

3 September 1986

Dear fellow students and visitors,

It is a thrill to be working with you beginning this year at The Boulder School. I want to put in your hands some general information about our program.

#### I. Class Schedule

9:00 - 9:10	Meditation
9:10 - 10:10	Discussion of Paper
10:10 - 10:20	Fellowship
10:20 - 11:10	Further exploration of Paper or other topic
11:10 - 11:20	Fellowship
11:20 - 12:10	Supplemental class

#### II. General

Classes will begin on time! This refers to the end of the break times as well as the 9:00 beginning time. Here is a time where the individual can respect the good of the group. Jesus was punctual. Enough said.

#### II. Preparation

Each student is expected to read the Paper for the day and to prepare answers to the questions set by the teacher. In addition there will often be reading for the supplemental class. It is important that each student come daily with a question or an insight to share. One of our most important resources is each other—but it takes some work to bring to mind and to share selectively and beautifully what you have to offer. By the way, one good way to participate is to help draw out the contributions of others.

#### III. Limits on Participation

This program is designed flexibly so that students can participate who have very little time to do the homework. We are trying to design progressive compromises so that a wide variety of needs can be met and so that the school can also grow in quality of education. How can we stay this open and still raise our standards? One idea to try out is this one: students whose work schedules make it impossible for them to complete all the homework should be particularly sensitive to the times when the class discussion assumes that the homework has been done. In brief, if you haven't done the work, don't bog down the discussion for the ones who have. Be an auditor for a while—even if you think the better prepared students are totally missing the point—and even if you are right. Each day there will be times for everyone to participate. But if we're going to develop quality education here, we must provide some extra opportunities for those who can devote a large portion of their lives to the Boulder School agenda.

#### IV. The opening period of prayer, meditation, and worship.

The content of these periods is entirely up to the class leader; silent contemplation, directed meditation, group prayer, responsive reading, singing, even a short ceremony of some sort are all acceptable. Through these periods, we hope to

develop religious practices which will enhance spiritual growth.

#### V. Directing Vision

I hope that each student will graduate from the Boulder School spiritually strengthened, better informed, and wiser as s/he goes forth to live a life of love with others.

Any institution, especially a small one, needs to set clear priorities. The URANTIA Book in many ways teaches that our top priorities are spiritual. These priorities are evident in the school bulletin, and those are the ones we will emphasize in our way of approaching our studies.

What are these spiritual priorities? The book gives many statements of spiritual priorities, each presenting an important facet of a well-rounded concept. How many times does Jesus give injunctions to go forth proclaiming the joyous truth of our relationship with the heavenly Father! Then there is the great challenge to modern man about developing better communion with the indwelling spirit (2097—I take this to symbolize the theme called "living the teachings"). And remember the passage about "the religious challenge of this age" to construct a philosophy of living (43)? Another one is about upstepping Christianity with a new revelation of Jesus (2086). There are other statements that may be joined to these. If we take these statements together, in balance, without exaggerating any one of them by isolating it and setting it up alone on a pedestal, we will find that our priorities are diverse, centered, and dynamic. Thus we need to achieve better communion with the spirit of God, to construct a new philosophy of living, proclaim the truth of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and do the Father's will.

What impact will this priority have on our class? First of all, the impact will be limited; we will not skip the parts of the book that discuss scientific and philosophical topics, and we will have supplemental classes that deal with cosmology, history and social science, philosophy and ethics. But the selection of passages for emphasis in discussion and the selection of supplemental materials will be designed to create a harmonious curriculum in which the primacy of the spirit is clear.

Many students will find/create specific channels of service. Insofar as you can tell at this point what those channels are, it is well to use your years at the School to prepare for that ministry. It is very important to do more than just have a nice time here. Periods that were relatively pleasant at the time may seem comparatively empty later on, when one realizes what opportunities were wasted. Each quarter each student will do a project, chosen by the student in consultation with the teacher. During the Fall trimester the project will have something specifically to do with spirituality. Why not have each of these projects build towards a continuing channel of service?

What if you feel that the notion of a "ministry project" sounds too ambitious for you at the present time? Think of the different stages in the life of Jesus; he didn't do much proclaiming of the gospel while he was busy rearing his sibs and fighting off poverty. Then he had a half-time job (on the Mediterranean trip) and did a lot of personal spiritual ministry. Later he got liberated for full-time spiritual ministry and shifted into high gear. During our precious years at the School we can prepare to some extent for both near-term and long-range goals. But there is no pressure to select a ministry goal.

We will have class activities directed towards education in thinking, feeling, and action. This quarter the first hour will be focused on intellectual goals; the second hour will (often) highlight emotional aspects of the Paper for the day with the aid of music and the arts; the third quarter is a bridge-building class, preparing

us for interaction with the Christian community.

Finally, study is not an end in itself; but the relationships we develop during our time together are ends in themselves. We will learn to disagree and discuss and challenge and support each other. And we will learn that our real unity is derived not from the fact that we are students of The URANTIA Book, but from the consciousness that each of us is a progressing child of our heavenly Father.

Best wishes for an excellent year at the Boulder School. Do not hesitate to discuss further with me any ideas or problems that come up as we pursue our work together.

Your brother,



Jeff Wattles