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SCHOOL
OF
MEANINGS
AND
VALUES

LEADER'S MANUAL

THE SCHOOL OF MEANINGS AND VALUES was established February 17, 1968 by the Governing Board of the First Urantia Society of Los Angeles, a chartered organization. This Society functions as an offspring of the Urantia Brotherhood of Chicago, Illinois.

The Urantia Book was published in Chicago in 1955, sponsored by the Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

According to the constitutional mandate we are resolved to disseminate the teachings of the Urantia Book.

Our purpose here on the west coast is to establish study groups, and through them to disseminate the truths of the Urantia Book. We try to find leaders and assist them. We then endeavor to co-ordinate the activities of such groups by sharing speakers occasionally and by the preparation of guide lines for class study.

These outlines are more particularly to aid new groups in getting started. The group leader will have an outline to work from and may embellish it with other references from the Urantia Book if he wishes. Each prepared lesson may take two or more sessions to complete.

Some of the material consists of charts of the cosmography concepts as explained in the Urantia Book. Others are illustrations of various other concepts set forth in explanatory and analytical papers.

This manual is offered by the School of Meanings and Values. The purpose of the suggestions in this manual is to aid leaders in study groups that are devoted to the teachings of the Urantia Book.

The person, - or persons in the case of co-leaders, - may write to the School of Meanings and Values for information or suggestions relating to the work.

GROUP STUDY PRINCIPLES

LEADER'S MANUAL

THE FUNCTION of a Urantia Book study group is to provide individuals with "other-mindness" and to aid their understanding in considering these revelations through group discussion, group knowledge, and by uniting their potentials for increased insight into these beautiful and long awaited truths.

THE GROUP LEADERS OR CO-LEADERS will have to study harder than anyone else. Since the responsibility of the program rests upon the leader, you must read all of the assigned material before the meeting so that you will feel more competent to lead the class.

HAVE PLENTY OF NOTES as memorandums and enter notes in the margins of your Urantia Book, such as cross-references. They are invaluable. Search out the central purpose of each paragraph. At the end of each Paper you read, sum up the underlying message as briefly as possible. This aids in remembering what has been read.

We understand that the ability to lead is acquired only through practice. But many suggestions can be offered that are garnered from the experience of others which can accelerate your development as a leader.

YOU MUST MAINTAIN the sessions on a high level and within the bounds of good taste.

ASK AN OPINION occasionally. In the beginning if you are not well informed on the Urantia Book and cannot quote from the book, do not support the opinions on any side. The individuals may offer their opinions as a suggestion. You simply answer - "that is an interesting viewpoint", -"a profound observation", -"food for thought", -"thank you, Mr. W for offering the idea"... or any simple answer that may come to mind.

A PERSONAL INTEREST in everyone should be maintained by the leader, calling them by name, except in the case of a large group of twenty-five or more, you simply nod to them or single them out when they raise their hands.

A MOMENT OF WORSHIP at the beginning of the session is commonly practiced but is entirely optional. Read 998:#5: para. 2 regarding benefits from group prayer.

TRY TO PLAN AN UNDERLYING RIGID ROUTINE for the entire session. Do not permit wanderings and deviations to any appreciable extent. Remember you are leading individuals of widely different interests, backgrounds, religions, and capacities for understanding the realities of life and for accepting these truths. Your purpose is to unify this group and you must be flexible at all times, but gently keep them well on the track of the original study material, with an eye on the time, since the time is quite precious. It is well to remind them that the time is running out. This will act as a warning to them not to waste others' time.

PROFITABLE DISCUSSION that is relevant is welcomed for short periods of time.

YOUR INTRODUCTORY REMARKS in calling the class to order should be a brief, pointed outline of what material is to be covered in the session. Phrase it in as short, clear, and uncomplicated way as you can. Always address it to the whole group, -- not to any one individual.

Sometimes it is helpful to sum up briefly what was learned in the previous meeting to start them thinking and 'tuning in' on the wave length that is required to unify their thinking.

THE LEADER MUST LISTEN to what is said and who says it. If you listen well and think with the participants the right answers will usually come. New and relevant ideas are many times offered as a product of diverse intellectual and environmental backgrounds. You may use the old comment, "we are all entitled to our own opinions".

REAL BENEFITS come sometimes if there is a so-called 'catalyst' in the group. He will stimulate thinking and discussion, sometimes waking up an otherwise lethargic group. This, however, is with the provision that the catalyst is a sympathizer toward Christian beliefs and is not injecting anti-Urantia Book ideas into the group.

WE MUST ALL BE AWARE of the destructive, sophisticated organized forces that are running amuck in this present age, even as they were in the times of Jesus. If the situation has an element of danger to the unity of the group and all reasonable efforts to silence such a person have been made, the leader should not hesitate to inform the person that his presence is disturbing and that he must not attend the class again.

REGARDING THE SILENT MEMBERS of the group: some would speak if given a little assistance and encouragement from the leader. You must be especially friendly to them and watch their expressions. Sometimes they are on the brink of speaking but never quite make it. Single out these persons and help them overcome shyness by asking if they have anything to add to the subject, or by telling the class of some idea they have offered to you privately and commend them for it.

Never embarrass anyone by calling on him when he shows no signs of wanting to speak. Gentle encouragement will aid him in presenting his own views for the consideration of the group. Tell him others are missing his contributions.

When you wish any member to come forth with a special contribution to the group, always give him plenty of advance warning.

Some people have reason to be shy. They may have speech impediment, a foreign accent, or may never have participated in group discussion before. You must respect their feelings.

ON THE OTHER EXTREME is the monologist. He never stops talking. He foists his ideas on the group and can ruin it very quickly. Some participants will drop out in disgust. He is delighted that he has found an opportunity to expound and that he can project an intellectual image, probably covering an inferiority complex. Other silent and often far more intelligent persons will reserve their opinions.

He may very well be interrupted by the leader.

The leader may suggest that others must have equal opportunity to participate. Every paragraph does not require discussion, - only absorption.

If he continues to talk too much or interrupts others while expressing their views, - halt him, even with a motion of the hand, until the other person has had his opportunity to finish. You may even have to ask him privately to help others to participate. If he continues with his bad habits, put it to him bluntly that he is monopolizing the conversation and is demanding too much time, which is damaging to group unity. Sometimes beautiful spiritual thoughts are short-circuited by a persistent talker, which is undesirable.

IT IS YOUR DUTY TO PROTECT all participants from any obstructive behavior and to help everyone to learn to listen.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE URANTIA BOOK relate to all religions, philosophies, and some ideas in metaphysical studies and often inspire members to recite beliefs of other studies. It is time-wasting to permit any member to expound his own religious concepts for more than a minute or so, since the purpose of the group is to study the Urantia Book. The leader may suggest that "time will not permit the discussion of comparative religions however interesting they may be", and that "we must stay to the purpose of the group, to study the Urantia Book teachings". You may suggest that "views from other studies may be discussed during the social hour after class".

The leader must not shout down an argument. He may ring a small bell that is sometimes used in calling a class to order at the beginning of a session, or he may tap on the table or desk and restore order.

"A new revelation is always contaminated by the older evolutionary beliefs". (1022:2) This is a good reference to use when necessary. (Also 1576:2)

BUT REMEMBER, DIFFERING OPINIONS are a delight to many people. The leader of the group does not have to agree or disagree. He simply remarks... "well put", ... "that is a new approach", ... "unusual viewpoint", or the equivalent. There must never be derision, only reason.

IF TENSION ARISES or a caustic remark of disagreement is expressed, the leader quickly calls the attention of the group to the Urantia Book and the study subject, ignoring the remark.

OFTEN TIMES MEMBERS HAVE COME a very long distance to attend a meeting, and some find it difficult to find the time to be away from their families and social duties. Therefore MUCH CONSIDERATION should be accorded them. It is indeed disappointing to attend a meeting and find much of the time wasted, listening to someone talk about his preconceived concepts, or to disturbing private conversations going on between inattentive members. They may have a question saved to ask at the end of the session, but due to noise and confusion toward the conclusion of the session by thoughtless persons, never get the answer to their question. They may never return.

MAINTAIN ORDER TO THE END of the meeting, then announce the adjournment if there are no more questions. This is simple etiquette.

IF A MEMBER WANDERS OFF in all directions in talking to the group, a quick retort by the leader to save time is, "Mr. W, what you are saying is unrelated to our subject. Let us get back to the subject before we lose sight of it". The teachings of the Urantia Book should be adhered to at all costs since it is the primary purpose of the meeting.

CONCERNING READERS: Occasionally we find a regular attendant who thoroughly enjoys studying with the class, but never reads the book when alone. It is wise to lure him into some very interesting personal references and encourage him to get started at reading - if only a half hour a day. He may develop into one of the best readers of the group. The book will lose its awesome look to him.

THE LEADER MAY PAUSE occasionally when he comes to a good point and ask if there are any remarks on that idea. The group must participate periodically, otherwise there is a tendency to relax too much and this is attended with drowsiness.

SLOW, WELL-ARTICULATED READING with a short pause after each deep thought is advisable to practice.

Many people who are excellent students of this philosophy are slow thinkers and readers and cannot keep up a fast pace. You may lose them in the middle of a paragraph. Swiftiness can cause 'spiritual indigestion'.

In past years, research on what used to be considered "retarded" young students revealed that many were only "word deaf" since they could not separate the words while listening to a faulty teacher who spoke too fast. To fix a thought, or concept in the mind, a pause is very helpful. This is not an institutional form of educational activity. God does not hasten through creations in the universe.

ASK EACH PERSON TO READ one or two paragraphs or even a whole section if it is not too long. This is practiced in many groups. It stimulates discussion. There are always certain persons who read better than others, but this should not prevent the leader from asking others to read. Sometimes they need a little aid in the beginning to relieve shyness. Remark about something that is being read, after asking if you may interrupt for a moment. Then ask him to proceed. You are participating with him which is a relief to him. However, the leader usually does a great portion of reading if you wish to cover a lot of material.

THE LEADER MUST BE A GENIAL HOST to his group. He should see that people are properly introduced and that they are all properly seated and comfortable.

Some people prefer to be called by their first names. Others find it too familiar. You may have to respond to the use of first names, but address others as Mr. or Mrs.

SMOKING MUST NOT BE PERMITTED during class in deference to non-smokers, and to the fact that in the study of religious philosophy there may be some disapproval.

CO-LEADERSHIP IS DESIRABLE since they often create a meaningful discussion and offer ideas. If there is an awkward moment of silence or you are at loss for words or ideas the CO-LEADER can be a great help.

In a two-hour meeting one leader can choose a subject and keep in mind a one-hour limit. Then the other leader may take over the class with either a related subject, continue the same one, or present an entirely new subject. This sometimes enhances interest. Also, sometimes one of the leaders cannot be present. Advance notice should be given so the other leader can prepare for the full session.

COFFEE BREAKS occur at any time desired. New groups often have the break in the middle of the session. Older more advanced groups do not like being interrupted in the middle of deep thought. So they delay socializing until the study period is completed.

A LEADER SHOULD NOT unwittingly guide a group toward his own viewpoint unless he speaks from the viewpoint of the Urantia Book and can back his statements up with references.

SYMPATHETIC LISTENING AND PATIENCE are an important part of good leading. Never permit ridicule or laughter when someone is struggling with a new or difficult idea unless he jokes about the incident.

ALWAYS LOOK INTERESTED. Set the example of listening attentively. Nothing is more effective in maintaining a group's interest. A bored-looking leader will soon find the group reacting with the same attitude.

IF A CONCEPT IS VAGUE, probe the thoughts of the members in an effort to find the best interpretation.

It is beneficial to continue thinking about the subjects after the meeting. Many of the best ideas and understandings come after the meeting when you sit alone and think over what you have read and what was said. Silent receptivity affords the listening soul a blissful and comforting opportunity to receive understanding. After-session silent contemplation very nearly amounts to true worship, and is an excellent time to prepare notes for your next lesson.

IF STUDENTS BECOME DISCOURAGED and feel they cannot comprehend the teachings of the Urantia Book, read aloud to the class the last paragraph on page 17 of the Foreword. Then suggest a 'listening' attitude while reading. The previous suggestion to review the lesson after the meeting is excellent for all students as well as leaders.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE LEADER should be that of humility, camaraderie, and the love of people. He weighs conflicting ideas and carefully examines the reasoning, being careful to correlate the ideas with the Urantia Book to the best of his knowledge. He must keep in mind that all are to grow in wisdom through the study of these truths and through sharing concepts.

In some cases the older people make better leaders, -- education and culture taken into consideration, -- because they are fortified by mass-experience, -- the experience of adult life. They can, in some cases, evaluate by totality recognition of realities through awareness developed by soul growth subjected to the time-lag of finite experience. This is not a rule of thumb, but in this present age of evolution it has proved to be of some value in stability and constancy. This should not in any sense discourage a young person from attempting to lead a class.

TAKING A USEFUL PART in disseminating the teachings of the Urantia Book is a most rewarding experience.

Many people feel they do not qualify as a leader. Leaders are very hard to find among the laymen. But with the use of the few ideas presented here, coupled with the desire to help others, and the urge to understand the Urantia Book, many readers can -- with a little courage, be delighted with using their potentials in the adventure of "other-mindness". (1123:#4:1) It is a joy to serve in this universal movement.

INSTRUCTION FOR TEACHERS AND BELIEVERS. Page 1765:#3 of the Urantia Book should be carefully read for further help.

"Whet the appetites of your associates for truth; give advice when it is asked for". (556:no. 14)

FRANCIS BACON aptly expressed a valuable attitude for leaders in the following quotation:

"I would address one general admonition to all: that they consider what are the true ends of knowledge and that they seek it not either for the pleasure of the mind, or for contention, or for superiority to others, or for profit, or fame, or power, or any of these inferior things; but for the benefit and use of life."



Out of the numberless references to meanings and values in the Urantia Book, the following selections will explain the appropriate name for this school:

- 2094:2, 3, and last para., - Just three elements in universal reality: things, meanings, and values.
- Unless an evaluator dwelt with man, he could not possibly appraise moral values and recognize spiritual meanings . . .
- 1:3 - Deity and associated concepts of things, meanings, and values of universal reality.
- 17:1 - one thousand human concepts representing the highest and most advanced planetary knowledge of spiritual values and universe meanings.
- 73:3 - the Father is the eternal and universal source of all the meanings and values of the spiritual, the volitional, the purposeful, and the personal.
- 98:4 - ...God, in whom all things consist---things, meanings, and values; -energies, minds, and spirits.
- 102:5 - energy is thing, mind is meaning, spirit is value.
- 110:7 - Because of the various Deity groupings, it is inevitable that the realities of the universe shall appear in seven variations of values, meanings, and personality.

- 113:#5:2 - The Trinity association of the three Paradise Deities results in evolution, eventuation, and deitization of new meanings, values, powers and capacities . . .
- 648:2, 3 - These three divinities.....variously shown forth by God the Sevenfold in seven differing associations of divine meanings and values on seven ascending levels.
- 1211:2 - these psychic circles of mortal progression would be better denominated cosmic levels -- actual meaning grasps and value realizations.....
- 1220:2-4 - Meanings and values are only perceived in the inner or supermaterial spheres of human experience.
- 1226:LP - The finite dimensions of personality have to do with cosmic length, depth, and breadth. Length denotes meaning; depth signifies value; breadth embraces insight....
- 1227:3 - The personality imparts value of identity and meanings of continuity.....



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