

BEYOND BAGGAGE

*A stage play
and other writings
on the theme*

BY JIM CLEVELAND

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The Alien Intimacies (fiction) 2003

Beyond Cynicism:
Liberating Voices from the Spirit Within 2003

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BEYOND BAGGAGE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Al Johnson
Doc
D.A.R.E speaker
Rockets Redglare
Urantia speaker
Mom
Jim Browning
Chaplain Rob Davie
Gina, the granddaughter
Cheyenne, the ex-wife
Bear Man
Ronzo
Monsanto representative
Father Jacob
Celestial Angel 1
Celestial Angel 2
Celestial Angel 3
Eva

MUSIC over dimly lit and empty stage with clouds backdrop. Tracks by Van Morrison: "Into the Mystic" and "Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child."

ACT ONE

Lights come up. From stage left, a man comes into view pushing an airport luggage rack, jam-packed with suitcases. He pushes it along laboriously, finally slowing to a stop at center stage, and takes a breath. He is wearing a dark robe with a hood, pulled down to show his face and closely cropped head. He is passing through middle age.

The man pulls a flashlight and his beam scours the stage and then flits over the audience. He notices the people and comes forward to address them.

MAN: Well damned! I ... really didn't expect an audience. I'm just ... getting rid of all my baggage -- all the shit I've been taught in my life that wasn't true ... all the shit that was just designed to sell me something and make a profit off my poor ass ... all the shit they told me to cover up the real shit. What, you ask? Corruption! Pure and simple.

(He walks closer to the baggage carrier.)

I think this is the last of it but ... you never can tell. It's hard to get completely clean. By the way, you can call me Johnson. *(heckler laugh is heard)*

Hey, don't read anything into that. See ... even names have connotations. Real and unreal. You can just call me Al, okay? That makes me a regular guy, a friendly fellow ... doesn't it? Al.

Well, I'm actually not that friendly, always been a little introverted, in here (*taps forehead*) wondering what's right and wrong ... true or false ... good or bad. And gray is always just a little too dull. It's weak — compromise.

See ... connotations are just plain bad. We need to be rid of them. One thing, you know, is that one thing. It should not connote another thing. But even our names tend to do that. You can't name a kid Adolf any more Lucifer isn't good ... Cuthbert Casper Beauregard ...

If you're a woman, you want to be beautiful, not homely like Hortense ... Henrietta ... Beatrice if you're Billy Joe or Betty Sue, they'll think you're from the rural South

And if we wear a beret, that's different from a cowboy hat or a baseball cap or a turban or a fez.

So ... I am really naked here because I'm on a quest. I packed away my jeans and t-shirts and sneakers. Even clothes can be distracting when you really want to get back to basics -- baggage free, with nobody here to preach or persuade or pontificate or politicize or put forth a spiel. No teachers, preachers, prophets or poets.

Put everything you didn't learn aside because it turned out you couldn't trust any of it at all. You look around one day and wonder if you've ever learned anything. So ... you

dump it all.

(gestures to luggage cart.)

From this original starting point, this nucleus, this new beginning Maybe I can conceive a new and true world in which clear thinking and caring community prevails? Can we start with just the basic God-given elements and work from there ... before the propaganda ministries got organized?

But just what is basic? How do you start over? If you start from scratch, what is scratch? Are we all like a flock of chickens ... scratching and pecking at life but not getting anywhere because we can't comprehend the whole barnyard. Only getting rocks in our gizzards. And did we come from eggs or from horny roosters?

(He turns more to the audience as an aside.) I am a silly man. I've always used humor to escape from whatever reality I'm tap dancing around.

Where do we start clean — with Elements! -- that's elemental ... elementary even. Soil from the earth, receptive to seeds. The waters, fresh and life-giving. The wind that blows clean. The air we breathe The sun that warms us and provides light. And finally the Spirit that lives within us.

We know it's there. It's in there. We know it. Don't we? Those are the basics. The five points of reality.

Am I going back too far? I ... don't think so. We have to discover the truth about basics. Are we basically

acrimonious, animal-like, territorial, bellicose? beasts?
Aren't humans just mammals with a Spirit?

And ... how could we be so violent with these fine gifts of
wind and water and air and fire and each other ... to
help each other?

So ... I'm off. I'm dumping all this stuff and I'm gone.
And ... see ... I am basic in my physical image too. I think a
robe like this would be the very first kind of garment
humans would develop. Not for modesty but to stay warm
from the cold and protected from the sun.

The Sun God just gets a little hot sometimes but ... we can
invent fabrics. Whew! Dead animal skins do sound like a
drag.

(He walks again, and turns abruptly to the audience.) Yes! I'm a
silly man. But I'm dealing with it.

*(He goes to the luggage cart and begins to push. Then he stops
suddenly as a spotlight flashes on, stage left, first in a series to
come across the stage. First of several characters come forth.)*

*MEDICAL DOCTOR steps up. He's a vision of the elderly,
kindly family doctor, white coat and stethoscope.*

DOC: Hey, hold on whipper-snapper. You've made some
nasty accusations and since I'm the first experience you
had, I need to speak up.

AL: Don't remember it.

DOC: I held you up, slapped you on your butt and you started breathing. Then ... I cut you free.

AL: Thanks. That was ... good advice. Breathe. And ... you didn't even have to say it.

DOC: At that time, you knew no English. In fact, you had to learn everything. You knew nothing, nothing at all. Somebody had to tell you all of history and all of reality ... from scratch as you say.

Mostly your mother, rest her soul. I came back to say that you need to learn some more appreciation for all you've been taught over the years. You need to make some allowances for us folks back in the ... olden times. You need to hold some memories.

AL: Your profession is all about pills and surgery now. They treat symptoms. They don't promote healthy living. They've become infested with greedy pharmaceutical companies, who have even corrupted their journals, their research, everything they touch in their insatiable drive for profits.

DOC: Hey! Son ... hold your horses. You seem to be confusing me with the medical profession. I'm just providing services to people based on what I think I know ... (*observing that Al is holding his head in his hands*) ... you know, when I passed, we had beaten down smallpox, diphtheria, measles, mumps and whooping cough, and polio and we were just getting wind of antibiotics and getting familiar with Tylenol. That's a ways back. Do you have a headache?

AL: You're plainly of another time. You're not aware of present realities at all.

DOC: Aspirin still works, and most all the folk remedies. *(He steps back into the darkness.)*

AL: *(looking into the dark)* Folk remedies eternal truths of the herbal kind. Like weed. All my years I've heard how evil and harmful it is, from people like that, and now I find it's a wonderful healing herb, with extracts that have amazing curative qualities and even shrinks cancer tumors.

SPOTLIGHT shines on a classroom speaker with a D.A.R.E. jacket.

DARE Speaker: As for long-term effects on your brain, nobody knows. It does damage short-term memory and God knows what else. Nobody knows.

AL: That's a fact. Pure ignorance. The weed is not guilty of anything, never was. Now, we do know some facts. It cures cancer -- idiot!

DARE Speaker: Well, that remains to be seen. We need a lot more research.

AL: True, because your stupid drug war made it unavailable for medical research for years, a pact with the drug companies to demonize it and develop such crap as Vicotin, Xanax, Zoloft, Oxycontin, and Adderall, which is incredibly similar to crystal meth.

They're deadly pharmaceuticals that have killed millions of people and addicted so many more Your drugs have

killed minds, bodies and spirits with built-in addiction tools that seek to forever enslave us.

Speaker: Well, those are all valuable medicines when prescribed correctly, and marijuana is known to be a gateway ... an open threshold to more dangerous drugs.

AL: Which are the ones you're prescribing and the others you're endorsing.

Speaker: We don't endorse any kind of drug use.

AL: Most of your funding comes from Alcohol ... Tobacco ... and Pharmaceutical companies. Who are the real drug pushers anyway? The opioid epidemic is killing bodies, minds and spirits. Be gone!

(Speaker disappears into black.)

AL: You guessed it. I've been what they call a pothead for over 40 years. I was an activist for NORML and made speeches. In the 1990s when Federal Judge Francis Young made the famous statement after yet another blue ribbon panel of experts had advocated decriminalizing the plant .. he said ... cannabis 'is one of the safest and most effective therapeutic agents known to mankind.'

Hooray, I said. Hell yes! Now people will, at last, see the truth.

(Pauses to saunter about, head down, conjuring new thoughts.)

AL: How naive I was. The powers already knew this, and that's why it had to be made illegal, oppressed and its

users prosecuted, starting back in 1974 with Nixon and Ford in the White House.

Since it is a plant anyone can grow, it would be free. It would hurt their opioids business, damage the liquor and tobacco industries, and insulate people from the enslaving addictions that all of them cause.

A war against this medicinal herb would also empower and grow law enforcement and the prisons as a business -- a money-making business by destroying the lives and emptying the pockets of cannabis users.

Eventually, they can even privatize the prisons and make money off the inmates. People are just customers, places to go to make profits.

*SPOTLIGHT opens on a hippie friend, garbed
in tie dye and hairy.*

RR: Helluva speech, man. We had some good times, huh? Remember that junket down to Frankfurt to hear Willie and smoke with those guys?

AL: Hey Rockets! (*turns to face audience*) My buddy was looking for a cool name and found it in the National Anthem. Calls himself Rockets Redglare ... a contemporary of Wavy Gravy and Commander Cody and the Lost Planet Airmen ... and Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks.

RR: I seen you wuz raising hell about baggage. I just showed up to say them's good memories, man. Don't lose them.

AL: Hippies had a dream, it was crushed. Look at it now. The whole world is cluster-fucked with politics and acrimony.

RR: Hey, you should be a writer, man.

AL: I was.

RR: Wuz?

AL: Didn't sell shit. It's all a rigged game. And if you hook up with some company that says they can market books for you ...

RR: Yeah?

AL: You become their customer base. It's your money they're after.

RR: Same way with music, man, Me and my band made some good music but we couldn't get nowhere. You know the whole music biz is now owned by three companies. Did you know that?

AL: See that's the baggage I want to get rid of.

RR: What?

AL: What they call **MARKETING**. I've got it emblazoned on one of these suitcases.

RR: You don't wanna have to sell nothing. That's cool. The profit motive sucks big time.

AL: I wanted to share my creative work and just make a decent living. But, it's like the days of the Old Masters of art ... if you can't be taken under wing by the rich people, some sugar daddy you may as well be writing or creating art ... for yourself.

RR: Hey, man, that's the way it works. Fuck the system. Make it for yourself, yeah! That's self empowerment -- living off the grid, outside the system. But ... what was them old masters?

AL: Oh just some painters and writers. But, hey Rockets, I want your view. The so-called 'system.' I call it that but ... what system? Who is they? We're always railing about it and them, and it is ... they are loosely defined. I can't quite ... get it myself. It's become a catch-all pronoun and you can't figure what noun it represents.

RR: Hey! The system works by itself and as itself and for itself.. It's nobody's fault. There shouldn't be any blame involved. It's just self-evidence We're just widgets working inside the machine.

AL: Widgets widgets?

RR: Right, with the machine metaphor as in like Rage Against the Machine. For a biological metaphor, consider this: We are each sperms, wiggly millions ... trillions ... squirming through the life-line toward the birth canal, the continuing continuum of the re-birth canal from flesh and blood to become a spiritual being when we transition -- a spirit with a body, not a body with a spirit. We've had it all wrong, man.

AL: And the system is defined as?

RR: The forces of conformity. We should be free spirits and we do have free will. Use it.

Just like while we are racing through the channel of life. And ... free will is our'un. It's our-run. We just have to claim it. Free Bird, man ... Free ... Bird. Lynerd Skynerd nailed it perfect, man. And it's still true, man. You know it is!

AL: (*blacks him out with an arm flourish*) All good, Bro. Keep on trucking. Be cool. Peace. Whatever applies see ... that was then and the battle continues.

We're well into the 21st century and evolution of everything rolls on. Everyone on earth seems to be screaming: I'm somebody too!

We're all riding the same planet on the same ride together., going around the sun. The ride is scaring most of us.

But Rockets did refer me to a book that puts it all together for me -- a synthesis of science, philosophy and religion, altogether in a literary revelation that was inspired ... or personally dictated by personalities on the spirit side of things. It's outside the mainstream. It's a peaceful inlet.

SPOTLIGHT on a Urantia Book speaker at a podium.

Urantia Speaker: And so ... each of us is imbued with a spark of God, the Universal Father, who lives inside each of us. The Indwelling Spirit. The Soul. The higher self.

Or ... our book calls it our inner Thought Adjuster since this voice from inside us is always leading us toward truth and beauty and goodness -- gently adjusting our thoughts to these goals.

Actually, this inner spirit is our true identity. We are inhabiting well developed mammalian bodies on our evolving planet and we are evolving with it, the mind intended to be in charge but sensibly to be spirit-led.

We must utilize the gifts of the spirit to learn and grow and build world communities ... and still larger societies that lead the world into an era of light and joyful life.

AL: Yeah, I love this text. All of the manmade religions hate it, call it a fraud.

Urantia Speaker: Truly, the current generation is not ready for it. That's why we generally go slow, and share it one on one, word of mouth, and focus on small, personal book study groups. We don't want to rattle the Christians especially since the Jesus papers differ a great deal from Paul's erroneous atonement theories.

AL: Isn't that why you need to get some truth out there though? I've been advocating an active, dynamic marketing program for the book -- with plenty of media exposure.

Speaker: The media can destroy you.; Dangerous ground ...

AL: The media is a tool ... a venue that we can use to reach many more potential readers.

Speaker: The media represents the Christians and the Capitalists. And all of them worship wealth ... that being money and power. They would attack us, ridicule us, try to destroy us.

AL: I'm glad your hero -- Jesus -- didn't take that attitude. He marched right into Jerusalem, cleansed the temple and told them all off in his last discourse in the temple.

Urantia Speaker: It's not the same thing, not at all. You can't just force feed a new spiritual revelation on people who aren't nearly ready for it. They've got their own well-entrenched religions. Our revelation is for another time, another era.

AL: Well, the world wasn't ready for Jesus either. They crucified him in short order. Is that what the other religions are going to do to you then if you speak up too loudly?

Urantia Speaker: When people are ready for the book, they will be led to it.

AL: There is a whole new world of higher spirituality out there, rising above dogmas of past ages, and, instead of dividing people, as always, it can bring people together! ONeness of spirit, yes. Altruism. Personal Religion ... all one people ... all one race, the human race, and reverence

to the truest reflection of God as pure love. Why can't Urantia be part of that?

Urantia Speaker: We can't speak for those other paths. We know that our book is divine revelation, and we'd better stick with that. You know ... there are a lot of Oneness organizations out there ...

AL: (*blips the speaker away*) The New Age can be scary to some people, I guess. There just isn't room in the mainstream squiggly wiggly channel for all these new flavors.

Our Big Religion entities have already sewed things up -- Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and Jews. They are always killing one another with expensive firearms, and all of humanity has to pay the bills. My Urantia revelation? Still a footnote.

SPOTLIGHT on Al's mother.

MOM: You need to get out of that weird cult thing you're in and get back to the Holy Bible get right with the Lord. You ain't no spring chicken.

You need to be in church on Sunday, that's how we brought you up, and then you get into all this other stuff ... smoking that mary-juana you and Cheyenne wasn't even married. In the eyes of the Lord ya'll was living in sin.

AL: Thanks, Mom. Your values are from the 1930's. Thanks anyway. (*he blips her away and turns to the audience.*)

AL: See what I mean. These are all belief systems -- that's the system! -- with true believers in some zealotry or other who are assaulting you to believe likewise. Assault? Is that too strong a word?

I personally think that selling is too incessant ... partisanship is a disease stemming from myopia and corruption is rampant.

I think the world is insane and -- being insane -- we don't even recognize it as such. Look what we have wrought. Here's what a friend at Collective Evolution said recently.

WE prioritize money and the economy over basics like air, water, food quality, our environment, and our communities. We do. We lust for all the money we can get because we think we know that it can buy anything.

We utilize an economic trading system that facilitates the death of millions of people each year. They die of hunger, starvation and the diseases it feeds. They fall out the bottom of this system and die.

We divide the world's land into sections and then fight over who owns each one. This requires that great wealth be squandered on militaries.

It is a system by which we call some people "soldiers," and that makes it OK for them to kill other people.

We torture and kill millions of animals every day needlessly for food, clothing, and experiments.

We send children to school for their entire childhood to memorize facts and skills that they will rarely use.

We impose financial pressures on parents, forcing them to miss out on vital stages of their child's development.

And there are those thousands of religions, each one believing that their God or god-story is the only true and unique version. Each one reveals its flaws in its bigotry.

Love and compassion, which promote life, are mocked as facile. Whereas war, which harms life, is seen as honorable.

It's all madness. We need a polarity shift of mind ... we need to destroy partisanship because it's always half-baked ... we need to sprinkle all dogma with salt because it's ... unleavened. Whew! That's deep.

SPOTLIGHT on ...

Jim Browning: The curse of life is Dogma. Too much dogma.

AL: Jim! I remember that vividly. We were driving just south of Oxford. We bowled together. You had a helluva hook. Saw you go between the baby split one night without knocking down either pin. Amazing.. Nice to have a memory of you.

JIM: It's not just baggage?

AL: Well, everything's not baggage, I've got some good memories, but always ... always pertaining to small things.

JIM: And I told you that what ruined country music was -- the singing cowboy.

AL: I remember that too. We liked the mountain music, old style, Uncle Dave Macon ...

JIM: Folk baggage. Good stuff, huh? How many biscuits can you eat this morning. How many biscuits can you eat right now? *(he fades away, another guy appears)*

SPOTLIGHT on Chaplain Rob Davie:

ROB: Hey, Al, before you go, I just want to say a few words about baggage too.

AL: Chaplain Rob! Great to remember you. *(turns to audience)* I worked in PR at Mississippi State University. He was chaplain there and fresh out of the war in Viet Nam ... and dealing with the psychiatric cases that followed. One thing he said stuck with me.

ROB: I said I've seen lots of mental institutions and known lots of inmates and they all have one thing in common. They can't accept themselves for who they really are.

AL: I believe it! We have to face the mirror. Check out our eyes -- the insides of our eyes.

ROB: That's not baggage, is it?

AL: Well, no, I've collected a lot of ... nuggets of wisdom along the way too. I need to keep those, I guess, if I can sort them out like gold nuggets in the stream ... and stay away from arseno-pyrite.

ROB: What?

AL: Fool's gold it's everywhere. It's laying around.

ROB: The gold vein running through your life contains your eternal truths and your job is to share them. That's service, and service to your siblings is what grows your Soul during this mortal experience in flesh and blood and bone and soul.

The purpose of this world in which you have your material reality experience is Ascendancy. And he not busy being born is busy dying.

AL: Whew, that's eloquent. But I think Bob Dylan already said that last part.

ROB: He's part of the team. *(he disappears)*

(Al is left facing no one, in thought again. He walks up to his packed luggage cart and looks at it with new eyes. He rubs over a couple of the leather suitcases and looks at a box labeled: Al's Books.)

AL: Maybe maybe I should just keep my library, some of it anyway. What if what if I had to refer to something? What if I were going to write something and I had to research something ...

SPOTLIGHT: (granddaughter Gina, an attractive teen)

GINA: Hey Pops, you don't need all that anymore. You just need a smartphone you can make calls. you can shoot pictures, videos, browse the internet, share with

friends, there's an app for just about anything you need ... anything you use or want or need is here ... in the palm of your hand. Your personal cloud (*she gestures upward to the sky*) ... your very own cloud is going to stay right with you. Cool, huh?

AL: I heard a joke. All the knowledge of the world is right here in our hand with those gadgets. And what do we do? Argue with strangers and share cat pictures.

GINA: Ha! That's funny. A lot of people are sending pictures of their dinner.

AL: I wonder if humankind is making any progress at all. Amazing electronics , but ... It seems to all be getting dumbed down. Everything seems to run headlong toward the trivial ... toward entertainment ... toward commerce ... toward the simplism of the 140-character Twitter. We try to make things simple and we make them simplistic instead.

GINA: My friends at school are talking about Bernie Sanders. He seems to be ringing the truth bells, especially about student debt. He knows that everything is rigged. It's all rigged by the big money and they've got everybody in debt up to their ears with high interest credit.

AL: We've been lied to by the capitalist money-mongers who have totally corrupted the Republicans, now the party of the rich and oppressive. They corrupt everything they touch by buying it.

GINA: Whew! Yes! You should write a book. I appreciate you Poppy. Got to go for my dance class. I'm still busy picking up baggage.

AL: What?

GINA: Learning new stuff. Building up my resume. Need to pick up as many skills as I can and make some good memories. Bye. See you on Facebook. *(she is gone)*

AL: *(looking troubled, into the darkness)* Hey? You gone? It's notit's other baggage, not memories. I have lots of those, good ones. And sure you need skills, that's not baggage, no.

And ... I'm coming back soon. I'm just going on retreat ... *(she is definitely gone)* ... it's just going to be an ... experiment an exercise ... a happening ... a re-awakening ... a sojourn ... a mind trip ... an episodic adventure ... an inner voyage a vision quest ... a mind clearing ... a respite some personal therapy ... camping with some trail mix and some jerky and some beer.

Back to basics -- the values of the Earth itself. I'm going camping with some Pagans, Wiccans and Pantheists ... they're called Heathens by their detractors.... and they're also Permaculturists, survivalists, homesteaders ... somewhere in the Midwest. They wear the five-points of the star. Wish me luck. Anyone got a cellphone?

(Voice from backstage indecipherable.)

I don't care what I said ... Yeah, I am stripped down but ... just bring me a cellphone ... for just a minute.

(A supposed stagehand meets him near the curtain and hands him a phone. He dials a number and waits as it rings, turns to the audience again.)

I'll be naked, sky clad they call it. I want to be just me --me!
and the basic elements -- fire, water, earth and wind and ...
Spirit, fellow spirits around. That's all. Nothing else! No
baggage, no confusions to inflict clear, basic thinking get
back to the higher reality of basic and unencumbered
truth. (*in receiver*) Hello? Yes, is this Acme Storage?

(He listens and props himself on the luggage rack)

*SPOTLIGHT on a lovely woman in a long gown, adorned with
jewelry and long, flowing dark hair*

CHEYENNE: Al, what in the world are you doing? What's
all this baggage talk, have you learned nothing from our
time together? (*Al stares at her, hangs up without a word.*)

Do you want to start over? Where does that leave our
experience, the kids we raised? I gave you the foundations
for an excellent spiritual life -- self-empowerment, the
power of intention, yoga, a healthy diet, exercise.

Have you taken anything I shared with you to heart.? I
don't think so. Are you still eating white food?

AL: White rice ... brown rice. It doesn't matter that much.
All that holistic living advice. It's all good but it's
inconsequential. We're all still mice and elephants are
trampling through the village.

CHEYENNE: Then we should love ourselves as mice and
just share that love where we can when we can and as long
as we can. We grow the most when we face adversities and
have to overcome them. These are the challenges given to
us so that we can grow.

AL: Well ... I've got a good bit of baggage from all my relationships. *(turns toward audience.)* None of these people are ever quite gone. That's the problem.

CHEYENNE: I beg your pardon. Are you talking to me?

AL: Actually ... *(he flourishes his arm as if to show her the audience.)*

CHEYENNE: *(stares intently at him instead)* That was always your problem, Al -- looking for some kind of audience for your stuff and neglecting the important people and the important things in your life. I was looking for a soul mate and not a roommate. *(she looks disappointed, disapproving, and disappears.)*

AL: Ouch! I remember that piece of baggage, hit me right in the head. And ... of course, it's lodged up there, with all the rest of it.

But I just couldn't get it on with Elizabeth Claire Prophet and the Galactic Federation. I really did not think the world would end in 2000 and we would be evacuated ... if found worthy. It didn't happen in 2012 either and it won't happen in 2020.

Belief systems are traps, the old ones are faulty and the new ones too. New age religions tell you what to believe, just like the traditional ones.

We shouldn't be trapped into those hard beliefs. We should be gently molded in wonder. It would be okay to live with a lot of questions if we could live in peace.

Anyway, I'm going back to nature, into the woods, with people who celebrate nature and have freed themselves from the greed of capitalism and the bigotry of organized religion.

I'm going to forget all this stuff and start fresh, have an open mind to new ideas that are truly based on ... the earth, the wind, the water, the fire and fellow loving spirits. I need to get the ice chest, some beer ... and maybe get some dogs to grill.

Stage goes black and Van Morrison track begins. "Mystery."

*Let go into the mystery,
let yourself go,
There is no other way to be,
that's all I know.
etc.*

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

(Music on darkened, barely-lit stage is Van Morrison's "Enlightenment.")

SCENE: *The stage and the luggage cart. From stage left, Johnson comes into view. He is struggling with a heavy A-frame backpack, a water bottle and a sleeping bag tied on, and a ground pad.*

The pack is stuffed and heavy. Johnson finally drags to a halt, pulls it off his shoulders center stage and lets it drop to the floor.

He walks up to his luggage rack and puts his arms around it.

AL: My stuff it's almost like a security blanket. Physical stuff. I've been on the road and I've missed it, always good to get home.

(He glances back to the backpack he has dropped, and then back to the audience.)

I know. I was trying to dump baggage on this retreat and I picked up more baggage. Look at this, and you should see what's inside.

And I can't dump this old baggage either because I'm scared I might need some of it. My zeal has wavered and ...I see that all life is baggage collection.

Every experience I have just seems to add to it. It doesn't clarify things. It seems to just run them through an extruder. Sausage.

Yeah, I know. I was going somewhere to connect with the basic elements -- wind and fire and water and earth and spirit -- all that. I camped with the Wiccans and Pagans in the woods and I like them. They are striving for what most people really want -- a loving community.

But they're filled with baggage -- rituals and handfastings and every possible ancient spiritual idea you could wonder about. They are fragmented themselves into different sub-sects, like the Christians.

But that's all just religious history, from less civilized, mostly savage times. What does any of it matter today?

Isn't it a matter of eternal values? Values common to all humans?

My new friends are lost children, awash in a mix of earth-based religions, and resentful of judgmental Christian society which is seriously resentful of them. Christians and Pagans demonizing one another still, here in the 21st century.

The rural Hoosier Christians think the sanctuary has devil worship rituals. They are really potluck suppers. They think these free spirits are into debauchery. But they just built a playground for the kids and are tending an organic garden.

It's family-oriented. It's just that people can go naked and smoke herbs.

All this community goodness was in the air but there didn't seem to be much real spirituality going around except for appreciating and enjoying nature, but maybe that was enough.

SPOTLIGHT on a big bearded man in overalls.

Bear Man: It wasn't supposed to be this way. We were organized as a community for sharing and celebrating spirit, and to maintain a sustainable organic farm.

There is a clique of people on the Council who are essentially homesteaders ... or squatters. They live off the community, keep a suspicious set of books with no accountability to the membership. And if someone shows

up at Council to object to these insiders, they get shouted down.

All they want to do is go in the woods and get drunk and live off the community. No spiritual values; they are a facade built over what could have been.

AL: Ouch! Nothing works because people can't learn to work together. And they're generally self-centered, self-serving and self-absorbed.

SPOTLIGHT on another camper, Ronzo.

RONZO: He's always bitching about something or other. Why can't you just cool it, fat man, and enjoy what we got? Where else can you go camping and enjoy these festivals and smoke all the weed you want and be fucking free.

It's our property. Just cool out man and enjoy. All that paperwork is a bunch of Indiana non-profit corporation bullshit anyway, man.

BEAR MAN: You better learn to read, you drunken sot. 'Cause that paperwork is coming after your ass and you're gonna lose the fucking property if you don't shape up.

These officials don't like Pagans anyhow and they've been looking for an excuse to get us out of there.

(AL claps his hands and both go away.)

AL: Sounded like it could be an ideal little sharing community there but ... I moved on. Pagans don't get along much better than Christians.

I left with three Rainbow Family folks and we wound up at a gathering in Southern Illinois. These folks are free and back to nature too. Tribal values of the American Indian. No capitalism; everybody shares everything, barter, none of that nasty money involved. Ideals.

What was their gathering like? Lots of drugs, drinking and pussy. Lots of arguments in Rainbow too as to whether their ideals and their altruistic vision has been overcome by indulgences over the years ... liberty without license ... revelry over responsibility ... it was a phantasmagora of clashing values and clanging symbols.

Maybe it was like when the low-life addicts and thieves moved into Haight-Asbury to contaminate the hippie movement, take advantage of people with loving community ideas.

Do humans, as a rule, cheapen and vulgarize and corrupt every tradition ... every new thing ... every ideal?

Is it our nature to corrupt? We have corrupted all of our institutions while we hold up high ideals for them.

We have shirked many vital responsibilities even as we have vowed to serve them. Lip service, they call it.

We have made many things ugly that we should have appreciated and honored as they were.

And the media is filled with the pretty lies of their biggest advertisers, rich corporations and banks who drive hard for corporate and shareholder profits, and either buy off or destroy anybody in their way. But they sound good. They have great platitudes. Like this guy ...

SPOTLIGHT on a salesman in a suit, at a podium.

It has a sign: MONSANTO.

Monsanto Representative: Well, if you're going to seriously think about banning pesticides, you have to consider millions of people starving to death. We have simply got to control our insect and weed enemies if we are going to survive in the world. Our yields will drop dramatically and we won't be able to feed a hungry world ... where population growth is out of control.

AL: That's really old propaganda. That was when you were getting Round-Up registered back in the 1980's.

Monsanto: Still true today. We are securing the future of a prosperous global agriculture.

AL: Hey! It's thirty years down the road. World hunger is worse than ever. Your products have contaminated the soil and water and killed off huge bee populations.

Your genetically mutated crops to make them resistant to the poisons you created are being banned in some countries because you are widely distrusted.

Farmers are outraged to be put under the thumb of Monsanto to get seeds for re-planting. It's an issue of global importance.

Monsanto: Well, that's all overblown propaganda.

AL: Not too overblown. You've hired hundreds of lawyers to deal with it. You've spent huge sums of money on political donations and media advertising and lobbying in D.C. If it's all overblown you're the one doing it.

(He flips his arm to send the vision away.. He speaks again to the audience.)

AL: Who's next? Big Pharma. Big Banks. Big Insurance. If you're a Republican, it must be Big Government. Big Labor. Big trial lawyers getting big verdicts against their Big Corporate core?

Maybe the battle is against big and little. Power corrupts as it grows. In history, it's always been aristocracy vs. working class.

SPOTLIGHT on the bearded guy, rough-hewn, in overalls

BEAR MAN: It's all bullshit, man. I'm off the grid now. Media free. No electric bills. Growing my own food in my own garden. I can pee off my back porch.

AL: You dropped out. How's that going for you?

BEAR MAN: I tuned in, man, not out. It's all bullshit out there.

AL: You said that. You always said that.

BEAR MAN: We grow our own weed, man. Nobody fucks with us out here. How can you beat that?

AL: Maybe it's the idea of beating something. Is that what it's about? Beating something in your life? Calling it bullshit and running off in retreat. Doing without plumbing and electricity.

BEAR MAN: We catch rain water, we're getting solar panels. And nobody fucks with us. Peace, Love and Anarchy, man.

AL: Your mantra.

BEAR MAN: Hunter S. Thompson, man, gonzo. He knew the game, man. He could see right through all those mother fuckers.

AL: He saw his way clear to blow his own head off.

BEAR MAN: Yeah, that was cool, man. He just said, fuck it, I'm outta here.

Hey? You hear? They had a big party on his birthday this year, Johnny Depp was there. They fired off a big rocket of some kind.

AL: (*blips him away*) Even the hermit tells me what to think, what I should do. Everyone has always been full of advice. And I could always hear the sound of axes grinding,

sharpening themselves to keep grinding away at the world
-- I've got the truth. Here it is.

SPOTLIGHT on Cheyenne.

CHEYENNE: I never told you what to think, Al. You can't put that on me.

AL: I put nothing on you. We just grew apart. We had different interests. It happens to couples over the years sometimes.

CHEYENNE: I was looking for more, sorry. My vision was too high. If I could live with any man, it would probably be you.

AL: I only wanted to be friends, with easy and excellent sex ... pretty often. To be friends and buddies. To just Cool it.

CHEYENNE: And I wanted to be much more than that.

AL: Much more than what?

CHEYENNE: Just a sex partner. You know what. A real person with hopes and dreams.

AL: I spent years trying to convince you that I knew that. To be free. I just enjoyed sex more than you.

CHEYENNE: Constantly.

AL: Two or three times a week.

CHEYENNE: Constantly.

(AL blips her away.)

AL: Some things never change ... they're circular.

(He walks over to the luggage rack.)

AL: Like all this stuff. It's material. What counts is what I derived from it into my own head and into my own heart.

When I pass through this life, I won't take any material with me. My spirit will rise up out of our flesh and blood and bone existence and ascend another rung in the ladder of discovery.

So I must be sure I'm done with all this and have absorbed lessons that are ascendant too. Sort the self-serving and myopic propaganda out of the real truth of the cosmic mind.

Develop a cosmic mind ... a universe consciousness. Look around and see the matrix of evolution at work. Be in the world but not of it any more.

I need a return to nature, to basic values, a clean playing field to develop some clean thinking but the all-night drum circle was a different thing the rice and beans and raucous vulgarity with the Rainbow people was yet another thing but ... ironically, it's the Catholics who can give you the real thing -- the Gethsemani Monastery retreat center in Kentucky.

Hills and hollows of trees and beauty and solitude. The monks have taken a vow of silence. That might surely do me some good.

SPOTLIGHT on Father Jacob.

He wears a Trappist monk's habit.

FATHER JACOB: Good day, my son, does this mean you'll be coming to see us again, for a retreat.

AL: What? I remember you ... you spoke to us ... the so-called retreatants. Is my stuff all being broadcast or what?

JACOB: I'm just part of your recall. Baggage you call it. You recalled our meeting so I'm here.

AL: So that's where all these people are coming from. I remember them and they show up.

JACOB: And a suitcase filled with what they left with you. Maybe just a little weekend bag. Maybe just a tweet.

AL: I was fascinated with what you said. You wrote a book called "Who Told You That You Were Naked?" based on A Course in Miracles. The premise: Who could possibly have told Adam and Eve that they were naked? Who?

I was surprised. You said the world was undergoing a spiritual renaissance, that was in the 1990's, and for every change that you see in society, there are many more changes going on within the monastery. I'm still not certain about that one, but it hung with me.

JACOB: We have only a few over 50 monks today. We are constantly in touch with spiritual voices from within. We apply their teachings to what we see of the world today.

The inner voices give us the perspective for deeper understanding. But we have to read -- to keep up.

AL: Well, that all depends on what you're reading and whether to believe it. But ... you don't share it. Seems like you're just sitting on anything you learn. You're not teaching it vigorously, you're not sharing it with mankind.

JACOB: People can get spiritual insight from the same place we receive it, from within.

AL: And then, every evening the little Father came to the chapel and those who chose came to hear some Catholic homilies.

JACOB: Father Ryan, a gentle and loving little man. He passed on

AL: And he kept defending things like the Virgin Birth. You know ... Thomas Merton lived and wrote there and is buried there. In your side yard. You all know better than that.

JACOB: We can all grow spiritually, day by day, but we can't change Dogma ... Doctrine. It would shake the foundations of too many believers. We just have to grow our own souls in solitude and Let it be. *(he turns to go)*.

AL: Are you all still making the cheese ... the bourbon fruit cake?

JACOB: We have a network of monasteries now, all online, each offering their own speciality food and gift items, some income to keep the monasteries solvent.

But we're not making the cheese any more. Father Eustacius passed on. We're not as many but we persevere in peace and joy and have our frequent occasions to chant in worship with one another. Very niceI like it. (*he leaves*).

(*AL is alone ... thoughtful.*)

AL: That was sure great cheese but ... no more of it then? I can't go back anyway. I learned whatever was there and have to move on ... but where?

Father Jacob said to ... blow everything off and grow your own soul with study, solitude, solace. silence, soul searching, simplicity, service.

Oops! There I go with the alliterations again — but all true or they wouldn't be alliterations. The language is rich. But it's all right here within us.

Maybe I don't need to go anywhere outside myself. Maybe the journey I need to take has no distance.

Al walks off stage, which goes dark. Music comes up: "Hymns to the Silence," by Van Morrison, plays through.

LIGHTS come up on stage. Al is busy pulling a tarpaulin over the luggage cart. He is driving in the last stake. He finishes, puts down the sledgehammer and wipes sweat from his brow. He looks to the audience.)

AL: Yeah, well, I learned you can't destroy all your memories ... your experiences not even the less meaningful little incidents that dot your whole life.

You don't know why you remember this stuff, but you do. So you just manage it all, tie it down and keep it under control. None of this matters to your life today, only what you have retained that you can actually use, and to good purpose.

It has to be in here, in your mind, when you move on in your ascension plan. But you don't dump it; you build on it. Your life is not a do-over.

Yeah, I believe in an ascension plan for mortals. The Christians call the mission one to 'be ye perfect.' That's the goal. But ... how do I know this? How did I learn this?

(He is walking to stage left, and there a spotlight comes on to reveal his cushioned chair, a table and a lit candle beside it. He sits down and snuggles himself in comfortably.)

AL: First, don't go anywhere. Stay home. Take deep breathes and let your mind float free, imagine it as smoke wafting away, little substance. We are going deeper to the real substance.

Don't think. Empty all thoughts. No agenda. No analysis.
A blank canvas for the gifts of spirit.

None of the spiritual answers we seek are outside in any sense. They come from within. (*He takes another deep breath and exhales.*)

Be a candle in this world. Be a light.

STAGE lights dim and music comes up: "In The Garden" by Van Morrison.

(An angelic-like personality appears in stage center. She is a beautiful woman, with long flowing hair that resembles wings, dressed in a white gown, barefoot, and with a necklace pendant of blue neon light. She speaks:

CELESTIAL TEACHER 1: It is quiet. You have shut off the cacophony. You are open and free to ideas and insights and you have no fear. You know the two great motivators to man -- fear and Love -- and you have chosen wisely. Here is what you must know, and must synthesize from your myriad of experiences.

"God is Love. God is Spirit. God is all-Powerful, all Knowing, all Wise, and Everywhere Present. His Creation and every creature in it exist as the eventuation of His desire to know and possess All Experience — to know Himself.

As an answer to His primal question, "Who Am I?" the birth of the time-space universes came into being — to be

the theater for His children to experience life and to freely choose the path of knowing what it is to climb the ladder of life from imperfection to god-like perfection.

“To harvest these diverse life experiences, God placed an undiluted fragment of himself, the Indwelling Spirit, to live in the minds of all his children — to be the Divine Monitor that would lead these imperfect children through the Creation, level by level, realm by realm, world by world, revealing an ever-widening picture of Himself — the Great Mystery, and for which He shall impart on those of progressing spiritual maturity, greater and greater power, knowledge, and the understanding of love in more pure forms, until these children have achieved the wisdom and the glory of perfection attainment — to be like Him — to live eternally and to experience the divine embrace of Finality.

“All of Creation is changing, evolving and moving toward greater and greater states of perfection. Every creature, every world, every galaxy, every realm and dimension — all divinely orchestrated — a symphony of unimaginable complexity all moving according to His Great Plan.

As Creator and Divine Architect, He perpetually creates life and explores new ideas then experiences the outworking of those ideas and plans through His beloved Children.

“You, my friend, are a child of this magnificent and

benevolent Creator and you have been called to participate in His Great Plan.

Bar none — no matter what you believe — no person of any faith, religion or creed has exclusive right to participate in this Great Plan — all are invited just as all minds are indwelled by the Mighty and Divine Monitor — the God Fragment.

“In divine reality — the true reality, all are One since all things and beings are a part of God himself — there is no real separation from this Oneness — only your “temporary perception” of separation exists as a self-imposed illusion.

As you progress to greater states of perfection on your journey in the Grand Adventure, the veil of separation begins to fall away and soon you shall understand that all things work together in harmony to assist in the completion of the Great Plan.

“It is in ignorance of this Great Plan that your planet suffers and you find yourselves divided and at war believing that your lowest common denominator is your beliefs, your religion, your race, your culture, your sex, your social status or your national identity.

All these attributes of your humanity are but seeding for a diverse life experience — a diversity that should be celebrated and understood from the viewpoint of Oneness.

“Each one of you is intimately known by the Creator and His administrators and you have been chosen by divine appointment to be the host for the Divine Indwelling!

You are forever loved and never alone! All people on your world are your brothers and sisters — all are in the kindergarten of their education to become gods and each has a unique curriculum to fulfill.

Your graduation is the gift of your life experience to your Creator.

“Stand together in joy, wonder and astonishment as you wait your turn on the stage of graduation from the school of life. I congratulate you, even now, in the first steps of your kindergarten journey. The Great Plan requires your participation. Come now and take your place as a citizen of the universe and as an heir to your divine inheritance.”

(The teacher disappears and a SPOTLIGHT shines on another similar personality at stage left.

This is a male angel.)

CELESTIAL #2: “Dear ones, learn to expand your vision so that it reaches beyond your numbered days in your physical body. Ensure that your soul is adequately nurtured so that it is not aborted due to faulty nutrition. Treat your soul as loving parents would treat their child; do not neglect its needs for Truth, Beauty and Goodness.

These are the nutritional elements that will contribute to a well-rounded soul that will carry you through the birthing process of physical death. You will one day leave your birth planet for greater adventures — just as you left the womb of your birth mother.”

“Thank you dear one for beginning to pay more attention to your God-given Inner Voice. This means that you are serious about strengthening that most valuable connection to The All That Is. It is truly a joyful sign for the celestial hierarchy when more humans on this planet are actively seeking a more solid personal connection to The All That Is.

“In truth and fact, that is all that is required. The eternal Creator loves to hear from all His evolving creatures on the worlds of space with His Gift of free will to do so.

None ought to be enslaved to a worn-out religious system with their do’s and don’ts and with their pomp and redundant ceremonials, even though too many of you seem to require some sort of sign to hang on to the past, because ‘things have always been done this way and that is good enough for me’ type of mentality.

“When in earnest you truly start looking at the religion you were raised in, especially the erroneous law you had to abide by with confessing your sins to another mortal, who is supposedly ‘holier than thou’ to forgive your sins!

This is God’s domain to forgive sins and He forgives only in so far as you forgive yourselves and others.

“The crux of the matter here is: ‘How many truly love themselves as a worthy child of God to make that level of forgiveness easy for themselves?’ Do you feel that loving connection with God and let it flow through you and then pass this love on to others?

(She fades and a third and final Celestial teacher replaces her.. The personality appears androgenous, with silvery white hair but closely cropped, wearing a white jump suit with a zipper. The personality wears spike-heeled boots. The teacher could be male or female or neither or both.)

CELESTIAL TEACHER 3: “Today many people are not free. They are living with chains that prevent them from being happy.

Most often, they themselves have applied these chains. They live tied to memories of the past, resentment or material things that provide them with certain ‘status.’ Others live attached to an idea. None are free.

“You came to this world to find freedom because you are essentially free.

“Find out what binds you. What are those chains that keep you from flying freely in the sky of love, giving happiness, kindness and forgiveness?

Gradually discover each of those chains in your mind and break them at once. You will feel how your walk becomes lighter, how you enjoy more your life and how you will gradually be living Paradise on Earth.

“You can’t live in Paradise being shackled. You have to be free to live it. Check out then what are your chains and break them to be free.”

“The Universal Father loves you. Be joyful about it.”

(The personality smiles, waves a "party on" sign with the fingers, and glides away.)

(STAGE lightens up. Al opens his eyes and brings himself awake. He gets up, stretches and addresses the audience.)

AL Pretty cool, huh? You can listen on your keyboard too and type it up as you go.

(He starts walking toward stage right)

Most people haven't managed this yet. They're often trying too hard. You've got to learn to release to spirit, not control it. It's the same with nature itself.

We've got to learn to work with spiritual forces in our minds, not struggle for analytical understandings that we can't achieve with our human minds.

And we have to have just a little bit of faith that if you go into stillness and knock on God's door -- in worship and in a quest for spiritual growth ... that some devil of your own creation isn't going to answer the Father's door.

We don't need to be fearful of our minds. We need to trust in them as much as God, the Father, does. He has given us this world and the free will to live in it. This is the eternal gift. Beyond this is Evolution.

So ... we look around and see that we haven't overcome the mythologies we've created. We're guided by myths, everywhere. It's difficult if not impossible to put all of it

aside, all the baggage in our minds that have survived the years and made a big clot that fills our head.

It's like a ball of twine, maybe, and we're tied in knots.

If we could unravel it all, we would be left standing here, naked and clean, no clothes, no ideas in our heads, no dogma to obey, just ourselves, our Creator who lives inside, and these imperfect planetary gardens that are evolving too.

This is the state in which we can do some pure thinking with our mind gift and with inner spirit guidance that comes from eternal values and not from the uncertain, evolving, passing ones of evolution.

(Al is now at stage right, slaps the luggage cart with his hand as he walks by. A female voice comes from off-stage right.)

FEMALE VOICE EVA: *from backstage:* Al, my precious darling, come to supper ... and get this stinking garbage out of here, please.

AL: On the way, my Moon and Stars. *(He turns to the audience again, pointing to the voice coming from off-stage.)*

And ... if you want to worry a lot less about everything in mortal life -- find somebody to love and who responds with love. I met my dear friend Eva a week or so ago. She's cooking dinner for us in her condo. She cooks, I do the dishes.

Yeah, well, we all need to settle into an ordinary life don't we? And not spend so much time analyzing it and worrying about what all might be wrong with it.

It's really simple on this earthly part of our eternal path, as humans of the realm. We want LOVE — in all things!

So I think it's this way. Fulfill your basic needs on the planet to sustain the body. Learn and experience new things as a faith-filled explorer of this realm.

As you sift through it all, determine what true value is. What you can take with you when you transition from the mortal part of the path.

Above all, don't take on the world's problems while you're here. Collectively, they amount to learning and growing experiences for all of humanity. That's the way it is. We're all in school.

The learning is strongly experiential, and has to be this way. You just had to BE here to understand it. You had to have this ... Being. Live it in order to fully know it.

Keep belief systems, especially the stagnated ones, at arm's length. All of them are only partisan pieces of the overall planetary puzzle that you now recognize, since you have grown in universe awareness and cosmic consciousness.

And you know now that you can always ask your questions and lay out your concerns to the spirits within, and continue your learning here in parallel and in cohesion with your experiences in everyday life.

With this expanded inner consciousness, you now look upon your world as simply one of many planets in a vast universe where your explorations will lead you.

EVA: *(steps out into view, smiling at Al and holding a spatula. She notices the audience)* Here's the garbage. There's shrimp shells in there ... Hey! Who are all these people?

AL: Well ... what if I said all the world's a stage?

EVA: Well ... I would say ... let's eat while it's hot.
(AL and EVA leave hand in hand and go inside.)

Van Morrison sings "Bright Side of the Road." After the first verse CURTAIN COMES DOWN

ESSAYS ON THE THEME

by Jim Cleveland

Rising Above Human Mind

We humans, they say, have feet of clay. We are apt to fall and fail at any time.

Our minds are also clay — to be molded from our experiences, and what we learn.

If we were to rise above our material, mortal mind, where would we go? To Spirit.

We would know ourselves as the Spiritual beings we will become, not the flesh we inhabit temporarily — for its educational experiences.

We would then remain physically in the world, but not of it. We would assume our higher identity, when we are eventually fused with our spiritual energy, to leave our materiality behind.

Surely this isn't possible in this small lifetime. No. We are who we are in the ascension plan, and where we are in the quest for higher identity.

So can we actually rise above human mind? Assuredly. We can strive to reach its enormous potential.

Normal minds use a fraction of their capacity. There are barriers.

Bias and acrimony intrude on us at every turn — urging our fear and feeling of separation. We could be free of this and think more rationally. In evolution, we are still imbued with animal-like thinking.

Critical thinking is not the norm among the masses, and the masses are important to move the whole.

We can avoid jerking our knees at events and exploring them instead. Observe, discern, evaluate and judge its values. Do this in order.

The human mind does truly have untapped powers. In times of silent rest and worship, you can achieve an energized relaxation that opens your mind to new insights, new ways of looking at the exact issues in your lives. This is no coincidence.

You can rise above the usually dominating analytical mind as well, by engaging your imagination to see what inspirations and visualizations come to you in the silence and on the panoramic canvas of the mind-scape.

Many minds have untapped creativity. Many great artists are curtailed in their physical manifestations, but they are eternal ascending personalities and their artistic

expressions live on with them. Death is only a transition ... a passageway.

While you are here, you can shuck the cacophony of a planet comprised of the confused.

Know that God is Love. This is your daily, hourly Mantra. Dogma scripture has no real value; all the spiritual wisdom you need is within you.

Develop your gift of Cosmic Mind by learning to think with cosmic logic. The Universal Father and the time and space worlds for ascending humans make perfect sense.

Develop your intuitive powers, for they represent the balancing beam that colors your logic and gives it meaningful expression.

Develop the ability of instant Stillness — to quickly go into a moment of faith connection and personal recognition of God and become re-centered on the ultimate reality of your spirit identity. God, the Father, loves your company.

Develop a lifestyle of mental and physical health, allowing your mind, body and spirit to be your source of wisdom. Each of them speaks to you. They live best in balance, an enticing challenge for your life.

Develop a perspective shorn free of the partisan baggage that has been thrown on your life cart from the beginning. Recognize the marketers of myopia, the dupes and their clay feet, the con men, the whores, the punks and the addicts, the zealots of narrow mind and clandestine

racism, the ego engorgers and their insatiable appetites. Understand the pitiful hordes of homeless and hold empathy for them, and good will.

This is life, a glorious garden of blooming discoveries. Full of disintegration. Full of new growth.

Yet we all should examine our baggage cart now and then, and see if we should consider a clean start on some of these issues. In history, we have been lied to at every turn. It continues daily, all over the news and all over the ridiculous scenarios of the advertising industry.

It's time we turned to our inner authorities to show us the real truths of life. We are more than happy shoppers. We are more than rubes or demagogues.

Our inner spirit never fails to accurately appraise the situation and urge us in the right direction. Often we aren't listening. We should withdraw, be quiet and give full attention to our Universal God. Then everything else will go away for you to hear from your Father.

SIDES

We and they.

That's us and them.

My heart's astray

Over divisive hymns

Pundits of prickery

Sages of trickery

*Tell me lies
That twist all history
Puking their sanctimony
Grinding their axes
Upon all decency.*

*We and they
Can have our say
Noise in air
Ideas as snares
Twisting simplicity away.
They speak out on facades
Sentences like rods
While we stew as listeners
Truth and lie christeners
Reality fades.*

*We and they
And them in between
Habits to wean
Dulling the sheen
Very paradoxically.
The goal to embrace
The human race
All in one place
Seamless, joyfully
Separation being
The atrocity*

*We and they
According to plan
Evolve yourself
Burn your brand
The fire of breath
A mind of stealth
Take your place
As a grain of sand
Shining multitudes
Here at hand.*

*Us, them, divisive speech
Shrieking at us as they preach
Their pointless pride
arrogant stride
Too noisy for me to reach.
We together could
Make a difference
If we relegate beliefs to
added reference.
Listen to our hearts
That speak within
Safe, secure from frantic din.
Love light is your inner kin.
Your very essence.*

Basic Co-Creativity

*Reminders for readers of the Urantia revelation
and other spiritual seekers*

It appears to me that absolutely nothing in the time and space worlds is created by the hand of God and given to us. That is a myth. It is all co-creative.

There is a vast spiritual hierarchy that creates all of the cosmos and the evolving personalities within them. God delegates and many of those in the hierarchy delegate and delegate again.

On our planet, in the beginning, the Life Carriers created modest, initial biological lifeforms in conducive lagoons and these lifeforms immediately begin working with other lifeforms to create more lifeforms. We continue to create and give birth to children today through sexual union, and develop citizens from these offsprings in a co-creative way with many other forms of life, from teachers to doctors to employers, all shaping the actual real person. That person is a co-creative mix of mind and body and spirit.

When approval was given for the Urantia papers, it also was a co-creative endeavor. There would be little or no unearned knowledge since the quest for knowledge is ours, and the joys of discovery. But the co-creativity of spiritually inspired humans who had written about these concepts was included so as not to ignore their efforts. Everything from human sources was gathered to co-exist with the magnificent production of the collaborative work.

The commission that created the papers was also a co-creative collaboration, the latter part among midwayers who cooperated in the production. It required an outstanding team to produce the papers.

In science, philosophy, and religion, nothing is created by one person; all is teamwork. And teamwork is what the book says we must learn, and we will still be learning it in Havona. All creativity that we exhibit comes from the co-creative effort of others before us in the evolutionary plan.

One can assume that Dr. Sadler and his learned colleagues on the commission could have gleaned, written and organized all of this material and published it. But I don't believe that the contact commission of academic people would have the capability of producing such a document. I don't believe that adding another several hundred academics to the process would have produced this book either. It would likely have produced only more differences of opinion ... and a lot of messy history.

Jesus' mission was co-creative as well. He worked closely with his spiritual advisors and he organized a team of apostles to work together who greatly differed from one another but were pledged to the service. Later, the apostles worked with other humans to spread the good news, organize churches, etc.

Yes, there are various capacities within humans to seek and understand from the many sources.

Worldwide, we see the powerful results of the Holy Mother Spirit's work in many oneness and love

movements all across the globe. Many of them vary in their exact beliefs built around intellect and experience, but they all have the same belief in global spiritual altruism, not just tolerance of one another, but loving embrace. This is Mother's essential message.

And while the Urantia Book may be the best collection of knowledge on the planet, it's not necessary to even discover it to be a great spiritual leader, since spiritual truths are spoken to us from within as we seek them. Ask and you shall receive in the best way you can understand. Knock and Jesus answers in the best way that he can. Methods for contacting and working with humans are varied since every human is unique and every teacher is unique too.

Transmitting celestial teachers in the Urantia-based Teaching Mission is also a co-creative process, which alarms some people who think minds can't be trusted or the individuals who serve in this 'channeling' capacity. Some prefer to trust people in deep trances, whose minds are out of the picture. This is the old way. The new way allows humans to be an active part of this "correcting time" and the lessons provide a fundamental framework of spiritual insights for our soul growth. If you can't trust your own mind, then your first order of business is rectifying this bizarre problem. The idea is to curb your mind anyway, and just say the words that come to you, without any analytics.

Should our esteemed Urantian researcher Matthew Block find every existing human source that was included in the

Urantia Papers, he may have accomplished little beyond the realm of curiosity.

The book was indeed assembled and published over years of co-creative work, and didn't come from some purely channeled mystical source on a silver platter. Dr. Sadler and colleagues revised and included material from many contemporary books because that was the plan. Doc himself said the new insights from above were not just coming to him, but to others as well. He read from contemporary books at meetings of his Forum.

Those Urantia readers who seek to put their book on an elevated plane, above the inevitable pollution and corruption of the human mind and anyone who would dare to channel these same sources are clearly off the path and into the thorn thicket. What kind of mind believes that the human mind, theirs in particular, is a corrupting influence? Can you not do better then?

I am only thankful that these human authors from centuries ago are not completely lost in the annals of human publishing. The biography of one of them indicates he was a devout lover of Jesus and devoted his life to spiritual study. No doubt his writings that come from this are inspired and true. No doubt they belonged in this co-created book so that he can take his rightful place in the history of spiritual achievements. Had the Urantia authors bypassed his work what kind of justice would that be?

The time and space worlds evolve and their hallmark is co-creativity, learning to work together. All created works are the result of co-creation, including the Bible, the Urantia

Papers and the invention of post-its. They all build on the work that was done before them. The Bible, for example, pulls a lot of material from older writings, including Psalms and Proverbs.

Co-created works may not be absolutely and exactly accurate and true in some respects, but this is true for all humanity in all of the time-space worlds. No thing is perfect; all things feature evolving complexities that we are charged to understand as we seek the highest levels of truth, beauty and goodness that humans can achieve. The purpose of life is the Quest itself. Be ye perfect. We need lots of help.

Our celestial teachers are evolving too, and they state unequivocally that they are learning much as students on this sphere. We participate in their education and progress as we participate in ours.

As we evolve, we create ... or else we don't evolve. We create best when we are instructed and inspired by spirit. Otherwise, we can create discord, ignorance and evil.

Evolving humans today are blessed with individually crafted spiritual guidance every day via the Stillness time with God and his assigned teachers and guides, with your own Indwelling Spirit of God as the nucleus of your being. *The Urantia Book* praises and promotes a Personal Religion between ourselves and God. The Teaching Mission shows us the way to achieve it.

But you get nothing on a platter. You join the Universal God in Creation.

I AM ONE in service

For over 25 years, I've collected transmitted lessons from celestial teachers, who speak to us from within.

Despite all of the warnings of the uninformed, I have never been guided wrongly, and I have found that all of the messages point to exactly the same learnings. I find that these are the priority learnings that we need.

Our class teacher, Tarkas, in Cincinnati anchored his lessons on a series of priorities for personal spiritual growth — worship, prayer, forgiveness and love. Learn what these subjects truly mean and then practice them.

The 'love' part was defined as service, for that's love leads to — doing the Father's business by spreading what you can of truth, beauty and goodness to your siblings.

All humans are your siblings. There is one race — humanity.

In a recent transmission to a member of the 11.11 Correcting Time movement, there is a great summation from this human vessel's indwelling Thought Adjuster, which is God's presence inside us.

It tells us how to be happy and fulfilled in life.

Monterrey, Mexico, October 19, 2017.

Message received by Bettina.

Thought Adjuster: “Sometimes you have doubts about your activities on this earth; your work and your way of generating resources for survival. The confusion is in the approach you have given to these activities. Your main focus should be on service. Ask yourself: ‘How can you put the gifts that have been given to you, at the service of others?’ ‘How can you support the growth and evolution of the people around you?’ ‘How can you help

their lives on Earth to have more peace and love?’

“Right from the moment you focus your activities on the service and the contribution you can make to others, you will discover the engine that will move you to do what you have to do.

“And the results will not only be that you will touch and change the lives of many people, but your own life will change, be enriched, be transformed, grow and evolve.

“Then stop worrying about you, your decisions, your successes or mistakes. Focus on putting yourself at the service of others and how you can lead them to live in peace and love. As a result, you yourself will live in peace and love.

“Everything else that worries you today will consequently be given to you.”

REVERSING DOGMA TO 'I AM GOD'

Dogma is a rigid belief system.

How can the infantile mind of humans have a rigid belief system? We must be students and learn more. We are not here to take stands on human dogma, but to reach beyond it.

When you reverse the letters you get 'Am God' and if you add the 'I' and make your personal commitment, you get: I AM GOD.

This is not declaring your own sovereignty but accepting that you are part of God by being his child, his creation, one of the trillions of beings in evolving worlds that owe allegiance to this First Source and Center of the universes.

God inhabits each one of his children by indwelling his spirit. To grow, you must consult your inner self, the spirit energy of your being and find your true guidance there. We must overcome the cacophony of phony influences with inner serenity as did Jesus.

The spiritual teacher Ophelius is part of a team called the Council of Wisdom. His recent transmitted

messages are among many others at the website: **www.correctingtime.org** and they will individually and collectively add to your knowledge of inner spirit and how to work from within to radiate greater wisdom, beauty and goodness in your life.

Here are some lessons from celestial teacher Ophelius:

The Purpose and Importance of Stillness

Asheville, North Carolina, USA

Sunday, October 30, 2016

Teacher Ophelius

Receiver:

Chris Maurus

Dear One, the question has been asked about the purpose and importance of “Stillness” meditation and how it differs from the practice of “mindfulness”— a popular method used by many in western culture to focus the mind on present awareness.

There are many forms of meditation used by men and women around the world and each produces varying benefits depending on the intention used when participating in the practice.

The one unifying benefit is that meditation brings the mind into a state of “true consciousness,” meaning: It has a grounding effect to release the mind from material concerns, emotional distresses, and the circumstances of time related activities, bringing awareness to the present moment—to experience a state of simply “being.”

Stillness however, has an intention and goes beyond this static state of present moment awareness and brings consciousness into a more unified state with the Indwelling Spirit of the Creator.

An atheist can benefit from mindfulness meditation as can any other person having the intention that there are therapeutic benefits to be had from the practice—there is no faith or religious beliefs necessary to bring consciousness into a more pure state.

Once in this place of present centered awareness, consciousness itself first begins to connect to the conscious state of its most intimate companion—the body, which has its own consciousness—every cell, every tissue, every organ. The body “broadcasts” its needs to your consciousness continually.

However, because of mind chatter, clutter, material and emotional distresses and distractions, the internal “voice” is vanquished and the mind pays no attention until the body “screams” using pain to get your immediate attention.

It is a known fact that persons who practice any form of meditation or mindfulness will begin to pursue a healthier lifestyle because they unknowingly are “hearing” the voice of their body’s consciousness and shall begin doing those things that bring vitality to the total system—mind, body, and spirit.

Whether or not they acknowledge the “spirit” as a part of their total system does not prevent them from the benefits of communicating with their Indwelling God Fragment at some level. Intention, dear one, is the key to opening up a channel with the spirit part of your system.

Stillness meditation has an intention and recognition of the “primary relationship”—the parent/child relationship between you and the Universal Father. When you enter into stillness, you open your mind and remove all barriers, conditions, and concerns, and extend your faith as the hand that reaches up to God while you wait in silence for the “handshake” of God reaching down to you.

In this period of “waiting” in silence, many insights and discoveries may be experienced as your thoughts thin and your mind becomes quiet. Eventually, and with enough practice and perseverance, your mind shall come into a place of pure consciousness like a placid lake—there is a state of unity—a handshake with God. Many who reach this place are actually startled by it and immediately break away from it as it is something that has never before been experienced.

Once this moment of pure consciousness has been attained, the meditator shall be encouraged to try again and again, each time extending the period of unity. This

place of pure consciousness is beyond all words and understanding, yet to experience it, brings healing on many levels and builds faith in the assurance of eternal life as a child of God.

Peace to you,
The Circle of Seven

The One Most Important Idea

Sunday, July 24, 2016

Teacher: Ophelius

Receiver: Chris Maurus

Q: (Receiver) Teacher, What is the one most important idea that an awakening soul can know?

A: (Ophelius) Dear One, this is the very question that the Master, Joshua Ben Joseph, often pondered as a young man starting out on his ministry prior to his full awakening at his baptism in the Jordan River.

He knew the answer in His heart, but making it understood to a generation who was steeped in superstition and religious slavery was something that would take much thought and many strategies to approach the darkened minds of that time.

Like Him, you also will have to think much about how to make plain the good news to the souls of this world who in every way are just as darkened in their minds about the realities of life and purpose.

You must communicate the very fact that there IS a heavenly Father—a Creator Father—the First Source and Center, who is eternal, who always was and shall ever be the Universal Upholder of all realities, realms, and worlds in the master universe.

He created the physical universes to escape the absolutes of infinity—to experience life in a physical creation living vicariously through His created children—you, the explorers of these created realities of time and space.

Yet, how can this be? How can He experience life through you? By His unfathomable genius, He found a way to fragment His divinity and affix a perfect piece of Himself within the mind of every man, woman, and child—the Mystery Monitor, sometimes called the Higher Self, the Inner Pilot, the Spirit of God, the Thought Adjuster.

He created you imperfect by design so that by experience you would learn all there is to know about Him, His Creation, and to co-creatively work out every unique idea together, with Him, through the agency of

the Thought Adjuster, as He guides you back to a state of relative perfection—to be perfect like Him.

It is in this journey “back home” that is of most value to Him—the collection of free will life experiences that is helping Him emerge from the fetters of infinity as a Supreme Being who is and has known and experienced life in every way, shape, form, and possibility.

To achieve His Great Plan, He offers you eternal life and gives you the free will option to choose whether or not to continue with this grand adventure. He wants you to understand this most basic fact of life and purpose so that you can choose wisely and awaken to the understanding that you are a god in the making—His offspring—a child of this all knowing, all wise, all powerful, and everywhere present Creator.

Because we are his progeny, He loves us unconditionally and we feel this love in varying degrees through all the relationships we have with our brothers and sisters, both human and celestial, as we live our lives here and hereafter.

As we journey on this path home and become increasingly wise, we experience greater and more refined degrees of His love which allows us greater creative power to fulfill His mandate to experience life in every possibility.

Dear One, I cannot adequately express in words the astonishment of my journey thus far and I have a long, long, way to go. No matter your situation, or life station, please know that you are loved and never alone, for He is always with you, speaking softly, pointing the way forward toward that next perfecting moment that makes you more like Him.

Hold this thought in the back of your mind always: You shall one day stand before Him on Paradise as a perfect soul who has traveled the adventures of time and who has in every way become like Him—in His image, and shall receive the embrace of Finality.

From this place, no other can place a limit on your creative potential, for you shall have earned His trust and received the prize of god-like power and glory—to know the absolutes of pure love.

Peace to you,

The Circle of Seven

*Only from the Center
can you see all things.*

Sunday, April 3, 2016

Teacher: Ophelius

Receiver: Chris Maurus

The message for today is about getting grounded and bringing yourself back to a root state of spiritual surety.

For many of you students on the path read widely and from many sources—some of these sources are wise, deep, and expand your mind helping you to fill in the gaps in your understanding, while others may be very contaminated, contain fearful messages, or confuse and contradict what you already understand.

When you find yourself at a crossroads where you are confused and do not know what to believe because of these conflicting and sometimes fearful cross-pollinated beliefs or channelings, it is time for you to ground yourself and come back to center. Only from the center can you see all things in perspective and allow the One Truth to help you sort out and discern what is real and what is fantasy.

Each of you is an expression of the Creator's new and unique idea on the time-space worlds where you live.

Each of you has, to some degree, greater or lesser contact with your Indwelling Spirit, the angelic realm, mansion world teachers, and other celestial sources.

There also exist those layers around your planet that contain the lower vibrating entities, unresolved energies, and pathways to dark energy—the spirits of rebellion. Each of these sources can be tapped willingly or unwillingly depending on the intention or the naivety of the seeker.

These lower spirits can and do masquerade as sources of truth and light and can cause great confusion for those who are “undiscerning.” Even light workers of great understanding can be harassed by high-ranking rebellious spirits and must be diligent to guard against these ungodlike interferences.

When you feel confused or tormented by sources of information or spiritual influences, you can always “clean out your closet” and begin again at the source.

Seek the advice and guidance of your Heavenly Father. Sit in the silence with very clear intention and speak only to Him. Ask that any and all deceiving information or sources be taken from you and then stop all seeking for a period of time and replace your research time with stillness.

Just as your planet was cut off from all universe circuits during the Lucifer Rebellion to prevent it from spreading to other worlds in the system, so too must you cut off the circuits of those sources that confuse and bring fear to your mind.

Your Indwelling Spirit, the Thought Adjuster, is the Master Operator, whose job it is to spiritualize your mind according to the Great Plan for perfection attainment and god-like development. Let the Spirit within speak, and in time, those things that are helpful to know and understand will remain, while those things of confusion and fear will fall away.

Sometimes we are led astray by our impatience to know the mind of God by taking the short-cut in seeking out answers from other sources who we believe have a greater connection than do ourselves. Sometimes this can be helpful, and other times it can be harmful depending on the amount of contamination within the source.

Discernment is what is needed and that process should always involve the One True Source—the Indwelling Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of Truth. The Creator has a developmental plan for your life and when you come back to center, you can begin again to listen as the options for your development are whispered in the stillness of your divine connection.

Come home to center, dear ones, and let the Father
show you the true, the beautiful, and the good path.

Peace to you,

The Circle of Seven

*Be you perfect in your own day and
time - part 1*

Sunday, October 16, 2016

Teacher: Ophelius

Receiver: Chris Maurus

Dear One, the question has been asked about what it means to answer the Universal Father's edict to "Be perfect, as I AM perfect," and more specifically, what means for you: those living on Urantia?

Certainly perfection, in and of itself, is something that is not attainable on the evolutionary worlds of time, but there is a "standard" that is set for those at each planetary level of evolutionary status, meaning: "Be you perfect in your own day and time."

Because life on each evolutionary world develops uniquely and stands at various stages of development,

with respect to Light and Life status, there are different standards set for each as an expected “curve” of normal development and growth as it is viewed from your planetary administrators: the Planetary Prince, the System Sovereign, and the Most Highs of Edentia.

On very young planets where will creatures are still working out the vicissitudes of primitive life having had very little development in science or culture, the bar is set rather low with the expectation that they will follow the path of tribe against tribe warfare while developing tools and more cunning ways to kill each other.

At this level of development, there are few, if any, Thought Adjusters (TAs) of fusion status indwelling these creature minds. At best, TAs may indwell these minds temporarily to gain experience with the biological mind mechanisms for that species as it may later (in time) be evolving to a fusion status creature.

Once a Planetary Prince and his staff come to an evolutionary world, the bar is raised with respect to the guidance and education that is afforded the surrounding tribes of natives. They are taught many things from farming, building, raising cattle, sanitation, personal hygiene, to the basic cosmology of the universe and spiritual realities including the worship of the Universal Father. They are also given codes of

conduct for which they are expected to adopt when participating in the educational activities in the centers of the Planetary Prince and his staff.

It is here where men and women first develop their societies and primitive governments as they take what they have learned back to their peoples.

Later, when an Adamic pair (Adam and Eve) come to a world, the bar is raised yet again as the biology of the natives are elevated with the infusion of the Violet bloodline from the Adamic progeny.

Spiritual development from this point begins to “ramp up” and these creatures then move from merely obeying the laws of conduct to knowing with greater surety the leadings of the Indwelling Spirit as more and more of them begin to receive TAs of possible fusion status.

Once a Magisterial Son, or a Creator Son visits the planet, the bar is raised yet again and the TAs flock to these worlds in great numbers which have been prepared by the Spirit of Truth to indwell the minds of those creatures for fusion potential.

From this point, the planet is on an upward curve of development in both science and spirituality.

Everything I have just described (greatly abridged) to you is more or less the “normal” curve of planetary evolution and expectation.

However, your world, being classed as an experimental world and one that has been involved in a system wide rebellion for over 200,000 years, has had a “relapse” in growth and spiritual development, and so it is that the standard set for those who live their lives on Urantia is “adjusted” for their “day and time.”

In part 2 of this message we shall look more closely at what that standard is and how it relates to your current development.

Peace to you,
The Circle of Seven

“ Bridging the gap, or piercing the veil, as some would say, can be accomplished in many ways--communicate, communicate, communicate. Communication can be in the form of prayer, worship, or meditation (stillness). Learning to access this channel to the soul is paramount to achieving Godlikeness The more times we drink from this well, the greater becomes our bucket. Through providential action God enlarges our capacity to receive love as we in turn enlarge our willingness to show love to our brothers and sisters. ” --
Teacher Ophelius

Be you perfect in your own day and time – part 2

Sunday, October 23, 2016

Teacher: Ophelius

Receiver: Chris Maurus

In part 1 of this message we talked about the “normal” curve of planetary development and what the expectation was for each world according to its evolutionary standing—to be “perfect” meant living a life according to the guided and inherent maturity of the personal, spiritual, and social memes in planetary consciousness that were available to that day and generation.

The “bar” (expectation) that is set by your planetary administrators takes into consideration all these developmental factors for which a planetary dispensation is crafted to set standards and limitations for how each generation is to be guided according to its “intended” path of development.

To live a “perfect life” on Urantia, is one of the most challenging endeavors in the universe for the souls born to this world and for the planetary administration that oversees a dispensation.

Urantia, being an experimental world and having been greatly affected by the Lucifer Rebellion, was a recipe for disastrous setbacks in both the biological and sociological development of your species.

There was much “tinkering” by the rebellious leaders to “disconnect” man from knowing the love of the Universal Father and the Great Plan.

The “light of truth” that inspires man to be more than what he is was nearly extinct on Urantia were it not for the emergency service of Machiventa Melchizedek—the “Priest of Salem” who brought the lost teachings of your spiritual heritage back into planetary consciousness as he and his missionaries spread the light of truth throughout the world, which then seeded all the known religions of today and paved a way for the greatest spiritual dispensation and revelation any world in the universe could hope for—the bestowal of a Creator Son born to woman as Jesus of Nazareth and the outpouring of the Spirit of Truth on all flesh.

It is said that the Son of Man lived a perfect life and is the example for all worlds in the universe for what a perfect life meant for that day and time which could therefore be extrapolated by planetary administrators across all stages of planetary development for the standards that would be used to guide the evolutionary process.

Jesus was challenged in all ways in his humanity as any of you are in your lives. He is the pattern example for human behavior and spiritual achievement.

He attained perfect “atunement” with his Indwelling Spirit, which at that point did he awaken to his full consciousness as a Creator Son. In His words: “You shall achieve even greater things than I,” was a testament for the powerful potential that is within the human heart. I say “heart” because that is where the Spirit speaks.

I admonish each of you to read your text on the Life and Teachings of Jesus and examine the powerful character of His humanity—the courage, compassion, and righteous living that he demonstrated among his fellows—even in the face of incredible ignorance and cruelty and in the actions of the darkened minds of that time.

In His exemplary life He gives us the key to unlock that human potential to “achieve even greater things.” He challenges us to love, not only with a neighborly love, but with a Fatherly love—even unto your enemies—a simple statement, but with an utterly powerful consequence.

Peace to you,
The Circle of Seven

Receiver's note: A "dispensation" is defined as an epoch of time on an evolutionary world where certain rules and standards are set in place by the celestial planetary administration which governs the path of planetary evolution.

This includes, but not limited to: revelation, spiritual influence, and universe energies which may or may not be used in the process of moving a developing world from one epoch to another—a "playbook" of sorts.

Worlds that have been involved in rebellion need very carefully considered dispensations. Every dispensation sets the bar for human "accountability" which determines the mercy ministry to be considered for the souls of that world.

No Greater Time in History

Sunday, December 3, 2017

Teacher: Ophelius

Receiver: Chris Maurus

Today, my dear friends—students on the path, we would like to speak about the tremendous opportunities available to you all.

There has been no greater time in the history of your world to expand mind and bridge the gap between the human and Divine Self.

The Planetary Supreme is evolving, and with Her, She brings the circuits and energies needed for human consciousness to evolve as well, which makes it now possible for all humans to have greater attunement with their Indwelling Spirit—the Thought Adjuster.

This is a monumental achievement for your world and it is something we here on the Mansion Worlds are excited about as we watch your world transform from darkness into Light and Life!

What does this mean for you and your lives and for future generations? The Thought Adjusters have always led the way when it comes to needed changes in consciousness (on a planetary scale) to change and position social and geopolitical structures through leadership by citizens who are waking up to see the true path and potential of the human spirit—to rise above the old programming of war, fear, scarcity, and limitation through control by elitism.

It begins with each individual as the spiritual heart center hears the growing voice of the Adjuster, dwelling within, leading them to embrace the values of Truth,

Beauty, and Goodness, and to apply it directly to their lives.

That Divine Voice is now speaking to you, my dear friends, and you have the opportunity to make the changes you want to see in the world, but first you must make that change in your own heart.

When the Master declared, “You shall do even greater works than I,” he was looking forward to this time when humanity’s heart would begin beating from its spiritual center—not its root, where the brotherhood of man would finally take hold in the spirit of human consciousness. You are living in this time!

Those who sincerely want to have a real working relationship with their Father Fragments can do so. All you need to do is to close the door of your room and connect—ask and it shall be given!

Through this Divine Fragment of the Creator living in your mind—your personal spiritual operator, you have access to the Universal Mind. Use your co-creative imaginations and step into what you want to become and achieve in your life while you still breathe.

True joy, love, satisfaction, and achievement comes from within—find it within you first and then let the overflow spill onto all those around you. Let loose the Spirit!

When you do, you will see the reflection of that Spirit show up in others who are attracted to the vibration of the divine love radiating from your heart center!

Peace to you,
The Circle of Seven

Explore the Evolution of the Soul

December 17, 2017.

Teacher: Ophelius; TR: Chris Maurus

Teacher Ophelius: “Dear Students, today we would like to explore the evolution of the soul and what it means to actively participate in your own ascension. Many of you have achieved, have surpassed, or are approaching; the Third Circle of Adjuster Attunement also known as the Third Psychic Circle.

What this indicates is that there is an increasing exchange of communications in the conscious mind between you and your Thought Adjuster (TA), yet most of you do not recognize this exchange as being a conversation with the Divine — it feels more like your own voice, but if you could step back into your thoughts from a decade ago, you would quickly recognize the difference in the quality of your thoughts then as compared to now. It is in this difference that we

are speaking of today which you may recognize as your own spiritual evolution.

“Circle attainment (7th to the 1st) is an evolution of mind and thought played out on the stage of time as a construct for soul development. As you are presented with opportunities for growth throughout your life — moral choices, it is your ability to make decisions that reflect and demonstrate the divine attitude that determines the rate at which you grow.

A 7th Circler is starting at a place where it's 'all about me,' so to speak, and decisions are based on this ego-centric world view. In this place, there is little conscious input from the Adjuster because there is no open circuit in the mind for such input — the mind is locked down and the world is seen as being very 'black and white,' and decisions are largely made as a means of answering, 'How does this benefit me in my black and white world?'

“It is only when the churning of life and the relationships and opportunities therewith provides a 'color' to the black and white landscape does the individual 'stop' and take notice for the first time that something in his or her personal life has changed. There is a need for a decision that does not fit into the lexicon of black and white vocabulary.

It is here where the individual has the opportunity to ‘step outside the box’ of predictable patterns and open a new circuit in the mind where the TA may speak into the heart. It is here where the divine attitude sits waiting for the choosing to act. If the individual acts on this ‘feeling’ a new circuit in the mind opens and remains open for other Adjuster input unless the individual regresses back into black and white thinking — old patterns.

“As more and more decisions are made to stop and consider the divine attitude, more and more circuits are open for TA input. This progressive type of thinking will lead to attunement with the TA where He can more easily work with you directly rather than through the more difficult process of painful life lessons.

Working directly with the TA means you are giving more pause and thought to the situations and relationships in your life and you are being more proactive than re-active allowing TA input to flow through you. When the TA becomes a conscious partner in your thought-life, there shall be soul evolution — it must be so, for the soul begins to take on the form of the divine and when it is mature enough, fusion shall occur!

“Peace to you,

“The Circle of Seven.”

TRUTH and BEAUTY and GOODNESS

In my search for these ideals, I've been inspired most by three Revelations — the Urantia papers, A Course in Miracles, and the spirit-driven lectures of the Pathwork Foundation.

In realizing that much of what you are taught and supposedly “learn” is full of the mythical baggage of other humans, you naturally turn to the wisdom that can come from inside. But also you wish for some anchors of knowledge that you can count on. There must be some spirit-assisted documents of relative purity.

Truth is really where you find it, and can come in the voice of the next person you meet, but these are some cosmological texts that I truly admire.

Urantia explains the cosmology of the universe and your place in God's ascension plan. ACIM helps you think from your true identity, as a spiritual being with a body, an important polarity shift. The Pathwork is a roadmap for living in the earth community and sharing productively with others. The goal is to try to live in the awakening moment, and seek peace within that moment as you bring it to others.

I join with you in wishing for Peace on Earth and good will between all people. I truly believe you will enjoy and learn from these Revelations, and meet some loving, caring people if you join with them.

May I introduce them, with narratives from their own websites, so they have been edited, approved and passed inspection.

The Urantia Book contains nearly 2,000 pages divided into 196 Papers related to all aspects of human life. It is supported by the Urantia Foundation and a Urantia Fellowship. From the latter comes their website description:

The book begins with a description of God and the central universe of divine perfection. Its description of the cosmos moves outward toward life on our planet, covering in the process the essential elements of our careers from life here on Urantia (the universe name for the earth), all the way until we come into the personal presence of God on Paradise, and beyond. The highly detailed biography of Jesus places the Urantia Book in a class with the finest literature in the English language.

Some concepts in the Urantia Book have never before been expressed in print. The book's unique value consists in the comprehensive manner in which already well-known concepts are presented so as to illuminate God's love for each of us, and our place in his eternal plan—fitting these concepts together so as to give a philosophical and spiritual unity to our understanding of God's dealings with mankind. Some important themes are:

- 1 **God** The Universal Father is the eternal creator, controller, and infinite upholder of all reality, the source and destiny of all personalities, and the head of all government throughout the universal realms. Except for God, there would be no such

thing as reality; without the Father would not anything exist that does exist. The Father is living love, a Person who knows us, and whom we can know. The Father dwells within us, and in him we live and move and have our being.

- 2 **The universes** The galaxies are sprinkled with inhabited planets, many harboring civilizations billions of years old. The perfect central universe and the evolutionary universes such as our own all circle Paradise, the dwelling place of the eternal God at the center of all things.
- 3 **Unending progress** God has a purpose for every world in his almost limitless domains, and a plan for every creature on every one of them, a plan which embodies unlimited progress in eternal growth. Mortals start at the bottom and, through faith and service over long periods of time, ascend through the universes until one day we come to be with God on Paradise. In future ages he will send us forth to serve in new universes now in the making.
- 4 **Eternal life** God has a far-reaching plan for us which embodies boundless attainment, adventurous service, and personal fulfillment. Nevertheless, it is wholly optional whether or not we accept this plan. The Father has endowed each of us with the free will to accept or reject all or any part of his plan. The heavenly Father has ordained that we be free persons, and he respects the choices we make, even when such choosing is self-destructive. As a place, hell does not exist; after death, those who reject the way of life simply cease to exist. God loves every one of his children, and

wants each of us to survive, but nonetheless he endows us with the prerogative to chart our own courses.

- 5 **The inner light** The Universal Father gives each of us a fragment of his spirit to indwell our mind, and lead us toward him into eternal life. When a person's life purpose becomes wholly pure, when his or her faith is perfected, he or she will spiritually fuse with this indwelling spark of divinity and become everlastingly at-one with God. Such fusion normally occurs after this life in the flesh, and is but the first stage of a never-ending revelation of the infinity of God to the one-time mortal.
- 6 **Faith** It is our personal faith in the promises of god that ensures our becoming partakers of the divine nature. We must be willing to give God all that we have and are; our commitment must be unreserved, no aspect of our lives held back. Faith is the price of eternal life.
- 7 **Righteousness** Those who claim to love God, yet refuse to live by high moral and ethical standards, deceive themselves. A life of integrity inevitably results from an inner life consecrated to God. We are not saved because we are righteous, rather, we live in harmony with divine values because we love God and desire to do his will.
- 8 **Spiritual transformation** The old way to find God required man to suppress, obey, and conform to rules of living. In the new way we are first transformed by the Spirit of Truth, and thereby strengthened in our inner souls by the constant spiritual renewing of our minds, and so are

endowed with the power of the certain and joyous performance of the gracious, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

- 9 **God's universal family** We are all part of a gigantic enterprise involving uncounted trillions of beings whom God is perfecting on uncountable worlds. We are all brothers and sisters in God's universal family, and thus are affected by every other family member's actions. Any person's good effort moves the family forward, while any person's failure to choose the way of light retards us all.
- 10 **Service** A life of dedicated service to our fellows inevitably results from spiritual commitment. We can be God's partners in helping make this earth into the place he intends it to be, and help bring health, sanity, and happiness to mankind. Apart from serving others, life is meaningless and unfulfilling.
- 11 **Jesus of Nazareth** The Urantia Book's section on Jesus' life and teachings fills more than a third of its pages, and may be the book's most powerful contribution. It portrays Jesus as a divine Son of God, the creator of the vast stretch of the universe in which we live. There are other divine Sons of God who bear a similar relationship to God the Father in other parts of the grand universe. To us, however, the Son of God who incarnated on earth as Jesus of Nazareth is, to all intents and purposes, God. He came to earth to experience life as we live it on earth that he might become a more merciful and understanding sovereign, and while here, reveal God's love to his earthly children.

THE INTERNATIONAL PATHWORK FOUNDATION

www.pathwork.org

The spirit-driven lectures given by Eva Pierrakos from 1957 until her death in 1979 are the heart of the **Pathwork®** Foundation. They are an astonishing roadmap to self-responsibility, self-knowledge, and true self-acceptance. They point the way to genuine love of self, others, and the Divine.

The lectures cover the wide spectrum of our human journey, from our struggles with self-doubt, self-hatred and fear of inadequacy to the barriers we put up to relating with others, and ultimately with what we each know as God.

The lectures teach that vital life energy, feelings and insight are often buried under misconceptions about the nature of reality. We are all familiar with some of these wrong conclusions. For example, "It's weak to need and accept help; I don't deserve love and kindness; responsibility means a loss of freedom."

When such misconceptions are carried into adult life, particularly when they are unconscious, we surrender our physical, spiritual and emotional freedom to forces beyond our awareness. The effect of this loss of freedom are devastating-deep-seated unhappiness and a profound poverty of spirit.

The Pathwork lectures offer specific, practical tools for dissolving misconceptions, for making the unconscious conscious, and for activating the greater consciousness dwelling within every human soul.

Here is a lecture on the Spiritual Meaning of Political Systems, from June, 1976.

Greetings, my beloved friends. May the blessings given touch the deepest part of your being so that you will know forever the glory of your innermost truth; so that you will lose the fear of your innermost truth; so that your commitment to all of your being will be ever more anchored in your total devotion to your path.

Increasingly you find that the pain you wanted to avoid makes room for joy—a joy that could have never come if the pain had not been met. Increasingly you find, my dearest ones, that when you do not fear and do not avoid the negativity, the distortion and destructiveness that are a part of your being—be it only a small part—a divine alchemy takes place and produces the true integration and transformation of your total being in an ever deepening process.

Individually, more and more of you have found this to be so, even though the hurdles seemed great at times. They always seem much greater than they actually are. As more of you individually overcome the inner obstructions, futile fears and unnecessary resistance, so does your community grow in strength, in realistic groundedness, and in joyousness and abundance.

For this lecture I have announced a somewhat unusual topic, but you will see that it fits into the sequence of lectures and has its integral meaning in your own process, both as individuals and as a community.

The topic is the *spiritual meaning of political systems*. I will speak about the best known political systems on your earth plane at this point in your evolution. I shall explain the divine origin of each of these systems and the distortions in each. I will then show you how every one of these systems, in their divine as well as in their distorted manifestations, is a reality of your internal world. From there we shall proceed to perhaps gain a clearer vision of New Age politics.

Let us take first of all a by-now already obsolete, but still known system in your world, and let us classify it in one category as *monarchy and feudalism*.

What are the divine origins of this format and what are its distortions? The divine meaning and origin, the inner truth of these systems is in certain highly developed human beings who are fully aware of their responsibility.

Development always carries responsibility, and those who are willing to shoulder it can, according to divine eternal law, and commensurate with their commitment to their task, feel it their right to enjoy the accompanying privileges.

A person who is unwilling to assume such responsibilities has not rightfully earned these privileges; he either feels too guilty to even really want them, or is so rebellious that

he wants to steal them and justifies this by claiming that those who have earned them are unfair and abusive.

Now, even if authority is being abused, those who are unwilling to assume the demanding task of leadership are not right to rebel. They will not need to rebel if they fulfill the conditions that entitle them to the envied and coveted privileges. These are envied only when the price is not being paid.

Those who fully give to their tasks as leaders of nations and of governments, discharge themselves of their responsibility according to divine law. They lead and guide those who do not wish to take on the chores of such a task, which consists of many hardships, as well as of the privileges.

Leadership requires a lot of self-discipline that the self-indulgent do not desire to exert.

The often necessary and voluntary giving up of an immediate gratification is totally rejected by those who follow, but who often simultaneously resent those who lead.

Nor do they wish to assume the risks of exposure, criticism, slander and hostility that those in the limelight must be strong enough to endure. It is certainly easier to follow than to lead, to be an ordinary citizen than the leader of a nation.

The follower can afford to be lazy, even if the laziness is not necessarily physical. It can be laziness of mind, laziness of spirit, laziness of courage, laziness of heart.

Leaders create a following and, in total devotion to their task, give of their best. They use their power for the good of all. They do not shun personal inconveniences in connection with their task. This is, broadly speaking, the divine reality contained in the regimes of monarchy or feudalism.

It is easy to see how this can be distorted by ruthless, selfish or irresponsible human beings who abuse the power, and use it for their own material or power gain, and obstruct the unfoldment of justice, of law, of beauty, of fairness and of divine intercession.

The true leader, the monarch if you will, who is at the helm of the ship, is always a channel of divine inspiration. If that inspiration is not sought and put above all else, then abuse is the result.

When these systems appeared in your earth world, this was their innate message. They appeared when humanity in general was not able or willing or developed enough to assume the responsibility of true self-rulership. Therefore, people needed guidance.

Obviously, I do not have to go into much detail to show how these roles were not always fulfilled, even though at first highly developed beings often incarnated to fulfill such tasks. Sooner or later the temptations proved too much. Others followed who took the rulership by power

or manipulation and then abused their position and took advantage of their power.

How does this political system exist in the inner world of a human being? Again, this is not too difficult to see, my friends. You have all discovered that there is in every human being some talent to be a leader in one way or another; a talent to assume responsibilities and to serve a cause. No matter how buried these talents may at first be, they can be awakened from their dormant state and eventually always bring the individual to such a path.

If you do not cultivate this talent, then you will be a follower who has much fewer rights and privileges. It is as you wish. If you do not wish the higher task of assuming the responsibilities to lead, to stand in an exposed place, to risk everything that goes with it for the purpose of truly serving a higher cause, then you have no right to complain when others do this job.

And I emphasize once more that this might apply to very subtle expressions and not necessarily manifest in overt outer leadership or statesmanship. You can be a school teacher, you can supervise others in an office, you can do any task on earth and be, within its own framework, a leader, a “monarch,” or simply a follower. Both roles have their value and carry their distinct differences.

But when the follower resists his—or her—talent to become a leader in his own right, wherever his place may be, and then rebels against the leadership he refuses to assume because he is too lazy, too fearful, too selfish, too self-indulgent, he commits as grave an injustice and dishonesty as the ruler who abuses his power.

Wherever your talents lie, you contain the possibility of higher rulership in the best sense of the word. Rulership is not just a political expression. It can be expressed in every area of life.

First of all, this natural talent of leadership or rulership must be assumed toward yourself, as an expression of an integrated process. This means the ability to exert a certain amount of discipline, of firmness, of strength, of not succumbing to the temptation to indulge.

The weak ruler who does not wish to be bothered and dispenses with this necessary, healthy discipline, is as much at fault and does as much damage as the one who is over-severe, hard, and closed to the feelings of the heart, to compassion, and who never relaxes his or her domination.

Neither can find the balance between discipline and relaxation and the intuitive knowing of when one and when the other is appropriate.

Discipline cannot be used toward others in a fair and balanced way if it is not first and primarily used toward the self. If it only exists toward others while the self indulges—as many rulers have done and still do—then a hurtful imbalance comes about.

This is why your path teaches primarily, and with an apparent overemphasis, *self-discipline*. True self-purification and transformation on this path is impossible unless self-discipline is acquired and used constantly against the ever-lurking resistance to moving and to overcoming.

Only when you have mastered this resistance to a considerable degree does your leadership of others organically evolve—such as helper-ship, teaching, or any other responsible role in the community.

Within your own soul system both aspects exist—the monarch and the follower or citizen without responsibility. The one is rich, the other poor. The one has rights, the other does not.

How do you apportion your energies and direction in choosing what to cultivate on your road to unfoldment? Do you abuse this double principle in you? If one is abused, then the other must be too, for they are two parts of one whole.

How do you react toward those attitudes in you that wish to cheat, that want to get the results without earning them, that wish to have it as easy as possible and get free gratifications that are not earned by honesty and by everything a human being is capable of giving.

If you follow that discipline within yourself, then you earn authority in the best sense of the word in your immediate environment. Then the “monarch principle” within your soul is acting harmoniously, meaningfully and appropriately toward the “responsible citizen principle” within you.

This attitude can then unfold toward the outer environment and will rest on a very firm ground. This is monarchy and feudalism in the divine sense, not in the abused sense.

It must proceed, as all cellular growth does, from inside outward. You start with yourself; later, when sufficient self-rulership has been established, a small sphere of leadership arises naturally, almost without your outer intention, as it were. It grows as a tree, in whatever field you activate your innate talents and fulfill your task.

As your stature grows due to your ongoing development, so does the sphere of your influence and positive power widen and encompass more "followers." A beautiful, harmonious, organic monarchy is then a divine expression in your personal life that can, in some cases, extend into public outer life, if it is so ordained.

This is then the model for the feudal and monarchical political system, which is part of the scheme of all things.

But so is the second category which I wish to discuss, a part of the scheme of things. Let us take *socialism and communism* as one category. What is the divine expression and meaning in these systems?

It should not be too difficult for you to see that the idea here is equality, justice, and fairness for all. It may seem a contradiction if I say at the same time that all entities are not equally developed, some are stronger, some are more courageous, some are better equipped for and more deserving of the privileged position of leading a country, a society, a civilization, a group of individuals, a business, or whatever.

In that sense people are not equal, of course. Is this really a contradiction? I should say not. Owing to the dualistic spirit of human consciousness, things often appear to be in

contradiction which are not. So it is simultaneously true that people are created equal, and also that they are not equal in their expression, in their development and will direction, in the choices they make every day and every hour of their lives. People are unequal in their feelings, in their thoughts, their decisions and their actions.

You would say that an adult and a child are equal as far as their innate value is concerned. But they are certainly not equal in their life expressions. So we can say that there is no contradiction in saying that they are both equal and unequal.

The form of government in which all are equalized was clearly a reaction to the abuse of monarchy and feudalism. The inequality which is a characteristic of monarchy and feudalism was being abused. Another facet of divine truth had come to countermand the abuse of truth, the distortion of the truth.

But with the second system, too, abuse set in, as it is bound to when one truth seems to be a contradiction to another truth. With such exclusiveness the dualistic mind destroys the inner unity that exists in all your contradictions.

A tightrope of infringements diminishes the new truth. Now the equality becomes abused and a uniformity sets in that is no longer in keeping with the vitality of the human unfoldment and the divergence and varieties of human expression and development. Fairness, uniformity, conformism supersede free unfoldment and expression of choice, of talent, of development.

Now how does this appear in your soul? What is the inner reality of this form of government? In its divine expression the human soul deeply knows that no matter how distorted and negative another human being may be, he or she is nevertheless a divine manifestation and as such truly equal—on that deepest level.

If you can perceive this, your common sense and love will make it possible to also perceive and determine the differences of expressions. On that outer level of expression there is obviously no equality. For those who responsibly fulfill their tasks in the universe and live according to the spiritual laws are not equal in expression to those who abuse the laws selfishly, distort them according to their own, self-serving purposes—individually or in political life—and who do not care if their actions and attitudes affect others adversely.

The abuse of the laws may be on a more obvious level, or it may be a subtle, but nonetheless insidious attitude with possibly worse effects than the obvious manifestation. It would be absurd to claim that an individual who denies divine reality, within or without, is equal to those who nurture and uphold divine truth and love.

This inequality can be known truthfully and creatively only when one also knows the underlying equality of all divine life. And that is the inner expression, in its purity, of the outer political expression of socialism or communism.

Now let us look at a third, by now popular form of government, which is *capitalistic democracy*, as you know it in this land. Its divine manifestation and meaning are total freedom of expression and the use of divine abundance

according to personal investment. Yet, at the same time, in the divine manifestation it makes room for caring for those who are not able, or, on a deeper level, not willing, to undertake responsibility for themselves.

This system does not sentimentally proclaim that such people should reap the same benefits as those who invest their whole being into life. Nor does it exploit those people in order to justify the ruler's own power drive.

In that sense, this form of government is the nearest expression of New Age fusion of duality. You can sense here the fusion of the two other systems I was talking about, at least to some degree. It is a much more mature form of government than the other two. All categories, of course, have sub-categories.

The distortion of capitalistic democracy is again very obvious in that the abuse of power by the few stronger, more willful individuals may then impose disadvantages on those who are not willing to stand on their own two feet. These disadvantages would surpass the natural, cause-and-effect result of their refusal to fend for themselves and instead take on a parasitic role at the expense of others.

But in this distortion of the third system the exploiters become parasites in another sense, using those who want to use. Rather than helping them to awaken through really fair and appropriate dispositions, they play right into the rationalizations of those who are lazy and cheat, making their excuses valid by giving seeming justification to their

argument that it is an unfair world they live in and that they who are less greedy are victimized by the greedy.

Both extremes can abuse this system. The socialistically-minded can become more parasitic and use the power structure as an excuse. The strong and diligent ones, who risk and invest, can abuse the system by justifying their greed and power drive with the actual parasitic nature of the lazy ones. In other words, in this system, since it is a fusion of the former two categories, you also find a “negative fusion” of both distortions.

You can observe this in various ways in your political life, if you look at the public expression. Both expressions, of both categories, contain more possibility for abuse in this system, just because this system also offers more possibility for a healthy fusion of two apparent opposites. The other two categories offer less freedom and, therefore, perhaps less possibility for abuse.

On one level this may seem untrue—and it is untrue. Yet on another level it is also true. The more development and freedom, the greater are the dangers of abuse and distortion.

Freedom always contains more possibility of abuse. This is a universal reality within the soul, as well as in external expressions. When the abuse reaches its peak, the painful confusion of dualism arises and the pendulum must swing in the opposite direction.

So, within your soul, you may swing from being submissive to being a rebel. Political systems swing from

authoritarianism of one form or another to over-permissive systems that allow the parasite to sentimentalize his "cause." And so it goes back and forth throughout the centuries until the margin of the swing of the pendulum becomes narrower and the point of fusion is approached.

Democratic capitalism or capitalistic democracy is such an expression, but if the system is based on abstract theories and governed by the mind only, the possibility for error, distortion and abuse will always be present. A channel to perceive divine will and divine law must therefore be established.

It is easy for you to see how this principle applies to your inner world. When you are given the freedom to responsibly run your life, how easy it is to abuse this freedom unless you confront your real, hidden motives constantly and conscientiously.

How much maturity is needed to abstain from the temptations to abuse freedom! How much self-discipline is needed not to do so!

You also need maturity, strength and fair-mindedness so that you stand responsibly on your own two feet and you don't become a burden on your fellow-citizens. This temptation always exists, both in your personal life and in public life. When you consistently yield to the temptation, you draw tighter fences around your emotional freedom and you set up an inner system of tyranny in which you no longer feel free.

You may for a while find outer circumstances for blame for this self-restriction, but when this is no longer possible, you often keep frantically struggling, not understanding why you feel so constricted within yourself. You do not understand the inner tyranny you have set up by constantly abusing your freedom to create, to choose, to direct your life, your thoughts, your feelings, your will.

Now let us observe, with our knowledge of these three basic systems, their divine meaning and their abuses—inside of you and therefore inevitably outside—how these laws apply to the smallest immediate individual life situation as well as to the largest scale of world government. How can all this be integrated with and become part of politics in the New Age? What is your idea? Some of you have thought about it, have had ideas. So let us be a little more specific.

In the first place New Age politics must, above all, always be carried by those who cultivate a channel to divine inspiration. Those who do not possess such a channel themselves cannot always judge whether or not this is so.

The lack of perception may either be due to having a stake in not knowing because of selfish reasons, or it may really be “innocent ignorance,” if there is such a thing. But the more individuals are seriously motivated to choose their leaders according to this consideration, the more such leaders will actually be chosen.

How you can be sure with any specific leader is, of course, the question, especially without personal contact.

However, inner inspiration can also work to guide your intuitive faculties and your choices.

The choice is easier today than it was in former times. For one, the communication system enables you to gain more contact with and knowledge about potential leaders. The technical advancements that make this possible are yet another facet of the maturing, the development, of humankind.

It is also easier today to choose inspired leaders because the energy and power of the spreading Christ consciousness creates channels all over the world. It requires courage to claim such a communication and also to own how difficult it is to put self-interest out of the way. For if self-interest comes first, the channel is naturally blocked.

With selflessness as the primary concern and focus, world politics in the New Age will contain every one of these systems—not in contradiction, but as an integrating whole.

It may sound impossible to you that a form of government can combine monarchy and feudalism, socialism and communism and democratic capitalism. Yet it is so. For as I outlined here, they all contain truth and they are not contradictory to one another.

As you increasingly find out on your own paths, all these systems and apparent contradictions must harmoniously blend in the human personality for fullest expression of creativity, joy and fulfillment.

In fact, if a world government, or the inner government of an individual, does not wisely contain every one of these systems in positive manifestation, complementing one another, it cannot maintain the balance required for harmonious and full living. Such a government must be destroyed sooner or later.

Is this not the case, over and over again, within the individual? For example, is not the struggling consciousness always straining to maintain an exaggerated independence and individualism at the expense of others, out of fear of conforming, of losing individuality?

And is it not just as true, on the other end of the scale, that the lazy, demanding personality wants to be taken care of, be given to without the slightest effort on his or her part?

Such a personality wants to discharge only the minimal amount of rebelliously executed duty, resenting anything that is demanded by life. Being full of resentment, he will do what he can't avoid, against his will. This is truly the behavior of an unruly child who needs a parent to discipline it.

Do you not always find an area in your soul that proudly wants to use power and have abundance, and does not care about others? All these expressions exist in the soul of every human being in one form or another.

If they do not come to the surface, they lie hidden and therefore have more power to indirectly affect the person's life and environment. If nothing else, they create a separating wall of loneliness and fear. To break through

the wall, one truly needs to face it and to deal with it, so that it is eliminated and the divine channel can unclog itself.

It is so with world politics in the New Age. Humankind has been going through all these various phases and stages of development. Just like you, as individuals in purification, find these aspects inside of you, so does humanity fluctuate from one form of expression of political life to another and work its way through, until it is clear that one system is not all good and the other all bad.

One of the greatest pitfalls for human understanding of universal truths and the cosmic reality of life in which you dwell is the dualistic error of "this is right and that is wrong." I have said this so many times. Now I bring this principle to this very topic.

The New Age politicians must beware of embracing one form of government against another form of government. The nature of New Age politics will be precisely that it will not be partisan, not only within the country, but even concerning outer forms of government.

The New Age politician's task is indeed to represent all forms of government as the world knows them today in their divine expressions. This can and will happen if people open their channels and see the unity within the apparent contradiction.

This has to start, and has of course already started, in your own community, where you combine monarchy and feudalism, communism and socialism, and capitalistic

democracy. You combine them all. When you rebel against the one and are in favor of the other, you are already in distortion.

And let that then be a reminder that you are in distortion and that you need to look within yourself, to know what part in you wants to create the distortion. Is it the lazy part that resents the authority without wanting to be one and pay the price for it? Is it the envious part that refuses to earn what it envies? Or is it the powerful part in you that secretly wishes to abuse power?

Look at that part in you which may want to use one format against the other when this is inappropriate, because of something self-serving and negative that is hidden.

When the format is appropriate, there will never be a contradiction. Whatever problems arise will not be ascribed to the outer format or expression of eternal inner divine principles, but you will look at other levels of reality to seek the solution—levels that contain very personal violations of truth, no matter how “public” the issue may be. Then one format will always have room for the other.

The only way to attain this harmony and unity of spirit in the government of your community, as well as in your self-government—the government of the intricate and manifold personality that you are—is to totally surrender to the will of the highest.

Look at that aspect in you that holds back from this surrender, that blinds itself so as not to see that in a specific

issue surrendering would be the appropriate choice, and that refuses to surrender to the divine will. You will then understand your obstructions.

Your community is growing very fast. It needs more and more responsible pillars who know of this principle and who devote their total life to being a divine channel. So those of you who wish to do this in every issue that comes up, that presents a problem inwardly or outwardly, in your feeling reactions or in the outer manifestations, or in both, go into yourselves and ask: "Is there God in this or that specific issue?"

If you honestly question yourself, you will get the answer from the way you feel. And those of you who are more responsible for the government of your community will then also become, directly or indirectly, influential in creating New Age politics. This will perhaps disseminate the truths I speak about here, and eliminate the unnecessary division of one party, or government, or format going against the other and thereby overlooking what the real issues are that create the problem.

Only then will the divine reality be experienced in all those formats. And you will also understand how every single divine reality can be distorted and abused.

When humanity reaches this approach to human problems, a giant step in maturing will have been made. At the present time the number of those who see life in these terms is comparatively low. The majority of human beings still tend to say, "This attitude or principle is right, the other is wrong. One format is good, the other bad."

The general majority of human beings, especially in political life, still operates on the mask-self level. In one sense this is progress, in that in former times the general level was the lower self that was crassly acted out—by leaders as well as by followers. Nobody bothered to even conceal it.

The individual, as well as the entity humankind, has to go through the curve of evolution. The creation of the mask is the first facet of the realization that the lower self is unacceptable and “does not pay.” Although it is self-serving and hypocritical, this phase is temporarily necessary, until more maturity is reached. Then the lower self can be identified and evaluated, which makes the mask-self superfluous. This is the only road to the higher self.

You, as individuals, are already beyond that and are struggling to eliminate the mask self that is now the generally accepted rule and pretended “necessity” for political life and politicians.

You do not need to be in this frame of reference—the mask self and the dualistic good versus bad—any longer. And what a relief and liberation it is to find and to discern—not only in your world view, but in your whole approach to life, to yourself, and to your relationships—the beauty, the truth, the reality, the love, the rightness in each system, and to see where and how each is distorted.

That is the revolutionary way into the New Age, which will reveal much greater truths than you can yet dream

of. But as long as this vision is not cultivated, these truths cannot reveal themselves to you.

Perhaps you feel, my dearest ones, the immense currents of powerful energy that you have created and with which you build a beautiful new world. Every one of you is contained in the deepest of security, in the guidance of the world of God. You are blessed.

“Every human being senses an inner longing that goes deeper than the longings for emotional and creative fulfillment. This longing comes from sensing that another, more fulfilling state of consciousness and a larger capacity to experience life must exist.”

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

A Course in Miracles is something of a phenomenon that has affected the lives of many thousands of people. This three-volume set of books was received through a process of inner dictation by a psychologist at Columbia University, beginning in 1965.

After ten years of preparation, the Course was first published in 1976 by the Foundation for Inner Peace. Since then, more than three million of these books have been sold, without the benefit of any paid advertising, to men and women in every walk of life and every major faith.

The Course consists of a 669-page Text, which describes the theoretical foundation upon which its thought system is based; a 488-page Workbook for Students, containing 365 daily lessons that are designed to train the mind of the student along the lines set forth by the Text; and a 92-page Manual for Teachers, which answers some of the questions most likely to be asked by one studying the Course, and clarifies some of the terms used in the books. While the Course is primarily a self-study program, many hundreds of study groups have been established worldwide.

On one level, *A Course in Miracles* is a restatement of the core of wisdom found in every major world religion. However, the Course is a spiritual teaching rather than a religion. While it uses Christian terminology, it is ecumenical in nature and states that "a universal theology is impossible, but a universal experience is not only possible but necessary."

The Course makes no claim of being “the only way,” but clearly states that it is only one of many thousands of forms of “the universal course” that can be used for personal transformation.

The language is extraordinarily rich and profound. Many sections are very poetic and written in blank verse, and have led some people to compare the Course with some of the world’s great literature.

The thought system of the Course is intellectually sophisticated, and combines spiritual inspiration with deep psychological understanding of such phenomena as belief and defense systems, perception and identity.

However, *A Course in Miracles* is also very practical. The daily Workbook lessons provide a systematic, step-by-step approach by which one can apply the principles of the Course. The lessons do not require a lot of time nor long practice periods, but they do require a willingness to question every value one holds as to what the world is all about, and the willingness to see things differently—through the eyes of God.

A Course in Miracles teaches that there are only two basic thought systems, one of perception and the other of knowledge. The thought system of perception is inherently illusory because it is based upon interpretation, not on fact. It is founded on our belief in our separation from God and from one another. From this flows a belief in evil, sin, guilt, fear, and scarcity.

It is a world of appearances, of birth and death, of time and constant change. This thought system of perception is what the Course calls the ego, which is actually a set of beliefs that center around the body as our reality and the limit of our being.

The world of knowledge, on the other hand, is truth. The Course teaches that the real world, which reflects truth, can be seen only through spiritual vision, and not through the body's eyes. The world of knowledge is one of unity, love, sinlessness and abundance.

The Course views reality as composed only of God's thoughts, which are loving, constant, timeless and eternal. Evil, sin and guilt are regarded as misperceptions. Sin is regarded as lack of love, or as a mistake calling for correction and love, rather than for guilt and punishment.

Once we are caught in the world of perception, or the ego's thought system, it is as though we were caught in a dream. In order to awaken to reality, it is necessary to reverse our thinking and correct our mistakes.

We need help to awaken from the dream because our physical senses accept only that information which reinforces our belief in the reality of the dream. *A Course in Miracles* offers us an avenue of awakening by showing us that our usual perception and sense of identity are distorted. It offers us a way of correcting these distortions so that we can see ourselves and the world more clearly. This change in perception is what the Course means by a 'miracle.'

Unlike some other thought systems, *A Course in Miracles* does not suggest withdrawal from the world. It teaches that our relationships offer us unique and valuable opportunities for learning, awakening and healing.

The Course offers a variety of approaches by which relationships based on fear and lack can be healed. Forgiveness of ourselves and others provides the means by which we can use relationships to let go of the past with its burden of guilt and grievances. In the context of the Course, “forgiveness” means recognizing that what you thought your brother did to you has not occurred.

Forgiveness does not pardon sins and make them real. It sees that there was no sin. Forgiveness shows us only the extensions of love or the calls for love, not the attack or hate. By changing our perception in this way, we can remove the blocks to the awareness of love’s presence, which the Course says is our natural inheritance.

A goal of *A Course in Miracles* is to train us to listen to God’s voice, the Holy Spirit. This extension of God’s mind serves as our inner guide, who will direct our thoughts, telling us exactly what to do, and directing all our efforts. To be truly effective, we must learn to rely on our own internal teacher rather than looking for help outside ourselves. We are thus guided to discover our own God-given function.

As we are led from the world of the ego to the world of love, our perception of ourselves as separated persons is corrected, and we remember our higher, or true Self. We remember we were created by God as His Child, and we

are enabled to accept the Christ within, and to see with Christ's vision. We recognize our oneness with God, our Self, and all our brothers, and are able, finally, to "teach only love," which is our true function as Children of God.

And so ...

I believe each of these revelations are so rich that you can make them a lifelong source of spiritual insights. When you combine the trilogy, you consolidate a great deal of interrelated wisdom that should give you comfort and security in the spiritual faith it generates within your being.

Understanding the cosmology and your place within it is essentially your mission.

From these sources, we must also understand that there are many writers, artists and creators today who are moved and inspired by inner spirit and their current and future works will add to the treasure chest of spiritual insights that are coming to us from divine teachings.

MYTHICAL BAGGAGE

We live in an Age of Mythology. Myths guide our lives.

Mythology permeates our institutions – religion, law, medicine, government, education, journalism.

In religion, we are chained to the concept that one idea of God is better than another. It is the ultimate irony to kill one another over religions that promote love.

But we have a mythology of warrior kings and promised lands conquered via genocide. Battles for power have nothing to do with spirituality. No piece of land is holy.

Our democracy lives by the mythological creed of One Man-One Vote. But if you analyze your one vote, you find it has little influence at all when millions are being poured out to buy and corrupt every politician we have ever elected.

There is the mythology of a justice system that is just when it has clearly missed the mark in so many historic cases. This is because big money outspends and smothers out those who don't have it, and because prosecutors and defenders do what it takes to 'win' without any due diligence to honor, and because their primary objective is always the money they can reap. Lying and misrepresentation run the game.

There is the mythology of a free press that is mostly owned by corporate interests and will not touch any subject which those interests do not want in the public eye. That subject is anything that might detract in any way from sales of their products and services.

There is the mythological of independent scientific research from universities when the projects are financed by corporate investors who want validations and profits, not truth and consequences. If they don't get the results they want, they withdraw the research money. These special interests are even corrupting our research journals with their specious studies and co-opted "findings."

There is the mythology of our U.S. Constitution which declares that "all men are created equal" which clearly left out black slaves and women of any color.

There is the mythology that whites are superior to races of color. Their evidence is that the white race has been able to genocide many native people and virtually wipe out their cultures, and enslave black people because of their inability to prevent it. This does not make the white race superior to anything; it brands many whites as killers and slavers who had gunpowder.

Capitalism promotes the mass mythology that competition between profiteers fighting for your consumer dollar is a good thing for all. It is a massive waste of money, time and resources, and the bitter truth is that small businesses mostly exist to be cannibalized by big businesses and with the blessings of congressmen who stack the deck in their

favor by their command. Big feeds on small. Sharks and little fish.

The mythology that political campaign contributions are built around the donor's wishes to support good government have long been obliterated in the reality that there are double-wide doors into congressional and legislative corruption at all levels. Money and perks are strongly encouraged and many office holders were after it when they ran for office in the first place. They presented a mythical personality to the voters.

There is a quagmire of dirty money in D.C. and the state capitals, which are both commanded by two clusters of political pressure groups. They call themselves by the name "political parties." Their lives within this hierarchy results in their endless prosperity at the people's expense. Their mythology is that they represent the common people's interests. They actually represent their donor cluster, which even writes much of the tax dodging legislation they foment on us.

Political candidates abound across the country, brandishing mythological appearances. They reek of homilies and clichés, and their speech is so full of banalities and generalities that it amounts to a façade of slick, smiling nothingness. Do we have to see another smiling candidate in a suit, tie loose, his coat off and holding it awkwardly over his shoulder? Nobody does that.

The gigantic myth-creating world of American advertising is in an arena of its own. Agencies create alternate realities

of fantasy and fear and bizarre humor, and anything else that could positively affect sales figures. They mask out any iota of an idea that the product or service isn't ideal and perfect and of great benefit to consumers. The characters in their scenarios are giddily happy, delighted to be served so well by the product at hand. It is all a massive farce.

Perhaps our most damaging mythology drives us to spend nearly 60 percent of our national budget on war armaments and to support hundreds of military bases around the world. We reportedly have 1,370 armed nuclear bombs, and the Russians have even more. It is true that the world might not survive the detonation of only a few given our fragile environment.

It has been made all the more precarious over the years from the pollutions of air, water and soil they consistently foist upon us in their mythological world of progress. It amounts to plundering nature.

This massive overkill of expensive military arms must come from the "might makes right" ironic perversion, another mythology we embrace. This means that evil can logically murder millions of good people in our manifest, and this is still happening somewhere in the world right now.

This doesn't make it right; it makes it an abomination before God and there will be a due date of ultimate judgement. Killing God's children is a sin no matter how our infantile history frames it, as holy war or ethnic cleansing or liberation.

Whether by fear or for profit, or because of an unholy alliance between the two, America's war arsenal is a massive money-sucking hog. We spend more than the next five countries combined. With the internal demand for newer, bigger, more proficient long-range weapons, we have turned over our older arms to dictators and demagogues across the world for profit. They prop up their despotic little regimes by employing weaponry bought by taxpayers from the land of the free and the home of capitalism.

The U.S. and the other members of the UN Security Council are the biggest arms dealers in the world, but by no means the only ones. There is a massive black market.

We live in a global mythology that we must arm ourselves and all of our friends with all the money we can, and must face off against people who aren't in our nexus of commerce. This is more important than our 200,000 homeless Americans, or our deep and deleterious middle-class indebtedness to the big banks that turns millions of people into servitude laborers, paying interest on our debt and struggling to raise children.

Do we really need to buy into the fear mythology that requires a bloated 60 percent of our budget, and in reality, is not serving our citizens' needs at all? How many Americans benefit when we invest \$200 million in a submarine?

Once upon a time, mankind was sold the massive mythology of war being a noble quest, where heroes are made and national honor upheld. That mythology long

ago wore thin with the realities of our own massive losses of life and limb, and the reality that war never has a real winner. But we continue the mythology we build around the American soldier as one to be honored highly and never to be considered a pawn in a rich people's political and business games. That would dishonor his service as a pawn.

There is no honor whatsoever in war and that may be the worst mythology ever inflicted on humankind.

We must also escape the attendant modern mythology that we must police the world as champions of freedom and democracy. The Sunnis and Shias, for example, and the Jews and the Arabs, will continue to fight each other to no end because of nonsensical ancient rivalries fueled by hate and vengeance. We shouldn't participate in this kind of barbaric activity.

The world is not our responsibility; our own people are our responsibility, to provide meaningful work, stable income, family support, a health care system for everyone that doesn't lavish riches on HMO executives. Our concern should be first and foremost the quality of life of all Americans. We can't deal with the quality of life in places where the people are incessantly killing each other for no good reason. We must deal with our own problems and the insurance companies are one of them.

These people live in their own mythology. When you ask why this guy is making about \$57,000 an hour plus huge numbers of perks, the reply is that these people are gifted and talented and there is great competition to get them. By whom? All of the good old boys riding the gravy train at

the public expense, due to the virtual sell-out of Congress in recent years?

These people aren't worth nearly the money they pay themselves and they damned well know it. And when they make a hundred times what their workers are paid, there is even more reason to question their luxury lifestyles and foreign tax havens.

Citizens should be able to use their government and shuck off its leech-like, barnacle patch of corporate pay-offs to do one thing in health care – set up a program where our contributions go directly into our family's own self-care fund. Our money would skip over the insurance hucksters and go directly to doctors, clinics, nurses, therapists, hospitals, and laboratories.

This system would result in reasonable prices for services, cutting out the money changers, and would reward every citizen with their own account to manage and put money into it as able. If their account goes red, they can pay it out as they can.

This can't happen as long as lavishly living HMO's put de facto bribes into the hands of lascivious politicians. And that's just one gang of profiteers who are living off corporate welfare. There is Big Pharma, Big Oil, and the world's super banks are at the root of it all, even while the mass mythology of their apple-polishing institutional ads paints them as illustrious caretakers of our society.

They whack Americans for over \$35 million in late fee penalties every year alone, which is like punishing and

taking money from people who don't have it. Banks feed off such weak people. They even want to embarrass you and make you feel bad to fall into the red, while their penalties hurt you even more.

It was likely a lot of mythology-fueled optimism that permeated the minds of the millions of Americans who have gotten themselves hopelessly in debt and are struggling constantly to make ends meet and support the family. Capitalism gave them a dose of hope and then burst their bubbles with more investments corruption, the same crap they've been doing in the stock markets since it was invented.

Often, people don't make it, so many bankruptcies come, due to exorbitant medical bills and mass capitalistic layoffs and overpowering competition from the giants in the business. Each bankruptcy is a human tragedy. High hopes can be a mythological trap and you can be lured by the looks of luxury that you won't be attaining.

It's a bubble for consumers to ride in, and when it gets up in the air, they burst it, and reveal that your \$850,000 home is only worth \$250,000 and virtually all you've paid them for months just goes for interest, starting at 99% on your first bill and sinking at the speed of a slime-trailing slug. Pay them a ton of interest, get a little bit of equity.

When big business has adversities, most often because of their waste and inefficiency and perks to greedy executives, they start at the bottom of the economic rung to make corrections. They never reach the top and those bulletproof corporate royalty benefits.

They often throw people onto welfare and then bitch about the number of people who are getting it and questioning their credentials. It never occurs to them to just help the problem; people want to be productive and buy products, and it is a scurrilous mythology that paints our welfare recipients as unambitious drains on our economy – our godless and self-serving capitalistic economy. That one.

We need to help these people invest in themselves and not just send them a paper check that winds up going to the food chains and Wal Mart. And we need a living wage that might require Wal Mart and some other chains to pay a wage that sustains people and doesn't require supplemental government food stamps. By sharing the mythology that recipients are lazy drug users who don't want a job is a lie that diverts attention from their self-serving labor policies.

From all of this, can we surmise that Americans worship money most of all, and put up a mythological façade to disguise it? We call it anything but just don't imply that I'm doing this to make a profit. This reality is ever-present but must be covered over with a mystical mythology that makes me and my intentions noble.

This all contributes to a mythological surface interaction between people. They put on a façade of feelings and concerns for others, but are creating their behavior as rote as they go, a stage role with lines, and they can't be counted on to really and truly believe anything they say. It is the mythology of small talk, with only modicums of suspicious sincerity.

Such a mess within human minds trying to interact profitably, for their own self-interests. Too many mythologies circulate in the mind, creating an aura of uncertainty about everything, requiring constant ethical and moral decision-making. It is a global Dis-Ease. The world is perpetually in a state of unease. It's like our minds are stuffed with useless baggage you didn't need in the first place.

We live in an age of mythology.

Myths are created and promoted everywhere to mask our true intentions.

Since we know this, we don't believe salesmen or repairmen. We don't believe advertising. We don't believe politicians. We don't believe most if not all religions. We don't believe much of the news media. We don't believe friends and acquaintances because they might have ulterior motives; we often believe that they do. We don't believe people we consider misguided because they don't agree with us on our beliefs.

We often don't believe in the future. We don't believe progress is being made, or will be. We don't believe people will ever work together because of our genetic differences. We don't believe in loving and caring about everyone in the world, all the family of man, because it is so far from reality.

But reality is what is being lived right now, by a world full of humans, and the present is what we have. We need to

believe in the present and fill it with service and that will, in turn, bring love right back to us.

Mythology must have started with primitive man telling tales around the fire, with imaginary creatures and fascinating, fearful events. Myth-making has proceeded to modern day.

Mythology was big enough to encompass fanciful stories about the various heavenly gods of Greece and Rome to horrible, black monsters of the underworld. We have a world history of mass exaggerations, *Dante's Inferno* being one of them, and some tales in the Old Testament for another.

In today's world, we have so much history to explore that we should soon realize that the ability to overcome myopic and self-serving mythology from others, and to think critically, logical, altruistically, for the people of our small planet should be our great goal in life.

Don't retreat into mythology, though it may seem superficially satisfying. Embrace reality, the reality of today, and you will see that society has been distorted drastically by hundreds of generations of myths.

RISING ABOVE MYTHOLOGY

We live in an age of mythology. So, if it isn't real, we should pay it no honor.

Some seekers of salvation tell us we should be in the world, of necessity, but not of it. We should see it all as a pack of self-serving lies or just misdirection, and rise above it.

Know ourselves as spiritual personalities who are inhabiting physical bodies for the experience of it.

Know ourselves as children of a one God and one of his gifts to us is our knowledge of right and wrong and our abilities to honor our creation and his Fatherhood.

But if we live in mythology all through the day and every day, isn't it a myth to think that we can somehow rise above it? No. We must deal with it, all through the day and every day, and not create a mythological web that somehow enshrouds and smothers us. If we don't confront the myths, we can't rise above them.

The problem is endemic. Mythical ideals and insights run the physical world in almost every way and we will only rise above it when we pass on to another reality. While we are here, we have Father's business to do as a grateful mortal, represent and promote Goodness. Seek truth and beauty and find it with our intentions and the capacities that the Universal Father has indwelt in us all.

The reservoir for your growth in living truth is within. Keep it clean and deal with the world as one with inner wisdom. You know yourself as a true child of God and so be confident in your faith. Do not bring the unease, the disease, of the world into your inner sanctuary. Do not live in fear and forboding and loathing and worry because the world is a corrupt and treacherous place. God created Evolution so that we can evolve.

It is not our task to change the world and worry if we can't. We are to work within our talents and skills to be of service, and do it in joy. We are to learn, over the evolution of time, that the world works best as a caring and sharing community, and not as a conglomerate of heavily-armed ideological fortresses. We are to learn that there are no enemies if we don't make them.

Can we possibly live with daily peace of mind in the light of turbulent world events, continuing ignorant bluster from our own president, who has sucked our national image into the confines of his jaundiced Tweeter account?

It's time to bring back the anthem, 'We Shall Overcome,' and this time we're talking about human rights for all people, all colors, and a resistance that goes to the Capitol Dome and within.

But can we do this work in love and not fear? These are the two great motivators.

When Love is the potion that fuels your heart and mind, you are on track and can rationalize and accept your place in supporting it. When you are dominated by fear, you are

just struggling to survive yourself, much less focusing on service to your siblings.

As humans, we know that fears are as real as the events we fear, but we should also know that illogical and unreasoned fears are a fraud against mankind. Don't buy the fraud of abiding fear and worry; live in joy with the realities of life of all kinds in its logical places, and seeing your own place as both a temporary mortal and an evolving citizen of the universe, with a destiny beyond flesh, blood and bone. Don't worry; be happy.

In *A Course in Miracles*, its students are taught that all of the material world is an illusion. To one with a spirit identity, it concerns matter, and it comes and goes in evolution. We are spirits with bodies, not vice versa, and we will learn this as we move forward in the mortal ascension plan.

Some critics consider that dismissing the entire physical world as illusion is carrying that concept to an illogical extreme. Matter is very much real and occupies space. It may be inconsequential in the spirit world, but it is highly consequential to our own personalities, right now.

The ACIM idea is that matter was created by God in the time and space worlds evolution and ascension project. Our overriding missions in these worlds is to experience physicality, survive, prosper and serve the process of evolution toward a planet that will ultimately represent the values of God – truth, beauty and goodness. This is the mission, simple as it is.

This is not the mission above and beyond the mortal domains – out into the universe education plan that serves the time and space universes. The trials of humankind are replaced with constancy and the comfort of living and growing service to our fellows. The old physical world of our origins, as babies of the universe, is seen as unreal in a universe sense, as an experiential testing ground experience on our eternal journey.

But if we do accept this premise, that mortal life is just a construct, scaffolding that can ultimately be pulled away when we ascend to higher being-ness, then we should likely also accept the idea that these numbers of inhabited planets and cosmic citizens are very real. They seem to comprise the grandest plan that a Universal God could possibly have conceived, through which God's indwelling spirit, your pilot and constant "thought adjuster," experiences everything that you do as well as your siblings on this and all other planets. God grows in experience – ours – believe it or not.

So, do not despair over the world's problems. Don't take them on, not your job. Live in pursuit of love and peace that comes from no organization but from within. Don't stop representing higher values your whole life, and you can feel honor for yourself. Don't blame yourself for your mistakes and make these errors into valuable lessons that serve you well later. Just ... love one another.

This seems like a hopelessly naïve impossibility in our world today. We have been constantly medicated against reality and critical thinking dating back to our childhood. Incessant voices telling us what to believe, what to buy

and what is better than something else. Can we use the Universal Father's great gift of Free Will to sort it all out? It will be challenging.

We live in an age of mythology. Can we use our endowments of mind and body and spirit, working together, to find some great truth? We will have to make full use of one of God's greatest gifts to us – our free will.

Alas, in this age of mythology, virtually all power centers work to destroy your individual free will and perpetuate their false institutionalized realities. Don't trust your own mind; trust us. We've already worked it out for you. They don't usually tell you, but it comes with a cost, and gives them a profit in either money or power or both.

Some blame free will for the world's evils. Look what people have done, they say. People must be controlled, and it often takes a lot of force to do it. We take on the task of making laws to regulate free will behavior and then punish those who violate them – by taking away their free will if not their life.

So, your free will is abrogated by laws, and through hundreds of generations, governments have worked incessantly to blunt and destroy anyone who uses their free will to oppose them. It's not that you don't possess free will always, but you can be killed for using it.

Free will is personal then, between each of us and our Creator. Man's laws are something else entirely. Your willful, unwise and unlawful actions can have bad consequences for you. If you sit in prison or on death row,

you still have free will every day but your options are severely limited.

Free will is a management job and it's done, again, by using your mind, body and spirit in cohesion to make it work best for you. No one else, and no institution, has the authority or the ability to manage it for you.

God's "Be Ye Perfect" mandate is for you as an individual soul, a biological personality that passes beyond this mortal life into the realms of a vast universe. We must use our endowments to embrace this eternal quest.

INNER ASCENSION

Why am I always being lectured by dupes?
They swallow up their biases and release them like poops
They believe propaganda and think I should too.
Worrying incessantly about what will ensue.
For we're headed to ruin if we don't see their wisdom
And lock ourselves into their lonely lost prison.

Why am I surrounded by people in fear?
Why do they think that the worst will appear?
And when it does happen, they show us a leer.
Like they knew it all along, like a perverted seer.
I'm tired of such people, wish they would all disappear.
In morning light showing a new bright frontier.

Why is the truth seen as pessimistic doom?
A coming banality academically assumed?
For tragedy is greater and sentimentalists buffooned
for being naive in the face of their gloom.
Humanity they call wretched by their wisdom a'bloom
And their pompous myopia flatulates many rooms.

Why does the future to them seem so bleak?
Why do they think themselves up some shitty creek?
And why do they continue to paddle upstream
in frustrated despondency that sweats on their dreams
When connection to spirit brings an easier direction,
flowing with insights from inner perceptions.

Why do they declare holiness in pieces of writ
all with gritty condiments of imagination spent?
Why do they declare it wisdom because of its age or bent
when it's proven time and again that goodness has not been sent
into this mad world where preachers and prophets vent
about saviors they deify while asking you to pay their rent.
They are not really heaven sent.
Progress needs your personal ascent.

Other works by Jim Cleveland:

Published by Jim Cleveland and the Light and Life publishing cooperative via Amazon Create Space and Author House. Book design by Hensel Graphics, Xenia, OH.

Books from 2003 to present:

THE ALIEN INTIMACIES, adventure novel with extraterrestrials, philosophical and spiritual issues. Revolves around a man's poignant and personal relations with a woman from the Pleiades, and her patriarchal and theatrical leader. (2003) First in a series.

BEYOND CYNICISM: *Liberating Voices from the Spirit Within*. Keyboard transmissions with celestial teachers called the OneTeam and an introduction into the Stillness practice. Explains the human ascension plan within God's evolving time and space worlds. (2003)

CELESTIALS OVER CINCINNATI: *Lessons of the Planetary Correcting Time*. Chronicle of a Urantia Book-based spiritual study group's encounters with benevolent celestial teachers (1991-96) as the author grows from cynic to active transmitter of celestial personalities. Lessons from over 30 visiting celestial teachers across the country. (2004)

THE CELESTIAL SONGBOOK. Lyrical and other poetry on spiritual themes, co-created with celestial artisans. (2004)

EDGE OF DARK LIGHT, novel. Suspense thriller sequel in which our protagonist faces a myriad of mysteries and alien

encounters by the hours over a violent and snow-swept weekend. (2007)

DARK RIDERS, action adventure. Protagonist and two star-crossed vagabond women stir sparks on a perverse cross-country jaunt to attack the Mafia, with violent and plot-twisting surprises. (2008)

CELESTIAL SONGBOOK 2:. More poetry co-created with celestial artisans, including sections on human romance and earthy expressions. (2009)

SAUNTERING THROUGH APOCALYPSE: *IN-sights, OUT-rages, and ID-idiocies*. A rainbow compilation from the years surrounding the 2000 millennium change non-event. Serio-comedy and satire in part one; essays and workshop presentations on simple spirituality in part two. (2014)

LUCIFER'S GARDENS, novel. The series continues. An embedded, altruistic ET empire, seeded from the Pleiades, comes to grips with a warmongering president and corrupt military complex, with a series of plot twists and discoveries and ultimately leading to a terrorist attack in New York. In a parallel story from prehistory, a surviving band of Pleiadian survivors of the Lucifer Rebellion fight to survive in a primitive world. (2014)

THE TEACHING MISSION (vol. 1) : *A New Foundation of Spirituality for a Quickening Planet* (Editor and contributor). Includes chapters from over 40 human contributors who made contact and work interactively with celestial teachers, as well as nearly 80 celestials and their transmissions from 1990-2012. (2015)

THE TEACHING MISSION (vol. 2) : *Living in the Aura of Love*. A collection of topical lessons from celestial teachers, and human commentaries. (2016)

FLATWOODS (E-book) Photographic and poetic imagery from my native Mississippi hills. (2017)

SLOUCHING THROUGH ABSURDITY: *Skits, Spoofs and Satires*. With vignettes in the era of Trumpery. (2017)

ON TOP OF IT: *Rising Above the Human Mind*. Alternative ideas and insights on Simple Spirituality and Simple Sense in our confused society. (2017)

SPIRITUAL POETRY readings with MUSIC and Guest Artists, at CD Baby, iTunes, Napster and other music services. CDs include:

WE CAN BE: *A Celebration of Spiritual Unity*, Producer. (2003)
Eighty minutes of songs by a plethora of spirit-assisted musicians, produced for the Association for Light and Life.

CDs at www.cdbaby.com/all/lightandlife and online digital services. Themed collections from collaborations with Mark Austin and Dallas area musicians, with a variety of guest artists.

SOULS POURING: *Reflections in Dark and Light* (2004)

SOULS BLOOMING: *Vibrations of the Loving Spirit* (2004)

SOUL STORIES: *Tales of the Human Quest* (2005)

SOUL STRUGGLES: *The Search for Higher Love* (2006)

SOULS RESTLESS: *Pursuing the 'Be Ye Perfect' Path* (2006)

SOUL SYNTHESIS: *Favorites from the Soul Series* (2006)

JESUS OF URANTIA: *In His Own Words* (2007)

SOULS SEARCHING: *Finding Truths Within the Quest* (2007)

CELESTIAL FUSIONS: *Realities of the Teaching Mission* (2007)

GRINNING THROUGH APOCALYPSE: *One Armageddon at a Time* (Humor) (2008)

Executive Producer and script writer for the Teaching Mission Network-sponsored CD and online streaming distribution:

THE JOYS OF STILLNESS: *Where Meditation Meets God* (2014). Guidance readings for the Stillness practice and spiritual upreach, interwoven with music tracks by guest artists Pato Banton, Antoinette (Rootsdawtah) Hall, Beth & Cinde, Ron Cohen, Diane Irwin, and Michael DiMattia. Produced and narrated by Cohen, from a book, *The Stillness*, by Michael Painter.

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