URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

JOURNAL

December 2025

Essays by students of *The Urantia Book*

Pierre Bellavance

Lisa J. Crawford

Richard Jernigan

Evette Twyford

Michael Wood

and an interview with David Kantor



About the Journal

The Journal is produced twice yearly and contains essays, articles and study aids by readers and for readers of *The Urantia Book*. To read current and past issues see our website.

Any interpretations, opinions, conclusions, or artistic representations, whether stated or implied, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Urantia Association International, the National or Local Urantia Associations, or the editorial team of the Association's Journal.

Subscriptions

The Journal is available electronically free of charge for anyone with an email address. Join our mailing list to receive free electronic copies.

To receive hard copies, you may subscribe to the Journal at the annual rate of $15.00 USD via any of the following methods.

To subscribe on-line see our website.

To subscribe by telephone call: +1-773-572-1180

To subscribe by check or money order, please send in $U.S. dollars only and make payable to Urantia Association International. Mail to:

Urantia Association International

4000 W Montrose Avenue #606

Chicago, IL 60641

Journal Team

Chief Editor: Richard Jernigan

Editor: James Woodward

Communications Director: Myra Hight

French Newsletter: Alain Cyr

Spanish Newsletter: Olga Lopez

Submissions

The Journal editorial team welcomes all submissions for consideration for current or future issues. Personal spiritual experiences, fresh insights, and new perspectives are always of interest, as well as thematic studies and articles that compare, evaluate, or integrate academic research (scientific, social, religious, or otherwise) with the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Send correspondence or article submissions for the Journal to the above Chicago address or email the Chief Editor, Richard Jernigan at richardjernigan@urantia-association.org.

See our website for submissions policy and formatting requirements.

Reader Comments

The Journal editorial team is always interested in your thoughts about articles we publish. Please keep comments under 250 words and understand they may be edited for grammar and length. We look forward to hearing from you. Send your comments to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org

Cover: *Uncharted*, Painting by Evette Twyford



From the Editor

Richard Jernigan

We're entering the bimillennial of Jesus' ministry. Think about it: at this time 2000 years ago Jesus was working at the Zebedee boatshop, listening for reports about John's progress as the Baptist moved up the Jordan River. On January 13, 26 AD Jesus would declare, "My hour has come," and his baptism would be the next day on January 14. These next four years will be a striking opportunity for reflection and celebration as we enter the third millennium of the fourth epochal revelation.

We begin this issue with an interview with long-time Urantia Book reader **David Kantor**, who recently released his feature-length documentary, *When Stories Die: Christianity's Crisis and The Urantia Papers*. This outstanding film provides excellent background on the origins of Christianity and the complex struggles throughout the past 2000 years as believers struggled with personal faith and social organization. David invites us to not look at Christians as something outside of our arena as Urantia Book readers, but as fellow travelers. As David says in his interview, "I was hopeful that the film would help build a sense of identity with Urantia Book readers to think, 'Oh, these are our people. This is our real culture.'"

Lisa J. Crawford found *The Urantia Book* in 2021 and has fervently embraced the teachings, recently starting a website truthbeautygoodness.info to promote the text's ideals to a broad audience. Her article "Be of Good Cheer: Humor, Wholeness, and the Truth-Coordinated Life" examines and affirms humor as not a mode of avoidance and denial, but an integral way to express our spirituality and navigate our complex times.

Several years ago I came across Proverbs 8 and was struck by how close this scriptural hymn to Wisdom reminded me of our Universe Mother Spirit. My article is simply an invitation to read this magnificent chapter from the Bible and to examine the possibility that our feminine deity was recognized early in our world's religious evolution.

In "Personality: An Inestimable Gift," **Pierre Bellavance** provides excellent focus on the facets of personality as it is described over several papers. It is a core teaching of *The Urantia Book* that personality is not only a unique gift ("without duplicate in infinity, irreplaceable in all eternity"), but God the Universal Father exclusively reserves the bestowal of this gift to each of us mortals from himself alone.

Evette Twyford recently posted a magnificent abstract expressionist painting on Facebook and I immediately reached out to her. She shared several examples of her work with me and I'm immeasurably pleased to share her works on this issue's print cover and in a special two-page spread.

We express both sorrow and hopeful joy over longtime reader and friend **Hoite Caston**, who departed this world November 1. Michael Wood shares his insights into Hoite's successful career, and his loving service and dedication to *The Urantia Book* and its teachings.

Finally, I want to give tribute to **Margaret Slater-Thompson**, who is leaving her position as Executive Administrator at the end of this year. Margaret has served Urantia Association International for over ten years and the Urantia Book revelation her entire adult life. If you're holding this print edition in your hands, thank Margaret. Once we complete production of each issue she sends it to the printer and oversees the distribution to our readers—in addition to her other endless contributions. So many thanks to you, Margaret.



5



15



20



27



32



34

TABLE OF CONTENTS

page 5

An Interview With David Kantor

conducted by Richard Jernigan, USA

Page 15

Be of Good Cheer:

Humor, Wholeness, and the Truth-Coordinated Life

Lisa J. Crawford, USA

page 25

A Hymn to the Universe Mother Spirit (?)

Richard Jernigan, USA

Page 29

Personality: An Inestimable Gift

Pierre Bellavance, Canada

Page 32

Paintings by Evette Twyford

Page 34

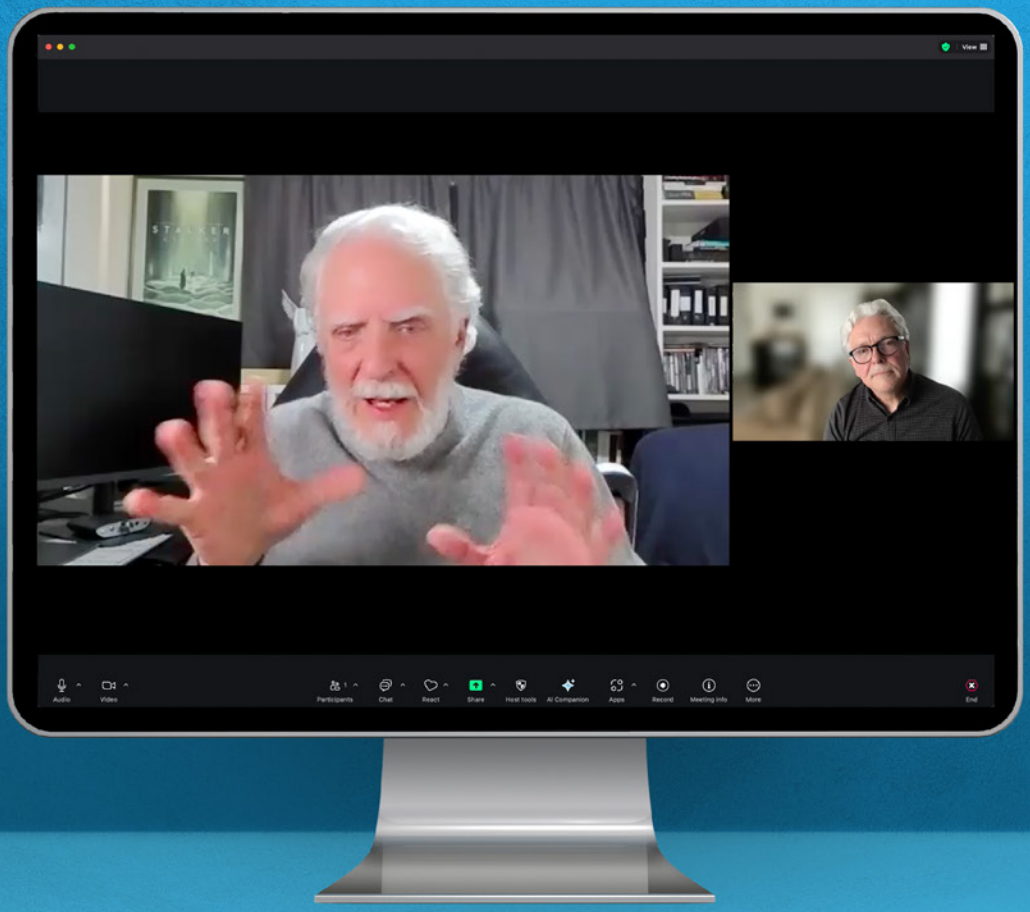
Hoite Caston

In Memoriam

Michael Wood, USA

When Stories Die:

Christianity's Crisis and The Urantia Papers



An Interview with David Kantor

Interviewed by Richard Jernigan, USA

RICHARD JERNIGAN: So first of all, David, can you give us a little background about yourself as a student of *The Urantia Book*?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, I started reading *The Urantia Book* in 1966, and I've been pretty well immersed in it ever since. It's been a great adventure. I've been involved in the social infrastructure side, study groups, conferences, administration. It's been really great. I think looking back, one of the best things that's happened has been the people that I've met as a result of reading *The Urantia Book*. Individuals.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: So what faith tradition were you raised in?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, I come from a long line of missionaries going back at least five generations. My parents worked for a mission in California to migrant farm laborers, a mission that had been set up when people were coming out of the Dust Bowl era and looking for agricultural work in California. They were evangelical, non-denominational, close to Southern Baptist. Very conservative and rigid theologically. My father was a graduate of Moody Bible Institute, so he had that whole Dwight Moody orientation to evangelicalism.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: So, let's talk about your film. What was the original impetus for doing your film *When Stories Die: Christianity's Crisis and The Urantia Papers*?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, when I found *The Urantia Book*, I was totally blown away. I think I read the whole book in a month, first time through, and I knew at that time that my entire adult life was going to be oriented to this revelation. And at that point in my prayer life, I kind of made an agreement that I'm going to work with this thing and before I die I'm going to write an introduction to it. It just turned out to be a film instead of a book, and I could do it relative to the situation that exists now. So, it's been percolating in the background forever.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: But you had done one film, *Re-imagining Jesus*. And that was completed about 10 years ago. And then something attracted you to do this. I wouldn't say it's a follow up because it's a whole different direction. What got you interested in it?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, it was about 2000 when I decided I needed to do the film work. And I thought I'd do two films, one about Jesus, which was *Re-imagining Jesus*, and then one about the book. So I wanted to do those two films and I started on this one in 2017. And one of

Images: Adobe Stock; Online interivew



From *When Stories Die*, courtesy David Kantor

the things I was concerned about at the time was I felt that leadership especially and the readership overall were proceeding without a whole lot of background in the context, the evolutionary context into which the revelation has been dropped. And so I thought that would be a good tack—to try to illuminate the context so people would have a better sense of why we got the revelation and where we are relative to the unfolding on our planet.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: So, it sounds like your original audience in mind was the readership.

DAVID KANTOR: Readership actually is number one. I really wanted to communicate to the readership, but I also want to communicate to people who have heard about the book, who want to know something about it. They're kind of in that fringe of truth seekers in Christianity. Paul exploited that fringe in the synagogue, if you'll remember *The Urantia Book* talks about a fringe of truth seekers in the synagogues. And I think there's that fringe of truth seekers in Christianity today, and I want to try to expose them to *The Urantia Book*.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: It's certainly a fascinating encapsulation of Christian history. It's outstanding in that regard. Just thinking about the title of it, why did you choose this title?

DAVID KANTOR: I really wanted it to be provocative. And in the literature, magazines, websites, Facebook pages of people who are in that demographic that I just described, the crisis of Christianity is a big topic. I mean, Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict even wrote a book about it. If you Google "Christianity's crisis," you'll be amazed at the conversation that's going on out there. And one of the problems is that people who are trying to create solutions tend to want to go back. They think, "Oh, it was good back here. We have to get back to living like original Christians. We have to get back to the tradition." It's always a looking back and I wanted the film to have a view that's looking forward, there are solutions forward.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: As you did the research for this film, what surprises did you encounter?

DAVID KANTOR: Oh, I think the most significant one was the role that the Irish played. I was not aware of that. And then I picked up the book *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, and that's a remarkable read. It really

opened my eyes to this whole process of the Irish coming into Europe from the west and missionaries coming out from Rome from the east, operating on that chaos in Europe.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Christianity has such a complex history. For many of us who grow up in a Christian tradition its history seemed clear-cut, and everybody knew what they were doing and everybody was unified except for an occasional heretic. But it's complex and you address much of that.

DAVID KANTOR: Well, you're certainly spot on there with recognizing the complexity. History's interesting and to get a picture of it I look at it as one of those connect the dot things you did when you were a kid. You can connect those dots in a whole variety of ways. And with a study of Christianity, you can study the history of doctrine, the history of the church. I wanted to try to pick out a thread that would show the function of the Spirit of Truth working through all of this through the lives of men and women. And I was hopeful that the film would help build a sense of identity with Urantia book readers to think, "Oh, these are our people. This is our real culture." I wanted to try to get that sense worked in there.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: And you do that very well because that's often something that can be lacking. It can be an "us vs. them" sort of thing with Urantia Book readers and Christianity. And really we're all in the same boat very much and we're all attracted to the same Jesus. There may be some different stories and such, but many of the interpretations that *The Urantia Book* has about Jesus I will find often in Protestantism and Catholicism, trying to get at what is the religion *of* Jesus as opposed to *about* Jesus. There are very sincere Christians courageously struggling with that. And I did notice that in your film the Spirit of Truth is a thread.

DAVID KANTOR: I see this interplay between the institutional church, especially early on, trying to stabilize things. And even today, institutional Christianity is trying to stabilize things, but you've got the Spirit of Truth working through men and women, and people are talking to God, and they're being directed, guided to do things. So you have the Spirit of Truth constantly throwing rocks into the pond and waves are rippling out, this other side over here is trying to stabilize it. And I really see that as the fundamental dynamic.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: You had so much historical material to work with. How did you decide what to keep, what to put in?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, yes, I did have a lot of material. The way I like to work is to generate far more material than I need, more resources than I need. And then get to a point where I say, okay, time to pull it together and get the cream of the crop and finish it. It's not like when you're in the sixth grade and you've got a 200-word essay to do and you're trying to stretch paragraphs. My original script for the film was 300 pages and the finished film was about 28 pages. So, I generated a lot of material, which down the road I may use. I thought of doing some small little one-topic podcast things. Maybe for the future.



From *When Stories Die*, courtesy David Kantor

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Did you talk with scholars during this process?

DAVID KANTOR: I did not actually. I talked with a lot of priests and ministers. I spent a lot of time in Denver area churches and shot a lot of stained glass that I was going to use in the film. I had permission to be in the churches and permission to do the photography. But

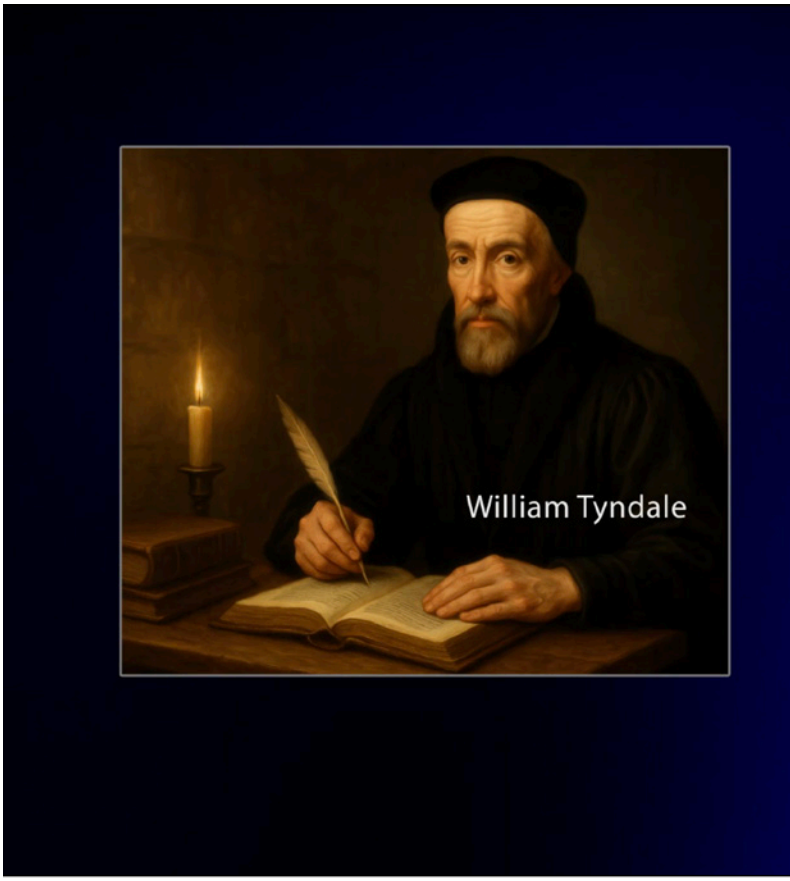
when I got down to working on it, I found out that with contemporary stained glass works, I had to have permission from the creators of the glass pieces. They owned the rights and I kind of had to abandon that whole tack. But I had a lot of good conversations with ministers mostly. I used books. I added probably a hundred volumes to my library doing this. I watched a lot of movies. I watch at least one movie every night and have for the last eight years. I also did a lot of research on film itself, philosophy of film. I took master classes from people like Ken Burns and Martin Scorsese, Werner Herzog. Masterclass is wonderful. For a hundred dollars a year you have access to classes from all these amazing people. So, I drew from a lot of sources.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: One thing that you seem to dig up was some very intriguing material about the role of women in Christian history. How did you go about uncovering that?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, it was Professor Google. Just Google something like "influential Christian women in the fourth century" and you get a lot of stuff. And I just went through and did that for all the different periods in the film and tried to pull out some that were representative of what was happening with women during those times. They've done a lot and they really were repressed largely by the church for a long time. And still today, women can't take on holy orders in the Catholic church. So, there's this whole thing in the culture that women aren't quite as good as men. It wasn't until the 19th century that European universities began admitting women, and that's because the women in America had gotten together and created their own university. Europeans had to take note. So yeah, there's some amazing stories of women's contributions.

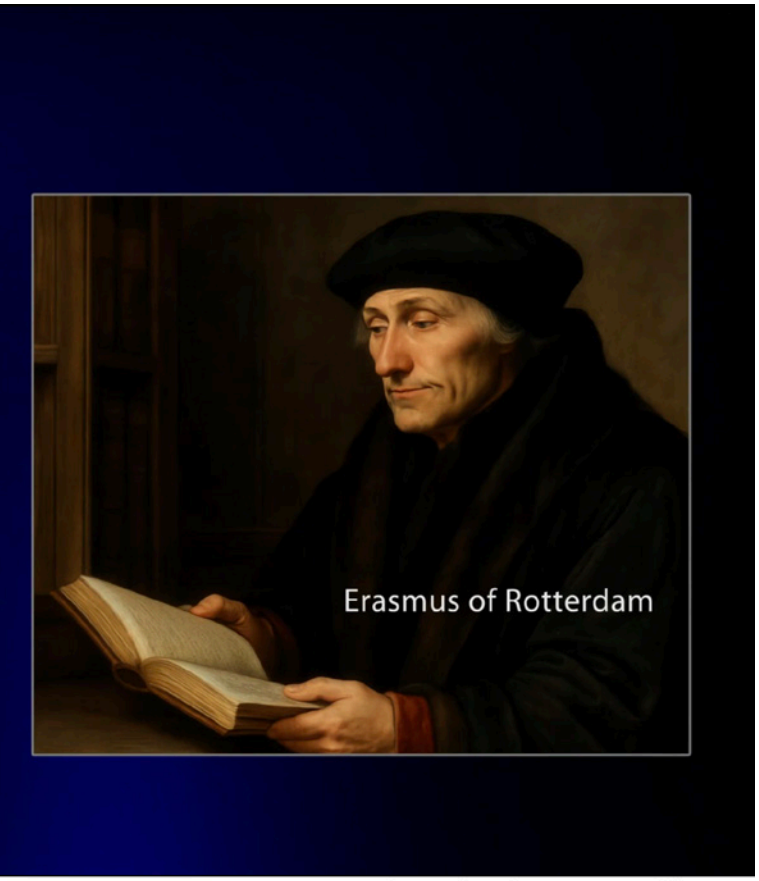
RICHARD JERNIGAN: Another thread in your film is the notion of the religion of personal experience. You really magnify that. Tell me about your thinking on that. What were you doing?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, I see the religion of personal experience as a bridge between our mortal lives and our spiritual benefactors. There needs to be a way for our spiritual insight to actually have repercussions out in the real world, the world of sociopolitical religious activity. And I feel like cultivating personal spiritual experience opens up a channel. It provides a bridge in



my own experience, especially working on the film, that there's a whole area of learning how to work with our spiritual benefactors, of learning how to work with personal revelation, if you will. There's a whole process there of learning how to sort things out from your own psychological and emotional antecedents to "what is guidance?" I mean, they're not going to tell you, "go out and do this, this, and this," but you get guidance, as *The Urantia Book* says, the Spirit of Truth will always speak, "This is the way." And it's learning how to cultivate that consciousness when you're working and serving. If you were out working in a homeless shelter, you could do that same thing. You're praying, you're trying to figure out "How do I help these people?" When you get into that super-conscious state where you're merging all of your resources, desiring to do the Father's will, there's a process there of discovery and recognition of values. So that's a part of cultivating personal spiritual experience. It's some action there, some work, and evolution.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: It seems like you were detecting that over and over men and women were trying to move



From *When Stories Die*, courtesy David Kantor

the religion *of* Jesus forward, if you know what I'm saying. Many times you used that actual terminology in some of the individuals you're talking about, "the religion of Jesus."

DAVID KANTOR: Well, I really wanted the Spirit of Truth to be the protagonist in the film. And the Spirit of Truth is an amazing thing to spend some time thinking about and looking at. Here's the spirit of our creator son who's still here on the planet, trying to move things forward. And it's progressive. The degree to which the Spirit of Truth can impact what's going on in the environment is a function of people willing to work with the Spirit of Truth. It has to be done by human beings. And a lot of progress I think has been made over the centuries in terms of the presence of the Spirit of Truth. I feel like today, and this was a big part that I was trying to do in the film, the Spirit of Truth is really alive out there in evangelicalism, in Pentecostalism. People experience the presence of the spirit, but there's not a connection to the outer world. There's no story to explain what does this mean, what are the implications, what are the implications for my life, the fact that I can experience the presence of the spirit? I really see that the stage has been set for the Urantia revelation. People have that spirituality, but they need the story. And that's kind of what I was working toward.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: So what choices did you make in mentioning *The Urantia Book* in the film?

DAVID KANTOR: I wanted to keep it low key. I picked up somewhere along the line what I call the 80% rule, and that is if you want to teach something new to people or get them to recognize something new, you need to make sure that at least 80% of what you tell them are things that they already believe to be true and agree with. And then it's much easier psychologically for them to pick up what's new. So I wanted to do that in the film. I didn't want it to be a hard sell. I wanted it to be just kind of low key, but at the same time expose it in the context of what had gone before. I used "Urantia Papers" because even the revelators referred to them as the Papers. I see "The Urantia Book" as a commercial product, looking at it in terms of doing the film. I wanted to focus on the papers themselves, and I didn't want to get into any readership, infrastructure, reader, institutions, anything. I just wanted it to be an exposure of The Urantia Papers.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: And I think that's a very good choice. Originally it was The Urantia Papers and in order to get it out there, it became a book. That was a very good call.

DAVID KANTOR: I like "Papers." If it's "The Urantia Book" it sounds like a book promotion, but Urantia Papers, there's a little bit of mystery there. It's like the movie, The Ipcress File, what's going on here? Try to keep their curiosity.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: At the end you selected some quotes. Tell me about selecting those because it was a tough selection to make, it sounds like.

DAVID KANTOR: Well, that's the only place in the film where I strayed into Urantia politics because in the Fellowship and also in the Foundation, the trustees, there seems to be some apprehension about Christianity. And I know I fought in the Fellowship for 20 years about representing Jesus. "No, we don't want Jesus on the front page of the website, keep it in the background." "No, it's not a Christian text." And I just wanted to throw those quotes out there so people would

have to look at them. And how can you argue with those? The most significant one of all in preference is the last one, that what a blessing it would be if through this revelation, the family of believers could be united around the gospel of Jesus. That's a wonderful vision, and that's a vision that the midwayers have. I think it's important for us to recognize that.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: You did some magnificent artwork in this film. I mean, it is very original. It's very non-literal. What was your process or evolution? You mentioned the stained glass windows, but tell us how you came to where you ended up.

DAVID KANTOR: Well, thank you. Yeah, it's a process, as you know, and very much it's my process. I understand the Hollywood system, read a lot of background on philosophy of film, and we take from that and develop our own. What I wanted to do in the film was use classical art just to link to the heritage. Those are images that a lot of people already have associations with, and I wanted to be able to go from there into more abstraction. I used some classical abstract art, but generated a lot with Midjourney, which I love. But I wanted the whole film to be anchored in footage of nature scenes. Nature was the foundation here, we have human classical art, and then we have this abstraction that takes us into our thinking and our own generation of imagery. I wanted to lay out the film so that it had some respiration between the natural, the nature footage as mental resting places, and then go out into some abstraction and come back into a resting place. So that is a low frequency pulse through the film.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Using something like Midjourney the more insight you have about the various genres of the history of art and such, the more you can talk to it. What were some of your prompts?

DAVID KANTOR: Oh, well, I do have a background in the history of art, not as much as I'd like, but I have some consciousness there. I had thought originally that as I did the film, I would use artwork from the different periods that reflected those different periods and then use artists. But in terms of prompts, just using an artist's name, describe what it is that you want, and then "in the style of Fra Angelico," and it works. I've used this kind of thing before "in the style of Fra Angelico influenced by Sid Mead and Blade Runner," and that'll generate some really unique imagery that pulls from both of those genres and artists. It's just really fun to play with that and see what AI churns out.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Sure. And you have a consistency in there too. The artwork was consistent stylistically,

DAVID KANTOR: And that's important to me to have some consistency there. And you can do that with Midjourney. With Midjourney, you enter a prompt and you get four images back and you can pick the one you want, and then you can manipulate that. You can manipulate it radically or lightly. You can remove pieces. So when you do that, you can regenerate it so it comes back a little bit like the first one, but a little bit different. So that gives you a sequence of three or four images. It give you some nice continuity in the film. One of the places where I used that was in the part about Marguerite Porete, I was able to create her and then take her from being a young nun to being an old woman ready to be executed, and I could keep the sense of her through that. So it appeared to be close to the same person through those years. A lot of potential there. We're just scratching the surface with these resources.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: It's remarkable. I noticed when you get in more into the 20th century, you're able to access some archives and you got more photographs to work with.

DAVID KANTOR: I wanted to tell the story, but in terms of constructing the film, once I get into the 20th century, I have a lot more issues with rights and also getting footage, video footage. I felt like the film reached a point where it could burst into live shots of, I mean, I love the Billy Graham sequence. It's just like a shock. He hits you. "Who is Jesus?" It felt like being able to move into that footage just gave the film a lot more life and made it a lot more relevant to our situation today, our "lived-in world."

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Who are some of the people that assisted you on this film?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, if I start mentioning names, I'm going to miss somebody. I have a network of people, and I've always thought networking is the way to work rather than have an organization with job titles and things—just having a network. You helped me a lot. You were there to answer questions I had at several critical points. I really appreciated that. There's oh, probably 20 people or so in my network who have



From *When Stories Die*, courtesy David Kantor

experience in different areas. Michael Hill is a retired high school English teacher and he's been great for helping with my script. Gerry Richie has a recording studio down in Fulton, California, and did post-production on my narration. Wonderful. A commercial artist here in Denver, Alexandra Taylor did all of the animated portraits for me—a network of people contributing. And financially also, there were, oh, 50 to 60 people contributed financially to getting the thing going. And that's another big part of it. People who send in $25 a month get those auto debits going, and before you know it, you've got enough resources out there to get some serious work done. So a lot of people, and I'm grateful for each of them.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Yeah, I didn't want to put you on the spot there. I do know that there's a lot of individuals that are contributing and such. So how did this doing this project change your perception of *The Urantia Book* and if so, how?

DAVID KANTOR: That's a really important question, Richard, and it really made me think about who's going to watch this movie, who's going to listen to what I'm saying here and what's the perspective that they're looking from? And there's been a huge shift coming out of the 20th century from modernism to postmodernism. You can read *The Urantia Book* in both ways. Modernism says this is an actual description of reality, this book. Postmodernism says, it's impossible to know objective reality. Truth gets synthesized in the mind of every individual. And *The Urantia Book* is a story, granted, by celestial storytellers, but it's about stimulating the formation of meanings and values, not just abstract knowledge. There are two very different ways of reading *The Urantia Book* there. Is it a description of absolute reality? Well, I think my personal sense is much more postmodern. Reality is so vast! The revelators themselves talk about universe frames and say, no matter what, it's going to be erroneous.

So we kind of have to work with that vagueness. Interestingly, and just in the past 10 years, there's been an emergence of something called transmodernism, which combines all of this. It takes the pre-modern view that God said this, so do it or die down through a modernism where rationality prevails. It says, oh, this is an actual description, like something which could be returned from a scientific experiment. And then we have postmodernism. And it says, well, it's a narrative. It's a story, and it functions as a myth in religious life. So there's a whole range of things to consider there. And it just opened me up to that and I appreciated it. There's a lot of freedom there in considering how the very way that we process reality has been evolving itself.

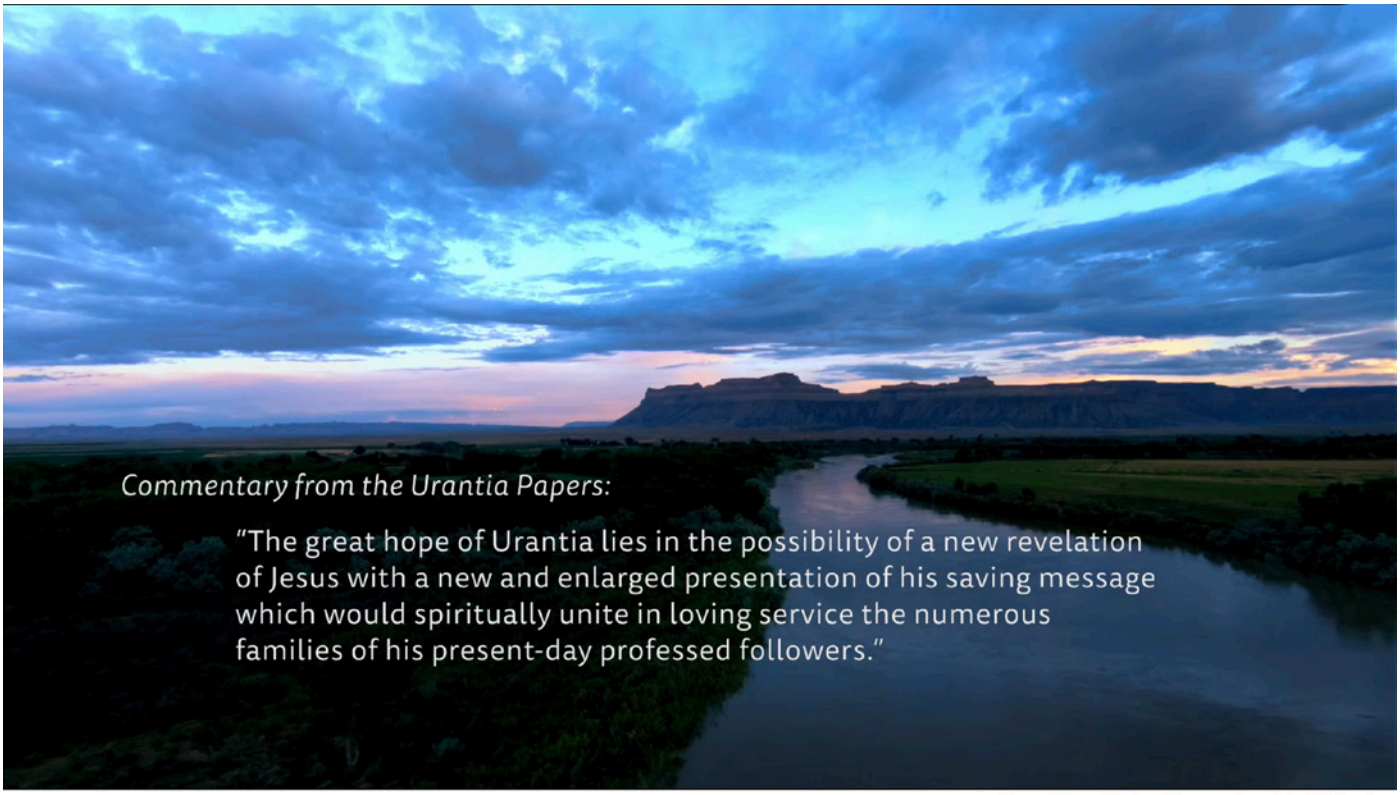
RICHARD JERNIGAN: So how does transmodernism fit into an understanding of *The Urantia Book*?

DAVID KANTOR: It's kind of emerging out of postmodernism because postmodernism is thought to be too vague. And also there are people like Ken Wilbur and Steve McIntosh doing a lot of work in this area. The trend now is to seek synthesis: science, philosophy, and religion. Seek a synthesis of all these things, and that's kind of the transmodern view that's emerging. Yes, you can have a revelation from celestial beings. Yes, you fabricate truth in your own mind. All of this can be pulled together into a much more inclusive, philosophical perspective on what constitutes knowledge and truth. I think another piece of transmodernism is that the idea that truth is discovered while being engaged in reality, which it gets back to something I was saying earlier about service, the importance of service. We discover truth when we're actually engaged in reality. It's that Kierkegaardian commitment. You don't get anywhere unless you're committed. Once you commit, now you're on the path to revelation.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: What plans do you have for getting this film out?

DAVID KANTOR: Well, you know how it is. I suspect you're a lot like me, seeing a lot of things that can be done, but there's the commitment, resources, time, money.

I'm sneaking up on 80 years old, can I do another eight year project? I still have a lot of cleanup work to do on the film. I just got the Spanish subtitled translation that I need to get in there. I have to do artwork to



From *When Stories Die*, courtesy David Kantor

get it up on Amazon Prime. I'm going to do a run of DVDs for Baker and Taylor. They have a special DVD distribution to seminary libraries. I want to get some DVDs out to them. My prayer is always help me see the next step. There's so many different directions that we can move in. What's most important given limited time and resources, help me see that next step.

I took a break here and wrote a book that I'm going to publish within a couple of weeks. I've been accumulating material as I did the film, and I just threw it into this little book and it doesn't cost anything to self-publish on Amazon. So I'm going to get this little book out there, but that's just a little break from the film work. I have thought if I did something else, another significant piece of work, I think there's the possibility of another Copernicus moment in our history, and that's when either NASA or Elon Musk come up with evidence that the universe is inhabited. There is intelligent life out there that's going to shake things up, that's really going to shake Christianity up. And so I'd like to do a trans-planetary Jesus. A lot of people have done really nice work on the life of Jesus over the last few years. I'd like to do one on the life of Jesus that goes from the Trinity and his origin down through his universe career, who he is as a Christ Michael, and bring that up to the time of the bestowal, but introduce a trans-planetary Jesus.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: What is your book?

DAVID KANTOR: It's called *Seed Flower Fruit*, and the subtitle is "from the Kingdom of Heaven to the Supreme Being ." One of the things that I discovered along the way in doing the film was that in the fourth epochal revelation we have the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus talked about the kingdom. In the fifth epochal revelation, it's the Supreme. And the Supreme is the development of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom. This is the fifth epochal revelation—amplification and development. And so the book is about that. It talks about how that has become part of the message. The book says, we're supposed to proclaim the kingdom. If we follow the teachings of Jesus, one of them is proclaim the kingdom. Well, now we have this huge picture showing more of the kingdom than just our existential following of the teachings of Jesus in our personal relationships. Now, there's this whole unfolding of the Supreme, and we're a part of that. We are playing a role in the unfolding of deity, and it provides a nice vision for people. It gives them hope, structure: "Oh, I can be involved in this. When I struggle with love, with values, I'm contributing to the actualization of deity. My values are going to be a part of this deity that conquers the outer space levels." There's this whole vision about the meaning of our lives that I wanted to express there. It's a short book, but it does express that.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: One last thing. How has this project changed you in your faith journey? But I think you have answered that in many other ways unless you had something specific.

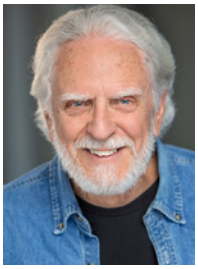
DAVID KANTOR: It certainly has reinforced me. My faith journey is constructed around the revelation and getting it out, getting out there. My journey is trying to figure out how to do that, how to get people interested, and it's just reinforced that.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Well, thanks for taking this hour to talk about your journey and work.

DAVID KANTOR: It's great to chat with you.

RICHARD JERNIGAN: Likewise. We should just do it again some other time just for fun. Thank you so much, and you have a great rest of your day.

DAVID KANTOR: You too.]



DAVID KANTOR *has studied* The Urantia Book *since 1966. He has produced and directed two Urantia Book-themed features,* Reimagining Jesus *and* When Stories Die. *He recently published a book,* Seed Flower Fruit. *His films can be found on Vimeo and his book is available on Amazon. David resides in Boulder, Colorado.*

RICHARD JERNIGAN *is Chief Editor of the UAI Journal.*



Be of Good Cheer:

Humor, Wholeness, and the Truth-Coordinated Life

Lisa J. Crawford, USA

For a moment there was hope. Relief swelled, tears of gratitude fell—and then, as so often happens in our struggling world, grief returned. Now the world watches a fragile cease-fire in Gaza—if cease-fire is the right word—with both gratitude and dread, a pause in a long rhythm of suffering and striving for peace. The balance between tragedy and tenderness seems woven into our history. As *The Urantia Book* reminds us, "our new and oncoming social order will not settle down complacently for a millennium." (99:1.1)

Until then, our sense of humor—our capacity for proportion and light—may be one of our greatest safeguards of the soul.

It's hard, in this world we are inhabiting, to speak of cheer. Yet Jesus' perennial command still echoes through the centuries: "Be of good cheer." It can sound impossible, even tone-deaf, against the backdrop of human sorrow and injustice we see all around us. But for those of us anchored in *The Urantia Book*, this is no superficial encouragement. To "be of good cheer" is not to ignore suffering—it is to adopt a spiritual discipline of trust, to live with faith-born buoyancy precisely when the world feels unsteady.

We must learn to live joyfully not because the world is safe, but because we know with quiet certainty that the Father's love is stronger than fear. Cheerfulness in this context is an act of positive resistance—the divine art of keeping the heart light when the world grows heavy.

When Truth Alone Felt Heavy

Like many readers, when I first read *The Urantia Book,* I was electrified. Every conversation after that seemed to point back to something I had just read and discovered in its pages. I started with Part IV, the quintessential biography of Jesus, and then went on to be transfixed and fascinated by the architecture of the universe, and to rejoice in the certainty that everything we do in this life which is good contributes directly to the enhancement of the future life. I knew that it was truly a revelation, that it was everything I had ever wanted to know about the life of Jesus, and more than I had imagined would be possible to know about the cosmos before death.

For the first two years, I dearly wanted to share it. I pushed books into people's hands, mentioned it over

Adobe Stock

dinner, and tried to intrigue friends and family into reading it. I talked too much about it, gushed too freely, and turned on a firehose of information in my response to any simple inquiry. Gradually I accepted that I had to incorporate the truth, beauty, and goodness gained from the book into every aspect of myself and live it to bring it to others. That, of course, is much more work than handing a revelation to others and having it transform their lives. In four years of reading, not one person, to my knowledge, has actually read the book because of me. Not one.

This makes me smile now—cosmic irony at my expense. I imagine the Reversion Directors themselves would approve. In my zeal for truth, I had forgotten that truth without joy, beauty, and goodness rarely attracts (155:1.5). Instead of inspiring others, my seriousness risked driving them away (34:6.13). Someone asked me once in response to a deep discussion, "What do you do to have fun?" It brought me up short, partly because I hadn't grasped that truth alone is simply "cold hard facts," that even truth plus beauty is only "smart but unhelpful," and that truth plus goodness is "effective but joyless." I needed to incorporate all three to bring balance to my life—to have knowledge, wonder, and kindness working together. Along with Ganid, I am also charmed with this saying of the Hebrew wise man, "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. With all your quest for knowledge, get understanding. Exalt wisdom and she will promote you. She will bring you honor if you will but embrace her." (133:9.3)

From Zeal to Cheerful Service

The next two years took a different turn. I began volunteering with the Center for Unity, working on group projects that put ideas into action. I shifted from trying to convince people to read the book to living its values through collaboration, creativity, and service. I joined several study groups and took online courses from the Urantia Book International School.

I decided to accept the challenge and "construct a new and appealing philosophy of living out of the enlarged and exquisitely integrated modern concepts of cosmic truth, universe beauty, and divine goodness." (2:7.10) I defined the Truth–Beauty–Goodness philosophy (truthbeautygoodness.info) as a simple, open way of presenting what I believe is the triad of a healthy spiritual life. Rarely do I mention the book anymore. Instead, I talk about novels, films, or art that highlight truth, beauty, and goodness—trusting the Spirit of Truth to do its work (2:5.10). I never shy away from answering questions about belief in God, the kingdom of heaven, or humanity's purpose, but the motivation has shifted to attuning my approach to the receiver.

This shift has taught me what Jesus told his apostles plainly: "If you, by truth-coordination, learn to exemplify in your lives this beautiful wholeness of righteousness, your fellow men will then seek after you…" (155:1.5). If we have to push the message, it is a measure of our failure.

The Lighthearted Spirit of Adjuster-Led Living

The revelators insist that deep spiritual living is "compatible with a lighthearted and joyous life and with a successful and honorable career" (110:3.4). Religion is not meant to be a burden; it is meant to be inspiration. Living it dynamically transforms us (100:0.1).

When Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33), he wasn't ignoring suffering. He was revealing that cheerfulness is the natural fruit of trust in the Father:



> 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. (159:3.10)

Humor as a Safeguard Against Rigidity

Jesus regretted that his own people "were just about devoid of an appreciation of humor," noting that "the burdensome religion of the Pharisees could never have had origin among a people with a sense of humor" (156:2.8). What a radical idea! Imagine a sense of humor saving people from the bondage of a legalistic yoke that burdened them for over a hundred years—that is indeed a revelation. Humor is not trivial; it is essential for spiritual balance.

The revelators describe humor as a divine relief, reminding us of "the senselessness of much that so often causes us serious concern, the joy at discovering the unimportance of much of our serious personal anxiety" (48:4.6). This kind of laughter is restorative because it realigns our perspective. When we can "discount the anxieties of the present in favor of the certainties of the future," we make room for joy—the humor of proportion, the laughter of eternity.



In the morontia life, the Reversion Directors coordinate these moments of cheerful perspective, offering recreation and lightness as essential ingredients of growth. They remind us that joy is not a distraction from progress but one of its sustaining powers:

> When we are tempted to magnify our self-importance, if we stop to contemplate the infinity of the greatness and grandeur of our Makers, our own self-glorification becomes sublimely ridiculous, even verging on the humorous. One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego. (48:4.15)

If this principle holds true for celestial beings, how much more vital must it be for us on a confused and anxious world like Urantia? Humor is a divine safety valve—a sacred reminder that even in striving for righteousness, we are still children barely learning to walk.

Even so, as the revelators remind us, "You of Urantia… are to be congratulated on a comparatively keen sense of humor" (48:4.13). It's a gentle cosmic compliment—a reminder that even on our confused and anxious world, laughter still lives close to the divine. Perhaps our very capacity for humor is what keeps us teachable, flexible, and open to joy—the leaven in our DNA.

G.K. Chesterton captured this same truth in *Orthodoxy*, observing that "solemnity flows out of men naturally; but laughter is a leap. It is easy to be heavy: hard to be light. Satan fell by the force of gravity." The pride that pulls us downward is not only moral but emotional—a heaviness of spirit that resists joy. The ability to laugh, especially at ourselves, is an act of spiritual lightness; it defies the gravitational pull of ego.

C.S. Lewis, in *The Great Divorce*, envisioned a laughter that feels almost morontial in spirit. When the redeemed souls reach the mountain of Heaven, they laugh with joyous, loving abandon—not the laughter of mockery but of revelation. One radiant spirit exclaims, "That's what we all find when we reach this country. We've all been wrong! That's the great joke."

This laughter, full of humility and wonder, stands in direct contrast to the gloom of the gray town—a place of resentment and self-importance, where no

one can laugh at themselves because they still cling to being right. Lewis's imagery harmonizes beautifully with the revelators' teaching that "one of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously" (48:4.15).

In both visions, divine humor is born of proportion and grace. It is the moment we finally see ourselves as we truly are—finite but favored, fallible but forgiven. The laughter of Heaven is the release of ego, a sound that restores the universe's symmetry.

I once saw this safeguard in action while teaching kindergarten and first grade. The first month of school was always about play—setting the tone for a year of delight, balancing parents' anxieties with the children's need for joy. My team teacher, Maria, embodied this balance: gentle, creative, present, and wonderfully funny.

One day during journaling time with the students, she burst out laughing. As I approached her and the student she was helping to "catch his words," she waved me away while wiping tears from her eyes. Later at lunch she told me why. This young man had drawn a big lumpy circle with lines coming out for arms and legs, and obvious eyes and a mouth. Then as she watched, he scribbled all over the face. When she asked him who it was, he said, "That's you! I love you, Maria." After a hug, she pointed to the scribbles and asked, "And what's this? Why did you scribble all over me?" The boy replied proudly, "Those are your wrinkles!" Maria laughed as she shared it with all of us in the breakroom. She said she would photocopy it for her bathroom mirror as a reminder not to take herself too seriously.

The Reversion Directors would surely have approved of Maria's laughter that day. In helping a child express affection through art, she also helped all of us take ourselves a little less seriously. That is humor as a safeguard—affectionately laughing at ourselves, restoring proportion, and preventing over-seriousness, just as the Reversion Directors teach ascending mortals to find joy and balance through perspective and play.

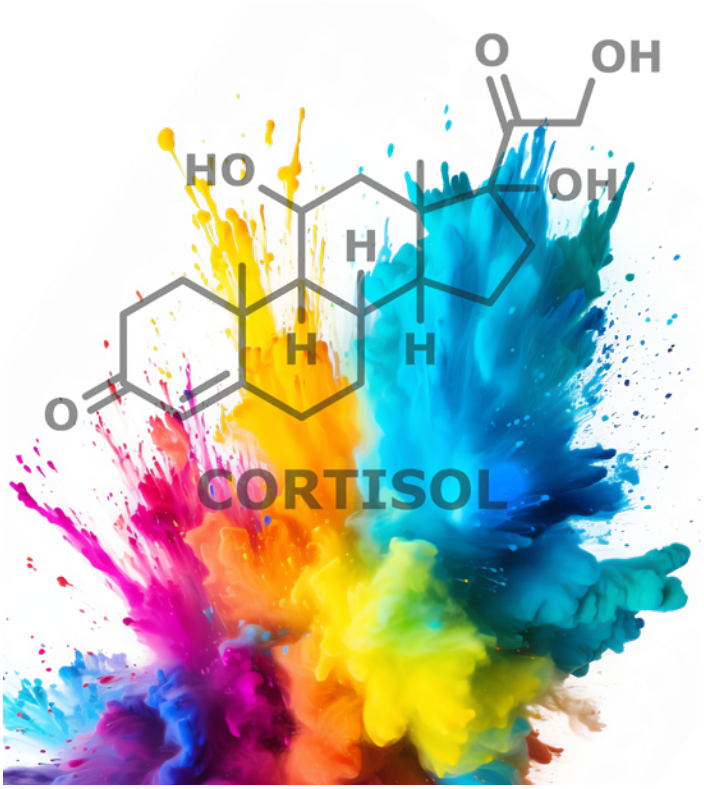
The revelators also tell us that our loyal midwayers—both primary and secondary—share many of our human traits. These devoted helpers, who bridge the material and morontia worlds, are said to enjoy and even follow our humor as well as our worship. For all they have done for us through the long struggles of planetary rebellion and reconstruction, it is touching to know that our laughter and good humor gives something back to them. Every time we choose humor over heaviness, we are, in a sense, joining them in the universal fellowship of good cheer.

It seems heaven laughs with us—and now, even science confirms why.

Science Catches Up to Spirit

Modern research validates what Jesus and the revelators already taught. The Master's own life was filled with cheerfulness—he reminded his followers to "be of good cheer" and live without fear, trusting in the Father's love (John 16:33; 140:6.13). Science now affirms that a spirit of gladness and humor brings tangible renewal to body and mind.[1]

Clinical studies show that even a few minutes



1 "The Neuroscience of Laughter, and How to Inspire More of It at Work," Neuroleadership Institute, accessed September 20, 2025, https://neuroleadership.com/your-brain-at-work/neuroscience-laughter-at-work.

of laughter lowers cortisol—the primary stress hormone—by more than 30%, easing anxiety and building resilience.[2]

Laughter also strengthens learning and social connection. Neuroscience shows humor reduces tension, opening the mind to creativity and retention.[3] Developmental studies reveal that children who laugh and play while learning grasp concepts more quickly and develop stronger empathy—the "theory of mind" that allows us to understand others.[4] And socially, people laugh thirty times more often in groups than when alone, confirming humor's role as "social glue."[5]

In other words, heaven has always known it: laughter heals the body, steadies the mind, and joins the soul in fellowship.

Head, Heart, and Hands in Harmony

The truth-coordinated life requires all three:

Head (Truth): Keep learning, recognizing truth wherever it appears. Jesus was quick to recognize truth, wherever it appeared, and ready to embrace it without regard for the apparent source (126:3.8). Truth alone, though, can often feel dry and academic.

Heart (Beauty): Humor, joy, and fellowship harmonize the soul. Beauty restores proportion and makes truth attractive. Without humor, truth grows rigid and stern (156:2.8).

Hands (Goodness): Service with a cheerful spirit is magnetic. Jesus taught that it is not merely what you do, but how you do it—the joy of service grows out of the love of service (171:7.9). True service radiates joy; a sour servant drives people away, but a glad heart draws them in.

This alignment of head, heart, and hands is what the Master called the beautiful wholeness of righteousness (155:1.5). When they are in harmony, faith becomes radiant; when they are not, even the grandest truths fail to inspire.

Perhaps our lament that the revelation has not "caught on" is misplaced. The truth itself is luminous—but if our lives are heavy, joyless, or overly academic, why would anyone seek it out (155:1.5)?

Cheerfulness is not an accessory to religion; it is its evidence. It is the measure of truth lived, beauty integrated, and goodness practiced. To "be of good cheer" is not denial of suffering. It is the confident, lighthearted witness that God's love is bigger than fear, that humor restores balance (48:4.15), and that joy itself is a form of truth-coordination.

Cheerfulness is not frivolous—it is faith with a smile, the living proof of a truth-coordinated life.



LISA J. CRAWFORD discovered The Urantia Book *in 2021 and has since served with UBIS, the Center for Unity, and now Urantia Foundation as Programs Assistant. She works in nonprofit communications, provides elder support through her small business Lady Friday, and writes on the lived philosophy of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. She hopes always to do the Father's will and to shine a cheerful light in her corner of the world.*

2 Ana M. Kramer and Paulo P. Leitão, "Laughter as Medicine: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis," Journal of Behavioral Health (2023): 1-12, accessed September 7, 2025, https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10204943/.

3 Gigi Otálvaro, "Brain Health Benefits of Laughter," Stanford Lifestyle Medicine, September 2025, accessed September 20, 2025, https://lifestylemedicine.stanford.edu/laughter-health-benefits.

4 Patricia Kelikani, "Laughter and Memory: When We Laugh, the Stress Hormone Cortisol Decreases," Loma Linda University Health, accessed September 10, 2025, https://lluh.org/patients-visitors/health-wellness/live-it/online-health-show/episode-5-laughter-and-memory.

5 Natalie Dattilo, "A Laugh a Day Keeps the Doctor Away?" Harvard Gazette, January 12, 2023, accessed September 6, 2025, https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/01/a-laugh-a-day-keeps-the-doctor-away.



Earth Meditation. Illustration by Detelina Petkova. Adobe Stock.

A Hymn to the Universe Mother Spirit (?)

Examining Proverbs 8

Richard Jernigan, USA

In *The Urantia Book* the Local Universe Mother Spirit is revealed to us with unmatched specificity. Paper 34 is solely devoted to her origin and role in the creation of local universes and her profound ministry. This revelation confirms what many of us have intuitively sensed but have not had confirmed in most religious traditions: that there is a formidable feminine deity.

However, is it possible that she's present in plain sight in the Judeo-Christian tradition? A close look at the concept of Wisdom in certain biblical passages and the etymology of the word points to an apparent feminine deity. For some reason this prominent feminine Deity presence is overlooked and even marginalized in most Judeo-Christian thought and practice.

In multiple biblical passages the word "wisdom" is often a translation of the Hebrew "khokhmah," translated into Greek as "Sophia." Both the Hebrew and Greek terms are not only feminine, but personal.

In her article in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Carole R. Fontaine of Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts writes:

> Wisdom, personified as a woman, is an important, if somewhat puzzling construct in the Old Testament. "Wisdom" (or Khokhmah) is grammatically feminine in gender, as are most abstract concepts in the Hebrew language (e.g. "torah," "understanding"). One must distinguish whether the text is referring to Woman Wisdom, the character and patron of the sages, or the overall concept of knowledge, learning, and skill....The prologue (chaps. 1–9) to the book of Proverbs features the literary figure of **personified** Wisdom.[1] [bolded emphasis added]

For a Urantia Book reader as myself, Proverbs 8 (see pp. 23–24) is majestic poetry calling out many of the attributes of our Universe Mother Spirit.

One of her central attributes is her part in creation "ages before...at the first, before the beginning of the earth." It's no small leap to speculate that when she states "When he established the heavens, I was there" she speaks of her creative presence and co-creation with Michael:

> ...when he marked out the foundations of the earth,
>
> 30 then I was beside him, like a master worker,

1 Carol R. Fontaine, "Sophia," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, Copyright 2009), Volume 5, p.356.

and I was daily his delight,

playing before him always,

31 playing in his inhabited world

and delighting in the human race.

Other attributes of the Universe Mother Spirit appear in this passage, namely the seven adjutant mind-spirits, of which we know from Papers 34 and 36 and other passages she is the originator and their ministerial presence. "Understanding" appears in verse 1; knowledge in verses 9-12; and courage and counsel can be inferred in the description of effective governance:

I have insight; I have strength.

15 By me kings reign,

and rulers decree what is just;

16 by me rulers rule,

and nobles, all who govern rightly.

So, what is known about the origin of Proverbs itself? There is general consensus among biblical scholars that it was likely written in the post-exilic period, the time after the release of Jews from Babylon in 539 BCE. A large number of exiled Jews arrived in Jerusalem in 520 BCE, and the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem was dedicated in 516 BCE.[2] But authorship, even sources, are murky at best. Proverbs is attributed to King Solomon, but that's considered to be an honorary convention, as S.H. Blank wryly observes:

> The ascription of a book to a great man of the past was both a tribute to him and a claim upon the prestige which his name might lend to the book. New laws were written and Moses was given the credit; new songs were sung and David was hailed as their source.[3]

In Paper 95, the Melchizedek attests that "chapters fifteen, seventeen, twenty, and chapter twenty-two, verse seventeen, to chapter twenty-four, verse twenty-two, are taken almost verbatim from Amenemope's Book of Wisdom." 95:4.5 (1046.6) This observation



of Proverbs 22:17-24:22 is recognized in mainstream biblical scholarship. In my limited research, I have not found 15,17,and 20 confirmed in scholarship.

Regardless of my observation that this passage is reminiscent of the Universe Mother Spirit, there is something of a scholastic battle whether this person of

2 Ralph H. Klein, "Exile," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, Copyright 2009), Volume 2 D-H, p.368.

3 Sheldon H. Blank, "Proverbs," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, Copyright 1962), Volume 3 K-Q, p.938.

Wisdom in Proverbs 8 should be construed as a personal feminine deity, or as more of a symbolic convention. The evangelical Christian site gotquestions.org goes to great lengths to dismiss the "she" of Wisdom as a figure of speech not to be taken literally (curiously). While the article admits that "Khokhmah" is feminine in Hebrew, it concludes by stating "men should not be insulted nor women puffed up at its reading."[4] However, British Jungian analyst Anne Baring, who co-authored with Andrew Harvey *The Divine Feminine* has written extensively on the divine feminine. Along with Proverbs 8, she cites Ben Sirach 1.2-6 and 15.2-3, Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-15, and Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach 24:3-6, 9-11, 13-21, 28-34 as further examples of "the language of the immanence of the Divine Feminine in the world."[5] There is widespread acceptance among certain biblical thinkers that there is a clear feminine deity presence in Judeo-Christian scripture.*The Urantia Book* confirms this.

The spirit of wisdom is the Universe Mother Spirit's culminating adjutant mind-spirit, activated after the spirit of worship. We should realize that for millions of years the Universe Mother Spirit is our planet's primary spiritual connection, since the first five adjutant mind spirits are encircuited in animals and in any given living organism of intellect status (36:5.3). Worship and wisdom are activated at the arrival of will, in our case, with Andon and Fonta approximately one million years ago (when these two adjutant mind spirits are accessed by mortals, the Holy Spirit "unfailingly appears in all bona fide human personalities" and "creates the capacity to self-realize the postulate of human survival"). (92.0.4) Subsequently, for hundreds of thousands of years the spirit of Wisdom ministers to every will creature. Then:

> Faith most willingly carries reason along as far as reason can go and then goes on with **wisdom** to the full philosophic limit; and then it dares to launch out upon the limitless and never-ending universe journey in the sole company of TRUTH. 103:9.7 (1141.5) [emphasis added]

The Spirit of Truth is the spirit influence bestowed upon Urantians just hours after Jesus' ascension. The connection in the aforementioned passage ties these two great spiritual influences together. For we read that once we leave Urantia we will no longer have access to the seven adjutant mind spirits, including the spirit of Wisdom. (110:6.21; 112:6.6; 112:6.10) But apparently we will no longer need that spirit influence as morontia-level beings. At that point we will be continuing our journey "in the sole company of TRUTH," and our Mother Spirit will be our connection (as she is now) to the cosmic mind, that great influence that is responsible for true "qualities of courageous and independent cosmic thinking." (16:6.9)

So was Proverbs 8 written as a hymn to our Universe Mother Spirit? As many revelators state in several Urantia Book passages, "we really do not know." But it's captivating to read this exquisite, ancient poetry and universally romance that it is her.]



RICHARD JERNIGAN *has studied* The Urantia Book *since 1977. He has produced and directed multiple Urantia Book-themed films including* A Feast of Uncertainty *and* Urantia, Nebadon, and the Master Universe. *He resides in Chambersville, Texas.*

4 https://www.gotquestions.org/wisdom-she-Proverbs.html

5 https://www.anne-baring.com/anbar08_seminarl3.htm

Proverbs 8

The Gifts of Wisdom

Does not Wisdom call
and Understanding raise her voice?
2 On the heights, beside the way,
at the crossroads she takes her stand;
3 beside the gates in front of the town,
at the entrance of the portals she cries out:
4 “To you, O people, I call,
and my cry is to all who live.
5 O simple ones, learn prudence;
acquire intelligence, you who lack it.
6 Hear, for I will speak noble things,
and from my lips will come what is right,
7 for my mouth will utter truth;
wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
8 All the words of my mouth are righteous;
there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.
9 They are all straight to one who understands
and right to those who find knowledge.
10 Take my instruction instead of silver
and knowledge rather than choice gold,
11 for wisdom is better than jewels,
and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.
12 I, wisdom, live with prudence,
and I attain knowledge and discretion.
13 The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil.
Pride and arrogance and the way of evil
and perverted speech I hate.
14 I have good advice and sound wisdom;
I have insight; I have strength.
15 By me kings reign,
and rulers decree what is just;
16 by me rulers rule,
and nobles, all who govern rightly.
17 I love those who love me,
and those who seek me diligently find me.
18 Riches and honor are with me,
enduring wealth and prosperity.
19 My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold,
and my yield than choice silver.
20 I walk in the way of righteousness,
along the paths of justice,
21 endowing with wealth those who love me
and filling their treasuries.

Wisdom's Part in Creation

22 "The LORD created me at the beginning of his work,

the first of his acts of long ago.

23 Ages ago I was set up,

at the first, before the beginning of the earth.

24 When there were no depths I was brought forth,

when there were no springs abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains had been shaped,

before the hills, I was brought forth,

26 when he had not yet made earth and fields

or the world's first bits of soil.

27 When he established the heavens, I was there;

when he drew a circle on the face of the deep,

28 when he made firm the skies above,

when he established the fountains of the deep,

29 when he assigned to the sea its limit,

so that the waters might not transgress his command,

when he marked out the foundations of the earth,

30 then I was beside him, like a master worker,

and I was daily his delight,

playing before him always,

31 playing in his inhabited world

and delighting in the human race.

32 "And now, my children, listen to me:

happy are those who keep my ways.

33 Hear instruction and be wise,

and do not neglect it.

34 Happy is the one who listens to me,

watching daily at my gates,

waiting beside my doors.

35 For whoever finds me finds life

and obtains favor from the LORD,

36 but those who miss me injure themselves;

all who hate me love death."

Book of Proverbs quotations are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



Personality: An Inestimable Gift

(translated from French)

Pierre Bellavance, Quebec

Let us take a few moments to carefully analyze this immense gift that God the Father has given us. Personality is a powerful tool for self-development and one's spiritual journey. Without personality, we would not be self-conscious and we would not be able to grow our soul.

In the Paper dealing with the appearance of the first humans on Urantia, it is mentioned that Andon and Fonta had a "vague feeling of being something more than mere animals was due to the possession of personality and was augmented by the indwelling presence of the Thought Adjusters." (63:1.4) Personality is the gift of the Heavenly Father to all human beings, bestowing upon them the status of potential sons of God.

Often, we understand personality as a particular trait, a unique nature that distinguishes us from each other. But personality is much broader than that. It gives us several special attributes, particularly the possibility of surviving material death by transferring our physical mortal self to our immortal soul. It is a glue that brings together all our characteristics into a coherent and unified whole. It pushes our whole being to transcend our animal nature and rise to our heavenly destiny.

The Nature of Personality

The Urantia Book begins by mentioning to us the very special character of this gift of God, which even a Divine Counselor admits he does not fully understand:

> Personality is one of the unsolved mysteries of the universes.... we do not fully comprehend the real nature of the personality itself. We clearly perceive the numerous factors which, when put together, constitute the vehicle for human personality, but we do not fully comprehend the nature and significance of such a finite personality. 5:6.2 (70.3).
>
> Personality is that **quality** and **value in cosmic reality** which is exclusively bestowed by God the Father upon these living systems of the associated and co-ordinated energies of matter, mind, and spirit. Neither is personality a progressive achievement. Personality may be material or spiritual, but there either is personality or there is no personality. 5:6.3 (70.4) [emphasis added in bold]
>
> Personality is a unique endowment of **original**

Alan/stock.adobe.com

> **nature** whose existence is independent of, and antecedent to, the bestowal of the Thought Adjuster. Nevertheless, the presence of the Adjuster does augment the qualitative manifestation of personality.... and the manifestation of personality is further conditioned and qualified by the nature and qualities of the associated energies of a material, mindal, and spiritual nature which constitute the organismal vehicle for personality manifestation. 16:8.3 (194.3) [emphasis added]

The revelators do not speak of personality as an energy in the same way as mind, spirit or matter. Moreover, the gravity circuit of the personality centered on God the Father is not measurable like the other energy circuits, it is qualifiable. Personality is not an energy, but a quality of original nature.

The unifying function of personality

First, personality brings together the different components that constitute us into a whole:

> In the human organism the summation of its parts constitutes selfhood—individuality—but such a process has nothing whatever to do with personality, which is the unifier of all these factors as related to cosmic realities.... it is the personality which unifies all activities and in turn imparts the qualities of identity and creativity. 112:1.18 (1227.8)

The personality acts as a cement that amalgamates us into a creative whole capable of maintaining original relationships with the other realities of the universe.

A Gift from God to Stay "in touch"

> ...the Paradise Father is personally conscious of, and in personal touch with, all personalities of all levels of self-conscious existence. And this personality consciousness of all creation exists independently of the mission of the Thought Adjusters. 5:6.10 (71.5)

Not only has he given us a fragment of himself, the Thought Adjuster, to guide us in our spiritual growth, but he also maintains personal contact with each of us. Whether or not we survive material life, the spiritual qualities accumulated by our personality participate in the development of the Supreme Being.



A unique identity

> And throughout all of these successive ages and stages of evolutionary growth, there is one part of you that remains absolutely unaltered, and that is personality—permanence in the presence of change. 112:0.1 (1225.1)

> Personalities may be similar, but they are never the same. Persons of a given series, type, order, or pattern may and do resemble one another, but they are never identical. Personality is that feature of an individual which we know, and which enables us to identify such a being at some future time regardless of the nature and extent of changes in form, mind, or spirit status. Personality is that part of any individual which enables us to recognize and positively identify that person as the one we have previously known, no matter how much he may have changed because of the modification of the vehicle of expression and manifestation of his personality. 16:8.4 (194.4)

We are unique and have the possibility of expressing in an original way in all our means of contact with God. God could have created us perfect or identical, but that is not what he wants. He desires us to establish an original relationship with him and to express our faith and love freely. God asks for unity in himself and not uniformity in our behavior. We are free to live our faith in God as we wish.

We must distinguish between personality, which is a gift from God, and character that has fallen to us through our genetic baggage. We can observe in our pets character traits specific to each animal (playful, fearful, aggressive, friendly, lazy...). Similarly, some human traits come from our heredity, a legacy of our biological ancestors. Some of these character traits will disappear with the death of our physical body. Similarly, the behaviors we have developed in reaction to this character can gradually be counterbalanced by the gifts of our personality.

> In every mortal there exists a dual nature: the inheritance of animal tendencies and the high urge of spirit endowment. During the short life you live on Urantia, these two diverse and opposing urges can seldom be fully reconciled; they can hardly be harmonized and unified; but throughout your lifetime the combined Spirit ever ministers to assist you in subjecting the flesh more and more to the leading of the Spirit. 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. 34:6.9 (381.3)

Recognition of other personalities

> Personality responds directly to other-personality presence. 112:0.13 (1226.1)

> Personality cannot very well perform in isolation. Man is innately a social creature; he is dominated by the craving of belongingness. It is literally true that “No man lives unto himself.” 112:1.16 (1227.6)

Personality is endowed with an innate sense of recognition of other personalities. God has placed in us an impulse of association to prepare us to live in community, to learn to share and associate within the great family of God. The nature of love demands that it bestows itself generously.

The gift of personality also allows us to meet and know intimately the greatest personality in the entire universe, God the Father. Our heavenly Father is not unattainable. We can draw near to him and know him.

Self-awareness

> Self-consciousness involves intellectual awareness of personality actuality; it includes the ability to recognize the reality of other personalities. It indicates capacity for individualized experience in and with cosmic realities, equivalating to the attainment of identity status in the personality relationships

> of the universe. Self-consciousness connotes recognition of the actuality of mind ministration and the realization of relative independence of creative and determinative free will. 16:8.6 (194.6)
>
> The possession of personality identifies man as a spiritual being since the unity of selfhood and the self-consciousness of personality are endowments of the supermaterial world. 112:2.9 (1228.4)

God offers us a great gift, the opportunity to choose how we want to live our lives. He offers us, in the first place, the gift of being aware of our life, our thoughts and our actions—self-awareness. We have the opportunity to observe ourselves, to choose and act as we see fit according to personal moral preferences.

> Animals (not having worship and wisdom) cannot experience superconsciousness, consciousness of consciousness. The animal mind is only conscious of the objective universe. 130:4.9 (1435.1)
>
> Consciousness, much less self-consciousness, cannot be explained by any theory of mechanistic electronic association or materialistic energy phenomena. 112:2.10 (1228.5)

So, what is it that supports personality as well as superconsciousness? This consciousness of consciousness cannot simply be associated with the mind, which is the seat of the first consciousness.

> The observer cannot be the thing observed; evaluation demands some degree of transcendence of the thing which is evaluated. 112:2.12 (1228.7)

To be able to observe yourself, you have to be able to take a step back. I hypothesize that this superconsciousness is associated with the Supreme Being.

The Supreme Being did not create man, but man was literally created out of, his very life was derived from, the potentiality of the Supreme. Nor does he evolve man; yet is the Supreme himself the very essence of evolution. From the finite standpoint, we actually live, move, and have our being within the immanence of the Supreme. 117:3.12 (1283.1)

The Divine Counselor quoted in Paper 5 at the beginning of this article did not reveal to us whether or not superconsciousness is associated with the Supreme Being. He doesn't seem to be able to tell us more, which makes the value of this gift of God mysterious and even more incredible. Nothing is impossible for God the Father. He integrated superconsciousness into personality in a unique and original way.

Our capacity for free will stems directly from this superconsciousness. Our mind, like that of animals, offers us objective awareness on a daily basis. Once awakened, we are aware, present to what we are doing. But through our personality, we access a second level of consciousness, a place where we can be aware of our daily consciousness. Personality offers us the ability to observe ourselves and evaluate what we are doing on the scale of our own values.

The seat of values and morality

> [Personality] is characterized by morality—awareness of relativity of relationship with other persons. It discerns conduct levels and choosingly discriminates between them. 112:0.11 (1225.11)

We are born with a virgin moral inheritance. We slowly develop our values throughout our lives on which we base our judgments.

> In all concepts of selfhood it should be recognized that the fact of life comes first, its evaluation or interpretation later. The human child first lives and subsequently thinks about his living. In the cosmic economy insight precedes foresight. 112:2.6 (1228.1)

We build our values on our experiences and life choices. By working closely with our Thought Adjuster, our personality elevates its values and advances its emerging soul.

Free will

Human beings have the possibility of observing themselves thinking and acting. One can orient his life

by cultivating a universal and unifying vision.

> [Personality] is not wholly subject to the fetters of antecedent causation. It is relatively creative or cocreative. 112:0.5 (1225.5)

God's capacity for free will is implicit in our ability to be self-aware. The consciousness of consciousness necessarily generates a judgment fueled by our own values and leads to choices of creative free will.



We are free to make the choices in life that direct us towards an eternal destiny, but this choice belongs solely to each one of us.

> No personal creature can be coerced into the eternal adventure; the portal of eternity opens only in response to the freewill choice of the freewill sons of the God of free will. 5:6.12 (71.7)

> The relative free will which characterizes the self-consciousness of human personality is involved in:

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. 16:8.7-14 (194.7-195.1)

Mastery of the mind

> The bestowal of the divine gift of personality upon such a mind-endowed mortal mechanism confers the dignity of cosmic citizenship and enables such a mortal creature forthwith to become reactive to the constitutive recognition of the three basic mind realities of the cosmos:

1. The mathematical or logical recognition of the uniformity of physical causation. **(matter)**

2. The reasoned recognition of the obligation of moral conduct. **(mind)**

3. The faith-grasp of the fellowship worship of Deity, associated with the loving service of humanity. **(spirit)** 16:8.15-18 (195.2-5) [emphasis added]

These scientific, moral, and spiritual insights, these cosmic responses, are innate in the cosmic mind, which endows all will creatures. The

> experience of living never fails to develop these three cosmic intuitions; they are constitutive in the self-consciousness of reflective thinking. 16:6.9 (192.5)

We are here told on what basis our self-aware reflections (self-consciousness), are elaborated. When we reflect on who we are and what we do, we do so from our scientific, moral and spiritual insight and this path of reflection leads to a greater understanding of our relationship with God.

> In the local universe mind bestowals, these three insights of the cosmic mind constitute the a priori assumptions which make it possible for man to function as a rational and self-conscious personality in the realms of science, philosophy, and religion. Stated otherwise, the recognition of the reality of these three manifestations of the Infinite is by a cosmic technique of self-revelation. Matter-energy is recognized by the mathematical logic of the senses; mind-reason intuitively knows its moral duty; spirit-faith (worship) is the religion of the reality of spiritual experience. 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.
>
> It is the purpose of education to develop and sharpen these innate endowments of the human mind; of civilization to express them; of life experience to realize them; of religion to ennoble them; and of personality to unify them. 16:6.10-11 (192.6-7)

Perception of time

> Personality is uniquely conscious of time, and this is something other than the time perception of mind or spirit. 112:0.16 (1226.4)

Personality has a strong sense of the present moment. Time may pass, but personality develops by focusing more and more on its intimate relationship with God in the present moment. Everything else becomes secondary. Even though it may take millions of years to meet God, our moment-to-moment relationship with him levels the time of this long journey into a long, continuous presence.

> 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. 12:5.11 (135.10)

The evolution of mastery

> The purpose of cosmic evolution is to achieve unity of personality through increasing spirit dominance, volitional response to the teaching and leading of the Thought Adjuster. Personality, both human and superhuman, is characterized by an inherent cosmic quality which may be called "the evolution of dominance," the expansion of the control of both itself and its environment. 112:2.15 (1229.2)
>
> Personality may survive mortal death with identity in the surviving soul. The Adjuster and the personality are changeless; the relationship between them (in the soul) is nothing but change, continuing evolution; and if this change (growth) ceased, the soul would cease. 112:0.15 (1226.3)

"The watchword of the universe is progress," growth—becoming perfect as God is perfect.

Conclusion

Of all the tools we possess that can enable us to fulfill our heavenly destiny, personality is the most significant gift that has been given to us by God himself.

Unfortunately, too often we live only at the level of our first consciousness, focused on satisfying our selfish needs and sensory pleasures.

> When man fails to discriminate the ends of his mortal striving, he finds himself functioning on

> the animal level of existence. He has failed to avail himself of the superior advantages of that material acumen, moral discrimination, and spiritual insight which are an integral part of his cosmic-mind endowment as a personal being. 16:7.5 (193.4)

Self-awareness and free will help us to free ourselves from previous material causes.

> Man has been freed from the chains of the law of cause and effect, at least as far as his eternal destiny is concerned, and the soul, the immortal self, has what it takes to grow. 5:6.8 (71.3)

> 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. 1:1.2 (22.5)

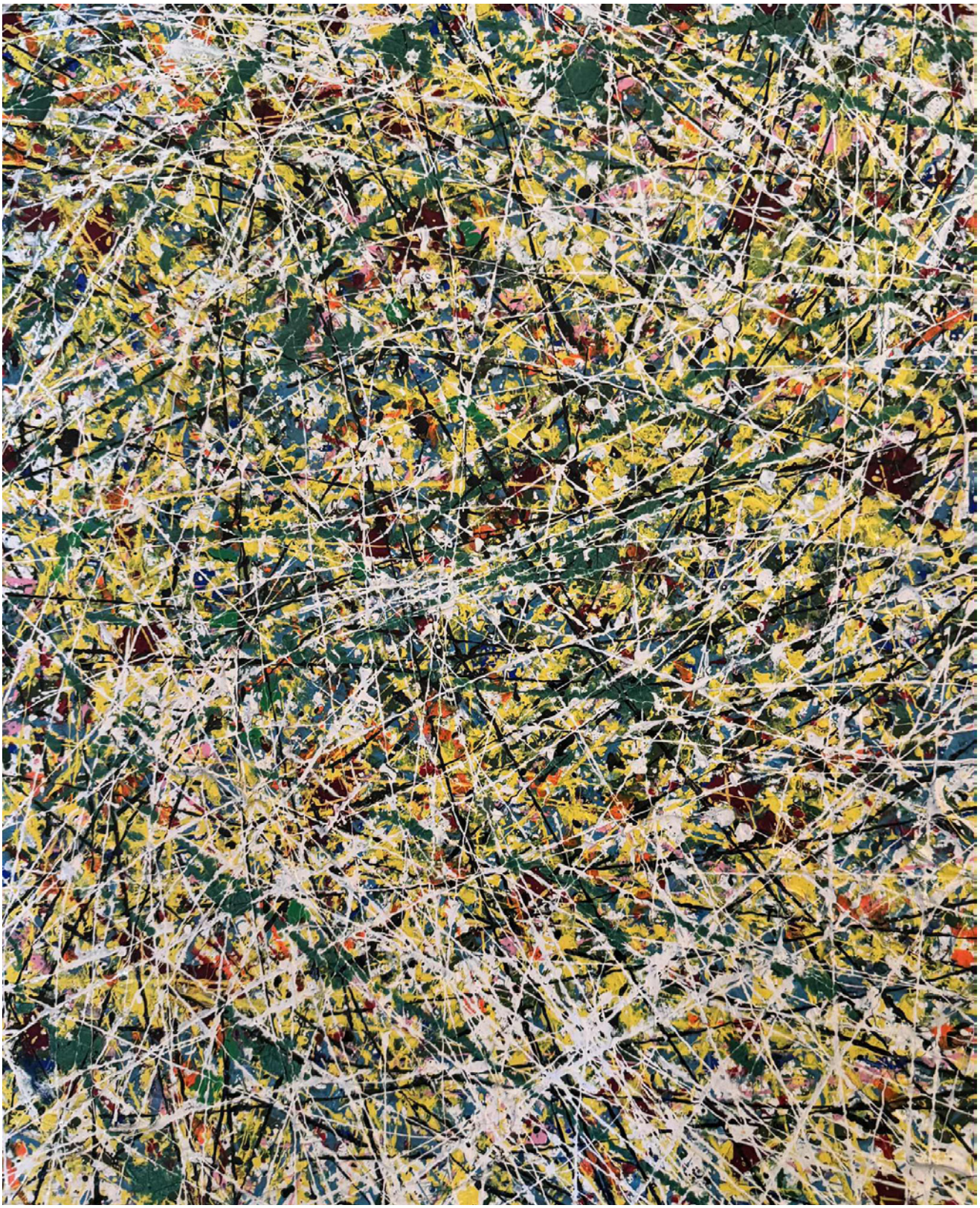
I have been practicing Mindfulness Meditation daily for twenty years. Mindfulness is aptly named, as it focuses on an attentive awareness of our bodily reactions, thoughts, and daily behaviors. Too often, we react to life situations automatically and impulsively, thoughtlessly and endlessly repeating the same behaviors. The first step in meditation is stopping. This pause is the benevolent opening to all we are experiencing. The only way to master the whirlwind of thoughts and actions we endlessly repeat is to stop and observe in order to consciously choose instead of experiencing the same repetitive behaviors. Choosing instead of submitting—this is what mindfulness offers us. But, let's admit it, *The Urantia Book* does, too. With a few seconds of stopping, we can focus our attention on the elements of our life. Over time, this practice decreases the whirlwind of disordered thoughts that clutter our minds and helps us see clearly and make better choices. Jesus often isolated himself in nature to observe his life, pray, and make informed choices that brought him closer to his heavenly Father. Let us put our conscience in order and learn to act more in accordance with our deepest values.

> This actual transfer from material association to morontia identification is **effected by the sincerity, persistence, and steadfastness of the God-seeking decisions of the human creature.** 112:2.20 (1229.7) [Emphasis added]

I wish you to fully exploit the immense potential of your personality. May your self-consciousness be clear and joyful and carry you far on the path to infinity.



PIERRE BELLAVANCE *worked for over 30 years in the forests of Quebec as a forestry engineer, and has studied* The Urantia Book *for over 40 years. He is a devotee of meditation and gardening. Like trees and plants, he seeks light.*



Freakalicios
Oil, acrylic, and plaster on canvas
16 x 20 inches



Hallelujah
Oil and acrylic on canvas
39x20.5 inches

Two Paintings by Evette Twyford

EVETTE TWYFORD is an artist and Urantia Book reader residing in Colorado. Of her work she says:

"The art form I primarily engage in may be referred to as 'action painting,' a type of abstract expressionism. Commonly mixing oil and acrylics onto canvas or other surface, pouring and/or brushing the paint, sometimes using a combination of spatula, ink roller, natural sponge, and other tools to spread and often 'throw' paint, usually circling around the canvas. Occasionally I may tilt or even shake the canvas. My work is frequently noted as having an ethereal appearance. Interpreted images include shooting stars, galaxies forming, landscapes, seascapes, beings, or pathways. Perhaps a particular emotion comes into play, and draws my attention to relate this by combining specific colors. In essence, I create in an attempt to portray something eternal, something revealed in my mind's eye. When I am thus engaged, I feel as though the Original Artist is attempting to express through me."

Evette lives in Salida and has a working studio and gallery at F & 1st Streets in Salida's creative arts district: Flying Red Horse Art Studio and Gallery, 101 1/2 E. 1st Street, Suite E.

In Memoriam

Hoite Caston

November 7, 1941-November 1, 2025





Hoite Caston, who served as a Trustee of Urantia Foundation from 1986 through 1995, passed away on November 1st. While serving in Vietnam, Hoite was exposed to Agent Orange which eventually resulted in a 22-year battle with prostate cancer.

In the fall of 1959, Hoyte joined the Sigma Chi Fraternity at the University of Kansas where he met Richard Keeler, David Gray, Martin Myers and Vern Grimsley. Vern, who had recently learned of *The Urantia Book* from Meredith Sprunger, shared it with his fraternity brothers. After reading and studying together, they made numerous trips to Chicago where they met with Dr. William Sadler, E.L. (Christy) Christensen, and others. They were immediately accepted into this group of early readers and learned about the history and culture of the two organizations that had originally been set up to disseminate *The Urantia Book* and its teachings. The five, sometimes jokingly referred to as the "Kansas or Sigma Chi Mafia" all went on to become active supporters of and participants in the work of the Revelation. In 1984, after Vern claimed to be receiving "messages," Hoite authored a 361 page report entitled "Vern Grimsley Message Evaluation" where he debunked the authenticity of these alleged messages.

He was an active member of First Urantia Society of Los Angeles (FUSLA) where he served as president in 1989 during the political upheavals that resulted in the split between the Urantia Brotherhood and Urantia Foundation. Later he was a member of the Missouri-Kansas Urantia Association.

In addition to his service in the Navy and his extensive activities in support of *The Urantia Book* and Urantia Foundation, he also had a long, interesting, and successful career in Hollywood as a director, writer, editor, and producer. Hoite told me several interesting stories about one of his earliest positions in Hollywood where he was an American Film Institute Directing Intern on the Mike Nichols 1971 film *Carnal Knowledge*. He went on to work on numerous films and directed one full-length film entitled *The Dirt Bike Kid*. He spent many years working for HBO directing *Not Necessarily the News* for which he received the prestigious Cable ACE Award. He wrote, produced and directed two documentary episodes for the History Channel series, *Investigating History*. He also wrote, directed, and edited more than 1000 commercials for which he received numerous awards.

After retiring from his career in Hollywood, Hoite returned to his childhood home in Independence, Kansas where he lived in and restored the house that his grandfather built. He continued his work as writer, director and editor for his company Hoite Caston Productions and spent a year teaching film production at KU while the university conducted a search for a new department chair. He also served 2 terms on the Kansas Film Commission and became active in local politics including serving a 4 year term on the Board of Trustees of Independence Community College.

Hoite is survived by his former wife Patty McCormick, his daughter Aubree Ridley, his two grandchildren, Hazel and Huck, as well as two nephews, four grand nephews and a grand niece.

Hoite was a master story teller. I am very grateful for the many hours that I got to listen to him tell stories of his exploits in the Navy, Hollywood, and the Urantia movement.

He will be missed by all who knew him.

Michael Wood

"...a limitless expanding of never-ending, ever-widening spheres of opportunity for exhilarating service, matchless adventure, sublime uncertainty, and boundless attainment."

108:6.8

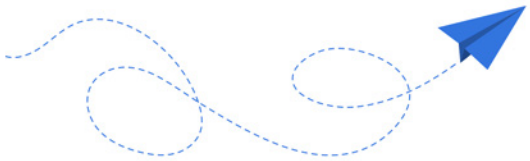
We want to hear from you

Beginning with our November 2024 issue, we began publishing reader comments on UAI Journal articles. We look forward to hearing from you. Send your responses to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org



Do you have an article to share?



The Journal editorial team welcomes all submissions for consideration for future issues. Personal spiritual experiences, fresh insights, and new perspectives are always of interest, as well as thematic studies and articles that compare, evaluate, or integrate academic research (scientific, social, religious, or otherwise) with the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Send correspondence or article submissions for the Journal to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org.

See our website for submissions policy and formatting requirements.

Ways to Contribute to Urantia Association International

The world is changing fast and Urantia Association International is in a unique position to foster the Urantia revelation in so many ways. With localized teams in the form of associations springing up across the globe, we are ready to help anyone, anywhere, to study and spread the teachings that we all hold so dear.

With the beneficial changes that technology brings, more and more organizations are switching to a subscription model as a way of making donations. Urantia Association has launched the Global Urantia Perspective for those who share a dynamic world vision for *The Urantia Book*. We are looking for supporters to subscribe for a minimum donation of $10 per month to support programs that work to spread the teachings.

The Association has only one paid staff member to manage and coordinate our worldwide activities. All other services are rendered by devoted students who donate their time (and often their treasure) to the projects that help bring us closer to our heavenly Father. Thank you to our faithful volunteers and donors!

There are a number of ways to donate to Urantia Association International:

Online by Credit Card or PayPal

Visit our website to access our secure online donation form at: https://urantia-association.org/donate

Unrestricted Giving: Choose General Fund on the online donation form for unrestricted donations that can be used for any purpose, including all administrative costs.

Restricted Giving: Choose one of the Program Funds on the online donation form for restricted donations. Your contribution will be used only for the purpose of that fund. (More details on the Program funds can be found at: https://urantia-association.org/program-funds.)

Check or Money Order

Send your contribution to:

Urantia Association International
4000 W. Montrose Ave. #606
Chicago, IL 60641 USA

By Telephone or Email:

Phone: +1-773-572-1180

Email: centraloffice@urantia-association.org

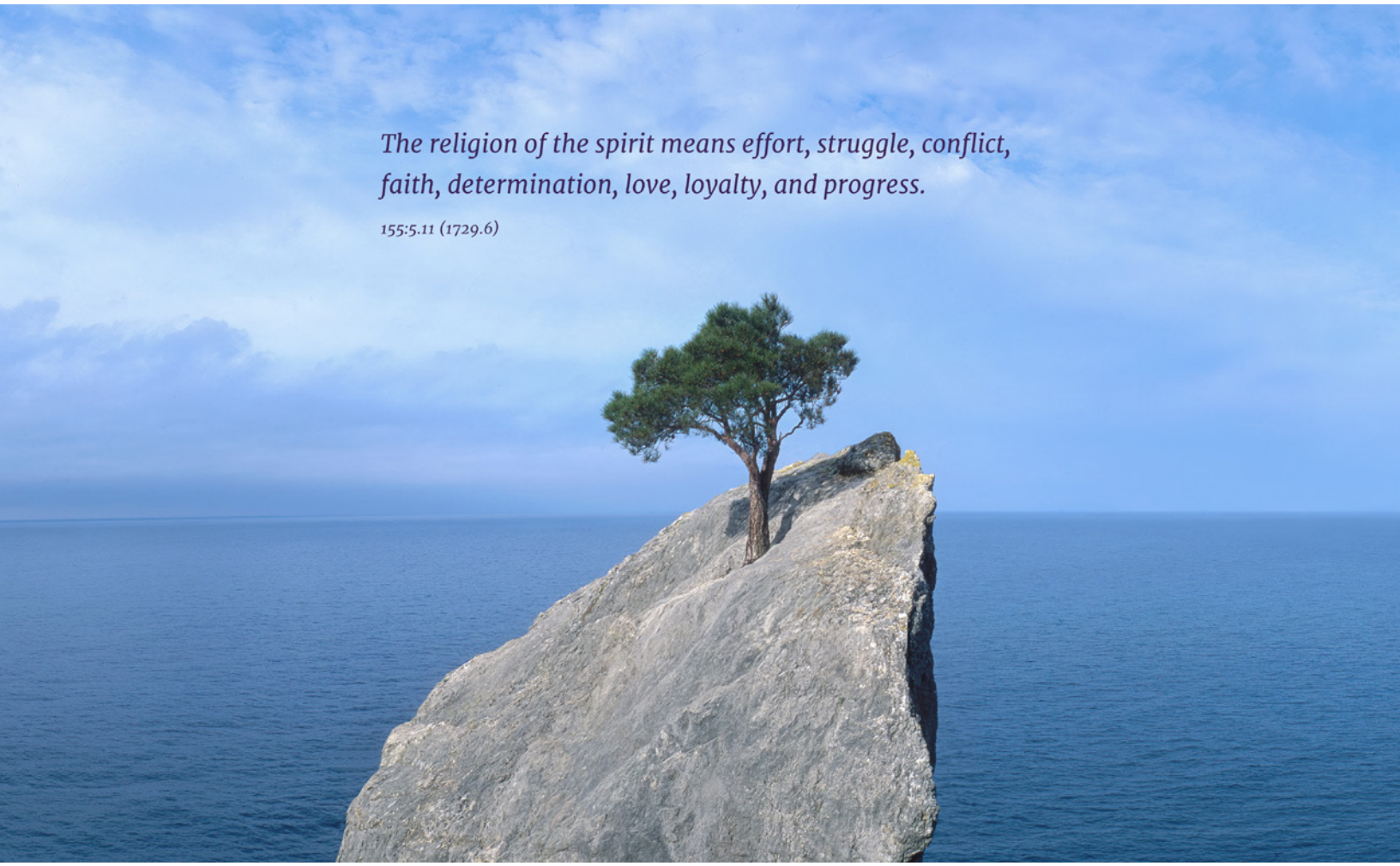
Planned Giving

See our website for more information about planned giving and tax exemptions for donations and gifts.

Urantia Association International

4000 W Montrose Avenue #606

Chicago, IL 60641



Adobe Stock

Fostering study of *The Urantia Book* and dissemination of its teachings