



## Universal Brotherhood Spiritualist Church

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### *Spiritualism: What is it?*

Writer unknown but associated with the Psychic News. May have been written by Maurice Barbanell.

#### *Spiritualism is a way of life.*

It combines philosophy, science, and religion.

The Universal Brotherhood Spiritualist Church (UBSC) recognizes the Seven Principles of Spiritualism as presented through the mediumship of Emma Hardinge Britten (1823—1899) in a message from the spirit of social activist Robert Owen (1771—1858).

1. The fatherhood of God.
2. The brotherhood of Man.
3. The communion of spirits and the ministry of angels.
4. The continuous existence of the human soul.
5. Personal responsibility.
6. Compensation and retribution hereafter for all the good and evil deeds done on earth.
7. Eternal progress open to every (human) soul.

These seven principles are guidelines only, and people are encouraged to interpret them for themselves. For instance, many spiritualists believe that the continuous existence of every soul includes humans and animals and all life; therefore, eternal progress is open to *each* and *every* soul.

*The primary object of Spiritualism today* is to prove the survival of human personality after death. Death is the doorway to a new and wider life. From the day of our birth we each have two bodies, the material or earthly one, which can be seen, and the spiritual one, which is unseen during life but is a counterpart of our earthly organism. These two bodies are linked by a cord. In similar fashion, before birth a baby is joined to its mother by an umbilical cord. When it is born, the cord must be cut.

When we die, the cord linking our two bodies is severed. The material body returns to the earth whence it came, and the

spiritual one becomes the vehicle of our spirit. We are spirit here and now--we don't have to wait until death to become spirit.

#### *Death Follows the Natural Law*

Death, as a rule, seems like sleep--there is no pain. When we awake, conditions seem much the same to us as before we "died". We take with us into the beyond no material possession, such as clothes or money. They are no longer needed. But we do take our character and our individuality. In every way we are the same individuals immediately after death as before, with all our faults and virtues.

The home that awaits us in the spirit world depends on the life we have led on earth. If we have honestly tried to do the best we can, then we need have no fear of death. We have fitted ourselves for the result, which is automatic: a better, happier life where we are reunited with our loved ones and friends.

If, on the other hand, there has been more selfishness than goodness and service in our lives, we will automatically have to pay the price. This is part of the law of sowing and reaping, which is only another way of saying that effect must follow cause. It is perfectly summarized in the sixth principle, which says that hereafter there are compensation and retribution for all the good and evil done on earth.

Acts of service that we have performed will naturally increase our spiritual status. Sins of omission or commission will just as naturally retard it. There is, however, no hell to which its inhabitants are condemned for eternity. Once self-realization dawns and the soul is ready to advance, there are enlightened spiritual beings who will show the way to progress.

The practical application of Spiritualism is the supreme necessity for all of us to lead the best kind of life we can on earth, to practise qualities of compassion and kindness, and to give service wherever we can.

Heaven and hell are really states of mind, not geographical locations. Even here we can live in heaven or in hell; the choice is ours. The world we inhabit after death is not far away up in the sky. It is round and about us, inter-penetrating the world in which we now live. Those we have "loved and lost a while" are

not in some far-off, inaccessible place, seated on pink clouds at the right hand of God, playing golden harps. Very often, they are close by our side, striving to help and guide us, and loving us just as they did before passing.

### *Spirit Communication*

The evidence reveals that love, like life, is stronger than death. In order to achieve spirit communication, it is love that proves to be the compelling force, striving to break down the barriers which man in his ignorance has created between this world and what is called the next. Often there is grief on both sides of the veil. Here are the tears shed over loved ones who have died, and there is the grief they experience when they try to reach us, but fail to make their presence known.

There are many spheres of existence that are invisible to us because they function in a different manner from earth. Millions of vibrations of sound are lost to us because they are outside the range of our hearing. And millions of vibrations of sight fail to be registered because they are beyond the scope of our eyes.

Microphones and radio receivers enable us to hear what is normally beyond the range of our ears. The microscope, telescope, and television will bring into focus what is beyond our vision. The inhabitants of the spirit world are very real even though we cannot see or hear them.

There are, however, highly sensitive individuals who have developed their innate natural psychic faculties with the result that they can tune in to the spirit world and its denizens. These human television and radio sets are mediums. They become the agents through whom spirit communication is achieved.

### *God, Spirit, and the Spark of Divinity*

There is nothing supernatural about this happening, though it is supernormal. Everything in the universe is in accordance with natural laws. They were devised by God, and God is perfect. If it was God's will that we should be ignorant about divinely-ordained natural laws, then we would know nothing about them.

### *God is not only perfect but all-powerful.*

*God is Spirit.* God is not an old man with a long white beard who sits on a throne in heaven. To picture God as a human being is to impose limitations. God, if human, could not be in all places at once, nor hear every prayer.

### *God is not a person, but the creative, universal*

*Spirit.* Wherever there is life, there is Spirit; and wherever there is Spirit, there is life. We exist because a spark of divinity is within each one of us. This is a divine relationship, in which God is our "father" and we are all the Creator's children.

We can, by our lives, fan the spark into a flame so that a greater expression of divinity is made known through us. The result will be to sustain, uplift, and help us in our spiritual development. And we have the free will to reject and ignore the spark of divinity. The result is that we then fail to make the progress we should, and deny ourselves the beauty that life has to offer.

### *Jesus: a divine example?*

We do not believe in a vicarious atonement as preached in some orthodox religions. We regard Jesus as an exemplar, not a saviour. Man has no saviour but himself. We are each personally responsible for our sins and must atone for them here or hereafter. It is far more moral to acknowledge our sins and try to make amends, than to try to place them on the shoulders of another. We believe that Jesus was divine, but only in the sense that we are all divine. There is a difference of degree but not of kind.

We also believe, as the Bible states, that Jesus developed his psychic faculties and was a supreme master of spiritual law. Moreover, he was in close touch with the spirit world and demonstrated his survival after his death. His teaching of brotherhood, love, humility, and service is the basis of Spiritualism as we know it today.

### *Knowledge Leads to Understanding*

We do not claim to know everything--no one does. Knowledge is infinite and we shall always be learning. What we do maintain is that we have received a glimmer of truth. It inspires us to search for more, rejecting anything that does not appeal to our God-given reason and accepting only that which is logical and uplifting.

What makes Spiritualism unique is the evidence of survival after death that is obtainable through mediumship. Whereas most religions preach an after-life as a hope, faith, or belief, we maintain that reasonable people can prove it for themselves. We do not ask you to believe what we say. What we do suggest is that you study the literature and then make your own inquiry.