LESSON 2: Soul Growth — The Journey Into Truth Beauty and Goodness

Soul Growth

Your mental health affects the growth and development of your soul. If you are unable to rationally, consciously make decisions that develop your spiritual growth and maturity, then you are not able to engage and receive further soul growth. You must understand this, even as a five-year old, that your moral decisions are conscious, that you know what is right and what is wrong, that you know how to be of loving service to your fellow brothers and sisters. When your mental condition is such that it is not able to appreciate these differences and these contributions of its thinking, then it is no longer capable of making contributions to the soul. The soul is the repository of the wisdom and moral decisions and service credit that you earn, that you garner in your mortal life from the decisions that you make.

Is there a connection or influence between the soul and DNA?

There is no connection of any significance to your conscious decisions. The DNA definitely have an influence on the soul but only in as much as the DNA prepares the physical body and the brain, and provides the format for the mind, and for the occupation of the Seven Adjutant Spirits, and for the eventual reception of your Thought Adjuster. Beyond that there is no connection or influence between your soul and your DNA.

Truth Beauty and Goodness

As you may have noticed, this web site makes frequent reference to Truth Beauty and Goodness. It's in the top header of the site, in our T B G icon, on our logo at the bottom of our pages, it's even the name of our organisation, **The Truth Beauty and Goodness Commission**. What are the real meanings and values of Truth Beauty and Goodness? Let's explore some.

The pursuit of authentic Truth Beauty and Goodness is what makes religion genuine and worthwhile, whereas dogma, ritual, and rigid tradition only serve to devalue authentic religion into imitative routine lacking in creativity.

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

The quest for Truth Beauty and Goodness is learning to discern God in mind, matter, and spirit, for a better discernment and a fuller realization of the comprehensible elements of Deity.

There is an interassociation between Truth Beauty and Goodness:

- All **Truth** — material, philosophic, or spiritual — is both beautiful and good.
- All real **Beauty** — material art or spiritual symmetry — is both true and good.
- All genuine **Goodness** — whether personal morality, social equity, or divine ministry — is equally true and beautiful.

Health, sanity, and happiness are integrations of Truth Beauty and Goodness as they are blended in human
experience. Such levels of efficient living come about through the unification of energy systems, idea systems, and spirit systems.

- Truth is coherent,
- Beauty is attractive,
- Goodness is stabilizing.

And when these values of that which is real are co-ordinated in personality experience, the result is a high order of love conditioned by wisdom and qualified by loyalty.

Truth Beauty and Goodness can also be interpreted as philosophy, cosmology, and divinity.

Truth Beauty and Goodness is soul food. We find the Creator through the leadings of spiritual insight, but we approach this insight of the soul through the love of the beautiful, the pursuit of truth, loyalty to duty, and the worship of divine goodness. But of all these values, love is the true guide to real insight.

Love is the sum total of these three qualities — Truth Beauty and Goodness, and is man’s perception of God as his spirit Father. But love, divested of Truth Beauty and Goodness, is only a sentiment, a philosophic distortion, a psychic illusion, a spiritual deception.

Love is the desire to do good to others. To finite man Truth Beauty and Goodness embrace the full revelation of
divinity reality. As this love-comprehension of Deity finds spiritual expression in the lives of mortal men, there are yielded the fruits of divinity: intellectual peace, social progress, moral satisfaction, spiritual joy, and cosmic wisdom. As mortal man advances in his pursuit of Truth Beauty and Goodness, he begins to realize that **Love** is the greatest thing in the universe — and it begins to dawn on such a man that God is love.

Truth: The discernment of mind

As previously stated: All Truth — material, philosophic, or spiritual — is both beautiful and good.

Truth is coherent. Where Truth is lacking we find a lack of cohesion, we find ambiguity, confusion, deceit, vagueness.

> When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the Truth. — John 16:13
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> Present yourself to God as one approved...rightly handling the word of Truth. — 2 Timothy 2:15
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> You will know the Truth, and the Truth will make you free. — John 8:32

The pursuit of Truth represents man's effort to discern God in **mind** through a better understanding and a fuller realization of the comprehensible elements of Deity.

Truth is a subject of special consideration because of the fact and presence of the Spirit of Truth on our planet. The Spirit of Truth is covered in our next curriculum The Spirit in Man: LESSON 1: Spirit Foundation & Support Infrastructure.

Beauty: The charm and harmony of art

The discernment of supreme Beauty is the discovery and integration of reality: The discernment of the divine Goodness in the eternal Truth, that is ultimate Beauty. Even the charm of human art consists in the harmony of
its unity.

The pursuit of Beauty — cosmology — is all too often limited to the study of man's crude artistic endeavors. Beauty, art, is largely a matter of the unification of contrasts. Variety is essential to the concept of Beauty. The supreme Beauty, the height of finite art, is the drama of the unification of the vastness of the cosmic extremes of Creator and creature. Man finding God and God finding man — the creature becoming perfect as is the Creator — that is the supernal achievement of the supremely beautiful, the attainment of the apex of cosmic art.

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

The existence of Beauty implies the presence of appreciative creature mind.

Goodness: A living and personal experience

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

Goodness is living, relative, always progressing, invariably a personal experience, and everlastingly correlated with the discernment of Truth and Beauty. Goodness is found in the recognition of the positive Truth-values of
the spiritual level, which must, in human experience, be contrasted with the negative counterpart — the shadows of potential evil.

The 9 inevitabilities of life

The Urantia Book 3:5.5 provides us with a comprehensive list of 9 essential elements of life that are unavoidable for character development, which can then lead to robust soul growth.

> The uncertainties of life and the vicissitudes of existence do not in any manner contradict the concept of the universal sovereignty of God. All evolutionary creature life is beset by certain inevitabilities. Consider the following:
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> 1. Is **courage** — strength of character — desirable? Then must man be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments.
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> 2. Is **altruism** — service of one's fellows — desirable? Then must life experience provide for encountering situations of social inequality.
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> 3. Is **hope** — the grandeur of trust — desirable? Then human existence must constantly be confronted with insecurities and recurrent uncertainties.
>
> 4. Is **faith** — the supreme assertion of human thought — desirable? Then must the mind of man find itself in that troublesome predicament where it ever knows less than it can believe.

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

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

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

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

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

A grandmother's wisdom

Who better than a grandmother who has lived a full, varied, productive and challenging life in the pursuit of Truth Beauty and Goodness to offer us some practical techniques for the remainder of this lesson.

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Stay watchful and vigilant, always observant, always scanning the horizon and watching the angles. Pay attention to the truth. Find the good in people where you find it, regardless of their color, age, sex, religion, nationality, or political party.

Don't be quick to judge, but don't be afraid to judge, either.

Keep your balance and keep moving. Don't just accept appearances. Don't rely on the status quo. If there is too much fanfare, and you will have to become a good judge of that, avoid whatever it is.

Be friendly, but don't extend yourself too much. Always hang back a little. Survey the scene. Observe yourself within the scene. Be logical about things first, emotional about things second.

Let yourself enjoy life, especially all the little things, but don't let any person, experience, or thing become your master. Don't lose yourself in the crush of the crowd. Make sure you are at your own
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controls.

Politely consider everyone else's ideas and opinions, but mind your own thoughts. Push yourself a little every day, to try something that interests you, to find answers to questions that interest you.

Don't let other people ask all of your questions for you.

Never accept a dead end. If one good thing ends, accept that, and go on, knowing that other good things will come. Honor your own truth. Have courage and don't even try to lie.

Accept the fact that our relationships don't always last forever, and neither do our lives. That's not the point. It's the living that matters, every day, moment to moment, right now.

It's the sincerity of the love in each moment that matters most of all.

Make friends with Nature, even if it seems alien at first. The Earth is your Mother and your birthright, even if you've spent your entire life standing on asphalt and concrete. Take a clue from the Japanese. No matter how crowded together they are, no matter how urban their environment, they find ways to connect back to Nature. There are gardens on the rooftops and fish tanks in the restaurants, single flower blossoms adorning their chopsticks — for a reason.

They constantly remind each other that they are part of Nature and something greater than their individual selves.

We all need to know that.

When you fall down, stand back up. We all make mistakes, but the biggest mistake is when people don't dust themselves off, learn from it, and try again.

Remember Yogi Berra: "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." Whichever road you choose, you can make it the right one.

Never live with regret for long. It's a bad roommate. And don't be chintzy about forgiveness. Just forgive and move on. Whatever harm people have done to you, they've also done to themselves. There's no point in prolonging any attachment to that pain. Just let it go. Set yourself free of it.

And know that you are doing so. Be willful about it. You are forgiving them for your own sake, not for theirs, so there's no reason to hold onto the least shadow of hate. If you do, it will only darken your own days.

This goes double for "ancestral memories" — that is, animosity and fears and hatred about things that happened to your ancestors. Stay present. Those things didn't happen to you.

You weren't enslaved on a cotton plantation. You weren't slaughtered at Wounded Knee. You didn't die at Gettysburg. You didn't perish in a gas chamber at Dachau.

The soul memory of these things can cling to us for 22 generations, locked into our DNA. The only reason to remember what happened to your ancestors is to evaluate the experience. Examine it. What were the evil motives, thoughts, emotions, and beliefs that caused it?

How do we keep that from happening again?

Beyond that, the experience has served its purpose, and needs to be put to rest, together with all the prejudices and cruelties and fears that those memories engender.

The present moment is where you are and where you belong.

Don't get caught in the slipstream of a past that you can't consciously remember.

Let it go in peace and you — you move on. Live your own life.

Don't forget to dream. Dreams become realities. Thoughts take on a life of their own. Cherish every good dream you have, including daydreams and pipedreams. Remember that they belong to you, and are utterly your own.

Nobody else has the right to pass judgment on your dreams.

If people do pass judgement on your dreams, if they laugh at you, if they say, "Oh, that will never happen!" — just put that in the grab bag labeled "Personal Opinions" and smile, knowing that the fate of your dreams isn't up to them. It's up to you.

Don't waste your time on the P. Diddys and Jeffrey Epsteins of the world. Know that they will get the payment they are owed and harvest the seeds they've sown — and so will you. So make up your mind to do good deeds and spread kindness. Plant carrots, not bombs.

By doing that, you change the world that is, and help to create a new world, where evil can't exist.

Give compassion as a gift. Nurture the world. Not being stupid about it, not to exhaust yourself, but quietly and consistently through the years, granting mercy and nurture to man and beast, not to be seen by any crowd or to earn any accolades, but just to fulfill your own nature as a caretaker of this world, and be at peace.

When you look at yourself in the mirror, look closely. Look at what you see reflected in your eyes. Are you happy? Really? Are you at peace with yourself? Is your conscience as clear as a pane of glass?

Trace over any scars and wrinkles. Think of them as tokens of the experience you've earned. Realize that while you may have lost beauty of one kind, you've gained another beauty. And it's all, first to last, uniquely your own.

At the end of one road, is the beginning of another. The wretched excuses for men like P. Diddy and Jeffrey Epstein, the empty husks of men, don't count, but you do, because you made that decision for yourself.

The decision to love.

It is a decision, like a decision to mow the lawn. It doesn't have to be any more dramatic than that. Just a simple decision, but it's the one decision that — repeated everyday — makes all the difference between a life well-lived, and ending up in the Abyss.

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