

Paper 1 — The Universal Father

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This chart is a revision of the April 16, 2012 and Feb. 6, 2014 versions.

Endnotes and some Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 1, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Orville J. Nave, A.M., D.D., LL.D., *Nave's Topical Bible: A Digest of the Holy Scriptures* (New York: Topical Bible Publishing Company, from press of Eaton & Mains, 1896, 1897)

Note: This source is coded **Nave's TB**.

- (2) Albert C. **Knudson**, *The Doctrine of God* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1930)
- (3) W. R. **Matthews**, K.C.V.O., D.D., D.Lit., *God in Christian Thought and Experience* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1930)
- (4) J. R. **Illingworth**, M.A., *Personality Human and Divine* (London and New York: The Macmillan Company, 1894)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)

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PAPER 1 — THE UNIVERSAL FATHER

1:0.1 The Universal Father is the God of all creation, the First Source and Center of all things and beings. First think of God as a creator, then as a controller, and lastly as an infinite upholder.

The truth about the Universal Father had begun to dawn upon mankind when the prophet said:

[?]

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

CREATOR: (*Nave's TB* 434)

[*Thou, even thou, art LORD alone;* (Neh. 9:6)]
 [*contd two rows down*]

[*There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God* (1 Sam. 2:2).]

Neh. 9:6. *Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein,*

and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee (*NTB* 435).

Psa. 33:6. *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth* (*N* 436).

[*Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:* (Ps. 104:2)] [*contd next row*]

Psa. 104:2. *Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:* (*NTB* 436)

“You, God, are alone;”¹

there is none beside you.²

You have created the heaven and the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts;

you preserve and control them.

By the Sons of God were the universes made.

The Creator covers himself with light as with a garment

and stretches out the heavens as a curtain.”

Only the concept of the Universal Father—one God in the place of many gods—enabled mortal man to comprehend the Father as divine creator and infinite controller.

1:0.2 The myriads of planetary systems were all made to be eventually inhabited by many different types of intelligent creatures, beings who could know God, receive the divine affection, and love him in return. The universe of universes is the work of God and the dwelling place of his diverse creatures.

Isa. 45:18. Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it;

he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: (NTB 437)

“God created the heavens and formed the earth;

he established the universe and created this world not in vain; he formed it to be inhabited.”

1:0.3 The enlightened worlds all recognize and worship the Universal Father, the eternal maker and infinite upholder of all creation. The will creatures of universe upon universe have embarked upon the long, long Paradise journey, the fascinating struggle of the eternal adventure of attaining God the Father. The transcendent goal of the children of time is to find the eternal God, to comprehend the divine nature, to recognize the Universal Father. God-knowing creatures have only one supreme ambition, just one consuming desire, and that is to become, as they are in their spheres, like him as he is in his Paradise perfection of personality and in his universal sphere of righteous supremacy.

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From the Universal Father who inhabits eternity there has gone forth the supreme mandate,

[Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matt 5:48).]

“Be you perfect, even as I am perfect.”

In love and mercy the messengers of Paradise have carried this divine exhortation down through the ages and out through the universes, even to such lowly animal-origin creatures as the human races of Urantia.

1:0.4 This magnificent and universal injunction to strive for the attainment of the perfection of divinity is the first duty, and should be the highest ambition, of all the struggling creature creation of the God of perfection. This possibility of the attainment of divine perfection is the final and certain destiny of all man’s eternal spiritual progress.

[Compare: The command, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,” would never have been given, if every provision had not been made whereby we may become as perfect in our sphere as God is in his. We are to be ever advancing from light to a greater light, holding fast what we have already received, and praying for more (Ellen G. White, “Sanctification Through the Truth,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 12, 1892), et al.]

1:0.5 Urantia mortals can hardly hope to be perfect in the infinite sense, but it is entirely possible for human beings, starting out as they do on this planet, to attain the supernal and divine goal which the infinite God has set for mortal man; and when they do achieve this destiny, they will, in all that pertains to self-realization and mind attainment, be just as replete in their sphere of divine perfection as God himself is in his sphere of infinity and eternity.

Such perfection may not be universal in the material sense, unlimited in intellectual grasp, or final in spiritual experience, but it is final and complete in all finite aspects of divinity of will, perfection of personality motivation, and God-consciousness.

1:0.6 This is the true meaning of that divine command, “Be you perfect, even as I am perfect,” which ever urges mortal man onward and beckons him inward in that long and fascinating struggle for the attainment of higher and higher levels of spiritual values and true universe meanings. This sublime search for the God of universes is the supreme adventure of the inhabitants of all the worlds of time and space.

1. THE FATHER’S NAME

1:1.1 Of all the names by which God the Father is known throughout the universes, those which designate him as the First Source and the Universe Center are most often encountered. The First Father is known by various names in different universes and in different sectors of the same universe. The names which the creature assigns to the Creator are much dependent on the creature’s concept of the Creator. The First Source and Universe Center has never revealed himself by name, only by nature. If we believe that we are the children of this Creator, it is only natural that we should eventually call him Father. But this is the name of our own choosing, and it grows out of the recognition of our personal relationship with the First Source and Center.

[God desires from all His creatures the service of love—homage that springs from an intelligent appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced allegiance, and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render him voluntary service (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (1888, 1911), p. 493.)]

1:1.2 The Universal Father never imposes any form of arbitrary recognition, formal worship, or slavish service upon the intelligent will creatures of the universes. The evolutionary inhabitants of the worlds of time and space must of themselves—in their own hearts—recognize, love, and voluntarily worship him.

The Creator refuses to coerce or compel the submission of the spiritual free wills of his material creatures.

The affectionate dedication of the human will to the doing of the Father's will is man's choicest gift to God; in fact, such a consecration of creature will constitutes man's only possible gift of true value to the Paradise Father.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring (Acts 17:28).

In God, man lives, moves, and has his being;

there is nothing which man can give to God except this choosing to abide by the Father's will, and such decisions, effected by the intelligent will creatures of the universes, constitute the reality of that true worship which is so satisfying to the love-dominated nature of the Creator Father.

1:1.3 When you have once become truly God-conscious, after you really discover the majestic Creator and begin to experience the realization of the indwelling presence of the divine controller, then, in accordance with your enlightenment and in accordance with the manner and method by which the divine Sons reveal God, you will find a name for the Universal Father which will be adequately expressive of your concept of the First Great Source and Center. And so, on different worlds and in various universes, the Creator becomes known by numerous appellations, in spirit of relationship all meaning the same but, in words and symbols, each name standing for the degree, the depth, of his enthronement in the hearts of his creatures of any given realm.

1:1.4 Near the center of the universe of universes, the Universal Father is generally known by names which may be regarded as meaning the First Source. Farther out in the universes of space, the terms employed to designate the Universal Father more often mean the Universal Center. Still farther out in the starry creation, he is known, as on the headquarters world of your local universe, as the First Creative Source and Divine Center. In one near-by constellation God is called the Father of Universes. In another, the Infinite Upholder, and to the east, the Divine Controller.

He has also been designated

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (Jas. 1:17).

the Father of Lights,

the Gift of Life, and the All-powerful One.

1:1.5 On those worlds where a Paradise Son has lived a bestowal life, God is generally known by some name indicative of personal relationship, tender affection, and fatherly devotion. On your constellation headquarters God is referred to as the Universal Father, and on different planets in your local system of inhabited worlds he is variously known as the Father of Fathers, the Paradise Father, the Havona Father, and the Spirit Father. Those who know God through the revelations of the bestowals of the Paradise Sons, eventually yield to the sentimental appeal of the touching relationship of the creature-Creator association and refer to God as

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After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name (Matt. 6:9), et al.

And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beer-she-ba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God (Gen. 21:33).] [See also Isa. 40:28.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones (Isa. 57:15).

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“our Father.”

1:1.6 On a planet of sex creatures, in a world where the impulses of parental emotion are inherent in the hearts of its intelligent beings, the term Father becomes a very expressive and appropriate name for the eternal God. He is best known, most universally acknowledged, on your planet, Urantia, by the name God. The name he is given is of little importance; the significant thing is that you should know him and aspire to be like him.

Your prophets of old truly called him

“the everlasting God”

and referred to him as

the one who “inhabits eternity.”

2. THE REALITY OF GOD

1:2.1 God is primal reality in the spirit world; God is the source of truth in the mind spheres; God overshadows all throughout the material realms. To all created intelligences God is a personality, and to the universe of universes he is the First Source and Center of eternal reality. God is neither manlike nor machinelike. The First Father is universal spirit, eternal truth, infinite reality, and father personality.

VI: THE EXISTENCE OF GOD
(Knudson 203)

[PREAMBLE] (Knudson 203)

Under the influence of [the] positivistic view of reality efforts have been made to redefine God in such a way as to eliminate the older metaphysical implications of the term and yet to retain the idea of his real existence. He is, for instance, said to be real in the same sense as Alma Mater, Uncle Sam, and Humanity, though in a “greater” degree. He is “reality idealized,”

he is “experienced reality taken in a socialized way,” he is “the Spirit of the world of living beings, taken in their associated and ideal experience.”

[Compare K 46-47 and 103:9.5.]

Or from a slightly different point of view he is identified with a part or aspect of nature (K 210-11).

He may be spoken of as “the Power which makes for righteousness,” but this is only in an accommodated sense. He is, rather, a law or process, and is real only in the sense in which a law or social group is real (K 211).

That such a God exists is the basal affirmation of the Christian faith. But on what does this affirmation rest? It comes to us through tradition (K 212).

1:2.2 The eternal God is infinitely more than reality idealized

or the universe personalized.

God is not simply the supreme desire of man, the mortal quest objectified.

Neither is God merely a concept, the power-potential of righteousness.

The Universal Father is not a synonym for nature,

neither is he natural law personified.

God is a transcendent reality,

not merely man’s traditional concept of supreme values.

It has been said that “God is the noblest work of man”; and to Heine we owe the taunting remark that “if God made man in his own image, man made haste to return the compliment” (K 213).

God is not a psychological focalization of spiritual meanings,

neither is he “the noblest work of man.”

God may be any or all of these concepts in the minds of men, but he is more. He is a saving person and a loving Father to all who enjoy spiritual peace on earth, and who crave to experience personality survival in death.

THE RELIGIOUS ARGUMENT (Knudson 218)

1:2.3 The actuality of the existence of God is demonstrated in human experience by the indwelling of the divine presence, the spirit Monitor sent from Paradise to live in the mortal mind of man and there to assist in evolving the immortal soul of eternal survival. The presence of this divine Adjuster in the human mind is disclosed by three experiential phenomena:

[contd] The religious argument is based on the uniqueness of man’s religious nature. It is maintained, not that there is a separate religious faculty in the human mind, but that man has a capacity for religion as original and distinct as is his capacity for art, for morality, and for science, and that this capacity when fully and consistently developed leads to the belief in God (K 218-19).

1:2.4 1. The intellectual capacity for knowing God—God-consciousness.

1:2.5 2. The spiritual urge to find God—God-seeking.

1:2.6 3. The personality craving to be like God—the wholehearted desire to do the Father’s will.

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THE THEORETICAL ARGUMENT (Knudson 234)

These theoretical arguments—epistemological and causal—do not demonstrate the existence of God. Such a [logical] demonstration, as we have seen, is impossible.

But when thought through they do make it clear that the theistic world-view is

“the line of least resistance” for the intellect as it is also for the moral and religious nature (K 241).

1:2.7 The existence of God can never be proved by scientific experiment or by the pure reason of logical deduction.

God can be realized only in the realms of human experience;

nevertheless, the true concept of the reality of God is

reasonable to logic, plausible to philosophy, essential to religion, and indispensable to any hope of personality survival.

1:2.8 Those who know God have experienced the fact of his presence; such God-knowing mortals hold in their personal experience the only positive proof of the existence of the living God which one human being can offer to another. The existence of God is utterly beyond all possibility of demonstration except for the contact between the God-consciousness of the human mind and the God-presence of the Thought Adjuster that indwells the mortal intellect and is bestowed upon man as the free gift of the Universal Father.

1:2.9 In theory you may think of God as the Creator, and he is the personal creator of Paradise and the central universe of perfection, but the universes of time and space are all created and organized by the Paradise corps of the Creator Sons. The Universal Father is not the personal creator of the local universe of Nebadon; the universe in which you live is the creation of his Son Michael. Though the Father does not personally create the evolutionary universes, he does control them in many of their universal relationships and in certain of their manifestations of physical, mindal, and spiritual energies. God the Father is the personal creator of the Paradise universe and, in association with the Eternal Son, the creator of all other personal universe Creators.

1:2.10 As a physical controller in the material universe of universes, the First Source and Center functions in the patterns of the eternal Isle of Paradise, and through this absolute gravity center the eternal God exercises cosmic overcontrol of the physical level equally in the central universe and throughout the universe of universes. As mind, God functions in the Deity of the Infinite Spirit; as spirit, God is manifest in the person of the Eternal Son and in the persons of the divine children of the Eternal Son. This interrelation of the First Source and Center with the co-ordinate Persons and Absolutes of Paradise does not in the least preclude the direct personal action of the Universal Father throughout all creation and on all levels thereof. Through the presence of his fragmentized spirit the Creator Father maintains immediate contact with his creature children and his created universes.

3. GOD IS A UNIVERSAL SPIRIT

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

1:3.1 “God is spirit.”

He is a universal spiritual presence. The Universal Father is an infinite spiritual reality;

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

INVISIBLE: (*Nave's TB* 459)

1 Tim. 1:17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever (*NTB* 460).

he is “the sovereign, eternal, immortal, invisible, and only true God.”

[Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device (Acts 17:29).]

Even though you are “the offspring of God,” you ought not to think that the Father is like yourselves in form and physique

because you are said to be

[So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:27).]

created “in his image”—

indwelt by Mystery Monitors dispatched from the central abode of his eternal presence.

Spirit beings are real, notwithstanding they are invisible to human eyes; even though they have not flesh and blood.

1:3.2 Said the seer of old:

Job 9:11. Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not (*NTB* 459).

“Lo, he goes by me, and I see him not; he passes on also, but I perceive him not.”

We may constantly observe the works of God, we may be highly conscious of the material evidences of his majestic conduct,

[And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish (Exod. 19:21).]

but rarely may we gaze upon the visible manifestation of his divinity,

not even to behold the presence of his delegated spirit of human indwelling.

1:3.3 The Universal Father is not invisible because he is hiding himself away from the lowly creatures of materialistic handicaps and limited spiritual endowments. The situation rather is:

Ex. 33:20. Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live (NTB 459).

“You cannot see my face, for no mortal can see me and live.”

No material man could behold the spirit God and preserve his mortal existence. The glory and the spiritual brilliance of the divine personality presence is impossible of approach by the lower groups of spirit beings or by any order of material personalities.

The spiritual luminosity of the Father’s personal presence is

1 Tim. 6:16. Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: (NTB 460)

a “light which no mortal man can approach; which no material creature has seen or can see.”

But it is not necessary to see God with the eyes of the flesh in order to discern him by the faith-vision of the spiritualized mind.

1:3.4 The spirit nature of the Universal Father is shared fully with his coexistent self, the Eternal Son of Paradise. Both the Father and the Son in like manner share the universal and eternal spirit fully and unreservedly with their conjoint personality co-ordinate, the Infinite Spirit. God's spirit is, in and of himself, absolute; in the Son it is unqualified, in the Spirit, universal, and in and by all of them, infinite.

1:3.5 God is a universal spirit; God is the universal person. The supreme personal reality of the finite creation is spirit; the ultimate reality of the personal cosmos is absolute spirit. Only the levels of infinity are absolute, and only on such levels is there finality of oneness between matter, mind, and spirit.

1:3.6 In the universes God the Father is, in potential, the overcontroller of matter, mind, and spirit. Only by means of his far-flung personality circuit does God deal directly with the personalities of his vast creation of will creatures, but he is contactable (outside of Paradise) only in the presences of his fragmented entities, the will of God abroad in the universes. This Paradise spirit that indwells the minds of the mortals of time and there fosters the evolution of the immortal soul of the surviving creature is of the nature and divinity of the Universal Father. But the minds of such evolutionary creatures originate in the local universes and must gain divine perfection by achieving those experiential transformations of spiritual attainment which are the inevitable result of a creature's choosing to do the will of the Father in heaven.

1:3.7 In the inner experience of man, mind is joined to matter. Such material-linked minds cannot survive mortal death. The technique of survival is embraced in those adjustments of the human will and those transformations in the mortal mind whereby such a God-conscious intellect gradually becomes spirit taught and eventually spirit led. This evolution of the human mind from matter association to spirit union results in the transmutation of the potentially spirit phases of the mortal mind into the morontia realities of the immortal soul. Mortal mind subservient to matter is destined to become increasingly material and consequently to suffer eventual personality extinction; mind yielded to spirit is destined to become increasingly spiritual and ultimately to achieve oneness with the surviving and guiding divine spirit and in this way to attain survival and eternity of personality existence.

1:3.8 I come forth from the Eternal, and I have repeatedly returned to the presence of the Universal Father. I know of the actuality and personality of the First Source and Center, the Eternal and Universal Father. I know that, while the great God is absolute, eternal, and infinite, he is also good, divine, and gracious. I know the truth of the great declarations:

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love (1 John 4:8).

“God is spirit”

and “God is love,”

and these two attributes are most completely revealed to the universe in the Eternal Son.

4. THE MYSTERY OF GOD

1:4.1 The infinity of the perfection of God is such that it eternally constitutes him mystery.

And the greatest of all the unfathomable mysteries of God is the phenomenon of the divine indwelling of mortal minds. The manner in which the Universal Father sojourns with the creatures of time is the most profound of all universe mysteries; the divine presence in the mind of man is the mystery of mysteries.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (1 Cor. 3:16).

1:4.2 The physical bodies of mortals are “the temples of God.”

Notwithstanding that the Sovereign Creator Sons come near the creatures of their inhabited worlds and

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me (John 12:32).

“draw all men to themselves”;

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock:

though they “stand at the door” of consciousness “and knock”

if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me (Rev. 3:20).

and delight to come in to all who will “open the doors of their hearts”;

although there does exist this intimate personal communion between the Creator Sons and their mortal creatures, nevertheless, mortal men have something from God himself which actually dwells within them; their bodies are the temples thereof.

1:4.3 When you are through down here, when your course has been run in temporary form on earth, when your trial trip in the flesh is finished,

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was:

when the dust that composes the mortal tabernacle “returns to the earth whence it came”;

then, it is revealed,

and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it (Eccl. 12:7).

the indwelling “Spirit shall return to God who gave it.”

There sojourns within each moral being of this planet a fragment of God, a part and parcel of divinity. It is not yet yours by right of possession, but it is designedly intended to be one with you if you survive the mortal existence.

1:4.4 We are constantly confronted with this mystery of God; we are nonplused by the increasing unfolding of the endless panorama of the truth of his infinite goodness, endless mercy, matchless wisdom, and superb character.

1:4.5 The divine mystery consists in the inherent difference which exists between the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the eternal, the time-space creature and the Universal Creator, the material and the spiritual, the imperfection of man and the perfection of Paradise Deity. The God of universal love unfailingly manifests himself to every one of his creatures up to the fullness of that creature’s capacity to spiritually grasp the qualities of divine truth, beauty, and goodness.

1:4.6 To every spirit being and to every mortal creature in every sphere and on every world of the universe of universes, the Universal Father reveals all of his gracious and divine self that can be discerned or comprehended by such spirit beings and by such mortal creatures.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: (Acts 10:34)

God is no respecter of persons, either spiritual or material.

[See 5:2.1.]

The divine presence which any child of the universe enjoys at any given moment is limited only by the capacity of such a creature to receive and to discern the spirit actualities of the supermaterial world.

1:4.7 As a reality in human spiritual experience God is not a mystery. But when an attempt is made to make plain the realities of the spirit world to the physical minds of the material order, mystery appears: mysteries so subtle and so profound that only the faith-grasp of the God-knowing mortal can achieve the philosophic miracle of the recognition of the Infinite by the finite, the discernment of the eternal God by the evolving mortals of the material worlds of time and space.

5. PERSONALITY OF THE UNIVERSAL FATHER

1:5.1 Do not permit the magnitude of God, his infinity, either to obscure or eclipse his personality.

He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? (Ps. 94:9) [Compare Knudson 240.]

“He who planned the ear, shall he not hear? He who formed the eye, shall he not see?”

[Compare Illingworth 194.]

The Universal Father is the acme of divine personality; he is the origin and destiny of personality throughout all creation. God is both infinite and personal; he is an infinite personality. The Father is truly a personality, notwithstanding that the infinity of his person places him forever beyond the full comprehension of material and finite beings.

VIII: THE LIVING AND PERSONAL GOD (Matthews 157)

The ordinary man, when asked if he believed that God was personal, would probably reply that he could not see why anyone should trouble themselves about an impersonal Deity, but would immediately go on to qualify his answer by saying that, of course, God cannot be personal in precisely the same sense as we are personal (M 159).

If the idea of the “supra-personal” has any meaning, it could certainly be claimed that the religious consciousness would be, on the whole, in favour of ascribing this to God (M 163).

As we shall see in the sequel, personality is that which for us is ultimately real, that from which we derive all our conceptions of reality and being

and at the same time is incapable of being an object of knowledge in the ordinary sense (M 164).

1:5.2 God is much more than a personality as personality is understood by the human mind;

he is even far more than any possible concept of a superpersonality.

But it is utterly futile to discuss such incomprehensible concepts of divine personality with the minds of material creatures

whose maximum concept of the reality of being consists in the idea and ideal of personality.

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[See 2:0.1.]

The material creature's highest possible concept of the Universal Creator is embraced within the spiritual ideals of the exalted idea of divine personality.

Therefore, although you may know that God must be much more than the human conception of personality, you equally well know that

God not Less than Personal (M 163, headline)

the Universal Father cannot possibly be anything less than an eternal, infinite, true, good, and beautiful personality.

GOD. (*Nave's TB* 427)

INVISIBLE: (*Nave's TB* 459)

1:5.3 God is not hiding from any of his creatures. He is unapproachable to so many orders of beings only because he

1 Tim 6:16. Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: (*NTB* 460)

“dwells in a light which no material creature can approach.”

INCOMPREHENSIBLE: (*Nave's TB* 458)

The immensity and grandeur of the divine personality is beyond the grasp of the unperfected mind of evolutionary mortals.

Isa. 40:12. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? (*NTB* 459)

He “measures the waters in the hollow of his hand, measures a universe with the span of his hand.

Isa. 40:22. *It is* he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof *are* as grasshoppers;

It is he who sits on the circle of the earth,

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and stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: (NTB 459)

Isa. 40:26. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these *things*, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth (NTB 459).

INVISIBLE: (Nave's TB 459)

Rom. 1:20. The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; (NTB 460)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men (Prov. 8:31).

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who stretches out the heavens as a curtain and spreads them out as a universe to dwell in.”

“Lift up your eyes on high and behold who has created all these things, who brings out their worlds by number and calls them all by their names”;

and so it is true that

“the invisible things of God are partially understood by the things which are made.”

Today, and as you are, you must discern the invisible Maker through his manifold and diverse creation, as well as through the revelation and ministration of his Sons and their numerous subordinates.

1:5.4 Even though material mortals cannot see the person of God, they should rejoice in the assurance that he is a person; by faith accept the truth which portrays that

the Universal Father so loved the world as to provide for the eternal spiritual progression of its lowly inhabitants;

that he “delights in his children.”

God is lacking in none of those superhuman and divine attributes which constitute a perfect, eternal, loving, and infinite Creator personality.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? **he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;** and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? (John 14:9)

I and *my* Father are one (John 10:30).

1:5.5 In the local creations (excepting the personnel of the superuniverses) God has no personal or residential manifestation aside from the Paradise Creator Sons who are the fathers of the inhabited worlds and the sovereigns of the local universes. If the faith of the creature were perfect, he would assuredly know that

when he had seen a Creator Son he had seen the Universal Father;

in seeking for the Father, he would not ask nor expect to see other than the Son. Mortal man simply cannot see God until he achieves completed spirit transformation and actually attains Paradise.

1:5.6 The natures of the Paradise Creator Sons do not encompass all the unqualified potentials of the universal absoluteness of the infinite nature of the First Great Source and Center, but the Universal Father is in every way divinely present in the Creator Sons.

The Father and his Sons are one.

These Paradise Sons of the order of Michael are perfect personalities, even the pattern for all local universe personality from that of the Bright and Morning Star down to the lowest human creature of progressing animal evolution.

1:5.7 Without God and except for his great and central person, there would be no personality throughout all the vast universe of universes. God *is* personality.

1:5.8 Notwithstanding that God is an eternal power, a majestic presence, a transcendent ideal, and a glorious spirit, though he is all these and infinitely more, nonetheless, he is truly and everlastingly a perfect Creator personality, a person who can “know and be known,” who can “love and be loved,” and one who can befriend us; while you can be known, as other humans have been known, as

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God (Jas.2:23).

the friend of God.

He is a real spirit and a spiritual reality.

1:5.9 As we see the Universal Father revealed throughout his universe; as we discern him indwelling his myriads of creatures; as we behold him in the persons of his Sovereign Sons; as we continue to sense his divine presence here and there, near and afar, let us not doubt nor question his personality primacy. Notwithstanding all these far-flung distributions, he remains a true person and everlastingly maintains personal connection with the countless hosts of his creatures scattered throughout the universe of universes.

VIII: THE PERSONALITY OF GOD (Knudson 285)

[PREAMBLE] (Knudson 285)

[contd] “Personality is the form in which the idea of God is given through Revelation.”

1:5.10 The idea of the personality of the Universal Father is an enlarged and truer concept of God which has come to mankind chiefly through revelation.

This statement by Ritschl would perhaps not be seriously questioned by any one who admits the fact of revelation, and even one who denies it would hardly call in question the view that the God of the Christian Scriptures is a personal Deity (K 285).

Reason, wisdom, and religious experience all infer and imply the personality of God, but they do not altogether validate it. Even the indwelling Thought Adjuster is prepersonal.

The truth and maturity of any religion is directly proportional to its concept of the infinite personality of God and to its grasp of the absolute unity of Deity. The idea of a personal Deity becomes, then, the measure of religious maturity after religion has first formulated the concept of the unity of God.

But, on the other hand, it may be justly urged that revelation at this point is only the culmination of natural religion.... Indeed, the earliest gods were personal beings (K 285-86).

1:5.11 Primitive religion had many personal gods,

and they were fashioned in the image of man.

Revelation affirms the validity of the personality concept of God which is merely possible in the scientific postulate of a First Cause and is only provisionally suggested in the philosophic idea of Universal Unity.

It now came to be seen [under the influence of Leibnitz, Berkeley, Kant and Lotze] that personality does not stand in an adjectival relation to ultimate reality, nor is it a mere hypostatic distinction within it, but it is itself the key to ultimate reality and identical with it. **Only in and through the personal** can we arrive at an understanding of the Absolute (K 291).

Modern metaphysics thus co-operated with the monism of modern science and with the instinctive Christian reaction against modern **materialism** and **pantheism** in establishing and giving currency to the belief in the unitary personality of God (K 291-92).

THE MEANING OF PERSONALITY (Knudson 292)

[The] linking up of **personality** with **corporeality** lies at the basis of one of the most common criticisms directed against theism since the time of Xenophanes.

The response to it is found in the fact that the **body** is not an analytically necessary factor of our mental life (K 293).

Both of these types of philosophy [*i.e.*, **materialism** and pantheism] have maintained that personality is indissolubly bound up with a material organization,

and that with the disappearance of the latter human personality vanishes.

Only by personality approach can any person begin to comprehend the unity of God.

To deny the personality of the First Source and Center leaves one only the choice of two philosophic dilemmas:

materialism or **pantheism**.

1:5.12 In the contemplation of Deity,

the concept of **personality** must be divested of the idea of **corporeality**.

A material **body** is not indispensable to personality in either man or God.

The corporeality error is shown in **both extremes of human philosophy**.

In **materialism**, since man loses his body at death, he ceases to exist as a personality;

Materialistic naturalism, furthermore, denies the independent existence of spirit altogether, while pantheism denies to the absolute Spirit personality. The fact that God does not have a body as we do is supposed to exclude his being a Person (K 292-93).

in pantheism, since God has no body, he is not, therefore, a person.

The superhuman type of progressing personality functions in a union of mind and spirit.

1:5.13 Personality is not simply an attribute of God; it rather stands for the totality of the co-ordinated infinite nature and the unified divine will which is exhibited in eternity and universality of perfect expression. Personality, in the supreme sense, is the revelation of God to the universe of universes.

1:5.14 God, being eternal, universal, absolute, and infinite, does not grow in knowledge nor increase in wisdom. God does not acquire experience, as finite man might conjecture or comprehend, but he does, within the realms of his own eternal personality, enjoy those continuous expansions of self-realization which are in certain ways comparable to, and analogous with, the acquirement of new experience by the finite creatures of the evolutionary worlds.

1:5.15 The absolute perfection of the infinite God would cause him to suffer the awful limitations of unqualified finality of perfectness were it not a fact that

[According to German writer Th. Steinmann:] **Struggle** and achievement are ... inherent in the very idea of spiritual personality. To be a person in this sense means to be in the process of becoming one. At least this is true of men.... God is not a **struggling** and developing Being; he is “complete” (K 294).

the Universal Father directly participates in the personality **struggle** of every imperfect soul in the wide universe who seeks, by divine aid, to ascend to the spiritually perfect worlds on high.

This progressive experience of every spirit being and every mortal creature throughout the universe of universes is a part of the Father’s ever-expanding Deity-consciousness of the never-ending divine circle of ceaseless self-realization.

1:5.16 It is literally true:

In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old (Isa. 63:9).

“In all your afflictions he is afflicted.”

“In all your triumphs he triumphs in and with you.” His prepersonal divine spirit is a real part of you.

The Isle of Paradise responds to all the physical metamorphoses of the universe of universes; the Eternal Son includes all the spirit impulses of all creation; the Conjoint Actor encompasses all the mind expression of the expanding cosmos. The Universal Father realizes in the fullness of the divine consciousness all the individual experience of the progressive **struggles** of the expanding minds and the ascending spirits of every entity, being, and personality of the whole evolutionary creation of time and space.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring (Acts 17:28).

And all this is literally true,

for “in him we all live and move and have our being.”

6. PERSONALITY IN THE UNIVERSE

II: ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTION OF HUMAN PERSONALITY (Illingworth 28)

‘In point of fact [says Lotze], we have little ground for speaking of the personality of finite beings; it is an ideal and, like all that is ideal, belongs unconditionally only to the Infinite. Perfect personality is in God only; to all finite minds there is allotted but a pale copy thereof;

the finiteness of the finite is not a producing condition of this personality, but a limit and hindrance of its development’ (I 53).

1:6.1 Human personality is the time-space image-shadow cast by the divine Creator personality.

And no actuality can ever be adequately comprehended by an examination of its shadow. Shadows should be interpreted in terms of the true substance.

1:6.2 God is to science a cause, to philosophy an idea, to religion a person, even the loving heavenly Father. God is to the scientist a primal force, to the philosopher a hypothesis of unity, to the religionist a living spiritual experience.

Man's inadequate concept of the personality of the Universal Father can be improved only by man's spiritual progress in the universe and will become truly adequate only when the pilgrims of time and space finally attain the divine embrace of the living God on Paradise.

1:6.3 Never lose sight of the antipodal viewpoints of personality as it is conceived by God and man. Man views and comprehends personality, looking from the finite to the infinite; God looks from the infinite to the finite. Man possesses the lowest type of personality; God, the highest, even supreme, ultimate, and absolute.

III: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTION OF DIVINE PERSONALITY (Illingworth 54)

[W]e have already seen that uncivilized man has a very dim and obscure sense both of the limits and the content of his own personality ... And all this was naturally reflected in his view of the outside world, with the result that his gods were indefinite in number and in outline, and their character 'vengeful, partial, passionate, unjust.' But as time went on, and man learned to distinguish between animate and inanimate, persons and things, and again between what was essential and accidental, good and bad in his own nature, higher conceptions of divine personality and character arose ... (I 58).

Therefore did the better concepts of the divine personality have patiently to await the appearance of improved ideas of human personality,

especially the enhanced revelation of both human and divine personality in the Urantian bestowal life of Michael, the Creator Son.

IV: ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTION
OF DIVINE PERSONALITY (Illingworth 81)

‘The true meaning of the ontological proof is this,’ says Dr. J. Caird—‘that as spiritual beings our whole conscious life is based on a universal self-consciousness, an absolute spiritual life,

which is not a mere subjective notion or conception, but which carries with it the proof of its necessary existence or reality’ (I 102).

V: MORAL AFFINITY NEEDFUL FOR
THE KNOWLEDGE OF A PERSON
(Illingworth 113)

Further, moral affinity is an essential of personal intimacy (I 120).

A Person who is loving, in the true sense of the word, cannot reveal Himself as such to those who have no notion that love must involve sacrifice, and has in it, therefore, an awful element of sternness; for to them love would not appear love, but its opposite (I 124).

1:6.4 The prepersonal divine spirit which indwells the mortal mind

carries, in its very presence, the valid proof of its actual existence,

but the concept of the divine personality can be grasped only by the spiritual insight of genuine personal religious experience.

Any person, human or divine, may be known and comprehended quite apart from the external reactions or the material presence of that person.

1:6.5 Some degree of moral affinity and spiritual harmony is essential to friendship between two persons;

a loving personality can hardly reveal himself to a loveless person.

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But to know a Person, who is perfectly holy,

we must focus our entire moral character upon Him, for such holiness partakes of the unity of the Person in whom it dwells, and, however various its manifestations, is yet absolutely one (I 121).

‘He must become godlike,’ says Plotinus, ‘who desires to see God’ (I 127).

Now an important consequence which follows from all this is that religious knowledge, in the sense above described—knowledge of God as distinct from opinion about Him—

is of the nature of a personal and private property, peculiar to its possessor, and which others cannot share. This is a fact which in controversy is apt to be ignored; and its assertion is sometimes resented (I 135).

Now and again a great religious teacher lays bare the secrets of his inmost spirit, less for the conviction of opponents

than for the confirmation of kindred souls:

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Even to approach the knowing of a divine personality,

all of man’s personality endowments must be wholly consecrated to the effort;

halfhearted, partial devotion will be unavailing.

1:6.6 The more completely man understands himself and appreciates the personality values of his fellows,

the more he will crave to know the Original Personality, and the more earnestly such a God-knowing human will strive to become like the Original Personality.

You can argue over opinions about God, but experience with him and in him

exists above and beyond all human controversy and mere intellectual logic.

The God-knowing man describes his spiritual experiences, not to convince unbelievers,

but for the edification and mutual satisfaction of believers.

but most men, who are at all conscious of them, keep these things and ponder them in their hearts; with the result that both their force and frequency are underrated by the external critic, and things attributed to exceptional superstition, or hallucination, that in reality are normal episodes in the spiritual life (I 136-37).

VIII: JESUS CHRIST THE DIVINE AND HUMAN PERSON (Illingworth 192)

In the first place [physical science] takes for granted that the **universe can be known**, or in other words is **intelligible**.

This assumption or conviction is so obvious and universal that it may easily escape notice altogether. But it involves the important conclusion that the **universe is a work of mind**, since we cannot attribute intelligibility to any source except intelligence (I 210).

Man, as we have already seen, **knows himself to be spiritual**.... He moves in another world than that of sight and sound—a world wherein he feels himself to be still but a beginner; quick with aspirations and faculties and powers, that claim for their due development an illimitable life (I 193-94).

1:6.7 To assume that the **universe can be known**, that it is **intelligible**,

is to assume that the **universe is mind made** and personality managed.

Man's mind can only perceive the mind phenomena of other minds, be they human or superhuman. If man's personality can experience the universe, there is a divine mind and an actual personality somewhere concealed in that universe.

1:6.8 God is spirit—spirit personality; **man is also a spirit**—potential spirit personality.

Jesus of Nazareth attained the full realization of this potential of spirit personality in human experience; therefore

The line of thought which we have been pursuing leads us on to the Incarnation, as the adequate and final revelation of the personality of God (I 192).

his life of achieving the Father's will becomes man's most real and ideal revelation of the personality of God.

Even though the personality of the Universal Father can be grasped only in actual religious experience, in Jesus' earth life we are inspired by the perfect demonstration of such a realization and revelation of the personality of God in a truly human experience.

7. SPIRITUAL VALUE OF THE PERSONALITY CONCEPT

VIII: THE PERSONALITY OF GOD
(Knudson 285)

RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL VALUE
(Knudson 305)

Fellowship requires something more than thought, something more than power to know; it requires an outgoing of feeling and will. This it is that underlies that moving word of Scripture, the "living" God (K 306).

There are two fundamental religious values. One is fellowship with God, the other is trust in his goodness; and both of these imply his personality.

1:7.1 When Jesus talked about "the living God,"

he referred to a personal Deity—the Father in heaven.

The concept of the personality of Deity facilitates fellowship; it favors intelligent worship; it promotes refreshing trustfulness.

No fellowship is possible without freedom and intelligence. There may be **interactions** between **impersonal beings**, both organic and inorganic.

But true **communion** can exist only between beings who know each other and take an emotional and volitional attitude toward each other (K 305-06).

Even on the **impersonal** plane religion seeks union with the Divine Being. But there is a vast difference between a mystical, metaphysical union with an impersonal Being and the kind of union with the Divine taught us in Scripture. Here we have not to do with the **union** of absorption,

but with a **union** that grows out of **reciprocal intercourse**,

a union of **heart** and **will** and **intellect**;

and such a union is possible **only between personal beings** (K 307).

Interactions can be had between **nonpersonal things**, but not fellowship.

The fellowship relation of father and son, as between God and man, cannot be enjoyed unless both are persons.

Only personalities can **commune** with each other,

albeit this personal communion may be greatly facilitated by the presence of just such an **impersonal entity** as the Thought Adjuster.

1:7.2 Man does not achieve **union** with God as a drop of water might find unity with the ocean.

Man attains divine **union** by progressive **reciprocal** spiritual communion, by personality **intercourse** with the personal God,

by increasingly attaining the divine nature through **wholehearted** and **intelligent** conformity to the divine **will**.

Such a sublime relationship can exist **only between personalities**.

1:7.3 The concept of truth might possibly be entertained apart from personality, the concept of beauty may exist without personality,

His personality is also the presupposition of his **goodness**.

but the concept of divine **goodness** is understandable only in relation to personality.

There can be no goodness in the ethical sense of the term without freedom and intelligence. In other words, only a personal being can be good (K 307).

Only a person can love and be loved.

Even beauty and truth would be divorced from survival hope if they were not attributes of a personal God, a loving Father.

UNITY (Knudson 311)

1:7.4 We cannot fully understand how God can be primal, changeless, all-powerful, and perfect, and at the same time be surrounded by an ever-changing and apparently law-limited universe, an evolving universe of relative imperfections.

In the case of an intelligent agent unity does not consist in any simplicity of being or of substance, but in consciousness itself, in the ability of the agent to originate activity, to posit plurality, and to **maintain his own unity and identity** over against the **changing many**. How this is possible we do not know, but it is a **fact of our own experience**;

But we can know such a **truth in our own personal experience** since we all **maintain identity of personality and unity of will** in spite of the constant **changing of both ourselves and our environment**.

and what holds true of us in a limited degree we are warranted in ascribing to God in an unlimited degree (K 314).

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL VALUE
(Knudson 305)

In personality we have the only empirical key to ultimate reality;

and that as a metaphysical principle it has a decided advantage over the abstract essences of all types of impersonal philosophy has been made increasingly clear by the course of modern thought (K 309-10).

Personality, however, is complex. It implies unity, identity, self-consciousness and self-control:

four attributes, the last three of which, when applied to the Supreme Person, may perhaps better be designated as immutability, omniscience, and freedom (K 311).

UNITY (Knudson 311)

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1:7.5 Ultimate universe reality cannot be grasped by mathematics, logic, or philosophy, only by personal experience in progressive conformity to the divine will of a personal God.

Neither science, philosophy, nor theology can validate the personality of God. Only the personal experience of the faith sons of the heavenly Father can effect the actual spiritual realization of the personality of God.

1:7.6 The higher concepts of universe personality imply: identity, self-consciousness, self-will, and possibility for self-revelation.

And these characteristics further imply fellowship with other and equal personalities, such as exists in the personality associations of the Paradise Deities.

And the absolute unity of these associations is so perfect that

[contd] The unity of God has a double meaning. It means that he is **indivisible** and **only** (K 311).

Both ideas received their classical expression in the famous saying of Deut. 6. 4, "Hear, O Israel: **The Lord our God is one Lord**" (K 311-12).

If unity is to be ascribed to the world-ground, it must be lifted to a **superspatial** and **supertemporal** level (K 313).

A common method [of lifting the world-ground to a superspatial and super-temporal level] has been to identify the world-ground with the highest universal, with bare being, and then define its nature as pure simplicity. As such it transcends all the plurality and all the differences of finite existence. It is not **mind**, nor it is **matter**. It is something above them both. [Etc.] (K 313)

divinity becomes known by **indivisibility**, by **oneness**.

"The Lord God is one."

Indivisibility of personality does not interfere with God's bestowing his spirit to live in the hearts of mortal men. Indivisibility of a human father's personality does not prevent the reproduction of mortal sons and daughters.

1:7.7 **This concept of indivisibility in association with the concept of unity implies transcendence of both time and space by the Ultimacy of Deity;**

therefore neither space nor time can be absolute or infinite.

The First Source and Center is that infinity who unqualifiedly transcends all **mind**, all **matter**, and all spirit.

1:7.8 The fact of the Paradise Trinity in no manner violates the truth of the divine unity. **The three personalities of Paradise Deity are, in all universe reality reactions and in all creature relations, as one.** Neither does the existence of these three eternal persons violate the truth of the indivisibility of Deity.

I am fully aware that I have at my command no language adequate to make clear to the mortal mind how these universe problems appear to us. But you should not become discouraged; not all of these things are wholly clear to even the high personalities belonging to my group of Paradise beings. Ever bear in mind that these profound truths pertaining to Deity will increasingly clarify as your minds become progressively spiritualized during the successive epochs of the long mortal ascent to Paradise.

1:7.9 [Presented by a Divine Counselor, a member of a group of celestial personalities assigned by the Ancients of Days on Uversa, the headquarters of the seventh superuniverse, to supervise those portions of this forthcoming revelation which have to do with affairs beyond the borders of the local universe of Nebadon. I am commissioned to sponsor those papers portraying the nature and attributes of God because I represent the highest source of information available for such a purpose on any inhabited world. I have served as a Divine Counselor in all seven of the superuniverses and have long resided at the Paradise center of all things. Many times have I enjoyed the supreme pleasure of a sojourn in the immediate personal presence of the Universal Father. I portray the reality and truth of the Father's nature and attributes with unchallengeable authority; I know whereof I speak.]

1. In his *Analytical Study of Part I of the Urantia Book: Vol. 1: Papers 1-10*, written for the Urantia Brotherhood School in 1964, Sadler identified the quote as coming from 2 Kings 19:15.

2. In his *Analytical Study of Part I of the Urantia Book: Vol. 1: Papers 1-10*, Sadler identified the quote as coming from Deut. 4:35.