

Putting New Wine into Fresh Wine Skins: Sharing the Teachings without Name or Number

Introduction

In this presentation, I aim to share my experience with the Revelations from *The Urantia Book* and my attempts to share them with others. Sometimes I was successful and other times I was not. When I was not successful, it was a sobering experience as I sadly realized that most of the religious people that I encountered were not at all prepared to accept a new revelation. But eventually I found new ways to share the teachings without sharing the Book.

New Beginning

I was brought up in a traditional religious Baptist environment. For many years after the death of my mother when I was 14, I had ceased to pray or to hold conscious communion with the heavenly Father. I had lost faith in religion and had sought to live a life without God in it. As I moved away from God, my life became more and more difficult. Nothing seemed to bring any real satisfaction or lasting joy, and I was assaulted by a distinct feeling that something was terribly wrong in my life. The philosophy of survive at any cost and grab what little pleasure there may be just did not satisfy my deeper longings.

Some years ago prior to the crash of my misguided philosophy, I had begun to search for answers in so-called new age literature. These teachings did not provide solutions to my problems. I had been exposed to *The Urantia Book* while I was interning at a hospital. When I sat down to read it, beginning at the foreword, I found it incomprehensible. I was looking at it with the wrong set of eyes. But even though I stopped reading it, I always carried the Book with me. Four years later, an incident occurred that spurred me to be serious about reading *The Urantia Book*.

My dear aunt, now deceased, invited me to church one Sunday. I was desperate and could not find any solutions for my moral and spiritual difficulties, and so I agreed to go with her. For some months, I accompanied my aunt to church. During that period, I had begun to pray again and asked God to help me, to forgive me, and deliver me from the unbearable situation I had fallen into. I was born again one Easter Sunday. There were no bells of emotional ecstasy, or ecstatic jubilations, but as I sat in the pews listening to the pastor telling the story of how Jesus hung on the cross, saying, "Don't you know Jesus knows how you feel?" I began to feel better right then. My life took on a whole new direction. I knew then that I was going to make it.

I became a serious Bible student and prayer. One day while I was listening to the Bible on tape I heard, "You are to be perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect." That statement caused an upheaval in my mind and soul. In my study of the biblical life of Jesus, I realized that I was reading an incomplete account of his life, but *The Urantia Book* had the Life of Jesus in it. I decided to use *The Urantia Book* to clarify some of the concepts in the Bible and to supplement the missing information about the life of Jesus. *The Urantia Book* provided such satisfaction that I continued to read it. Soon the roles were reversed. I used *The Urantia Book* for the primary concepts instead of the Bible. But the Bible was not going away. As I continued to read *The Urantia Book*, I felt such joy and peace, such satisfaction I felt that I had finally found what I was searching for. I realized that I had been searching for truth, and what a joy to have discovered it. After I accepted the Book as a revelation, I wanted everybody to have it.

Attempting to Master the Teachings

After I read the life of Jesus, I decided to read the Book from front to back, beginning with the foreword. As I studied, I began to realize that the revelation appeared to reveal its meanings in layers of comprehension. Each time I completed a reading of the Book, my understanding of the concepts

increased. This was an incentive to continue to read the Book the way the revelators intended. Although it was tempting to skip to sections of the Book that appealed to my immediate interest, I continued through the years to read and study it from beginning to end. I had a burning desire to master the teachings. During communion with the Father, I would discover new meanings about what I was reading. I soon began to write them down, and they became the cornerstone of my journaling.

Personal Writings

It was and is still an enthralling experience to write on some new concept of truth, beauty, goodness, love, forgiveness, mercy, grace, faith, trust, hope, inspiration, concepts of doing the Father's will, communication with the Thought Adjuster, peace, joy, patience, and so on. Soon I began to discover material analogies that would help me to understand the different combinations of divine values and meanings. Sometimes I would express these truths in poems or parables or allegories.

I was really pleasantly surprised to discover the positive reception to my writings by some and somewhat dismayed by the lukewarm reception I received from others. I learned a very valuable truth: just because something makes sense to me does not follow necessarily that it resonates with others. But overall, writing has been a labor of love for the last 37 years or more, and I have over 1,000 papers to show for my efforts.

Sharing the Teachings: Study Group

The first person that I shared the teachings with was my wife. I did this by casually mentioning certain truths from the Book which piqued her interest. She was very responsive to this approach and began to ask where I was getting the information from. She eventually became a lifetime reader and one of the earliest members of the Study group I formed shortly thereafter.

In 1981 while talking to a good friend about this new Book I had discovered, I suggested that we form a study group. A group of us began studying every Monday night for two hours. We read from beginning to the end. It took us about 5 years. During this period, there were new people entering the group as well as former members leaving. But as a whole, the group survived and thrived. After our first reading of the Book, we began a more serious study of it, trying to understand the meanings of what the revelators were portraying and what implications it might have for the group as well as the individual members.

The study group was an excellent forum for socialization, understanding different points of views, learning to know each other, learning to disagree without being disagreeable, learning to love each other, sharing the insights that we had grasped, and sharing our efforts to incorporate the teachings into our lives, as well as sharing the teaching with others, and on that rare occasion of sharing the Book with a potential new reader.

The study group was also a place where we shared our efforts to share the teachings, especially the teachings of Jesus where we are admonished to love one another. While there are many instances where we shared out outreach to others in the form of service, these are some highlights of our efforts: As we are all getting older, and have lost loved ones close to us. The group provided the environment where our faith was strengthened and we were comforted as we reminded each of the after life where we would be reunited with our loved ones. Then there was the random act of kindness that one of the members showed when she brought the breakfast of a stranger. Still in another instance she comforted one of her coworker who was being downsized by inspiring to look at this as an opportunity for new growth and new opportunity all the while suggesting that the heavenly Father was aware of her

situation, that he had not forgotten her. One of the group members shared her experiences volunteering at the local elementary school, assisting the children, all the while imparting to them that they should always do their best. And one of the members took it upon himself to retrieve the neighbor newspaper for them which was on the outside of a busy highway. The neighbor who has difficulty breathing expressed his gratitude for this little service. Finally one of the members volunteers at the homeless shelter, sharing words of encouragement those who live there.

Sharing the Teaching: Work Environment

Working as a general health practitioner at a local community health center was the first significant opportunity I had to share the teachings of *The Urantia Book* with a large population. During my service there, I ministered to the physical needs of patients and sometimes their emotional, moral, and spiritual needs as well. I recalled Jesus' admonition to the physician that his patient had minds and souls as well as bodies. My first duty of course was to address their physical needs and explain to my patients what was wrong with them in ways they could understand. There was an ever-present need to listen to my patients and allow them to tell their story. When I was in medical school, my professor had taught me to listen to the patient because the patient would tell me what was wrong with them, the only remaining element needed to merge facts into a diagnosis.

Alleviating the anxiety of patients by displaying an empathetic attitude was extremely important. And there were many who were suffering from spiritual difficulties, especially when they were given some devastating medical news. Some patients I prayed with, sharing that the heavenly Father loved them, that they were his children and he was mindful of what they were going through, and that everything was going to be alright after a while. By displaying an attitude of love, empathy, mercy, patience and tolerance, these same spiritual qualities were imparted to them.

I remember one patient who underwent surgery, and who said that my spirit was present in the operating room comforting her. Another instance was with a patient who is now deceased was very distressed by her relationship with her husband. I suggested that she began praying for him. She reported that her relationship with him began to improve. And there was the reformed alcoholic who declared that God had cleaned him up, and saved him. He said, "I am not afraid to die; not everyone can say that."

A decade later, I served as a physician at a local prison, which was an extremely challenging environment to share the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. The governing rule of conduct there was never to take or receive anything from an inmate which could lead to being compromised, but even here it was possible to share some light. As Jesus said, one's occupation could be used to effectively shed the light. By being a role model, inmates were able to see how a normal citizen functioned. Here the most important trait to display was the devotion to duty. By treating the inmate fairly and without judgment, the spirit within them was challenged.

I informed inmates that I was there to take care of their medical needs. I was not concerned with why they were here. I was not their judge. I instructed them that they should always be honest with me when reporting they were sick. If they did this I would believe them when they said they were sick and would search for the cause of their illness; however, if they lied about their condition, I would not believe them, and it would be up to them to prove that they were sick. In other words, their honesty would place the onus on me to discover the source of their illness; their dishonesty would force them to prove to me that they were truly sick. At the prison, sharing the teachings was limited to displaying the

character of Jesus as such a character was able to be displayed according to persons of various spiritual development. To those Jesus taught the most, he usually said the least.

I realized that though working at the prison was a difficult experience, it had value in that I learned that the Father's will could be done in any environment and that revealing a spiritual character to one is in many ways superior to having an intellectual exchange with them. I learned to be fair, impartial, and just, not to be deterred from my duty by reacting to something negative. After all, I was acting in an impersonal capacity—as a representative of the prison facility. When I left the prison, both inmates and staff said they were sorry to see me leave and they would miss me.

After serving at the prison, I served as a contract family physician. I ministered to a variety of patients; almost all nationalities were represented in this mixture of retired military soldiers and their families. I encountered medical problems that I had not seen very often. This cohort of middle-aged people had many problems associated with chronic illness. Fortunately, I was able to comfort them and expand, explain, and even reveal new truths to some patients.

To the minister whose young adult daughter was afflicted with terminal cancer and whose faith was challenged, I reminded him that in this world we have tribulations; despite this, God loved his daughter and him also. I shared that our mortality means we are subject to these afflictions of a mortal nature. I reminded him of the resurrection and of the many mansions in the Father's house where his daughter would have an opportunity to do those things that she was unable to do in her mortal life. Because we are human, I said, there are things that we could not understand in this life, but our faith instructs us that God is good. The minister's faith seemed to undergo a transformation. He left inspired and determined to continue his ministry using these new insights.

There was a woman who was seriously disturbed about the level of morality in society. She said she longed for a closer relationship with the heavenly Father. I shared she could have as close a relationship with him as she desired. With her faith, she should assume the relationship that she desired as a fact and that Jesus would honor her faith. I told her that Jesus desired us to be one with him even as he was one with the Father.

There was a lady whose husband was dying from a terminal cancer, and she was overwhelmed by grief. I just held her hand and looked into her eyes with compassion as she wept. I asked her if there was anything that I could do. Sometimes words are inadequate to comfort the soul but an empathetic and loving attitude does the trick. Before leaving she said she felt better.

A man whose son-in-law was not a confessed Christen but who went about doing good was concerned that his son-in-law was not saved. I said to him that his son-in-law was doing the work of Jesus, for Jesus said "if you love one another as I have loved you, you will be my disciples." There were many other situations that I encountered where I was able to share the spirit of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

Sharing the Teachings: Sunday School

I taught Sunday School for many years, beginning not too long after being born again. My tenure as a Sunday School teacher began when the teacher of the Adult Men's Class became ill and could not continue. I had been appointed the Assistant Adult Men's Class, where after several years, I had acquired a feel for where the students were and where they might be willing to go spiritually.

We used a regular lesson Book. My approach as I took over the class was first to read the text as given and discuss the meanings of the text. Then I asked if there were any questions or comments about what we had read. Finally, I endeavored to expand on the meanings provided in the text. It was a slow but effective process. This method allowed for few conflicts since I was only extending meanings that participants had already accepted. When Jesus told the Apostles that of men born of women, none was greater than John the Baptist, but the least of the disciples who entered the Kingdom of Heaven was greater than John, for example, it followed that if we are in the Kingdom, then we are greater than John the Baptist. In another example, the Scripture says that all power in heaven and earth had been given to Jesus; therefore, if Jesus had all the power, then no one else had any power unless he gave it to them. I emphasized this during one lesson as a challenge to the common belief among many Christians that Satan has power in this world. There were a few who would not follow expanded truth that was derived from truth already accepted, as in these examples.

Sharing the Teachings: On the Radio

Before I retired, I began an AM radio broadcast, which took place every Saturday morning for 15 minutes. Study group members translated the papers I had written over the years into concepts the average Christian could accept. This task took over 5 years to complete. We thus have enough material to broadcast over the next 20 years without repeating any papers. The response to these broadcasts have been very positive. I was very pleased and surprised when I saw some of my patients after my first broadcast. Without prompting and on their own volitions, they said that they heard me on the radio, and really enjoyed the message. As one of the listeners said, "that was some good stuff." Some of the excerpts of the transcripts from some of these broadcasts are as follows:

Excerpt 1: The Logic of Faith

"But without faith, it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hebrew, Chapter 11, Verse 11.

Faith takes over at the point where our material minds terminate. Our material minds can never logically prove that the first cause of all things is more than an "it. Faith easily bridges the gap from the "it" to the "Him" of religion. Faith assumes the reality of God as a person. It then goes on to ascertain that a relationship exists between God and the holder of the faith. It further assumes that this relationship is one motivated by love. Faith also assumes that there is some purpose for our existence, a purpose that transcends the mandatory functions inherent in a material existence.

Faith maintains that God is knowable; that he is a personality and can be recognized, not by the eyes of the material origin, but through the eyes of faith, spiritual insight. Faith says that the only way we of initiating a relationship with God is through our desire for such a relationship. In truth, our desire for the relationship is also the proof that the relationship exists. Our remoteness from him both in character and in distance suggest that he is complete and we are incomplete. This is in an analogous way similar to the parent child relationship. God thus becomes Father, and we become his sons and daughters. During times when our incompleteness makes it impossible for us to consciously hold direct conversation, faith ascertains that nevertheless communications are still taking place between him and our souls.

Excerpt 2: The Father's Will

"Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 48

"Not my will but your will be done,' cried Jesus in every crisis of His life as well as in all the ordinary situations of life requiring a moral or spiritual decision. Jesus is the example of all times and ages, past, present, and future, of one who learned how to do the Father's will in perfection.

The doing of the Father's will is necessary in order to obey His eternal command: 'Be you perfect even as I am perfect.' The doing of the Father's will is really an infallible road map that leads from the imperfections of self to the unselfish perfection of the heavenly Father. If we would learn how to do something, we must seek to follow one who knows."

"I have decided to follow Jesus' is the declaration of countless souls, and indeed is He the way, for no one comes to the Father except through the Son. But to start such a magnificent and intriguing journey, we must have the faith that we can complete such a magnificent journey of self-conquest. There is a vast difference between the will *to* believe and the will *that* believes. The will to believe is the will that desires to make the journey, but the will that believes has already embarked on the long but eventful journey of self-conquest."

Excerpt 3: The Triumph of Prayer

"And he went a little further and fell on his face and prayed, saying 'O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.'" Matthew, Chapter 26, Verse 39

"Jesus is being confronted with the great test of his mortal existence. He had come to reveal the Father's character and now faces the prospect of death as he continues his mission of ministry. The human Jesus, a man with human qualities, seeks to find any acceptable way out of this dilemma. All of his life Jesus has lived a life dedicated to doing the Father's will and now the great test is at hand: will he chose the human way--avoiding pain and suffering--or submit to the Father's way?"

"There in the garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus seeks to know God's will, we are told that sweat fell off his body like great drops of blood. He suffered tremendously with this decision. But as scripture records, Jesus' final attitude was not one of self-will--personal ease--but the Father's will. Thus, the true meaning of Jesus' struggle with suffering, sorrow, and disappointment in the garden of Gethsemane was the depiction of Jesus' human will submitting to the Divine will. Here we witness the perfection of human character. The human Jesus throughout his life complied with the Father's mandate to "be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect," and it was this character perfection that allowed Jesus to perform the way he did in the face of an outrageous and cruel impending death."

Excerpt 4: Living the Spirit Filled Life

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 14 and 16

"If we are the sons and daughters of God, and the Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, then we certainly can live the spirit-filled life if that is our wholehearted choice. But how do we actually live such a life, with all the riptides of material life constantly tugging and pulling us out into the sea of confusion and conflict? We begin by subjecting our wills to the Father's will. We boldly but humbly by faith acknowledge that we are sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. And like all faith realities, we act as if it is so and eventually it is. If we desire to live the spirit-filled life, we must whole-heartedly subject our slightest moral and spiritual desires to the Father's will. We must constantly display the attitude of 'not my will, but your will be done.'"

“Living the spirit-filled life means that we understand and accept that our human bodies are actually temples of God. It means that we understand that the Father through His Son, Jesus, seeks to manifest himself through us. Such a magnificent truth makes us truly humble. It makes us strive constantly to seek to ‘remove the beam from our own eyes so that we can better see how to remove the speck from our brothers' and sisters' eyes.’ It means we are willing to forgive our brothers and sisters even as we seek forgiveness for the wrongs that we have done. Not only do we seek forgiveness for the wrongs we have done, but we also seek forgiveness for not forgiving those who have wronged us, for failing to consistently practice an attitude of love, mercy, patience, and forgiveness. It also means we seek to be perfect even as the heavenly Father is perfect through his Son Jesus.”

Excerpt 5: The Walk of Love

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation. Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John, Chapter 16, Verse 33

“The experience of living is greater than any one person. By ourselves, we are unable to master life; there are too many factors and forces beyond our personal control. Our walk through life is truly a humbling experience. The difference between going through life filled with fear, dread, anxiety, and panic is the difference between doing our wills or subjecting our wills to doing the Father's will.”

“We begin to seek the better way when we realize the futility of our way, either through life's crises or through the natural unfolding of our spiritual natures. We must learn to do the Father's will, and we have definite ideas of what that is. Our spiritual ideals, however, are few. We naturally define the Father's will in terms of what we want. There is a way that seems right to us, but that way often times is the way of death. We must correct this conceptual error. The Father's will is not a partnership wherein we propose and the divine will disposes. Rather, it is a partnership where we voluntarily submit our wills to the Father's will without any reservation. As we try to do the Father's will, we recognize that the Father's will is usually the exact opposite of what we would naturally do.”

“We next recognize that doing the Father's will is not going to be easy. We painfully learn that doing the Father's will does not deliver us from the facts of experience. We learn that there is only one antidote to the facts of experience and that is the truth of spiritual experience: the Father's love. We learn that we can expand our consciousness from the material to the spiritual. After this, we realize that the problems of our material existence are the very material that the Father uses to perfect us, to make us perfect even as his Son, Jesus, is perfect.”

Excerpt 6: Jesus-The Way to the Father

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh unto the Father but by me." John, Chapter 14, Verse 6

"Show us the way, Jesus, to that precious blessed land." If we will follow Him, Jesus will lead all who are true of purpose and honest of heart to the land of their true desires and deepest hopes, the Kingdom of Heaven. To begin to follow Jesus, we must first make a consecrated choice to follow him, to do the Father's will. He cannot lead us into all truth if we do not desire to be led. If we follow Jesus sometimes or under certain conditions, we will not make much progress in entering that blessed land of faith, trust, hope, and divine righteousness. We must follow Him in the winter time of sorrow as well during the spring time of joy; we must follow Him in the fall of disappointed hopes as well as in the summer of ecstatic successes.”

“On our way to the Kingdom of Heaven, we must traverse many jagged cliffs of disappointments and barren deserts of sorrows, but Jesus leads us successfully through each one of them. We must exercise faith and trust in Him when we come to those painful barriers standing between ourselves and the promised land of spiritual joy, where the Father's love reigns supremely. If we turn back when the earthly values and meanings begin to crumble and before we fully grasp the eternal values and meanings of the Father's love, we surely will experience delay in reaching that blessed land of joy and righteousness. Jesus is the way!”

Sharing the Teachings: On the Internet

While sharing the above excerpts on the radio each week, we also published the audio and paper versions on the Internet so that we could reach a more global audience. People from various parts of the world have downloaded these broadcasts. To find the complete broadcasts, visit <http://www.inspirationalmessagesoflight.com/index.html>.

Principles of Sharing the Teachings

I've discovered that to share the teachings well, I must attempt to master them myself by studying and reading the Book from cover to cover. Reading allows one to comprehend the facts, but it does not yield the depth of understanding and comprehension that study affords. Nor does reading lead to discovering the layers of meanings that studying provides. Studying requires not only reading but meditating on the information, following clues to greater understanding and comprehension, and seeking to internalize the Revelation within the soul.

It requires that we eventually approach the teachings from the perspective of a cosmic citizen and as sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. By accepting sonship, we live more of our lives in the spirit even as we trod the lowly path of a mortal existence. We become less disturbed by the ups and downs of the world because of our faith in the final outcome. This world will eventually reach perfection.

By sharing the teachings and relating to those who are open to new truth, I became aware that I was cooperating with my spiritual helpers. When an individual is ready for new truth, events occur that bring the truth giver into relationship with the truth seeker. I came to realize that all divine values and meanings have their origin in love. By sharing, I came to realize that I live in a friendly universe, dominated by love and mercy. I learned that by sharing these truths, I realize them further myself as they become increasingly a part of my soul, moving me ever closer to fulfilling the command to be perfect even as the heavenly Father is perfect. The sharing of truth is the realization of truth. And when I discover new truth, I realize to my satisfaction that it is the same truth only manifesting itself on higher levels of divine meanings. Since newly discovered truth is the supreme joy of the soul, I constantly look forward to discovering it and realizing it further by sharing it.

Using the principles that Jesus used allows me to be more effective in my efforts to reveal new truth and new meanings to truth seekers. Jesus would start off by asking questions and end up answering questions from the truth seeker. He always sought to add something to the mind rather than attempting to take something out. He always demonstrated faith in people. He listened to them. To those he taught the most, he said the least. He often used parables to share truth that might otherwise be rejected. He always said something or did something to assist in resolving the difficulties of his children, telling them that they were sons and daughters of the heavenly Father and that God was their heavenly Father.

I have acquired from the Revelation the meaning of divine sonship—what it means to be a son or daughter of the heavenly Father. I have learned that all men and women are my spiritual brothers and

sisters, and I treat them as such. I have learned that love is the greatest reality in this world, indeed in the universe. I have no doubt that I am a son of the heavenly Father. I have learned that as I share divinely, my faith grows and my comprehension of spiritual reality increases.

The greatest value that I have learned is that no matter what my material status, I remain a son of the heavenly Father and that no one in the universe can alter that fact. These teachings have taught me that my destiny is determined by me, according to the Father's will. I can do the Father's will in ever-increasing perfection, and one day I will stand in his presence on Paradise, where I will serve in this perfected role for all eternity. There is no limit to my spiritual growth; the only barrier to growth in this life and in the hereafter is solely my desire and willingness to abide by the Father's will. I am a cosmic citizen, with all the privileges that such citizenship implies. It is a glorious revelation that my life has eternal significance.

Finally, to share the teachings means to treat others as I would like to be treated, always maintaining an attitude of forgiveness for wrongs suffered even as I seek forgiveness for my misdeeds. I must always look for the best in others, even though the best may sometimes be obscured by evil. I must love each person, for love conquers all. To share is to be like God, "who shares all with the Eternal Son."

And so in closing, I would admonish that while it is difficult and very often not successfully to share the cosmology and the structure of the universe, and all the personalities who live and serve there with those who are not ready for that kind of knowledge, there is little trouble in engaging in random acts of kindness, and in reminding them of God's goodness and his mercy to all his children. This presentation tells the story of how I found ways to share the spirit of the teachings. I encourage you if you have any questions, please feel free to ask them. Thank you.

Dr. James Perry, M.D. 03/04/17