

Spiritual Fellowship Journal

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A Careful Examination of the “Not Inspired” Disclaimers of the Urantia Book *(part 2)*

Philip Calabrese

Living the Teachings

Larry and Joan Mullins

Pioneers in the New Age

Meredith Sprunger

Fusion Power

Stan Hartman

The Search for Alternative Communities

Global Preparation

Religious Pluralism

Sermon: *Ye Shall Know the Truth*

Book Review: *Joy at Work*

The Spiritual Fellowship is a Religious Organization Whose Mission is to Bring the Spiritual Teachings of the Urantia Papers to All People.

We believe that the Fifth Epochal Revelation will enculturate the grass roots of society through new religious organizations and help lay the foundation for an interfaith movement that will eventually involve all of the religions of the world. The history of religion shows that spiritual value systems are always established and promoted by some kind of religious organization. We invite you to join us in this pioneering effort to establish new religious organizations that have the potential to bring a spiritual transformation to our world.

Guiding Principles¹

An Appropriate Symbolism and Socioreligious Expression of the Fifth Epochal Revelation Should:

1. Be based on the Fatherhood of God and the brother-sisterhood of humankind.
2. Be the outgrowth of love.
3. Foster sentiment, satisfy emotions, and promote loyalty.
4. Facilitate spiritual progress through cosmic meanings, moral values, social development, and personal living.
5. Provide supreme goals of living that are both temporal and eternal.
6. Be based on the biologic, social, and religious significance of the family.
7. Symbolize the permanent in the midst of unceasing change.
8. Glorify that which respects and unifies the diversities of society.
9. Promote higher meanings, beautiful relationships, and the highest values.
10. Embody some masterful mystery and connote some worthwhile unattainable.
11. Be meaningful and serviceable to both the individual and the group.
12. Serve as the skeletal structure for dynamic personal experience.

The Purpose of Religious Institutions is to:

1. Dramatize the loyalties of spiritual experience.
2. Magnify the lures of truth, beauty, and goodness—supreme values.
3. Enhance the service of unselfish fellowship.
4. Glorify the potentials of family life.
5. Promote religious education.
6. Provide wise counsel and spiritual guidance.
7. Furnish and promote group worship.
8. Encourage friendship, neighborhood welfare, and moral values.
9. Spread the gospel of eternal salvation.

Religious Institutions Should Avoid Dangers, Such As:

1. Fixation of ritual and theology.
2. Developing vested interests and secular involvement.
3. Serving the institution instead of serving God and ministering to people.
4. Forming competitive sects and developing a “chosen people” attitude.
5. Developing authoritarianism, dogmatism, and false ideas of sacredness.
6. Venerating the past while ignoring present needs and timely spiritual interpretations.
7. Failing to hold the interest of youth and grow with the times.
8. Losing sight of spiritual ministry and the saving message of salvation.

Central Objective

The central objective of those interested in initiating a new religious organization based on the teachings of the Urantia Papers should be to create a polity with maximum flexibility, function with both small groups or larger congregations, utilize lay leadership and/or ordained clergy, exhibit cross-cultural adaptability, and express broad theological inclusiveness.

Such a religious organization would be “a gathering of persons who have accepted a common purpose, and a common discipline to guide the pursuit of that purpose, to the end that each involved person reaches higher fulfillment as a person, through serving and being served by the common venture, than would be achieved alone or in a less committed relationship.”²

¹ See U. B. p. 966

² Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, Paulist Press, New York, 1977, p. 237.

The Spiritual Fellowship Journal

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The Spiritual Fellowship Journal is an ecumenical publication published twice yearly by The Spiritual Fellowship. Its purpose is to support the larger Urantia Community, especially as it seeks to interface with the cultures and religious institutions of our world. It also seeks to address issues of special concern in the establishment of new religious institutions with roots in the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

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Editorials

Looking for Alternative Communities

As a pastor, now retired, and as a Urantia reader for some 20 years, I would love to see an alternative to the divided and tradition bound church, desperately thrashing about in search of a clearer understanding of its Lord and its mission in our world today. I would love to be a part of a fellowship with a built in corrective in its mandate that would allow us to bypass the worst of the conflicts and infighting of this all too human institution. I would love to see an alternative grow out of the Urantia community—or at least to behold a church transformed by the Fifth Epochal Revelation, one that somehow captures the best of the Christian community, one that nurtures great hope and joy, a loving community grounded in transcendent worship and self-forgetful service.

However, I have a haunting conviction that this will not be the case in any foreseeable future. And the beginnings of the movement seems to have demonstrated that we simply are not, and will not be, immune to the same problems, no matter how lofty our motivation.

So my concern is—and I think it is shared by many—how can we be a body, a fellowship, a community, in any way worthy of the Revelation to which we have been entrusted and so passionately want to bear witness? This, I suspect, will keep many from joining our cause.

We're afraid of our own inadequacies and our human frailties, afraid we will not really be that different than what we have criticized as so inadequate. Many, I suspect, will wonder if it is better not to risk such failure in searching for alternative spiritual communities and new religious organizations, and wait and see what happens.

But there are a couple of things that keep coming to mind to help assuage at least some of those fears. One is the realization of how fragile and imperfect were the first people upon which Jesus placed the responsibility of sharing the Good News. Over the years I have found it strangely comforting to realize just how flawed and human the disciples were.

He didn't even appear to be that careful about choosing the first disciples, and he allowed them, in turn, to choose others. They still appear an likely group to be entrusted with such a thing. He chose them and used them as they were, with only the mandate that they follow him.

I must say, it gives me hope. Only a divine institution, The Urantia Book assures us, could be built on such a

human foundation. It is not our wisdom, or our goodness, or even our now enhanced understanding of God and his purposes that will suffice, any more than it did for the disciples. Over the years Luther's great affirmation has often come to mind, that "if we in our own strength confided, our striving would be losing"—and it is still true. We will not, and cannot, do this on our own.

What also keeps coming to mind are Jesus' words to the disciples in his farewell discourse. They are especially familiar because they have been recorded with remarkable accuracy in the fifteenth chapter of John.

It begins, "I am the vine, and you are the branches." ... "You must abide in me, and I in you; the branch will die if it is separated from the vine. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abides in the vine, so neither can you yield the fruits of loving service except you abide in me. ...He who lives in me and I in him, will bear much fruit in the spirit and experience the supreme joy of yielding this spiritual harvest." (Paper 180: sec. 3, paragraph 1)

We have the privilege of being the avenue of God's love and strength and Spirit that goes out to the world—but we are not its source.

I find John's recording of these verses insightful, for although they are not exactly the same as found in the Urantia Book, I find them helpful in distilling the message: "I am the vine and you are the branches; those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." *Apart from me you can do nothing.* Apart from God's Spirit we can do nothing for the progress of God's kingdom and family. It's not possible. There is no such thing as a good work on behalf of the Kingdom apart from the work of the Spirit.

I can't help but think that this kind of organic understanding of the relation of God's spirit and our works, could have, and should have, saved the church centuries of debate about the nature of "good works"—but that's another story.

Engrafting our lives into Christ's, hiding our lives in his, is the great privilege and opportunity we have, and controlling the outcome is not the issue.

Most of my life I have prayed for God's help to do this or that project for the church—some good thing, as I perceived it, for his Kingdom. Only more recently have I been more moved to pray, "God, help me align my life with your work and Spirit in every moment of my life, wherever I am, and with whomever I am, in your world."

The inherent joy of such living is far greater, and it does not rely on knowing the outcome.

So as we continue this venture, this great adventure, we can hardly know what exactly will come of it—five, ten, fifty, a hundred years from now.

We don't need to, for while we believe and trust the work is ours, and worthy of our best, we also believe the consequences belong to God—and that I find incredibly liberating. I trust you do too.

-Merlyn Cox

In this issue:

- Phil Calabrese concludes his two part series presenting a comprehensive survey and critique of the affirmations and disclaimers contained in the Urantia Book concerning science and cosmology, and challenges those he feels are too quick to dismiss its validity.
- Larry and Joan Mullins share a recent presentation on the *Living the Teachings Program* they have developed and used for many years.
- Meredith Sprunger explores what it means to be pioneers in a new age.
- Stan Hartman challenges us in dealing with conflict and differences within our own community.
- Also included is a sermon by Dan McCauley, “Ye Shall Know the Truth,” a public response to the action of his church governing body asking him to resign as campus minister based on issues of extra-Biblical revelation, and stemming largely from his being a reader of the Urantia Book.

Correction:

- In my review of Rhawn Joseph's book, “Astrobiology: The Origin of Life and the Death of Darwinism,” in the last issue, page 21, paragraph 5: “Rather, antigens to every possible disease...” should read, “Rather, lymphocytes for every possible disease...”

Religious Pluralism

William R. Hutchison in *Religious Pluralism in America*, observes that there are more Hindus in America than Quakers, more Buddhists than Unitarians. Islam in the United States has become as large as the Jewish population and is comparable in size to such old-line Protestant denominations as the Presbyterians or the Episcopalians. Religious pluralism in America has become a major characteristic of our culture. There is an increasing realization that no religious institution embodies final truth.

It appears that America's religious pluralism is laying the foundation for philosophical and theological interaction and an openness to new spiritual insights. Since the Fifth Epochal Revelation is establishing roots in North and South America it has the potential of being introduced through our religious pluralism to the other religions of the world. Professor Hutchison states that the dominant characteristic of our religious pluralism is personal choice in our beliefs rather than accepting institutional standards. Hopefully, this will enhance the introduction of the Urantia Papers.

-MJS

Global Preparation

Philip Jenkins, the author of *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford University Press, 2002, believes that the most significant and revolutionary event of the past hundred years is the religious changes that have taken place. We have been largely unaware of the explosive southward expansion of Christianity in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Jenkins asserts that by the year 2050 only one Christian in five will be a non-Latino white, and the center of gravity of the Christian world will have shifted firmly to the Southern Hemisphere.

It would appear that the Most Highs are continuing to prepare our planet for the Fifth Epochal Revelation. The foundation preparation includes establishing a Global Christianity while at the same time influencing theological and spiritual adjustments.

Christian leaders in North America and Europe are striving to eliminate concepts of fundamentalism, such as the literal inspiration of scripture and the atonement doctrine, while promoting ecumenical relationships and dialogue with other religions. Unfortunately, they have also tended to emphasize the rational over the spiritual, and to undermine the supernatural aspects of faith. Some are even predicting the demise of American Christianity. On the other hand, this negative influence is counterbalanced by the vigorous faith of the Southern Hemisphere that stresses the traditional, conservative, evangelical, and mystical aspects of faith, along with personal religious experience.

The evolutionary influence of the Fifth Epochal Revelation will gradually dovetail into Global Christianity. At some point in time it probably will trigger confrontation resulting in positive decision-making changes in the majority of people in Global Christianity and the other religions of the world.

-MJS

A Careful Examination of the “Not Inspired” Disclaimers of the Urantia Book- Part 2

by Philip Calabrese, Ph.D.

“... revelation does synthesize the apparently divergent sciences of nature and the theology of religion into a consistent and logical universe philosophy, a co-ordinated and unbroken explanation of both science and religion, thus creating a harmony of mind and satisfaction of spirit which answers in human experience those questionings of the mortal mind which craves to know how the Infinite works out his will and plans in matter, with minds, and on spirit.” (The Urantia Book, Paper 101, sec 2, ¶ 1)

(Continued from part 1; Spring-summer, '05)

Paper 106 - Universe Levels of Reality

“These levels of reality are convenient compromise symbolizations of the present universe age and for the mortal perspective. There are a number of other ways of looking at reality from other-than-mortal perspective and from the standpoint of other universe ages. Thus it should be recognized that the concepts herewith presented are entirely relative, relative in the sense of being conditioned and limited by

1. The limitations of mortal language.
2. The limitations of the mortal mind.
3. The limited development of the seven superuniverses.
4. Your ignorance of the six prime purposes of superuniverse development which do not pertain to the mortal ascent to Paradise.
5. Your inability to grasp even a partial eternity viewpoint.
6. The impossibility of depicting cosmic evolution and destiny in relation to all universe ages, not just in regard to the present age of the evolutionary unfolding of the seven superuniverses.
7. The inability of any creature to grasp what is really meant by pre-existentials or by postexperientials—that which lies before beginnings and after destinies.” (106:11)

Note that these limitations are not the kind that require revision of the Urantia Book’s science in a “few short years” or “in a very short time”; they are long-lasting ones that must wait for human language

to evolve, mortal mind to expand in consciousness, for the further development of the seven superuniverses, and other long-lasting circumstances that a few years will not change.

“The space-stage of the master universe seems to be adequate for the actualization of the Supreme Being, for the formation and full function of the Trinity Ultimate, for the eventuation of God the Ultimate, and even for the inception of the Trinity Absolute. But our concepts regarding the full function of this second experiential Trinity seem to imply something beyond even the wide-spreading master universe.” (106:6:2)

These are very far-reaching concepts, relative perhaps, but not likely to need revision by our scientists for a very, very long time.

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Paper 195 – After Pentecost

“The finite universe of matter would eventually become uniform and deterministic but for the combined presence of mind and spirit. The influence of the cosmic mind constantly injects spontaneity into even the material worlds.” (195:6:15)

This “cosmic mind” has still to be discovered by contemporary science.

Paper 189 – The Resurrection

Mankind is slow to perceive that, in all that is personal, matter is the skeleton of morontia, and that both are the reflected shadow of enduring spirit reality. How long before you will regard time as the moving image of eternity and space as the fleeting shadow of Paradise realities?” (189:1:3)

So we are asked to reformulate our concepts of space and time by recognizing Paradise.

“After the chief of archangels had been granted this request, he summoned to his assistance many of his fellows, together with a numerous host of the representatives of all orders of celestial personalities, and then, with the aid of the Urantia midwayers, proceeded to take possession of Jesus’ physical body. This body of death was a purely material creation; it was physical and literal; it could not be removed from the tomb as the morontia form of the resurrection had been able to escape the sealed sepulchre. By the aid of certain morontia auxiliary personalities, the morontia

form can be made at one time as of the spirit so that it can become indifferent to ordinary matter, while at another time it can become discernible and contactable to material beings, such as the mortals of the realm.” (195:2:3)

The existence and nature of “morontia,” a new word, was revealed. It was not possible for our scientists to discover it. It required revelation. Recall that our metaphysics is a failure and just adds confusion; we need revelation to make sense out of this semi-spiritual, semi-material realm called morontia. Incidentally, that new word might be derived from “more” and “ontia” (reality).

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Paper 12 – the Universe of Universes

“Although your spectroscopic estimations of astronomical velocities are fairly reliable when applied to the starry realms belonging to your superuniverse and its associate superuniverses, such reckonings with reference to the realms of outer space are wholly unreliable. Spectral lines are displaced from the normal towards the violet by an approaching star; likewise these lines are displaced towards the red by a receding star. Many influences interpose to make it appear that the recessionary velocity of the external universes increases at the rate of more than one hundred miles a second for every million light-years increase in distance. By this method of reckoning, subsequent to the perfection of more powerful telescopes, it will appear that these far-distant systems are in flight from this part of the universe at the unbelievable rate of more than thirty thousand miles a second. But this apparent speed of recession is not real; it results from numerous factors of error embracing angles of observation and other time-space distortions.” (12:4:9)

Here a Perfectioner of Wisdom, acting by authority of the Ancients of Days, tells us that the Big Bang, “expanding universe” idea of contemporary science is flat out wrong and due to “numerous factors of error” in the interpretations of our observations. The Big Bang is presently a fundamental premise of almost all contemporary cosmology.

If this statement in the Urantia Book is not factual then the Urantia Book is a dangerous fraud. We can’t have it both ways. Either the Urantia Book is good and its words are factual and true, or the Urantia Book is bad and its words dangerous to believe. Those who try to combine supposed already bad science—many supposed errors in the Urantia Book—with supposed good spiritual truth are deluding themselves and misleading others.

The Urantia Book claims to authoritatively correct error, but contemporary science still has not discovered these errors. That must be coming, or the Urantia Book is a fraud because these statements are otherwise gratuitous. They did not have to be made if they were not true.

Paper 92 – The Later Evolution of Religion

“The Urantia Papers.” The papers of which this is one, constitute the most recent presentation of truth

The Urantia Book claims to authoritatively correct error, but contemporary science still has not discovered these errors. That must be coming, or the Urantia Book is a fraud because these statements are otherwise gratuitous. They did not have to be made if they were not true.

to the mortals of Urantia. These papers differ from all previous revelations, for they are not the work of a single universe personality but a composite presentation by many beings. But no revelation short of the attainment of the Universal Father can ever be complete. All other celestial ministrations are no more than partial, transient, and practically adapted to local conditions in time and space. While such admissions as this may possibly detract from the immediate force and authority of all revelations, the time has arrived on Urantia when it is advisable to make such frank statements, even at the risk of weakening the future influence and authority of this, the most recent of the revelations of truth to the mortal races of Urantia.” (92: 4: 5)

Here a Nebadon Melchizedek admits that he wants to err on the side of weakening the authority of the Urantia Book rather than have people believe that the Urantia Book is a complete revelation or anything more than “partial, transient, and practically adapted to local conditions in time and space.” He is concerned with a relatively far-distant future compared to a man’s life span.

5. Religion Expanded by Revelation

“Revelation is a technique whereby ages upon ages of time are saved in the necessary work of sorting and sifting the errors of evolution from the truths of spirit acquirement.”

So “ages upon ages” are saved by revelation, and our science will outgrow only “many” revelatory scientific statements in “a few short years,” not “most” or “all.”

“As far as possible, consistent with our mandate, we have endeavored to utilize and to some extent coordinate the existing records having to do with the life of Jesus on Urantia. Although we have enjoyed access to the lost record of the Apostle Andrew and have benefited from the collaboration of a vast host of celestial beings who were on earth during the times of Michael’s bestowal (notably his now Personalized Adjuster), it has been our purpose also to make use of the so-called Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.” (121: 8:1)

So lost knowledge has been supplied about Jesus. Note that the author says that his mandate is to express the life and teachings of Jesus and do it with human knowledge if possible, or if necessary with superhuman knowledge.

So lost knowledge has been supplied about Jesus. Note that the author says that his mandate is to express the life and teachings of Jesus and do it with human knowledge if possible, or if necessary

“The memoranda which I have collected, and from which I have prepared this narrative of the life and teachings of Jesus—aside from the memory of the record of the Apostle Andrew—embrace thought gems and superior concepts of Jesus’ teachings assembled from more than two thousand human beings who have lived on earth from the days of Jesus down to the time of the inditing of these revelations, more correctly restatements. The revelatory permission has been utilized only when the human record and human concepts failed to supply an adequate thought pattern. My revelatory commission forbade me to resort to extrahuman sources of either information or expression until such a time as I could testify that I had failed in my efforts to find the required conceptual expression in purely human sources.” (121:8:11)

So again there was permission to *reveal* if human concepts were inadequate; and some conceptual expres-

sions were required even if it meant using superhuman concepts.

Biographical Statement

Working as a professional mathematician during my entire career with a specialty in combining Boolean logic with conditional probability theory, I have become well versed on the contemporary gradations of truth from absolute, through partial, to the absence of truth. A proposition contains no truth when there is no model (example or instance) in which it is true. A proposition has partial truth if it applies and is true in some instance. Absolutely true propositions are those true in all models or instances in which the proposition applies, such as mathematical theorems. But that is still relative to the overall conceptual framework of all mathematical statements in the larger natural language in which they are made. Thus “absolute” here means “relatively absolute,” relative to the natural language conceptual framework assumed in order to make the mathematical arguments or probabilistic statements.

Another feature of my background that may be helpful for some readers to know is that I was raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, but in my twenties I rejected the principle of “papal infallibility” and the intellectual and moral stranglehold that this doctrine attempts to put upon believers, as though any papal statement could infallibly embody absolute truth, or could be absolutely understood by the human mind. But I didn’t reject God, and since 1970 I have been appreciating the Urantia Book.

I am well aware of the history of attempts by believers to crystallize their beliefs and impose them on new believers or converts, to take an absolute attitude about their interpretations of revelation. But it is not yet time to be much concerned about this reaction among Urantia Book believers because the Urantia Book revelation has not yet been significantly validated by the findings of science that people are much tempted to make a fetish of it. After it has gained general acceptance and respect by most of the scientists of the world, that will be the beginning of the time to be concerned about taking the Urantia Book cosmology too seriously. That will be the time to reread and heed the limitations of revelation.

By that time on Urantia, a place called Paradise, with a geographic zone of Infinity, will be the acknowledged time-less, space-less center of the material cosmos.

(While we living now on Urantia will then likely be breathing a more energetic type of air on a “mansion” world, even sometimes sipping wine in new form with Jesus, as he promised.)

Phil Calabrese is a professional mathematician and a reader of the Urantia Book since 1970.

Significant Books

Joy At Work

Dennis W. Bakke, cofounder and CEO of Applied Energy Services (AES), a worldwide company with 40,000 employees, who has pioneered a revolutionary approach to management and leadership. In *Joy At Work, P V G, 2005*, Bakke presents the principles of servant leadership. The four major shared values of AES are to act with integrity, to be fair, to have fun, and to be socially responsible. “I am convinced,” Bakke says, “that the next form of discrimination that needs to be overturned is the second-class treatment accorded to working men and women.” (p. 121) The majority of the workers at AES were placed on salaries like management people.

Workers are encouraged to take initiative, practice self-discipline, make decisions, and assume responsibility for their actions. The basic character traits for leaders are to embrace company values, the humility to give up power, and love for people. The most important aspect of leadership is to let others make important decisions.

The epilogue of the book describes people in AES who were given the opportunity of making decisions and thereby discovering the joy of work and became significant people of achievement. The postscript presents Dennis Bakke’s religious and value convictions along with Biblical evaluations and interpretations.

-Meredith Sprunger

LIVING THE TEACHINGS

By Larry Mullins

A presentation by Larry and Joan Mullins to the Arizona Urantia Fellowship on May 7, 2005.

Good evening. Let’s take a moment to thank Jesus for being with us tonight. Let’s feel his presence and ask for his grace.

Tonight I am going to talk about a different kind of Urantia meeting. Here is a statistic I believe you will find interesting. The Fellowship reports that if the number of Urantians who fall asleep in meetings were laid end to end ... they would be more comfortable.

Its true. And tonight I am going to suggest you try a new kind of Urantia meeting. We call it *Living the Teachings*. It is my hope that at least one or two Urantians here in this room tonight will be interested in exerting the leadership and effort it takes to start a Living the Teachings group here in Phoenix.

But, on a deeper level, what I really want to talk about is transforming the world. Nothing less than creating the future. Tuning into the flow of the will of God. I want to talk about creating a different kind of future because Jesus of Nazareth told us how to do that in the Urantia revelation.

When the United States of America was born, Thomas Paine made this statement: “We have it in our power to begin the world again. A situation similar to the present has not appeared since the time of Noah until now. The birthday of the new world is at hand.” Doesn’t that sound like something Jesus might have said about the revelation he originally made to our world?

And, maybe I’m stretching it, but could that not be said about the Urantia Papers themselves? “You have it in your power to begin the world again. A situation similar to this has not occurred since Jesus walked the earth. The birthday of a new world is at hand.”

Now, I agree that progress has been slow. But, has not America also made slow progress? Thomas Paine made his statement back in 1775. Of course, it didn’t happen overnight. The truth that “All men are created equal” appeared in our Declaration of Independence, but not in our Constitution. Women would not get the vote for 150 years. And blacks would suffer de facto disenfranchisement for almost fifty more years.

So, we can forgive the fact that the Urantia revelation

Living the Teachings, cont.

has made slow progress. But, while we are watching the paint dry, perhaps there are things we can do that will make a difference. A few years ago, Joan and I began a Living the Teachings group in Boulder. We don't just read or quote from the Urantia Papers in that group. We talk about our successes and failures in actually following the Master. Unfortunately, we have all had more failures than successes in following these teachings. *Living the Teachings* is much more difficult than *talking* about them, or *reading* about them, or *believing* them. But we are a work in progress, and we are still meeting and striving. Our Living the Teachings group has helped both Joan and myself immensely. One reason for its success is that Jesus always attends our meetings. Always. I know this is an extravagant claim to make, but it is true. And, because Jesus attends every meeting, something magical *always* takes place.

I promise, if you will try a Living the Teachings group of your own, Jesus will attend it. And the magic will somehow happen. I don't know how it works, but it always does. The great psychologist, Carl Jung, had an interesting sign above the door of his home in Germany. It was in Latin, but it meant: "Evoked or not, God is always present."

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The concept is very simple. We get together for a couple of hours every two weeks. And we share. We talk about our inner lives, and our successes and failures in living the teachings of Jesus. We have been doing this for over seven years now. There are only five in our group, but all of us have individually made some progress. Some might say, amazing progress.

We always end our meetings with a short guided worshipful meditation. At the end of my talk Joan will lead us through one of these meditations to give you the idea. Then we will hand out some guidelines for our meetings. But for now I want to give you the basic idea in broad strokes.

You may be wondering: *why do we Urantians need yet another kind of group?* What's wrong with our study groups? Nothing, really. Joan and I also host a

weekly youth group who are reading the Book from beginning to end. It's wonderful. The oldest youth there is 21, Michelle, my daughter. Michelle is now a senior at CU, with a 3.7 something grade average and she is going for a Master's degree in Japanese. But, back to our group. We love hosting this study group, and we are now well into the Jesus papers. However, Joan and I decided long ago that even though study groups are stimulating, we needed something more. Why? Because we came to the conclusion that we, and too many other Urantians, had fallen into an intellectual trap. We read and talk about the teachings of the Urantia Papers but we had made very little progress in living them. So we came to the conclusion we needed a new way to actually challenge us to live the teachings.

This problem of wanting to talk the talk and forgetting to walk the walk is not uncommon in organizations. Someone once defined an organization as a small group of people who do things surrounded by a large group of people who stand around and complain about the people who are doing things. But, that is another subject.

This problem of wanting to talk the talk and forgetting to walk the walk is not uncommon in organizations. Someone once defined an organization as a small group of people who do things surrounded by a large group of people who stand around and complain about the people who are doing things. But, that is another subject.

To illustrate what I mean about talking the talk and forgetting to walk the walk, I will tell you a story about another revelation. It's known as the Legend of the Crystal Wall. As the story goes, there was once a Land of Misery, and a Land of Bliss. The people in the Land of Misery suffered greatly, and they naturally wanted to live in the Land of Bliss. But there was a towering Crystal Wall that separated the two lands and prevented the people from leaving. The wall was so high that only the birds could soar above it and find freedom and peace in the Land of Bliss.

One day a Great Teacher came to the Land of Misery. It did not seem possible, but he claimed that he had come from the Land of Bliss. He began to instruct the people in the Land of Misery that there was a way to defeat the Crystal Wall and reach the Land of Bliss. He claimed that, with a little help, people could actually learn to soar over the wall and escape the Land

of Misery. But most people scoffed at this idea. The experts and authorities were especially scornful.

It came to pass that this teacher placed an open box of materials in the central gathering place of the Land of Misery. He told the people, as they gathered round, that with these commonplace materials, and some courage and faith, any ordinary man or woman could fly over the wall. Some of the elders and authorities looked over the materials. "Hah!" they scoffed. "There is nothing new here," said one. "This science is hopelessly outdated," said another. "He has plagiarized the writings of other teachers," said a third. And on and on.

But the Great Teacher was a patient and determined young man. The people watched as he began putting together the materials in the box: pieces of sailcloth, cords, sticks, and various fasteners. When he was finished, he called out: "Follow me." Several curious people did follow him as he took his strange apparatus to a nearby towering slope near the highest mountain in the Land of Misery. They watched in astonishment as he ran down the slope, and once more called out: "Follow me!" Then, they gasped as he leaped off into the air! But, instead of falling, he began to sail effortlessly in the trackless blue sky. Then his paraglider began to rise higher and higher in great wide circles, the way they had seen the birds sailing.

Unfortunately, evil eyes were also watching the aggressive young man. The men who dominated the Land of Misery had been observing him carefully. They had a plan to set into motion should the self-assured young man get too far out of line. Suddenly, from some unseen place an arrow flew through the air. The people watched in horror as the arrow pierced the heart of the Great Teacher. He had, by this time, risen very high in the sky, and had actually sailed over the Crystal Wall. But now, his body tumbled from his craft and disappeared to human eyes somewhere in the Land of Bliss.

The craft itself continued to sail for a few minutes, and then began to drop. As luck would have it, it dropped within the Crystal Wall into the Land of Misery. Immediately the miraculous craft was recovered by the authorities. And disputes arose about who owned it. The disputing parties were generally divided into three camps, the scientists, the philosophers, and the sages and religious visionaries. The debate raged on and on. After a few hundred years, the scientists issued a press release:

"We have come to the conclusion that this craft is composed of commonplace materials. There is no hard evidence that it has actually flown. Superstition has created the myth about the so-called "Great Teacher." Likewise, we find no proof that there is some mysterious, lifting force that will carry this craft over the Crystal Wall. Our instruments detect no such force, and we cannot accept the claims of those who gave testimony that they saw the event." After releasing this statement, the scientists lost interest in the craft. Soon after this, most of the philosophers decided to give up on the strange craft. One said: "Although the existence of this mysterious force cannot be disproved, neither can it be proven. The domain of such perplexing, nonmaterial concepts is really that of the religionists."

The religionists, sages and gurus had long held sway over the people in the Land of Misery. They held their ground about the powers of the craft, but their influence had grown weaker and weaker. Meanwhile, the scientists were producing one wonderful invention after another. "Science works!" became the mantra of the new scientists. Even so, the scientists still had no clue about how to break through the Crystal Wall and free the people. By now though, it had been in place so long that people took it for granted.

Left alone with the craft of the Great Teacher, the sages and religionists began to argue among themselves. They took the craft apart, analyzed it, and finally they sealed it in a sacred shrine. More than a thousand years went by, and the priests could no longer remember how the craft was configured. Various factions sprang up. They speculated a great deal about the "Great Teacher," about who he was, where he really came from, and what really happened to him. The craft, and the message, "follow me" was all but forgotten. No authority dared to actually attempt to fly the craft. In fact, many religious experts came to a remarkable conclusion. They decided that it was not necessary to risk a flight over the wall anyway. The Great Teacher had already accomplished that. These experts claimed that all one had to do was to *believe* that the Great Teacher had died to free the people of the Land of Misery. If an individual declared this belief according to a proper ritual, he or she would be saved. When such a person died, they would wake up on the other side of the Crystal Wall in the Land of Bliss and be with the Great Teacher.

There were hundreds of other ideas about the Great Teacher. A few interesting ideas even developed around

Living the Teachings, cont.

the components of the craft he had built. But almost nothing was said or taught about the craft itself, or how it was used. In the meantime, the craft and the “follow me” message of the Great Teacher were all but forgotten. Like a magnificent butterfly, it seemed to be waiting for a time when some future generation of men and women would reassemble it and dare to use it. Two thousand years went by, and nothing much happened. Then, a small group of people made a monumental discovery.

They found a mysterious Blue Book somewhere in the Land of Misery. No one really knew for certain where it came from. The book itself claimed to have been authored by beings from the Land of Bliss. Moreover, the book declared that it contained the original information about how the craft of the Great Teacher was put together! This revelation pointed out the errors of the religionists who had lost the message of the Great Teacher: “Follow me.” It told how these well-meaning believers had created a religion ABOUT the Great Teacher, and lost the religion OF the Great Teacher. The people who found this book were overjoyed. At last the revelation of the Great Teacher could be given to the people of the Land of Misery. At last the people could be free of the bondage of superstition, and materialism, and the tyranny of self-proclaimed gurus and special people with secret information!

But, alas, these well-meaning people with this wonderful revelation for humankind had different ideas about who had authority over the Book, who owned it, and how best the new revelation should be presented. They began to break up into still more factions.

First, there were the **Bookists**, who believed everyone needed a copy of the Blue Book so that *they* could learn about the message of the Great Teacher and *they* follow his teachings. There were the **Buriests**, who wanted to bury the Blue Book so no one could change its great message and future generations could follow the teachings of the Book. Then came the **Channelists**, who claimed to be in contact with celestial government that ruled the earth. They wanted to add new information they claimed they were getting from on high that would complete the revelation. There were also the **Bashists**, who claimed that a human had obviously edited the Blue Book and made changes, so we had to pick and choose what parts of it we could believe. Another group was the **Nitpickists**, who spent untold hours finding what they perceived were factual errors in the Blue Book. And, of course the **Antiplagerists**

who claimed the Blue Book was simply a compilation of material stolen from other sources. Finally, there were the **Anything-gozers** who embraced anyone and everyone who happened to carry a Blue Book around.

In fact, all manner of self-proclaimed special people sprang up, and soon a religion about the Blue Book was established. Unfortunately, few people in the Land of Misery were interested in this strange religion about this strange book and all the strange BlueBookists who were constantly fighting with each other.

Now, I don’t want to imply that I have all the answers, nor that any of these factions are wrong in what they believe. I have no idea whether what they believe is true or not. It doesn’t really matter what we believe.

Did I say that?

It really doesn’t matter what we believe.

For a long time nearly everyone believed the world

*For a long time nearly everyone believed the world was flat. That didn’t change anything. **What matters is** how we live. Because the religion of Jesus, according to the Urantia Papers, is not something to be believed. It is not something to be discussed and read about, or amended by celestial decree. The religion of Jesus is something that can only be lived.*

was flat. That didn’t change anything. **What matters is** how we live. Because the religion of Jesus, according to the Urantia Papers, is not something to be believed. It is not something to be discussed and read about, or amended by celestial decree. The religion of Jesus is something that can only be lived.

Think of Mother Teresa. I believe a lot of her theology is all wrong, I believe mine is better. But Mother Teresa lived the Religion of Jesus far better than I could ever dream of doing. I have always loved her wonderful decree, “We cannot do great things, we can only do ordinary things with great love.” It is said that once a business man told her, “You couldn’t pay me enough to do what you do for the poor.” To which Mother Teresa answered: “Me either.”

This distinction between what we say we believe and the way we live is very important. Because, if the religion of Jesus is something to be believed, or read, or talked about, it would not be so difficult. However, if the religion of Jesus is something to be lived, it becomes a very different proposition. If we are to actually pick

up our individual crosses and follow the Master, then we are confronted with a very different question. But how is it that so many Urantians have come to create comfortable religions *about* this amazing Book? And, how is it possible to create a religion about a Book when the Book itself declares that the religion of Jesus is the religion of *personal experience* and it cannot be taught, it must be lived? A book that urges us to follow Jesus, not to just read and talk about him. But modern men and women are uncomfortable with the radical idea of believing *as* Jesus believed and serving *as* Jesus served. Most of us, even long time readers, react as Nalda did when she met Jesus.

But how is it that so many Urantians have come to create comfortable religions about this amazing Book? And, how is it possible to create a religion about a Book when the Book itself declares that the religion of Jesus is the religion of personal experience and it cannot be taught, it must be lived?

Remember Nalda? The story of Nalda at the well is, in many ways, the story of how too many of us back away from the greatest treasure ever offered human kind: the religion of Jesus.

Let's revisit that story. Nalda was an attractive Samaritan woman. Jesus wanted a drink but he had no way to get water out of the well. So when Nalda approached with her pitcher to draw water from the well, he asked her to give him a drink. Nalda was startled, because in those days a self-respecting man did not speak to women in public, much less would it be proper for a Jew to speak to a Samaritan woman. Unfortunately, Nalda thought this attractive Jewish man was flirting with her. But soon Nalda realized that she had mistaken Jesus' kindness, and she was completely baffled by the unusual man before her.

The Urantia Papers tell us that the "better side" of Nalda was awakened when Jesus said to her: **"Better it would be if you would cease to trifle with my words and seek for the living water which I have this day offered you."**

Nalda was embarrassed that she had spoken in the manner she did to Jesus. She said: "My Lord, I repent of my manner of speaking to you, for I perceive that you are a holy man or maybe a prophet." **And she was just about to seek direct and personal help from the Master when she did what so many have done before and since—dodged the issue of personal salvation by turning to the discussion of theology**

and philosophy.

This is the key phrase in the Urantia Papers: "... **she was just about to seek direct and personal help from the Master when she did what so many have done before and since—dodged the issue of personal salvation by turning to the discussion of theology and philosophy.**" She quickly turned the conversation from her own needs to a theological controversy. Pointing over to Mount Gerizim, she continued: "*Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and yet you would say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship; which, then, is the right place to worship God?*"

Of course, Jesus saw through this ploy. The papers tell us he **perceived the attempt of the woman's soul to avoid direct and searching contact with its Maker.** However, Jesus also saw that there was present in her soul **a desire to know the better way of life.** So he told her to receive into her own heart **"this living water which I am offering you even now."**

But Nalda makes yet another effort to avoid the discussion of the embarrassing question of her personal life on earth and the status of her soul before God. Once more she resorted to theological questions, saying: "*Yes, I know, Sir, that John has preached about the coming of the Converter, he who will be called the Deliverer, and that, when he shall come, he will declare to us all things*" —and Jesus, interrupting Nalda, said with startling assurance, **"I who speak to you am he."**

Why do I tell you this story? Because I believe, just as Nalda, too many Urantians have avoided the central message and the mission of the Urantia Papers. Like Nalda, too many Urantian leaders point in every direction but their own hearts.

This was the first direct, positive, and undisguised pronouncement of his divine nature and sonship which Jesus had made on earth. And it was made to a Samaritan woman, a human soul who desired salvation, desired it sincerely and wholeheartedly, and that was enough.

Why do I tell you this story? Because I believe, just as Nalda, too many Urantians have avoided the central message and the mission of the Urantia Papers. Like Nalda, too many Urantian leaders point in every direction but their own hearts.

After you really study the Urantia Papers, you come to the conclusion that **the more we know and under-**

Living the Teachings, cont.

stand about the Urantia Papers, the more we are aware that we have barely scratched the surface. At least many of us have come to that conclusion.

But are the Urantia Papers true? I believe they are true. However, I will agree that the premises upon which the Papers are based are extravagant, and challenging beyond measure.

We are told that a pre-existent being from another dimension ventured out from Paradise on a mission (along with our Mother Spirit) into the imperfection of time and space 400 billion years ago. His mission was to create, in this evolutionary time and space, a universe based upon the central core of divine perfection. Then, two thousand years ago, he set into motion a task to save our planet. Disguised as an ordinary human being, this celestial entity entered into enemy territory to save his little lost planet of Urantia, to bind its wounds and bring it home. He set into motion a new order of humankind, a gospel of peace and freedom. Then he turned over the task of saving the planet over to ordinary human minds and hearts to complete.

Of course, our Creator Son knew that if human beings were left alone to accomplish this task, the earth would soon degenerate into chaos. But, according to the Papers, human beings are endowed with a priceless gift, a fragment of God, to help them. Humans are also provided all manner of invisible helpers and spiritual forces to assist them, and the Master himself has sent his Spirit of Truth to live in human hearts and guide them to all truth.

Clearly, the Urantia Papers describe the task that Jesus began and turned over to human minds to complete. Update all of the science, and the message is unchanged.

Jesus still lives, and he still can do amazing things. But Jesus can only live and do wonderful things through human beings who are dedicated to the Master's religion of doing the will of the Father and unselfishly serving their brothers and sisters. Other than that, we are told not to attempt to put any limits on the spiritual power of Jesus' Spirit of Truth.

Once more, with the caveat that I am just scratching the surface of the deeper meanings contained in the Urantia Papers, I believe they are a description of the awesome enterprise our Creator Son set into motion 400 billion years ago. As part of his mission, he came to Urantia and walked the dusty roads of Israel as a mortal being. He then entrusted the completion of the

task of saving our planet to human hearts and minds.

I stand here before you with utter certainty that what I am saying resonates within the hearts of many of you. Phoenix has always been ahead of the curve as a leader in doing the work of the revelation. I know that many of you recall some wonderful moments we shared in the early days. I won't begin naming names, but it was from Phoenix that the most energetic support for freeing the revelation came. Phoenix was the first Society to be formed after the break between the Brotherhood and the Foundation. From Phoenix came leadership to interface with the Spanish-speaking community. As a matter of fact, Eric Cosh came up to Boulder from this community to learn more about the Living the Teachings concept. It was his idea to set up a website, which we are in the process of doing.

It was said that the members of the contact commission were told that they might live and die without knowing that they were laying the foundations for a new religious renaissance on our planet. And so it may be with all of us here in this room. But perhaps, like Camelot, we can take solace in the knowledge that at least some of what we did, and what we tried to do, will be remembered.

John Kennedy loved that final scene in the musical Camelot. King Arthur had strived to bring a new order of goodness and peace to the world, only to see it all come apart. At the end of the play, Arthur stands alone on the battlefield, lamenting that the golden days of Camelot had ended, and the fact that he must go to battle with those he loves.

As the story goes, a youth appears and tells Arthur that he wants to be a knight and fight in this battle. Arthur tells him, "What do you know of Knighthood?" and the young man replies: "Oh everything. I know from the stories that people tell." Arthur is amazed. "From the stories people tell, you know about knighthood and you want to be a knight?" "Oh yes!" the youth replies.

But Arthur thinks for a moment, and then tells him: "No. You will not fight in this battle. You go behind the lines and hide there until it is over. Then you will make your way back to England, alive ... to grow up and grow old. And you will do as I your king commands you. Each evening, from December to December ... before you drift to sleep upon your cot, think back of all the tales that you remember, of Camelot. Ask every person if he's heard the story, and tell it strong

and clear if he has not, that once there was a fleeting wisp of glory, called Camelot.

“Now, say it out with love and joy!” “Camelot! Camelot!”

“Yes, Camelot, my boy. Where the rain it never fell till after sundown. By eight am the morning fog had flown. Don’t let it be forgot, that once there was a spot, for one brief shining moment, that was known as Camelot!” Arthur then knights the youth and the boy runs off to fulfill his mission.

A general then approaches Arthur. “What are you doing Arthur? We have a battle to fight!” And Arthur replies: “I have won my battle! What we did, what we tried to do, will be remembered.” Pointing to the direction where the young man had ran, the general asks: “Who was that?”

“Oh, only one of what we all are. Less than a drop in the great blue motion of the sunlit sea. But, it seems that some of those drops do sparkle! Some of them do sparkle!”

Perhaps it is appropriate to quote Jesus at this point. He said: “Do you not realize that the hope of a better nation – or a better world – is bound up in the progress and enlightenment of the individual?”

Many of you “drops” here in this room *have* sparkled over the years, and I salute you. But some here may yet wonder about something, as Joan and I did. Suppose we do take it to another level. Suppose, just suppose, without reservation, we meet together with no other mission than to call upon Jesus to help us transform our lives. Suppose, in our mind’s eye, we see the living Jesus coming. And imagine that this time we did not run. We did not avert our eyes, even though we knew the living Jesus would not be content with simply rearranging the old familiar furniture of our souls and making us more comfortable. Even though we know he would tear out the rotten timbers of resentments and toss the baggage of vain regrets. Even though we know he will completely renovate our hearts and minds. Suppose we were able to allow him to do this, what real good would our small contribution do? What would it do for the revelation? What importance could our small voice, our “tiny drop on the great blue motion of the sunlit sea,” our testimony, have against a world that seems to be overwhelmed by vanity and human folly?

The answer lies in one final story. It is a short story.

JOAN:

One winter’s day a wild dove happened to land on a branch of a tree, and noticed a sparrow nearby. After a few moment’s of silence, the sparrow addressed the dove.

“Can you tell me the weight of a snowflake?” asked the sparrow.

“Nothing more than nothing,” replied the wild dove.

“In that case, I must tell you a marvelous story,” the sparrow said.

“I was sitting on the branch of a fir tree, near the trunk, when it began to snow—not heavily—not a raging blizzard—no, just like a dream, gently, ever so softly. Since I did not have anything better to do, I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs and needles of this branch. Their number reached exactly 3,741,952. When the 3,741,953rd snowflake dropped onto the branch, nothing more than nothing as you say, the branch broke off.”

Having said that, the sparrow flew away.

The dove, who since the time of Noah’s ark had been an authority on the matter, thought about the story for a while, and finally said to herself, “Perhaps there is only one person’s voice lacking for the peace of Jesus to come to the world.”

“Perhaps there is only one person’s voice lacking for the peace of Jesus to come to transform the world.”

Let’s close our eyes for a moment and meditate upon the peace of Jesus. (5 minute meditation).

Larry and Joan Mullins live in Boulder, Colorado, where they have been leading “Living the Teachings Groups” for many years.

Larry served as editor of The Spiritual Fellowship Journal from 2002-2003.

Pioneers in the New Age

Meredith J. Sprunger

I should like to call your attention to a statement made by the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk (1:5), “Look, there is work being done in your days which will astonish you and which you will not believe when it is told to you.” We are again living in a time when amazing things are being accomplished by the spirit of God in our world.

We are living in an age which is experiencing the exhaustion of the spiritual creativity of the renaissance and the reformation. Scientifically and conceptually we have left behind the horse and buggy technology and the geocentric universe view of our forefathers. It is generally recognized by the prophetic voices of our day that we are at the beginning of a new age. We are standing at the edge of tremendous potentials for human growth and human destruction.

The most creative minds of our generation are meeting with perplexity and frustration in attempting to solve the growing complexity and seriousness of our contemporary problems ranging from environmental pollution to human misery and destruction. The significance of the crisis of our age is seen in the fact that the spiritual supervisors of our planet have recognized the need for a new epochal revelation to restructure our planetary and universe views of reality and inspire us to new levels of material and spiritual growth. As a result we have the Fifth Epochal Revelation in the form of the Urantia Book.

Importance of Outreach

One of the most important responsibilities and opportunities of our world today is bringing this new vision of reality to the peoples of the world. Each person who discovers the Urantia Book and recognizes its significance must decide what his or her role should be in this many faceted outreach mission. The Fifth Epochal Revelation can only exercise its transforming power in our world if we have able, wholehearted dedication in this outreach ministry.

Paul in his letter to the Colossians says (3:23), “Whatsoever you do, put your whole heart into it as a service to the Lord, not just to humankind.” On page 1780 of the Urantia Book we read, “If you are not a positive and missionary evangel of your religion, you are self-deceived in that what you call a religion is only a traditional belief or a mere system of intellectual philosophy.” We are told on page 279-80, “In the

universal regime you are not reckoned as having possessed yourself of knowledge and truth until you have demonstrated your ability and willingness to impart this knowledge and truth to others.” On page 556 we are admonished, “The weak indulge in resolutions, but the strong act. Life is but a day’s work—do it well. The act us ours; the consequences God’s.” (48:7:#11)

Living Spiritual Truth

I should like to challenge you to act on the spiritual leading which you have for service. I would invite you to ascend the seven-step ladder of outreach ministry. *Step one* is the level of living the teachings of the Urantia Book. This is basic and elemental. None of the other steps of outreach service will be effective until we have reasonably mastered the principles of inspired spiritual living. Without honesty, integrity, sincerity, trustworthiness, loving attitudes and action directed by experiential spiritual wisdom, no outreach service will be effective. With these qualities of behavior, our lives are an eloquent message, and we have the opportunity to share the great truths of the Fifth Epochal Revelation that have inspired us.

Sharing Spiritual Truth

Most of us then take *step two* and begin sharing these enhanced spiritual realities with our fellows. We usually begin by relating these insights without revealing the source because, for one reason or another, we do not wish to publicly announce that we are readers of a strange new book that we believe is the Fifth Epochal Revelation. This bootleg ministry is constructive and good but lacks forthrightness and power. I would encourage you, when you are ready, to take the critically important *third* step in outreach ministry: summon that level of openness and courage where you become a discriminating herald or salesperson of the Urantia Book.

Now you are not only able to present insights which may be appropriate to specific situations but you are sharing a veritable library to truth and wisdom where people can find an entire philosophy of life and a new view of universe reality. As you wholeheartedly pursue the task of introducing people to the Urantia Book, you have become a missionary in the traditional sense of the word. When you inspire others to engage in such outreach work, the effect is geometric in nature.

Social Groups and Cultural Influences

All this is good but very soon we become aware of the necessity for the *fourth* step in outreach activity: the

cultivation, organization, and direction of study groups. There are now several hundred Urantia study groups in existence. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, we will have thousands of study groups throughout the world. Study groups are basic to the socialization of religion but they are partial and incomplete. These groups spring up, have an up and down history, are limited in the number of people they attract, and sometimes die out. At best the study group is a temporary and limited social-historical phenomenon.

Every serious and dedicated person engaged in outreach ministry in the Urantia movement faces the limitations of individual and study group evangelism and longs for the permanence and broad cultural depth of institutional wholeness and stability. To satisfy this hunger for a deeper relationship with society and realizing the greater potentials of cultural involvement, we take the *fifth* step in outreach ministry: participation in quasi or limited institutional activities such as forming Urantia Societies, placing books in libraries, introducing the study of the Urantia Book in educational institutions and professional societies, or getting involved in growing edge movements like environmental improvement, holistic studies, peace demonstrations, and futurist activities.

Authentic Religious Institutions

This progression of outreach experience, along with planetary religious history, leads to the realization that these five basic steps in missionary activity are but preliminary and partial phases leading to the only abiding form of the socialization of religion: the formation or reformation of religious institutions. It is the paradox of religious history that the institutionalization of religion increases the potential for evil and hampers growth but is a necessary requisite for religious enculturation and survival. (98:6:1)

The solution to this paradox, as the authors of the Urantia Book point out (97:10:7), is not the eradication of religious institutions but in creating more perfect, spiritually attuned religious organizations. All outreach activity which has survival value, therefore, must culminate in some form of institutionalization. Religion must have an appealing symbolism incorporated in ritual which encourages and enhances individual and group worship, undergirds the values of the family, and furnishes fellowship and spiritual care for all of life from birth to death. The initial five steps of outreach ministry are good and necessary steps to the only social vehicle and methodology which can carry the

Fifth Epochal Revelation to the peoples of the world. It must be incorporated in religious institutions. All wholehearted and thorough outreach ministry based on revelatory and historical wisdom must come to grips with this elemental fact.

Leavening Traditional Religions

There are two basic ways in which this can be done. The first takes us to step *six*: the study and incorporation of the teachings of The Urantia Book in the religions of the world. Here in Western Civilization this means creating an interface with Christianity. Christianity has tremendous latent potentials. The authors of the Urantia Book regard it as “the best of the religions of the twentieth century” (195:9:8) but it “is only the larval stage of the thwarted spiritual kingdom.” (170:5:21)

The Christian Church has great reserves of evolutionary historical wisdom and has organizational roots throughout the entire world. No one knows to what spiritual heights it may rise when reformed and transformed by the Fifth Epochal Revelation. It is imperative that we exercise the courage and wisdom to build an interface with Christianity as well as with all other religions of the world.

A New Religious Movement

The authors of the Urantia Book visualize one more step for the outreach mission of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. They point out that every new revelation of truth has given rise to a new religious movement (67:7:6) and that the enlarged “restatement of the religion of Jesus must develop a new and appropriate symbolism.” This prophetic insight and proclamation brings us to step *seven* in outreach ministry: the formation of a new social expression of religion.

Many suggestions are given for the development of this new religious fellowship predicated on the Fatherhood of God and the brother/sisterhood of humanity. Such a religious institution needs an appealing symbolism and ritual which promotes individual and group worship, embodies a masterful mystery, builds on the values of the home, encourages diversity and growth, and provides fellowship and spiritual care for humankind. It is the basic structure that stimulates and supports personal spiritual experience—true religion.

Missionary work at this seventh level, I believe, has the greatest promise for the future. It has the advantage of learning from the experiential wisdom of all of the religions of the world as well as the spiritual insights and universe view of the Fifth Epochal Revelation.

Pioneers in the New Age, cont.

Religious organizations working on this seventh level of outreach ministry will eventually establish spiritual fellowships throughout the world. They will head up a religious movement which will become known as the newest of the world's religions and will be a mighty force in ecumenical relationships, facilitating fellowship and unity of purpose among all the planetary religions.

Call to Courageous Service

I should like to challenge and encourage those of you who feel called to dedicate yourself to the outreach ministry of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. This, I believe, is the most important spiritual objective of the twenty-first century and it may be, in perspective, the most crucially significant project now in process on our planet.

This is a many-faceted and diverse ministry that needs to be carried out on all seven levels of outreach service. Strive to determine where your abilities and calling direct you to work and then serve wholeheartedly and dynamically in the spiritual kingdom of Christ Michael and the Universal Father. This ministry is not and will not be easy. "The religion of the spirit means effort, struggle, conflict, faith, determination, love, loyalty, and progress." (155:5:10)

Even as Jesus spoke to his apostles of the first century, he is speaking to his contemporary disciples, "Are you fearful, soft, and ease-seeking? Are you afraid to trust your future in the hands of the God of truth whose sons you are?...Will you go back to the easy path of the certainty and intellectual settledness of the religion of traditional authority, or will you gird yourselves to go forward with me into that uncertain and troublous future of proclaiming the new truths of the religion of the spirit, the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men?" (155:5:12)

Each of us must find the answer to this question in the quietness of our own soul. And then we must act on this guidance.

Meredith Sprunger is a retired UCC pastor and college professor who has worked for over fifty years to interface with mainline clergy. He is the founder and the first senior editor of the Spiritual Fellowship Journal, and currently associate editor.

Fusion Power

Stan Hartman

"Emancipation of the mind and soul can never be effected without the driving power of an intelligent enthusiasm which borders on religious zeal."(160:1:8)

The Urantia Book is our "talent," and belongs to no human being or group of human beings. It was entrusted to us to enrich all our planet. All who know it's true are its trustees, and have a responsibility to spread the news of it to the world, regardless of disagreements about how to do that. The most we can realistically ask of ourselves and others is sincerity, and appropriate humility, not perfect judgment. When we find ourselves in conflict, it's always good to keep in mind that tact and tolerance are the earmarks of a great soul. It's sometimes necessary to deal with discord head-on, but there's another progressive option. We can transform such conflicts by more focused dedication to the values and needs that lie deeper than such friction. Dishonesty, manipulation, and attempts to claim arbitrary authority over others have to be seen and condemned for what they are, but letting such spiritual errors also distract us from more important things needlessly compounds the harm they do. Jesus' way was to strengthen good, not waste time trying to destroy evil. We have a responsibility to keep in mind his warning about the beam and the mote (140:2:17), and one of the statements that simulates mota: "The argumentative defense of any proposition is inversely proportional to the truth contained" (48:7:#28). The truth is not in our personal judgments of others but in the quality of our brotherhood, including our kinship with those who disagree with us—especially those whom we like the least. "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me" (155:3:4).

Denial and avoidance are also dangers, of course, when we attempt this higher attitude. It's easy to think we're transforming something when in reality we're simply avoiding it. A clue to which we're involved in, transformation or avoidance, is whether or not we're free of fear and defensiveness, and whether or not the energy motivating our actions is spiritual enthusiasm. The Urantia Book speaks of Jesus being "surcharged with divine enthusiasm" (100:7:4), which simply had no time for the petty conflicts in the lives of the mortals he passed among. That this enthusiasm can lose its balance and turn into fanaticism shouldn't lead us to believe that it's an evil in itself, or that we can truly follow him without it.

Of course, we're not Jesus, and have to beware of kidding ourselves that we're "above it all." Not all conflicts are petty, either. Nevertheless, compared to the potential of a truly dedicated Urantia community, such frictions have little power to thwart our positive efforts unless we grant them undue attention. Our spiritual maturity is our greatest safeguard against real threats to our mission on earth—keeping in mind that our mission is something we have yet to discover and clearly define, and thereby let clearly define our community. Much more serious dangers to "the Urantia movement" are fear and its by-products, like suspicion, doubt, prejudice, short-sightedness, impatience, ignorance of the book itself, selfish ambition, power-hunger, enemy-mindedness, jealousy, and subservience to arbitrary human authority.

Fear and its byproducts will have little power in a truly unified Urantia community, a genuine family which welcomes sincere disagreements because it's ready to use them to find deeper unity.

Fear and its byproducts will have little power in a truly unified Urantia community, a genuine family which welcomes sincere disagreements because it's ready to use them to find deeper unity. Within each of us, even now, lives an enthusiasm which can crowd out anxiety and hostility and replace them, if we allow it to, with the joy of loyalty to the Father's will. As a community, we can help each other put away our fears and animosities and find the balance that frees that divine passion, inherent in our spiritual birthright, which consumes all doubt and timidity. Within each of us, if we look deeply enough—and use the power of community to help each other do so—is that certainty and divine enthusiasm that made the boy Jesus shake from head to foot and cry out to the spectacle below him, "O Jerusalem!"

"O Urantia!" should be our cry.

This spiritual passion is the prelude to the eternal ecstasy of fusion, and it requires our constant loyalty and care. We need to keep before us also a vision of our fusion *as a family*, the unity of our community within God's purpose for us, and let that vision guide us forward. We can't do God's will by backing into the future, keeping our anxious attention locked on how the community may have failed in the past, and we can't go forward boldly as we need to if we're overfocused on avoiding dangers. As the authors of the book point out, "only forward-looking and progressive attitudes

are personally real." (12:5:9) The only serious threat to our mission on earth is our personal and collective doubt.

Passionate, ecstatic—these are words not always associated with healthy spiritual community. But when our faith is real and strong, as individuals and as a family, such adjectives are appropriate—especially if we add another—*peaceful*. "Genuine spiritual ecstasy is usually associated with great outward calmness and almost perfect emotional control" (91:7:3).

Our problems of living and relating are real, yet if we acquire this calm but overwhelming enthusiasm, "taking the kingdom by storm," we'll find many of our difficulties dissolving effortlessly, without any anxious striving to resolve them. Unlike avoidance and conflict, which try to exclude things from our lives, this passion transforms difficulties by *including* them as part of a vision of greater things. Crises become opportunities for growth and service.

Trying to exclude things, ideas, or people from our lives is inherently full of stress, anxiety, constant caution, and worry, since it's focused on what it doesn't want, and has to keep it in mind in order to avoid or conquer it. It's obsessed with what it wants to be free of, like a novice sailor staring at the rolling sea beneath him, making his seasickness worse by watching the apparent source of his trouble. If he would look up to the distant horizon instead, his vision would include the waves but find an anchor for his balance also, and the basis for a graceful dance with a circling certainty.

How do we attain such a stable vision, that can serve as the foundation for spiritually passionate action? It's easy for the sailor—he just looks up. But where do *we* look for the stable horizon of our lives, as individuals and as the Urantia family, when we find ourselves surrounded by things much more complex and confusing than the sea, including those conflicts within our still actualizing spiritual community?

We certainly need, in the first place, to deeply believe in such stability. We need to ask ourselves honestly if we *know* our spirits are real, and if we are sure of the truth of our fusion destiny. This surety needs to be not merely intellectual, but real in our deepest hearts and souls, and proven outwardly by our actions. If we fail to find such faith in ourselves, we need to ask for it. If we succeed in finding it, we need to *focus* on it within the distractions of our time, and ask others who share our faith to help us stay consciously in touch with it,

Fusion Power, cont.

as we pledge also to help them. From such focusing on our faith and all its implications, the peaceful power of spiritual enthusiasm just naturally emerges, and so too does a stable, spiritually passionate, effective community.

Keeping our spiritual poise in the face of the distractions of planetary life is simply a matter of learning a new skill, like the sailor's learning to dance with the sea, until the horizon becomes for him finally not a visual perception but a *feeling*, that steadies him even below deck or in fog. As in learning to ride a bicycle, we really "get it" only when we discover how such dynamic balance *feels*.

From such focusing on our faith and all its implications, the peaceful power of spiritual enthusiasm just naturally emerges, and so too does a stable, spiritually passionate, effective community.

Like all skills, maintaining spiritual poise begins with paying attention. As a wonderful healer, Moshe Feldenkrais, once put it: "You can't do what you want until you know what you're doing." When we act, communicate, think, or feel, do we know what beliefs we're actually expressing? We tell ourselves we believe we're sons of God, but if our thoughts, feelings, actions, and communications fail to confirm that at any given moment, then for that moment it's not true that we believe it. What *do* we believe then, if not this truth? When we're angry, fearful, ambitious, hurt, vindictive, lonely, depressed, discouraged, what do we believe? If we hope to change such beliefs, rather than keep falling into them now and then, we need to be aware of what we *really* believe at such times, just as the sailor has to watch what he's doing, as the ship rolls and heels, if he's to learn how to ride the sea and work upon it, and eventually get beyond his need to be watchful.

An important prerequisite for this learning, however, is refusing to feel ashamed of our mistakes and clumsiness, and refusing to blame others for theirs, while we learn. Without giving ourselves some "slack," as a sailor would put it, learning a new skill becomes needlessly painful and difficult. When we catch ourselves in behaviors incompatible with conscious sonship, if we haven't taken such missteps deliberately, we need to be forgiving, and ideally even develop a sense of humor about them—that "divine antidote to exaltation of ego." Putting ourselves or others down for our mistakes, or standing idly by while someone else does (face to

face or in gossip), is a spiritual disservice to ourselves, others, and God, and a serious obstacle to our mission on earth. We can't afford the luxury of such guilt and blame, or let them be excuses to avoid further growth. Evaluating our own or others' motives or potentials is the height of arrogance, and is incompatible with present, honest, living faith in the divine sonship we share. In fact, even fear is a great arrogance, assuming much more certainty than it usually can have of the dangers that it thinks it foresees.

This principle applies to the community also. As a spiritual family, we have neither the ability nor the need to evaluate ourselves or other spiritual communities. Our need is to go forward honestly with our spiritual growth and service, based on our sincere decisions. This will inevitably involve mistakes and setbacks, surprising and disastrous only to our egos, and we have to refuse to let these supposed setbacks tempt us into the distractions of judgments. Forgiveness, forgiveness, and more forgiveness is Jesus' way, leaving judgments to those who can see much more than we can, until finally forgiveness is no longer necessary because the habit of blaming and labelling has been left behind us

Our planet needs the Urantia Book and all it means. It doesn't need any conflicts about how best to make the world aware of it.

Our planet needs the Urantia Book and all it means. It doesn't need any conflicts about how best to make the world aware of it. *We* are its protectors—all of us who know of it. We can't foist on a few, even if they would like us to, the responsibility that lies with all of us who know the book is what it says it is. Generations have passed since its arrival, yet it's still largely unknown and misunderstood. If we're to assign blame for this, each of us should begin with ourselves, but it would be better not to begin with that at all, but rather begin doing what a true son would. We need to go onward with what needs to be done, staying loyal to our highest, most honest, most personally enlightened vision of what that is—regardless of how confused, tentative, or short-sighted we may have been in the past, even if that past was only a moment ago.

We also need to support each other, always keeping in mind that not all of us should or will serve in the same way. Just as Jesus warned of the dangers of too much faith, there can also be danger in too much community, that gives undue attention to its merely visible, formal

activities. We don't need to *create* the family of Urantians, we need to *nourish* it as it already exists. Cults, if you recall, cannot be created. They need to evolve. Do you recall the book's warning about the mistake of the early Christians—that they became a community in too much of a social rather than a spiritual sense? Yet we do need to show the world we're the kind of family that evolving sons of God rightfully become with one another—a family committed to truth, love, mercy, compassion, service, spontaneous friendliness, wise generosity, and, not least for this generation on earth, the dissemination of the Urantia Book to those to whom it belongs—all the peoples of the planet.

It's not enough to form study groups that talk about the book, anymore than it's enough to focus only on the book itself. Study is important, but can't be an excuse for inaction or spiritual slumber.

It's not enough to form study groups that talk about the book, anymore than it's enough to focus only on the book itself. Study is important, but can't be an excuse for inaction or spiritual slumber. We have a treasure that belongs not only to us, a tremendous source of spiritual nourishment in a world where billions are starving for want of its truths, but the book's greatest value is in the vision it invites us to embrace. Christianity's greatest mistake (and we do need to be aware of mistakes, without wringing our hands over them) was in focusing so much on the figure of Jesus rather than the truth and value of his teachings. Let's not repeat that mistake with the Urantia Book, no matter how much we love it. Of all those who choose not to embrace its form in our day, few will resist the attraction of its spirit. Our highest obligation is to live that spirit, not to distribute a book, no matter how great it is. Certainly we should do the one, but not to the point of ignoring the other.

Those who feel loyalty to human religious authority have an obligation to do whatever their sincerity inspires in them, while those who see human religious authority as regressive also have an obligation to act according to their highest ideals of dedication to the Father's will. Jesus didn't hesitate to break laws he found to be interfering with the relationship between man and God, but always respected those that did not. Which are which in our time is something each of us has to determine as honestly as possible for ourselves, while refusing to assume others are insincere who differ with us about it. If we can love only those who agree

with us, we're hardly ambassadors of a better world.

In all that we do, we need to be as honest as possible about our own true motives. We need to recognize when we're acting out of faith and when we're acting out of doubt or presumption. The world has had enough of religionists who violate the very principles they proselytize. There's no place for stubborn personal animosities and expressions of moral or spiritual superiority within a community of people who claim to believe they are sons of God and live according to his will. Let's *see* the better world of his will, in the way we, as Urantians, behave toward one another, including those we differ with. Let's prove we believe what we say we believe, or else humbly and sincerely ask for help to believe what we know we should believe. By professing to be students of the revelation, no matter how our opinions diverge, we assume a responsibility demanding much more of us than what's expected of those who don't profess such faith.

It's not the book alone, after all, that belongs not solely to us. Even our lives belong not solely to us. We've been entrusted with them, put in control of them to a large extent, but they're not ours alone by right. Our selves are relationships. Anyone who sees the true depths of human experience doesn't think of his or her life as *my* life, but as *our* life—a life being lived in partnership with God, in the awesome, joyful responsibility of becoming with God the co-parents of an evolving soul. With this perspective, life becomes the supreme value of co-creating with God a being you *and* God want to be.

Let's rediscover the wonder and enthusiasm that gripped us the first time we felt the book was true.

Let's rediscover the wonder and enthusiasm that gripped us the first time we felt the book was true. That enthusiasm was rooted in the fire ignited in us by the divine spark that found our minds as children, the fire that may have fallen to embers for lack of tending before finding the Urantia Book, and may have faded again after we discovered it, for any of many temporary reasons. Let's realize, and help each other remember, that we can and will fan that fire with our faith until it builds to a balanced but wholehearted passion that consumes all doubt, uniting us forever with the Final Father—even on this world, if we nourish it as we have power to. Let's support one another in learning the walk, not just the talk, to that final union.

Fusion Power, cont.

It is time to do this. It's time to forge a true community of believers—or better still, fathers, knowers—who help each other when we stumble, steady each other when we succeed, and support each other with our true-son relationships in learning to walk as he walked, perfectly, who did it all before us.

It is time to do this. It's time to forge a true community of believers—or better still, fathers, knowers—who help each other when we stumble, steady each other when we succeed, and support each other with our true-son relationships in learning to walk as he walked, perfectly, who did it all before us.

He journeyed in the flesh here all but alone, without companions who truly understood him. We have each other, and him in the midst of us, and two thousand years of his Truth's work behind us as our solid foundation. Let's use him, and each other, to fulfill the promise our spirits saw in us before they came to dwell in us in childhood. Apart, it would be an awesome task. Together, surrounded by others sincerely practicing the way he showed us so clearly, we can help each other stay loyal to what we know is the deepest truth of our lives, with all its joy and freedom.

We are Urantians, who walk with God, who see the earth's part in an eternal universe, who know the true roots and destiny of the world, and know the greatest story ever told as it's never been told before.

That knowledge is our power. Finally and forever, let us use it in the way he did, the only way it can be used. His story continues in us, if we choose. Let's show the universe what his love for us, and ours for him, can make of us, and make of our suffering planet. Let's show those watching us from the stars that his faith in us is justified. Let's let the greatness of his story unfold the fullness of its beauty from our souls, until all the world knows that what we know *must* be true.

Stan Hartman has been a student of the Urantia Book for 35 years. He lives in Boulder, Colorado, and once taught at The Boulder School for Students of the Urantia Book.

Ye Shall Know The Truth

**A Sermon by Rev. Dan McCauley
Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church
January 15, 1995**

Two weeks after the following news article was published, I was asked to preach at Lakeshore Drive Baptist Church, a church that had been supportive of my ministry. The sermon was well received.

Baptist Press. December 29, 1994. Trennis Henderson, Editor. Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine:

“Dan McCauley, Baptist Student Union director at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock since 1977, has been asked to resign... Arkansas Baptist State Convention executive director Don Moore reported that McCauley's views of biblical authority, extra-biblical revelation and the security of the believer differ significantly from our commonly held faith as Southern Baptists. ...McCauley, age 50, is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Monticello and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to accepting the BSU position at UALR in 1977, he served as a minister of education in South Carolina and an associate pastor in North Carolina.”

It is my understanding that disagreement with my personal theological interpretations of three issues: the role of the Bible, extra-Biblical revelation, and eternal security, have prompted my forced resignation as Baptist Student Union Director at UALR. I feel that there is some *misunderstanding* as to where I stand on these doctrines, so I've tried to flesh out my basic beliefs in these areas both to enlighten you and to allow you to enlighten me.

With no warning, I was asked to respond to eight questions, among which were the following three:

- (1) What is your view of the Bible?
- (2) What is your stand on extra-biblical revelation?
- (3) What are your views on the security of the believer?

To the best of my recollection, my responses were these:

(1) The Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is *totally sufficient* in leading us into an understanding of who God is *and* our responsibility in that relationship. But I believe that the Bible is a tool to lead us *to* God, not a *substitute for* a relationship with God. The Bible can be abused without the leadership of the Holy Spirit to help us in interpretation.

(2) I do believe in extra-biblical revelation. I believe that God is bigger than my concept or experience of Him. I believe that God is Truth, and *all truth* reveals God. As I said before, I believe that the Bible is sufficient, but I read nothing in the Bible that prohibits me from learning about God from other-than-biblical sources. I do depend on the Holy Spirit to keep me from error, and I test all purported truth by the litmus test of the Truth *as revealed* in the Holy Scriptures.

(3) I believe that what God holds in the palm of His Hand *cannot be snatched* by any other power on earth or in the spiritual realms. But I believe that we do not lose our free will when we are saved or born-again. It seems to me that there is evidence that we may still retain the capacity to reject the covenant that has been established, even as there is rebellion in the spiritual realms.

I do believe in extra-biblical revelation. I believe that God is bigger than my concept or experience of Him. I believe that God is Truth, and all truth reveals God.

I've had some time to reflect on those questions, and from whence they came. In 18 years of BSU work, I never implied to any student that my personal doctrine was infallible. In fact, I told students that infallibility belongs to God alone, and that it was my desire that they should leave the BSU desiring to become more and more like Jesus Christ. Only vanity and immaturity would lead one to desire clones of himself to be running around. I would have students to be like me *only in my desire to be like Jesus Christ.*

To whom or to what does one subscribe ultimate authority? My position is that ultimate authority should only be given to God as revealed in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Example: Whereas the Bible told me about Jesus and his attitude toward pacifism, the Holy Spirit convicted me of God's will for me regarding whether or not I should bear arms in Vietnam. **We** are *not* "born again" through our relationship to the Bible, *but through* our relationship to God.

When I've heard someone say that the Bible is our ultimate authority, I've usually responded "Which version or whose interpretation?" I contend that without a relationship to God as Holy Spirit to convict us of ultimate Truth, the Bible *can and has been* abused.

Only two weeks ago, the Democrat-Gazette carried a story of a young man who, through placing ultimate

authority in the Bible, gouged out his right eye -cutting the tendons with a pair of scissors — because he believed that a pentagram was located in the eye.

Satan quoted scripture in tempting Jesus. Many have used scriptures through the ages to support evil. In testifying to such, I am *not* demoting the Bible. The Bible is my mother in the faith, *but as a tool* used by the Holy Spirit. I am merely promoting the reality that God is our ultimate authority, and that we believe in a triune Godhead, *not* a quad-god.

Bibliolotry is a heresy. Indeed, I fear that this heresy is hindering people from entering the Kingdom of Heaven. For when we isogete the scriptures, to read into them what we want them to say, we tend to build walls around our little kingdoms of beliefs, to keep out those who would not subscribe to our particular creeds, interpretations or basic beliefs.

I support Baptist heritage when it has stated, "We have no creed but the Bible." But has our heritage not also stated that soul-competency — the priesthood of the believer — is also a banner worth waving? Can one be convicted of not representing Southern Baptists when he takes the whole Bible as his creed and doesn't teach anything contrary to scripture?

Oh, some would say, teaching that it may be possible to "fall from grace" *is* contrary to scripture. But I say to you, it is just a matter of interpretation and emphasis. A great Southern Baptist theologian, Dale Moody, one of my professors in seminary, taught and debated that we may, indeed, fall from grace. That position eventually led to his contract not being renewed.

Why would I even suggest to a student that it may be possible to reject our covenant with God? The answer: There is danger in the concept of *cheap grace!*

For decades, we have been baptizing young people in our churches who see Jesus only as Savior, not Lord. They are neither asking the question "What would Jesus do?" nor the question "What would Jesus have me to do?" Have we no responsibility to teach our students that they are to grow spiritually so long as they are in the Kingdom? Are Christians not given the mandate to obey the commandments of our Lord? Are we not told to 'Be holy, even as our Father in Heaven is holy' and to become perfect even as God is perfect? Can I, in good conscience, sit back and allow my students to believe that all God desires from us is our name on a church-membership role somewhere?! I think not!

Some would say that my emphasis on walking by

Ye Shall Know the Truth... cont.

faith and not by sight can lead to subjective discipleship wherein self-deception can take root. They contend that we may convince ourselves that the Lord is speaking to us when, in actuality, our own desires may be holding sway. Certainly, many who have claimed to have heard a word from the Lord have been self-deceived and others have simply been wolves in sheep's clothing.

But scripture itself testifies that we are to walk by faith, not by sight. *We are* fallible in hearing what the Holy Spirit is saying, but the Holy Spirit is infallible.

Am I to allow a fallible human being to interpret the Spirit's voice in scripture for me? Or am I to guard against self-deception by spending quality time with God and doing my best to obey His commandments? You be the judge.

As for extra-biblical revelation, I believe it to be heretical for anyone to limit God to their understanding or experience of Him.

As for extra-biblical revelation, I believe it to be heretical for anyone to limit God to their understanding or experience of Him. Even though I believe the Bible to be sufficient, I do not believe the Bible to contain all there is to know about Truth. For I believe the scriptures when they testify that *God* is Truth. And whereas neither science nor philosophy nor religion can contain the whole of God, where there is Truth in science, it is of God; where there is Truth in philosophy, it is of God; and where there is Truth in religion, it is of God.

In conclusion, I feel that there are three simple but profound phrases that have been my credo over the years, a credo that has placed me *on* the cutting edge and possibly *over* the edge.

Those phrases are:

(1) It is more important to be taught *how* to think than *what* to think.

(2) Being in relationship *with* God should *precede* doing things for God.

(3) Unity in the spirit *prohibits* uniformity of practice or beliefs.

Trying to live by this credo requires effort, struggle, conflict, faith, determination, love, loyalty, and progress. May I be found worthy of it!

Dan McCauley was a campus minister for 18 years and served on church staffs for Southern Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and the Disciples. He discovered the Urantia Book in 1985 while browsing the metaphysical section of a book store, but didn't feel he could afford the price. His students bought it for him as a birthday present.



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