiritual vision. Fail not to recognize the danger of wealth’s becoming, not your servant, but your master.” (1822.1)

Jesus sent the young man away, saying to him, “My son, what shall it profit you if you gain the whole world and lose your own soul?” (1822.4)

### **Story number three**

To another standing near by who asked Jesus how the wealthy would stand in the day of judgment, he replied: “I have come to judge neither the rich nor the poor, but the lives men live will sit in judgment on all. Whatever else may concern the wealthy in the judgment, at least three questions must be answered by all who acquire great wealth, and these questions are: (1822.5 - 8)

1. How much wealth did you accumulate?
2. How did you get this wealth?
3. How did you use your wealth?”

... where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (1823.4)

## 79. THE ANSWER TO PRAYER

Many other teachings on religion do not provide explanations that clarify meaning, give practical advice, or recommend actions that can be implemented. Perhaps the following guidelines on prayer do meet these qualifications.

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### **Genuine prayers of the spirit are certain of an answer**

1. Prayer is an expression of the finite mind in an effort to approach the Infinite. The making of a prayer must, therefore, be limited by the knowledge, wisdom, and attributes of the finite; likewise must the answer be conditioned by the vision, aims, ideals, and prerogatives of the Infinite. (1848.4 – 9; 1849.1 – 4)
2. When a prayer is apparently unanswered, the delay often betokens a better answer, although one which is for some good reason greatly delayed.
3. ... the finite petition is sometimes so fraught with the grasp of the Infinite that the answer must long be postponed to await the creation of adequate capacity for receptivity; the prayer of faith may be so all-embracing that the answer can be received only on Paradise.
4. The prayer of the material being can many times be answered only when such an individual has progressed to the spirit level.
5. The prayer of a God-knowing person may be so distorted by ignorance and so deformed by superstition that the answer thereto would be highly undesirable.
6. Spirit beings cannot bestow material answers to the spirit petitions of even material beings. Material beings can pray effectively only when they “pray in the spirit.”
7. No prayer can hope for an answer unless it is born of the spirit and nurtured by faith.
8. The child is always within his rights when he presumes to petition the parent; and the parent is always within his parental obligations to the immature child when his superior wisdom dictates that the answer to the child’s prayer be delayed...

9. Do not hesitate to pray the prayers of spirit longing; doubt not that you shall receive the answer to your petitions.
10. All genuine spirit-born petitions are certain of an answer. Ask and you shall receive. But you should remember that you are progressive creatures of time and space; therefore must you constantly reckon with the time-space factor in the experience of your personal reception of the full answers to your manifold prayers and petitions.

## 80. PARABLES CONTAIN A SPIRITUAL TRUTH

Good people may feel an entitlement to the favor of God and think that those not living a so-called religious life are doomed. However, it seems the greater celebration is given for those who turn their life around. It's never too late, as long as we show the slightest flicker of wanting to reclaim our rightful inheritance.

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### The Parable of the Lost Son

...the Father and his Son go forth to *search* for those who are lost, and in this search we employ all influences capable of rendering assistance in our diligent efforts to find those who are lost, those who stand in need of salvation. (1851.2)

“A certain man had two sons ... The younger son enjoyed play but shunned work; the older devoted himself to work but seldom played. This association became so disagreeable that the younger son came to his father and said: ‘Father, give me the third portion of your possessions which would fall to me and allow me to go out into the world to seek my own fortune.’ And when the father heard this request, knowing how unhappy the young man was at home and with his older brother, he divided his property, giving the youth his share. (1851.4)

“Within a few weeks the young man gathered together all his funds and set out upon a journey to a far country, and finding nothing profitable to do which was also pleasurable, he soon wasted all his inheritance in riotous living. ... he found employment with one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into the fields to feed swine. And the young man would fain have filled himself with the husks which the swine ate, but no one would give him anything. (1851.5)

“I will say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no more worthy to be called your son; only be willing to make me one of your hired servants.’ (1852.1 – 6)

“... on the day he approached his home, even while he was yet afar off, the father saw him and, being moved with loving compassion, ran out to meet him, and with affectionate greeting he embraced and kissed him. And after they had thus met, the son looked up into his father's tearful face and said: ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no more worthy to be called a son’ - but the lad did not find opportunity to complete his confession because the overjoyed father said to the servants who had by this time come running up: ‘Bring quickly

his best robe, the one I have saved, and put it on him and put the son's ring on his hand and fetch sandals for his feet.'

... he called to his servants: 'Bring on the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they all gathered about the father to rejoice with him over the restoration of his son.

"About this time, while they were celebrating, the elder son came in from his day's work in the field, and as he drew near the house, he heard the music and the dancing. And then said the servant: 'Your long-lost brother has come home ...'

"But when the older brother heard this, he was so hurt and angry he would not go into the house. When his father heard of his resentment of the welcome of his younger brother, he went out to entreat him. But the older son would not yield to his father's persuasion. He answered his father, saying: 'Here these many years have I served you, never transgressing the least of your commands, and yet you never gave me even a kid that I might make merry with my friends. I have remained here to care for you all these years, and you never made rejoicing over my faithful service, but when this your son returns, having squandered your substance with harlots, you make haste to kill the fatted calf and make merry over him.'

"Since this father truly loved both of his sons, he tried to reason with this older one: 'But, my son, you have all the while been with me, and all this which I have is yours. You could have had a kid at any time you had made friends to share your merriment. But it is only proper that you should now join with me in being glad and merry because of your brother's return. Think of it, my son, your brother was lost and is found; he has returned alive to us!'"

### **The Parable of the Shrewd Steward**

"Master, what did you mean when you said today that many of the children of the world are wiser in their generation than are the children of the kingdom since they are skillful in making friends with the mammon of unrighteousness?" Jesus answered: (1853.4 – 7; 1854.1 – 3)

"Some of you, before you entered the kingdom, were very shrewd in dealing with your business associates. If you were unjust and often unfair, you were nonetheless prudent and farseeing in that you transacted your business with an

eye single to your present profit and future safety. Likewise should you now so order your lives in the kingdom as to provide for your present joy while you also make certain of your future enjoyment of treasures laid up in heaven. If you were so diligent in making gains for yourselves when in the service of self, why should you show less diligence in gaining souls for the kingdom since you are now servants of the brotherhood of man and stewards of God?

“You may all learn a lesson from the story of a certain rich man who had a shrewd but unjust steward. This steward had not only oppressed his master’s clients for his own selfish gain, but he had also directly wasted and squandered his master’s funds. When all this finally came to the ears of his master, he called the steward before him and asked the meaning of these rumors and required that he should give immediate accounting of his stewardship and prepare to turn his master’s affairs over to another.

“Now this unfaithful steward began to say to himself: ‘What shall I do since I am about to lose this stewardship? I have not the strength to dig; to beg I am ashamed. I know what I will do to make certain that, when I am put out of this stewardship, I will be welcomed into the houses of all who do business with my master.’ And then, calling in each of his lord’s debtors, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ He answered, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ Then said the steward, ‘Take your wax board bond, sit down quickly, and change it to fifty.’ Then he said to another debtor, ‘How much do you owe?’ And he replied, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ Then said the steward, ‘Take your bond and write fourscore.’ And this he did with numerous other debtors. And so did this dishonest steward seek to make friends for himself after he would be discharged from his stewardship. Even his lord and master, when he subsequently found out about this, was compelled to admit that his unfaithful steward had at least shown sagacity in the manner in which he had sought to provide for future days of want and adversity.

“Take lessons from those who make friends with the mammon of unrighteousness, and likewise so conduct your lives that you make eternal friendship with the forces of righteousness in order that, when all things earthly fail, you shall be joyfully received into the eternal habitations.

“I affirm that he who is faithful in little will also be faithful in much, while he who is unrighteous in little will also be unrighteous in much. If you have not shown foresight and integrity in the affairs of this world, how can you hope to be faithful and prudent when you are trusted with the stewardship of the true riches of the heavenly kingdom? If you are not good stewards and faithful bankers, if you have

not been faithful in that which is another's, who will be foolish enough to give you great treasure in your own name?

“And again I assert that no man can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one while he despises the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

### **The reason for parables**

Notwithstanding the favorable reception of Jesus and his teachings by the common people, the religious leaders at Jerusalem became increasingly alarmed and antagonistic. The Pharisees had formulated a systematic and dogmatic theology. Jesus was a teacher who taught as the occasion served; he was not a systematic teacher. Jesus taught not so much from the law as from life, by parables. (And when he employed a parable for illustrating his message, he designed to utilize just one feature of the story for that purpose. Many wrong ideas concerning the teachings of Jesus may be secured by attempting to make allegories out of his parables.) (1672.4)

## **81. THE ENDOWMENTS OF SPIRITUAL LIBERTY**

When considered even at the supreme level, the teachings of Jesus stand for the highest standards. This in itself is an ethical endorsement of his central tenets.

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### **This new way of living will eventually become a reality**

The Master made it clear that the kingdom of heaven must begin with, and be centered in, the dual concept of the truth of the fatherhood of God and the correlated fact of the brotherhood of man. The acceptance of such a teaching, Jesus declared, would liberate man from the age-long bondage of animal fear and at the same time enrich human living with the following endowments of the new life of spiritual liberty: (1859.11 -15; 1860.1 – 3)

1. The possession of new courage and augmented spiritual power. The gospel of the kingdom was to set man free and inspire him to dare to hope for eternal life.
2. The gospel carried a message of new confidence and true consolation for all men, even for the poor.
3. It was in itself a new standard of moral values, a new ethical yardstick wherewith to measure human conduct. It portrayed the ideal of a resultant new order of human society.
4. It taught the pre-eminence of the spiritual compared with the material; it glorified spiritual realities and exalted superhuman ideals.
5. This new gospel held up spiritual attainment as the true goal of living. Human life received a new endowment of moral value and divine dignity.
6. Jesus taught that eternal realities were the result (reward) of righteous earthly striving. Man's mortal sojourn on earth acquired new meanings consequent upon the recognition of a noble destiny.
7. The new gospel affirmed that human salvation is the revelation of a far-reaching divine purpose to be fulfilled and realized in the future destiny of the endless service of the salvaged sons of God.

At first life was a struggle for existence; now, for a standard of living; next it will be for quality of thinking, the coming earthly goal of human existence. (910.1)

## 82. SOCIAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AND ITS MOTIVE

Jesus did not have any agenda for an outcome or reward in any of his social encounters. He based all his activities on only one measure: doing God's will. We made decisions, and more decisions. We exert self-control, and more self-control.

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### **Forgiveness is experienced in forgiving**

It is in the consideration of the technique of *receiving* God's forgiveness that the attainment of the righteousness of the kingdom is revealed. Faith is the price you pay for entrance into the family of God; but forgiveness is the act of God which accepts your faith as the price of admission. And the reception of the forgiveness of God by a kingdom believer involves a definite and actual experience and consists in the following four steps, the kingdom steps of inner righteousness: (1861.10: 1862.1 - 4)

God's forgiveness is made actually available and is personally experienced by man just in so far as he forgives his fellows.

1. Man will not truly forgive his fellows unless he loves them as himself.
2. To thus love your neighbor as yourself *is* the highest ethics.
3. Moral conduct, true righteousness, becomes, then, the natural result of such love.

It therefore is evident that the true and inner religion of the kingdom unfailingly and increasingly tends to manifest itself in practical avenues of social service. Jesus taught a living religion that impelled its believers to engage in the doing of loving service. But Jesus did not put ethics in the place of religion. He taught religion as a cause and ethics as a result. (1862.5)

The righteousness of any act must be measured by the motive; the highest forms of good are therefore unconscious. Jesus was never concerned with morals or ethics as such. He was wholly concerned with that inward and spiritual fellowship with God the Father which so certainly and directly manifests itself as outward and loving service for man. (1862.6)

By teaching that the kingdom is within, by exalting the individual, Jesus struck the deathblow of the old society in that he ushered in the new dispensation of true social righteousness. (1862.8)

Goodness always compels respect, but when it is devoid of grace, it often repels affection. Goodness is universally attractive only when it is gracious. Goodness is effective only when it is attractive. (1874.5)

Most of the really important things which Jesus said or did seemed to happen casually, “as he passed by.” There was so little of the professional, the well-planned, or the premeditated in the Master’s earthly ministry. He dispensed health and scattered happiness naturally and gracefully as he journeyed through life. It was literally true, “He went about doing good.” (1875.4)

And it behooves the Master’s followers in all ages to learn to minister as “they pass by” - to do unselfish good as they go about their daily duties. (1875.5)

### **83. BEHAVIOR JUDGED RELATIVE TO CIRCUMSTANCES**

At times, the reaction of Jesus in a situation was contrary to what was expected by his audience. But collectively, his teachings are consistent and unwavering. Again and again he used life's events to explain the way of God and the values that we need to apply at all times. We need to work hard to achieve what he did so effortlessly.

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#### **Example 1: An act of kindness**

Nothing out of the ordinary happened until near the close of the feasting when Mary the sister of Lazarus stepped forward from among the group of women onlookers and, going up to where Jesus reclined as the guest of honor, proceeded to open a large alabaster cruse of very rare and costly ointment; and after anointing the Master's head, she began to pour it upon his feet as she took down her hair and wiped them with it. The whole house became filled with the odor of the ointment, and everybody present was amazed at what Mary had done. Lazarus said nothing, but when some of the people murmured, showing indignation that so costly an ointment should be thus used, Judas Iscariot stepped over to where Andrew reclined and said: "Why was this ointment not sold and the money bestowed to feed the poor? You should speak to the Master that he rebuke such waste." (1879.3)

Jesus, knowing what they thought and hearing what they said, put his hand upon Mary's head as she knelt by his side and, with a kindly expression upon his face, said: "Let her alone, every one of you. Why do you trouble her about this, seeing that she has done a good thing in her heart? To you who murmur and say that this ointment should have been sold and the money given to the poor, let me say that you have the poor always with you so that you may minister to them at any time it seems good to you; but I shall not always be with you; I go soon to my Father. This woman has long saved this ointment for my body at its burial, and now that it has seemed good to her to make this anointing in anticipation of my death, she shall not be denied such satisfaction. In the doing of this, Mary has reprov'd all of you in that by this act she evinces faith in what I have said about my death and ascension to my Father in heaven. This woman shall not be reprov'd for that which she has this night done; rather do I say to you that in the ages to come, wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, what she has done will be spoken of in memory of her." (1879.4)

### **Example 2: The widow's mites**

And now, as the evening drew on and the crowds went in quest of nourishment, Jesus and his immediate followers were left alone. What a strange day it had been! The apostles were thoughtful, but speechless. Never, in their years of association with Jesus, had they seen such a day. For a moment they sat down by the treasury, watching the people drop in their contributions: the rich putting much in the receiving box and all giving something in accordance with the extent of their possessions. At last there came along a poor widow, scantily attired, and they observed as she cast two mites (small coppers) into the trumpet. And then said Jesus, calling the attention of the apostles to the widow: "Heed well what you have just seen. This poor widow cast in more than all the others, for all these others, from their superfluity, cast in some trifle as a gift, but this poor woman, even though she is in want, gave all that she had, even her living." (1883.4)

### **Example 3: Self revelation before God**

"Works of self-righteousness cannot buy the favor of God, and much praying in public will not atone for lack of living faith in the heart. Men you may deceive by your outward service, but God looks into your souls. What I am telling you is well illustrated by two men who went into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed to himself: 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of men, extortioners, unlearned, unjust, adulterers, or even like this publican. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift his eyes to heaven but smote his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you that the publican went home with God's approval rather than the Pharisee, for every one who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted." (1838.2)

The Pharisee judged himself by the lowest standard; the publican squared himself by the highest ideal. Devotion, to the Pharisee, was a means of inducing self-righteous inactivity and the assurance of false spiritual security; devotion, to the publican, was a means of stirring up his soul to the realization of the need for repentance, confession, and the acceptance, by faith, of merciful forgiveness. The Pharisee sought justice; the publican sought mercy. The law of the universe is: Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find. (1838.3)

## **84. SEVEN LESSONS FROM ONE EXTRAORDINARY EVENT**

This is one of those extraordinary events that took place during the Master's life. It shows a combination of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual power. And while he had contempt for the temple practices, he afterwards calmly and solemnly explained the reason for his actions.

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### **Cleansing the temple**

To the amazement of his apostles, standing near at hand, who refrained from participation in what so soon followed, Jesus stepped down from the teaching platform and, going over to the lad who was driving the cattle through the court, took from him his whip of cords and swiftly drove the animals from the temple. But that was not all; he strode majestically before the wondering gaze of the thousands assembled in the temple court to the farthest cattle pen and proceeded to open the gates of every stall and to drive out the imprisoned animals. By this time the assembled pilgrims were electrified, and with uproarious shouting they moved toward the bazaars and began to overturn the tables of the money-changers. In less than five minutes all commerce had been swept from the temple. By the time the near-by Roman guards had appeared on the scene, all was quiet, and the crowds had become orderly; Jesus, returning to the speaker's stand, spoke to the multitude: "You have this day witnessed that which is written in the Scriptures: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of robbers.'" (1890.2)

This cleansing of the temple discloses the Master's attitude toward commercializing the practices of religion as well as his detestation of all forms of unfairness and profiteering at the expense of the poor and the unlearned. This episode also demonstrates that Jesus did not look with approval upon the refusal to employ force to protect the majority of any given human group against the unfair and enslaving practices of unjust minorities who may be able to entrench themselves behind political, financial, or ecclesiastical power. Shrewd, wicked, and designing men are not to be permitted to organize themselves for the exploitation and oppression of those who, because of their idealism, are not disposed to resort to force for self-protection or for the furtherance of their laudable life projects. (1891.1)

## **85. DIVINE FORGIVENESS**

We need to understand the way of God and the intentions of our fellows.

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### **Parable of the Two Sons**

As the caviling Pharisees stood there in silence before Jesus, he looked down on them and said: "Since you are in doubt about John's mission and arrayed in enmity against the teaching and the works of the Son of Man, give ear while I tell you a parable: A certain great and respected landholder had two sons, and desiring the help of his sons in the management of his large estates, he came to one of them, saying, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' And this unthinking son answered his father, saying, 'I will not go'; but afterward he repented and went. When he had found his older son, likewise he said to him, 'Son, go work in my vineyard.' And this hypocritical and unfaithful son answered, 'Yes, my father, I will go.' But when his father had departed, he went not. Let me ask you, which of these sons really did his father's will?" (1893.1)

### **Attributes of the true brother and father**

"When a wise man understands the inner impulses of his fellows, he will love them. And when you love your brother, you have already forgiven him. This capacity to understand man's nature and forgive his apparent wrongdoing is Godlike. If you are wise parents, this is the way you will love and understand your children, even forgive them when transient misunderstanding has apparently separated you. The child, being immature and lacking in the fuller understanding of the depth of the child-father relationship, must frequently feel a sense of guilty separation from a father's full approval, but the true father is never conscious of any such separation. Sin is an experience of creature consciousness; it is not a part of God's consciousness. (1898.4)

"Your inability or unwillingness to forgive your fellows is the measure of your immaturity, your failure to attain adult sympathy, understanding, and love. You hold grudges and nurse vengefulness in direct proportion to your ignorance of the inner nature and true longings of your children and your fellow beings. Love is the outworking of the divine and inner urge of life. It is founded on understanding, nurtured by unselfish service, and perfected in wisdom." (1898.5)

## 86. RELIGION AND THE STATE

We need to remember the essential nature of a monetary system while recognizing the spiritual values of reality. It becomes a matter of how we apportion those two diverse yet complementary systems into our earthly existence.

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### **Consider the ethics of the question, and the wisdom of the answer**

Tuesday morning, when Jesus arrived in the temple court and began to teach, he had uttered but few words when a group of the younger students from the academies, who had been rehearsed for this purpose, came forward and by their spokesman addressed Jesus: "Master, we know you are a righteous teacher, and we know that you proclaim the ways of truth, and that you serve only God, for you fear no man, and that you are no respecter of persons. We are only students, and we would know the truth about a matter which troubles us; our difficulty is this: Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar? Shall we give or shall we not give?" Jesus, perceiving their hypocrisy and craftiness, said to them: "Why do you thus come to tempt me? Show me the tribute money, and I will answer you." And when they handed him a denarius, he looked at it and said, "Whose image and superscription does this coin bear?" And when they answered him, "Caesar's," Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and render to God the things that are God's." (1899.2)

Both Pilate and Herod were in Jerusalem at this time, and Jesus' enemies conjectured that, if he would dare to advise against the payment of tribute to Caesar, they could go at once before the Roman authorities and charge him with sedition. On the other hand, if he should advise the payment of tribute in so many words, they rightly calculated that such a pronouncement would greatly wound the national pride of his Jewish hearers, thereby alienating the good will and affection of the multitude. (1899.4)

In all this the enemies of Jesus were defeated since it was a well-known ruling of the Sanhedrin, made for the guidance of the Jews dispersed among the gentile nations, that the "right of coinage carried with it the right to levy taxes." In this manner Jesus avoided their trap. To have answered "No" to their question would have been equivalent to inciting rebellion; to have answered "Yes" would have shocked the deep-rooted nationalist sentiments of that day. (1899.5)

## **87. THE PROMISE OF A SECOND COMING**

A promise by a Creator Son. It doesn't get any better than that. It will be some time off if all the people of Urantia are required to fully embrace his teachings prior to his return. The timing should be of no concern to us as we are on our way to visit him anyway. We just need to keep living loyally and realizing the historic role our World of the Cross plays in the unfolding of the local universe.

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### **The universal significance of the promise**

Urantia may yet be visited by an Avonal commissioned to incarnate on a magisterial mission, but regarding the future appearance of Paradise Sons, not even "the angels in heaven know the time or manner of such visitations," for a Michael-bestowal world becomes the individual and personal ward of a Master Son and, as such, is wholly subject to his own plans and rulings. And with your world, this is further complicated by Michael's promise to return. Regardless of the misunderstandings about the Urantian sojourn of Michael of Nebadon, one thing is certainly authentic - his promise to come back to your world. (227.3)

Do you grasp the significance of the fact that your lowly and confused planet has become a divisional headquarters for the universe administration and direction of certain archangel activities having to do with the Paradise ascension scheme? This undoubtedly presages the future concentration of other ascendant activities on the bestowal world of Michael and lends a tremendous and solemn import to the Master's personal promise, "I will come again". (409.1)

### **Pronouncement of the assurance**

"And when the kingdom shall have come to its full fruition, be assured that the Father in heaven will not fail to visit you with an enlarged revelation of truth and an enhanced demonstration of righteousness, even as he has already bestowed upon this world him who became the prince of darkness, and then Adam, who was followed by Melchizedek, and in these days, the Son of Man. And so will my Father continue to manifest his mercy and show forth his love, even to this dark and evil world. So also will I, after my Father has invested me with all power and authority, continue to follow your fortunes and to guide in the affairs of the kingdom by the presence of my spirit, who shall shortly be poured out upon all

flesh. Even though I shall thus be present with you in spirit, I also promise that I will sometime return to this world, where I have lived this life in the flesh and achieved the experience of simultaneously revealing God to man and leading man to God. Very soon must I leave you and take up the work the Father has intrusted to my hands, but be of good courage, for I will sometime return. In the meantime, my Spirit of the Truth of a universe shall comfort and guide you. (1914.4)

### **How, when, and where, are secrets of the spheres**

“But the times of the reappearing of the Son of Man are known only in the councils of Paradise; not even the angels of heaven know when this will occur. However, you should understand that, when this gospel of the kingdom shall have been proclaimed to all the world for the salvation of all peoples, and when the fullness of the age has come to pass, the Father will send you another dispensational bestowal, or else the Son of Man will return to adjudge the age. (1915.2)

### **The promise of the Spirit of Truth has been fulfilled**

Jesus promised to do two things after he had ascended to the Father, and after all power in heaven and on earth had been placed in his hands. He promised, first, to send into the world, and in his stead, another teacher, the Spirit of Truth; and this he did on the day of Pentecost. Second, he most certainly promised his followers that he would sometime personally return to this world. But he did not say how, where, or when he would revisit this planet of his bestowal experience in the flesh. On one occasion he intimated that, whereas the eye of flesh had beheld him when he lived here in the flesh, on his return (at least on one of his possible visits) he would be discerned only by the eye of spiritual faith. (1918.6)

### **The return in full spiritual glory**

Many of us are inclined to believe that Jesus will return to Urantia many times during the ages to come. We do not have his specific promise to make these plural visits, but it seems most probable that he who carries among his universe titles that of Planetary Prince of Urantia will many times visit the world whose conquest conferred such a unique title upon him. (1919.1)

Only one thing we are certain of, that is, when he does return, all the world will likely know about it, for he must come as the supreme ruler of a universe and not

as the obscure babe of Bethlehem. But if every eye is to behold him, and if only spiritual eyes are to discern his presence, then must his advent be long deferred. (1919.2)

You would do well, therefore, to disassociate the Master's personal return to earth from any and all set events or settled epochs. We are sure of only one thing: He has promised to come back. We have no idea as to when he will fulfill this promise or in what connection. As far as we know, he may appear on earth any day, and he may not come until age after age has passed and been duly adjudicated by his associated Sons of the Paradise corps. (1919.3)

The children of light are all destined to see him, and it is of no serious concern whether we go to him or whether he should chance first to come to us. Be you therefore ever ready to welcome him on earth as he stands ready to welcome you in heaven. We confidently look for his glorious appearing, even for repeated comings, but we are wholly ignorant as to how, when, or in what connection he is destined to appear. (1919.4)

## **88. EARLY HOME LIFE DETERMINES SUBSEQUENT YEARS**

Our children are ours to love, teach, guide. We cannot own their pathway. We cannot possess their love, we should never ask them to choose loyalty to us. We are to think about them, not about ourselves. Only personalities can love, and love knows its own, and generates its own.

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### **Parental love, with endless decisions requiring wisdom and intelligence**

“I know you will prove loyal to the gospel of the kingdom because I can depend upon your present faith and love when these qualities are grounded upon such an early training as has been your portion at home. You are the product of a home where the parents bear each other a sincere affection, and therefore you have not been overloved so as injuriously to exalt your concept of self-importance. Neither has your personality suffered distortion in consequence of your parents’ loveless maneuvering for your confidence and loyalty, the one against the other. You have enjoyed that parental love which insures laudable self-confidence and which fosters normal feelings of security. But you have also been fortunate in that your parents possessed wisdom as well as love; and it was wisdom which led them to withhold most forms of indulgence and many luxuries which wealth can buy while they sent you to the synagogue school along with your neighborhood playfellows, and they also encouraged you to learn how to live in this world by permitting you to have original experience. You came over to the Jordan, where we preached and John’s disciples baptized, with your young friend Amos. Both of you desired to go with us. When you returned to Jerusalem, your parents consented; Amos’s parents refused; they loved their son so much that they denied him the blessed experience which you have had, even such as you this day enjoy. By running away from home, Amos could have joined us, but in so doing he would have wounded love and sacrificed loyalty. Even if such a course had been wise, it would have been a terrible price to pay for experience, independence, and liberty. Wise parents, such as yours, see to it that their children do not have to wound love or stifle loyalty in order to develop independence and enjoy invigorating liberty when they have grown up to your age. (1921.6)

“Love... is the supreme reality of the universe when bestowed by all-wise beings, but it is a dangerous and oftentimes semiselfish trait as it is manifested in the experience of mortal parents. When you get married and have children of your own to rear, make sure that your love is admonished by wisdom and guided by

intelligence. (1922.1)

“Your whole afterlife will be more happy and dependable because you spent your first eight years in a normal and well-regulated home.” (1922.2)

The Master went on to explain to John how a child is wholly dependent on his parents and the associated home life for all his early concepts of everything intellectual, social, moral, and even spiritual since the family represents to the young child all that he can first know of either human or divine relationships. The child must derive his first impressions of the universe from the mother’s care; he is wholly dependent on the earthly father for his first ideas of the heavenly Father. The child’s subsequent life is made happy or unhappy, easy or difficult, in accordance with his early mental and emotional life, conditioned by these social and spiritual relationships of the home. (1922.3)

The love life of a wise home and the loyal devotion of true religion exert a profound reciprocal influence upon each other. Such a home life enhances religion, and genuine religion always glorifies the home. (1922.4)

## **89. CITIZENS FOR THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT**

How does it work that service to others gives the greater rewards to self? This is the case through our whole adventure and must therefore be seen as a key attribute of God. And helping others to find God is part of that as in the parables about lost sheep. Yet here we are told that helping God-knowing people is also a divine service, even a sacred obligation.

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### **Social service will always be the hallmark**

Sonship in the kingdom, from the standpoint of advancing civilization, should assist you in becoming the ideal citizens of the kingdoms of this world since brotherhood and service are the cornerstones of the gospel of the kingdom. The love call of the spiritual kingdom should prove to be the effective destroyer of the hate urge of the unbelieving and war-minded citizens of the earthly kingdoms. But these material-minded sons in darkness will never know of your spiritual light of truth unless you draw very near them with that unselfish social service which is the natural outgrowth of the bearing of the fruits of the spirit in the life experience of each individual believer. (1930.1)

### **The third sacred obligation**

As mortal and material men, you are indeed citizens of the earthly kingdoms, and you should be good citizens, all the better for having become reborn spirit sons of the heavenly kingdom. As faith-enlightened and spirit-liberated sons of the kingdom of heaven, you face a double responsibility of duty to man and duty to God while you voluntarily assume a third and sacred obligation: service to the brotherhood of God-knowing believers. (1930.2)

You should be made all the better citizens of the secular government as a result of becoming enlightened sons of the kingdom; so should the rulers of earthly governments become all the better rulers in civil affairs as a result of believing this gospel of the heavenly kingdom. The attitude of unselfish service of man and intelligent worship of God should make all kingdom believers better world citizens, while the attitude of honest citizenship and sincere devotion to one's temporal duty should help to make such a citizen the more easily reached by the spirit call to sonship in the heavenly kingdom. (1930.5)

### **Friendship, the transcendence of duty**

Keep in mind: It is loyalty, not sacrifice, that Jesus demands. The consciousness of sacrifice implies the absence of that wholehearted affection which would have made such a loving service a supreme joy. The idea of *duty* signifies that you are servant-minded and hence are missing the mighty thrill of doing your service as a friend and for a friend. The impulse of friendship transcends all convictions of duty, and the service of a friend for a friend can never be called a sacrifice. The Master has taught the apostles that they are the sons of God. He has called them brethren, and now, before he leaves, he calls them his friends. (1945.3)

## **90. THE GOLDEN RULE AGAIN**

Wisdom comes when the experiential dimension is added to knowledge, and insight applied to understanding. However, intelligence in itself is insufficient as a contributor to an ethical consciousness. Like facts, it can be an isolated and a singular indicator of the superficiality of any given situation.

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### **It is in fact, a rule of high ethical conduct**

The golden rule, when divested of the superhuman insight of the Spirit of Truth, becomes nothing more than a rule of high ethical conduct. The golden rule, when literally interpreted, may become the instrument of great offense to one's fellows. Without a spiritual discernment of the golden rule of wisdom you might reason that, since you are desirous that all men speak the full and frank truth of their minds to you, you should therefore fully and frankly speak the full thought of your mind to your fellow beings. Such an unspiritual interpretation of the golden rule might result in untold unhappiness and no end of sorrow. (1949.7)

Some persons discern and interpret the golden rule as a purely intellectual affirmation of human fraternity. Others experience this expression of human relationship as an emotional gratification of the tender feelings of the human personality. Another mortal recognizes this same golden rule as the yardstick for measuring all social relations, the standard of social conduct. Still others look upon it as being the positive injunction of a great moral teacher who embodied in this statement the highest concept of moral obligation as regards all fraternal relationships. In the lives of such moral beings the golden rule becomes the wise center and circumference of all their philosophy. (1950.1)

In the kingdom of the believing brotherhood of God-knowing truth lovers, this golden rule takes on living qualities of spiritual realization on those higher levels of interpretation which cause the mortal sons of God to view this injunction of the Master as requiring them so to relate themselves to their fellows that they will receive the highest possible good as a result of the believer's contact with them. This is the essence of true religion: that you love your neighbor as yourself. (1950.2)

### **The true cosmic meaning is spiritual in nature**

But the highest realization and the truest interpretation of the golden rule consists in the consciousness of the spirit of the truth of the enduring and living reality of such a divine declaration. The true cosmic meaning of this rule of universal relationship is revealed only in its spiritual realization, in the interpretation of the law of conduct by the spirit of the Son to the spirit of the Father that indwells the soul of mortal man. And when such spirit-led mortals realize the true meaning of this golden rule, they are filled to overflowing with the assurance of citizenship in a friendly universe, and their ideals of spirit reality are satisfied only when they love their fellows as Jesus loved us all, and that is the reality of the realization of the love of God. (1950.3)

And so must we clearly recognize that neither the golden rule nor the teaching of nonresistance can ever be properly understood as dogmas or precepts. They can only be comprehended by living them, by realizing their meanings in the living interpretation of the Spirit of Truth, who directs the loving contact of one human being with another. (1950.6)

## 91. THE DENIAL

What price do we pay for self-preservation, survival, saving face? Is the cost less than the price we might have to pay for telling the truth? How long can we avoid the consequences and judgment of a chosen course of action? What is our natural reaction to a challenging situation and how does it compare to Jesus, whose uppermost thought at all times was to do the Father's will?

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### **Dishonesty is superficial**

Peter was so perturbed that he sought to escape contact with his accusers by going away from the fire and remaining by himself on the porch. After more than an hour of this isolation, the gate-keeper and her sister chanced to meet him, and both of them again teasingly charged him with being a follower of Jesus. And again he denied the accusation. Just as he had once more denied all connection with Jesus, the cock crowed, and Peter remembered the words of warning spoken to him by his Master earlier that same night. As he stood there, heavy of heart and crushed with the sense of guilt, the palace doors opened, and the guards led Jesus past on the way to Caiaphas. As the Master passed Peter, he saw, by the light of the torches, the look of despair on the face of his former self-confident and superficially brave apostle, and he turned and looked upon Peter. Peter never forgot that look as long as he lived. It was such a glance of commingled pity and love as mortal man had never beheld in the face of the Master. (1981.2)

After Jesus and the guards passed out of the palace gates, Peter followed them, but only for a short distance. He could not go farther. He sat down by the side of the road and wept bitterly. (1981.3)

Until the crowing of the cock brought Peter to his better senses, he had only thought, as he walked up and down the porch to keep warm, how cleverly he had eluded the accusations of the servants, and how he had frustrated their purpose to identify him with Jesus. For the time being, he had only considered that these servants had no moral or legal right thus to question him, and he really congratulated himself over the manner in which he thought he had avoided being identified and possibly subjected to arrest and imprisonment. Not until the cock crowed did it occur to Peter that he had denied his Master. Not until Jesus looked upon him, did he realize that he had failed to live up to his privileges as an ambassador of the kingdom. (1981.5)

### **The moral of the story**

Having taken the first step along the path of compromise and least resistance, there was nothing apparent to Peter but to go on with the course of conduct decided upon. It requires a great and noble character, having started out wrong, to turn about and go right. All too often one's own mind tends to justify continuance in the path of error when once it is entered upon. (1981.6)

## 92. ETHICS OF THE BESTOWAL

We need to consider the ethics that define a life well lived. A challenge is to determine the ethics of the circumstances surrounding the death of Jesus. As in all events, partial truth, misinterpreted facts, limited comprehension and a closed mind, can all distort the reality and the background to that reality. There are the ethics of the mortal players, and, if we dare to even designate the term, the Ethics of God.

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### **The mission was fulfilled irrespective of the death**

Here stood the Son of God incarnate as the Son of Man. He was arrested without indictment; accused without evidence; adjudged without witnesses; punished without a verdict; and now was soon to be condemned to die by an unjust judge who confessed that he could find no fault in him. (1996.5)

Jesus is not about to die as a sacrifice for sin. He is not going to atone for the inborn moral guilt of the human race. Mankind has no such racial guilt before God. Guilt is purely a matter of personal sin and knowing, deliberate rebellion against the will of the Father and the administration of his Sons. (2003.1)

Sin and rebellion have nothing to do with the fundamental bestowal plan of the Paradise Sons of God, albeit it does appear to us that the salvage plan is a provisional feature of the bestowal plan. (2003.2)

The salvation of God for the mortals of Urantia would have been just as effective and unerringly certain if Jesus had not been put to death by the cruel hands of ignorant mortals. If the Master had been favorably received by the mortals of earth and had departed from Urantia by the voluntary relinquishment of his life in the flesh, the fact of the love of God and the mercy of the Son - the fact of sonship with God - would have in no wise been affected. You mortals are the sons of God, and only one thing is required to make such a truth factual in your personal experience, and that is your spirit-born faith. (2003.3)

The human heart cannot possibly conceive of the shudder of indignation that swept out over a vast universe as the celestial intelligences witnessed this sight of their beloved Sovereign submitting himself to the will of his ignorant and misguided creatures on the sin-darkened sphere of unfortunate Urantia. (1984.5)

### **Serving until the end, the motive of a lifetime**

Before Jesus was put on his cross, the two brigands had already been placed on their crosses, all the while cursing and spitting upon their executioners. Jesus' only words, as they nailed him to the crossbeam, were, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He could not have so mercifully and lovingly interceded for his executioners if such thoughts of affectionate devotion had not been the mainspring of all his life of unselfish service. The ideas, motives, and longings of a lifetime are openly revealed in a crisis. (2007.3)

### **Do the facts verify the value of the ethical life?**

And they found the Master's words to be true when they put his promises to the test. And since that day countless thousands also have tested and proved the surety of these same promises. (1808.2)

## 93. THE TOTAL RESTATEMENT OF VALUES

Recognition and rejection of teachings that may not represent fact or truth are necessary if we are to truly progress. Our effort to attain a spiritual life needs to be directed along those channels that facilitate our progress. A life spent in a well intentioned but misguided direction may be pleasant but ultimately of little value.

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### Lessons from the cross

The cross forever shows that the attitude of Jesus toward sinners was neither condemnation nor condonation, but rather eternal and loving salvation. Jesus is truly a savior in the sense that his life and death do win men over to goodness and righteous survival. Jesus loves men so much that his love awakens the response of love in the human heart. Love is truly contagious and eternally creative. Jesus' death on the cross exemplifies a love which is sufficiently strong and divine to forgive sin and swallow up all evil-doing. Jesus disclosed to this world a higher quality of righteousness than justice - mere technical right and wrong. Divine love does not merely forgive wrongs; it absorbs and actually destroys them. The forgiveness of love utterly transcends the forgiveness of mercy. Mercy sets the guilt of evil-doing to one side; but love destroys forever the sin and all weakness resulting therefrom. Jesus brought a new method of living to Urantia. He taught us not to resist evil but to find through him a goodness which effectually destroys evil. The forgiveness of Jesus is not condonation; it is salvation from condemnation. Salvation does not slight wrongs; it *makes them right*. True love does not compromise nor condone hate; it destroys it. The love of Jesus is never satisfied with mere forgiveness. The Master's love implies rehabilitation, eternal survival. It is altogether proper to speak of salvation as redemption if you mean this eternal rehabilitation. (2018.1)

### The significance of Pentecost

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. Jesus' message, as he preached it and lived it in his day, was an effective solvent for man's spiritual difficulties in that day of its statement. 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. (2060.6)

The first mission of this spirit is, of course, to foster and personalize truth, for it is the comprehension of truth that constitutes the highest form of human liberty. Next, it is the purpose of this spirit to destroy the believer's feeling of orphanhood. Jesus having been among men, all believers would experience a sense of loneliness had not the Spirit of Truth come to dwell in men's hearts. (2060.7)

In less than a month after the bestowal of the Spirit of Truth, the apostles made more individual spiritual progress than during their almost four years of personal and loving association with the Master. (2061.7)

Many things which happen in the course of a human life are hard to understand, difficult to reconcile with the idea that this is a universe in which truth prevails and in which righteousness triumphs. It so often appears that slander, lies, dishonesty, and unrighteousness - sin - prevail. Does faith, after all, triumph over evil, sin, and iniquity? It does. And the life and death of Jesus are the eternal proof that the truth of goodness and the faith of the spirit-led creature will always be vindicated. (2062.11)

The religion of Jesus fosters the highest type of human civilization in that it creates the highest type of spiritual personality and proclaims the sacredness of that person. (2063.5)

No revealed religion can spread to all the world when it makes the serious mistake of becoming permeated with some national culture or associated with established racial, social, or economic practices. (2064.1)

Pentecost marked the end of special priesthoods and all belief in sacred families. (2065.3)

The religion of Jesus is the most powerful unifying influence the world has ever known. (2065.5)

The joy of this outpoured spirit, when it is consciously experienced in human life, is a tonic for health, a stimulus for mind, and an unfailing energy for the soul. (2065.7)

## 94. A NEW WORLD ORDER OF SOCIETY

It is important to have a knowledge of the past. Origins are indicative of the pattern that emerges. In addition, the further back into the past we investigate, the further into the future we can project, because of the pattern. Here is an overview of a past event.

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### A brief historical narrative

This Jesus sect was growing rapidly, and once more the Sadducees took notice of them. The Pharisees were little bothered about the situation, seeing that none of the teachings in any way interfered with the observance of the Jewish laws. But the Sadducees began to put the leaders of the Jesus sect in jail until they were prevailed upon to accept the counsel of one of the leading rabbis, Gamaliel, who advised them: "Refrain from these men and let them alone, for if this counsel or this work is of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, lest haply you be found even to be fighting against God." They decided to follow Gamaliel's counsel, and there ensued a time of peace and quiet in Jerusalem, during which the new gospel about Jesus spread rapidly. (2067.5)

Although the tradition-bound and priest-ridden Hebrews, as a people, refused to accept either Jesus' gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man or Peter's and Paul's proclamation of the resurrection and ascension of Christ (subsequent Christianity), the rest of the Roman Empire was found to be receptive to the evolving Christian teachings. Western civilization was at this time intellectual, war weary, and thoroughly skeptical of all existing religions and universe philosophies. The peoples of the Western world, the beneficiaries of Greek culture, had a revered tradition of a great past. They could contemplate the inheritance of great accomplishments in philosophy, art, literature, and political progress. But with all these achievements they had no soul-satisfying religion. Their spiritual longings remained unsatisfied. (2069.2)

Upon such a stage of human society the teachings of Jesus, embraced in the Christian message, were suddenly thrust. A new order of living was thus presented to the hungry hearts of these Western peoples. This situation meant immediate conflict between the older religious practices and the new Christianized version of Jesus' message to the world. Such a conflict must result in either decided victory for the new or for the old or in some degree of *compromise*.

History shows that the struggle ended in compromise. Christianity presumed to embrace too much for any one people to assimilate in one or two generations. It was not a simple spiritual appeal, such as Jesus had presented to the souls of men; it early struck a decided attitude on religious rituals, education, magic, medicine, art, literature, law, government, morals, sex regulation, polygamy, and, in limited degree, even slavery. Christianity came not merely as a new religion - something all the Roman Empire and all the Orient were waiting for - but as a *new order of human society*. And as such a pretension it quickly precipitated the social-moral clash of the ages. The ideals of Jesus, as they were reinterpreted by Greek philosophy and socialized in Christianity, now boldly challenged the traditions of the human race embodied in the ethics, morality, and religions of Western civilization. (2069.3)

At first, Christianity won as converts only the lower social and economic strata. But by the beginning of the second century the very best of Greco-Roman culture was increasingly turning to this new order of Christian belief, this new concept of the purpose of living and the goal of existence. (2069.4)

And there was something strangely alike in Greek philosophy and many of the teachings of Jesus. They had a common goal — both aimed at the *emergence of the individual*. The Greek, at social and political emergence; Jesus, at moral and spiritual emergence. The Greek taught intellectual liberalism leading to political freedom; Jesus taught spiritual liberalism leading to religious liberty. These two ideas put together constituted a new and mighty charter for human freedom; they presaged man's social, political, and spiritual liberty. (2071.1)

Wisely or unwisely, these early leaders of Christianity deliberately compromised the *ideals* of Jesus in an effort to save and further many of his *ideas*. And they were eminently successful. But mistake not! these compromised ideals of the Master are still latent in his gospel, and they will eventually assert their full power upon the world. (2070.8)

## **95. THE MODERN PROBLEM**

It seems to be more difficult to find and know true religion because organized religion is so diverse, fragmented, and regulated. What is it that attracts people to the religions of today? And then consider how these reasons may compare with the attractiveness of true religion.

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### **The need to recognize spiritual realities**

The twentieth century has brought new problems for Christianity and all other religions to solve. The higher a civilization climbs, the more necessitous becomes the duty to “seek first the realities of heaven” in all of man’s efforts to stabilize society and facilitate the solution of its material problems. (2075.4)

Truth often becomes confusing and even misleading when it is dismembered, segregated, isolated, and too much analyzed. Living truth teaches the truth seeker aright only when it is embraced in wholeness and as a living spiritual reality, not as a fact of material science or an inspiration of intervening art. (2075.5)

Religion is the revelation to man of his divine and eternal destiny. Religion is a purely personal and spiritual experience and must forever be distinguished from man’s other high forms of thought, such as: (2075.6 – 10)

1. Man’s logical attitude toward the things of material reality.
2. Man’s aesthetic appreciation of beauty contrasted with ugliness.
3. Man’s ethical recognition of social obligations and political duty.
4. Even man’s sense of human morality is not, in and of itself, religious.

A lasting social system without a morality predicated on spiritual realities can no more be maintained than could the solar system without gravity. (2075.12)

### **What true religion will do**

The social characteristics of a true religion consist in the fact that it invariably seeks to convert the individual and to transform the world. Religion implies the existence of undiscovered ideals which far transcend the known standards of ethics and morality embodied in even the highest social usages of the most mature institutions of civilization. Religion reaches out for undiscovered ideals, unexplored realities, superhuman values, divine wisdom, and true spirit

attainment. True religion does all of this; all other beliefs are not worthy of the name. You cannot have a genuine spiritual religion without the supreme and supernal ideal of an eternal God. A religion without this God is an invention of man, a human institution of lifeless intellectual beliefs and meaningless emotional ceremonies. A religion might claim as the object of its devotion a great ideal. But such ideals of unreality are not attainable; such a concept is illusionary. The only ideals susceptible of human attainment are the divine realities of the infinite values resident in the spiritual fact of the eternal God. (1781.1)

## 96. MATERIALISM

Courage and conviction need to be applied by individuals to avoid the popular entrapments of materialism. Faith in a value, cause, and destiny, are required in order to fully enjoy and appreciate the many facets of the material world. A higher consciousness will not forsake one because of the other. We are required to understand the relationship between all things.

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### **Causes can only be explained in terms of the One Great Cause**

Science is a quantitative experience, religion a qualitative experience, as regards man's life on earth. Science deals with phenomena; religion, with origins, values, and goals. To assign *causes* as an explanation of physical phenomena is to confess ignorance of ultimates and in the end only leads the scientist straight back to the first great cause - the Universal Father of Paradise. (2077.1)

The violent swing from an age of miracles to an age of machines has proved altogether upsetting to man. The cleverness and dexterity of the false philosophies of mechanism belie their very mechanistic contentions. The fatalistic agility of the mind of a materialist forever disproves his assertions that the universe is a blind and purposeless energy phenomenon. (2077.2)

The mechanistic naturalism of some supposedly educated men and the thoughtless secularism of the man in the street are both exclusively concerned with *things*; they are barren of all real values, sanctions, and satisfactions of a spiritual nature, as well as being devoid of faith, hope, and eternal assurances. One of the great troubles with modern life is that man thinks he is too busy to find time for spiritual meditation and religious devotion. (2077.3)

Science may be physical, but the mind of the truth-discerning scientist is at once supermaterial. Matter knows not truth, neither can it love mercy nor delight in spiritual realities. Moral convictions based on spiritual enlightenment and rooted in human experience are just as real and certain as mathematical deductions based on physical observations, but on another and higher level. (2077.8)

### **Facts need evaluation through insight to elevate to values**

The very pessimism of the most pessimistic materialist is, in and of itself, sufficient

proof that the universe of the pessimist is not wholly material. Both optimism and pessimism are concept reactions in a mind conscious of *values* as well as of *facts*. If the universe were truly what the materialist regards it to be, man as a human machine would then be devoid of all conscious recognition of that very *fact*. Without the consciousness of the concept of *values* within the spirit-born mind, the fact of universe materialism and the mechanistic phenomena of universe operation would be wholly unrecognized by man. One machine cannot be conscious of the nature or value of another machine. (2079.3)

If universe reality is only one vast machine, then man must be outside of the universe and apart from it in order to recognize such a *fact* and become conscious of the *insight* of such an *evaluation*. (2079.7)

If man is only a machine, by what technique does this man come to *believe* or claim to *know* that he is only a machine? The experience of self-conscious evaluation of one's self is never an attribute of a mere machine. A self-conscious and avowed mechanist is the best possible answer to mechanism. If materialism were a fact, there could be no self-conscious mechanist. It is also true that one must first be a moral person before one can perform immoral acts. (2079.8)

The very claim of materialism implies a supermaterial consciousness of the mind which presumes to assert such dogmas. A mechanism might deteriorate, but it could never progress. Machines do not think, create, dream, aspire, idealize, hunger for truth, or thirst for righteousness. They do not motivate their lives with the passion to serve other machines and to choose as their goal of eternal progression the sublime task of finding God and striving to be like him. Machines are never intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, ethical, moral, or spiritual. (2079.9)

### **The role of the individual in all evaluation.**

Any scientific interpretation of the material universe is valueless unless it provides due recognition for the *scientist*. No appreciation of art is genuine unless it accords recognition to the *artist*. No evaluation of morals is worth while unless it includes the *moralist*. No recognition of philosophy is edifying if it ignores the *philosopher*, and religion cannot exist without the real experience of the *religionist* who, in and through this very experience, is seeking to find God and to know him. Likewise is the universe of universes without significance apart from the I AM, the infinite God who made it and unceasingly manages it. (2080.3)

Mechanists - humanists - tend to drift with the material currents. Idealists and

spiritists *dare* to use their oars with intelligence and vigor in order to modify the apparently purely material course of the energy streams. (2080.4)

**The final word goes to Jesus:**

“True and genuine inward certainty does not in the least fear outward analysis, nor does truth resent honest criticism. You should never forget that intolerance is the mask covering up the entertainment of secret doubts as to the trueness of one’s belief. No man is at any time disturbed by his neighbor’s attitude when he has perfect confidence in the truth of that which he wholeheartedly believes. Courage is the confidence of thoroughgoing honesty about those things which one professes to believe. Sincere men are unafraid of the critical examination of their true convictions and noble ideals.” (1641.4)

## 97. SECULAR TOTALITARIANISM

Can we have it all? Can materialistic pursuits contain beauty and honesty, even a balance with true religion? The denial of God and science does not advance civilization as the full investigation of both, including their interrelationship, is essential to the basics of everyday existence. Secular power is temporary, humanity is enduring.

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### **Does the price of secularism include the cost of God?**

Secularism frees man from ecclesiastical slavery only to betray him into the tyranny of political and economic slavery. (2081:4)

Materialism denies God, secularism simply ignores him; at least that was the earlier attitude. More recently, secularism has assumed a more militant attitude, assuming to take the place of the religion whose totalitarian bondage it onetime resisted. Twentieth-century secularism tends to affirm that man does not need God. But beware! This godless philosophy of human society will lead only to unrest, animosity, unhappiness, war, and world-wide disaster. (2081:5)

Secularism can never bring peace to mankind. Nothing can take the place of God in human society. But mark you well! Do not be quick to surrender the beneficent gains of the secular revolt from ecclesiastical totalitarianism. Western civilization today enjoys many liberties and satisfactions as a result of the secular revolt. The great mistake of secularism was this: In revolting against the almost total control of life by religious authority, and after attaining the liberation from such ecclesiastical tyranny, the secularists went on to institute a revolt against God himself, sometimes tacitly and sometimes openly. (2081.6)

It is not necessary to sacrifice faith in God in order to enjoy the blessings of the modern secularistic revolt: tolerance, social service, democratic government, and civil liberties. It was not necessary for the secularists to antagonize true religion in order to promote science and to advance education. (2081.8)

### **This claim invites the challenge: Is it being demonstrated and proven?**

But secularism is not the sole parent of all these recent gains in the enlargement of living. Behind the gains of the twentieth century are not only science and

secularism but also the unrecognized and unacknowledged spiritual workings of the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. (2082.1)

Without God, without religion, scientific secularism can never co-ordinate its forces, harmonize its divergent and rivalrous interests, races, and nationalisms. This secularistic human society, notwithstanding its unparalleled materialistic achievement, is slowly disintegrating. The chief cohesive force resisting this disintegration of antagonism is nationalism. And nationalism is the chief barrier to world peace. (2082.2)

The inherent weakness of secularism is that it discards ethics and religion for politics and power. You simply cannot establish the brotherhood of men while ignoring or denying the fatherhood of God. (2082.3)

## **98. CHRISTIANITY: PART OF THE PROBLEM IT SEEKS TO FIX**

We have to be honest with ourselves. We need to find ways to identify, verify, and accept the true circumstances of a situation. And then we need to know those aspects that need to be openly discussed, admitted, and improved. And we need to base our future position on an improved model. Then we need the people who share that vision, and to be prepared for the passing of lots of time.

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### **It has sufficient truth to survive, but it lacks the purity.**

But the Christianity of even the twentieth century must not be despised. It is the product of the combined moral genius of the God-knowing men of many races during many ages, and it has truly been one of the greatest powers for good on earth, and therefore no man should lightly regard it, notwithstanding its inherent and acquired defects. Christianity still contrives to move the minds of reflective men with mighty moral emotions. (2085.4)

But there is no excuse for the involvement of the church in commerce and politics; such unholy alliances are a flagrant betrayal of the Master. And the genuine lovers of truth will be slow to forget that this powerful institutionalized church has often dared to smother newborn faith and persecute truth bearers who chanced to appear in unorthodox raiment. (2085.5)

The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present-day professed followers. (2086.2)

### **The world is still eagerly waiting to hear the original and greatest truths.**

Even secular education could help in this great spiritual renaissance if it would pay more attention to the work of teaching youth how to engage in life planning and character progression. The purpose of all education should be to foster and further the supreme purpose of life, the development of a majestic and well-balanced personality. There is great need for the teaching of moral discipline in the place of so much self-gratification. Upon such a foundation religion may contribute its spiritual incentive to the enlargement and enrichment of mortal life, even to the security and enhancement of life eternal. (2086.3)

If Christianity could only grasp more of Jesus' teachings, it could do so much more in helping modern man to solve his new and increasingly complex problems. (2086.5)

Christianity suffers under a great handicap because it has become identified in the minds of all the world as a part of the social system, the industrial life, and the moral standards of Western civilization; and thus has Christianity unwittingly seemed to sponsor a society which staggers under the guilt of tolerating science without idealism, politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without restraint, knowledge without character, power without conscience, and industry without morality. (2086.6)

The hope of modern Christianity is that it should cease to sponsor the social systems and industrial policies of Western civilization while it humbly bows itself before the cross it so valiantly extols, there to learn anew from Jesus of Nazareth the greatest truths mortal man can ever hear - the living gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. (2086.7)

## **99. IS THIS THE ULTIMATE ETHICAL LIFE?**

It is difficult to travel without a map, difficult to achieve a goal without a plan, and difficult to establish a better life without an example. We do have such an example of personal behavior based on an enduring faith. And we can know and witness first hand evidence from the application of such standards for ourselves. The following list of desirable attributes is quite lengthy, with each one requiring deep consideration, evaluation, and a dedication to implementation.

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### **The Faith of Jesus**

Jesus brought to God, as a man of the realm, the greatest of all offerings: the consecration and dedication of his own will to the majestic service of doing the divine will. Jesus always and consistently interpreted religion wholly in terms of the Father's will. When you study the career of the Master, as concerns prayer or any other feature of the religious life, look not so much for what he taught as for what he did. Jesus never prayed as a religious duty. To him prayer was a sincere expression of spiritual attitude, a declaration of soul loyalty, a recital of personal devotion, an expression of thanksgiving, an avoidance of emotional tension, a prevention of conflict, an exaltation of intellection, an ennoblement of desire, a vindication of moral decision, an enrichment of thought, an invigoration of higher inclinations, a consecration of impulse, a clarification of viewpoint, a declaration of faith, a transcendental surrender of will, a sublime assertion of confidence, a revelation of courage, the proclamation of discovery, a confession of supreme devotion, the validation of consecration, a technique for the adjustment of difficulties, and the mighty mobilization of the combined soul powers to withstand all human tendencies toward selfishness, evil, and sin. He lived just such a life of prayerful consecration to the doing of his Father's will and ended his life triumphantly with just such a prayer. The secret of his unparalleled religious life was this consciousness of the presence of God; and he attained it by intelligent prayer and sincere worship - unbroken communion with God - and not by leadings, voices, visions, or extraordinary religious practices. (2088.5)

Jesus' earthly life was devoted to one great purpose - doing the Father's will, living the human life religiously and by faith. The faith of Jesus was trusting, like that of a child, but it was wholly free from presumption. He made robust and manly decisions, courageously faced manifold disappointments, resolutely surmounted extraordinary difficulties, and unflinchingly confronted the stern requirements of duty. It required a strong will and an unflinching confidence to

believe what Jesus believed and as he believed. (2090.1)

Jesus blessed the poor because they were usually sincere and pious; he condemned the rich because they were usually wanton and irreligious. He would equally condemn the irreligious pauper and commend the consecrated and worshipful man of wealth. (2093.2)

He taught men to place a high value upon themselves in time and in eternity. Because of this high estimate which Jesus placed upon men, he was willing to spend himself in the unremitting service of humankind. And it was this infinite worth of the finite that made the golden rule a vital factor in his religion. What mortal can fail to be uplifted by the extraordinary faith Jesus has in him? (2093.4)

Jesus offered no rules for social advancement; his was a religious mission, and religion is an exclusively individual experience. The ultimate goal of society's most advanced achievement can never hope to transcend Jesus' brotherhood of men based on the recognition of the fatherhood of God. The ideal of all social attainment can be realized only in the coming of this divine kingdom. (2093.5)

## 100. THE SUPREMACY OF THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

True religion incorporates the ideals and values of living, and requires them to be applied with wisdom and an awareness of the worlds to come. We can place an equivalent spiritual ethic on mortal behavior in order to see it operate and actuate in its highest form. Such every day living is indicative of an advanced society on an advanced planet. We can live a better life now by virtue of true religion and its supernal experiences. And know it as a fact, a faith, a belief - a divine actuality.

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### **Values come from evolution and revelation.**

The human mind does not create real values; human experience does not yield universe insight. Concerning insight, the recognition of moral values and the discernment of spiritual meanings, all that the human mind can do is to discover, recognize, interpret, and *choose*. (2094.9)

The moral values of the universe become intellectual possessions by the exercise of the three basic judgments, or choices, of the mortal mind: (2094.10 - 13)

1. Self-judgment - moral choice.
2. Social-judgment - ethical choice.
3. God-judgment - religious choice.

Thus it appears that all human progress is effected by a technique of conjoint *revelational evolution*. (2094.14)

### **The measure is the spiritual dimension.**

Moral evaluation with a religious meaning - spiritual insight - connotes the individual's choice between good and evil, truth and error, material and spiritual, human and divine, time and eternity. Human survival is in great measure dependent on consecrating the human will to the choosing of those values selected by this spirit-value sorter - the indwelling interpreter and unifier. Personal religious experience consists in two phases: discovery in the human mind and revelation by the indwelling divine spirit. (2095.1)

Every time man makes a reflective moral choice, he immediately experiences a new divine invasion of his soul. Moral choosing constitutes religion as the motive of inner response to outer conditions. But such a real religion is not a purely

subjective experience. It signifies the whole of the subjectivity of the individual engaged in a meaningful and intelligent response to total objectivity - the universe and its Maker. (2095.4)

Morality is the essential pre-existent soil of personal God-consciousness, the personal realization of the Adjuster's inner presence, but such morality is not the source of religious experience and the resultant spiritual insight. The moral nature is superanimal but subspiritual. Morality is equivalent to the recognition of duty, the realization of the existence of right and wrong. The moral zone intervenes between the animal and the human types of mind as morontia functions between the material and the spiritual spheres of personality attainment. (2096.1)

The evolutionary mind is able to discover law, morals, and ethics; but the bestowed spirit, the indwelling Adjuster, reveals to the evolving human mind the lawgiver, the Father-source of all that is true, beautiful, and good; and such an illuminated man has a religion and is spiritually equipped to begin the long and adventurous search for God. (2096.2)

### **True religion embraces all human values and experiences.**

Morality is not necessarily spiritual; it may be wholly and purely human, albeit real religion enhances all moral values, makes them more meaningful. Morality without religion fails to reveal ultimate goodness, and it also fails to provide for the survival of even its own moral values. Religion provides for the enhancement, glorification, and assured survival of everything morality recognizes and approves. (2096.3)

Religion stands above science, art, philosophy, ethics, and morals, but not independent of them. They are all indissolubly interrelated in human experience, personal and social. Religion is man's supreme experience in the mortal nature, but finite language makes it forever impossible for theology ever adequately to depict real religious experience. (2096.4)