

The Circles

"Life is but a day's work—
do it well."*

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The Father's Business

Introduction

Last summer at the General Conference in Snowmass the emphasis was on genuine religious experience and the spontaneous service urge that results. The atmosphere was fertile ground for insights, inspirations, and new motivation. Opinions were varied as to what types of service (specifically relating to this revelation) we as readers should choose to do. Some opinions urged us to work hard to get *The URANTIA Book* out to as many new readers as possible. Others proclaimed the importance of sharing the message of the Book with our fellows regardless of their interest in or readiness for the Book itself.

It might be tempting when hearing diverse viewpoints to make the mistake of looking at these ideas as alternatives. This is *not* an "either/or" situation. Each of us may well be doing both of these things and many more. The important thing is to act: to be about our Father's business with all the enthusiasm and vigor of a new spiritual being.

Each of us must make individual choices as we find the areas of service in which we can be most effective. The Father's will must find expression in each life individually. And if our brother's areas of service are different from our own, we can cheer him on joyfully.

It is a universe pattern to have unity of purpose while expressing that purpose through a diversity of ways. We take pleasure in seeing that pattern in this issue.

the editors

*Excerpt at page 556 from *The URANTIA Book*. Copyright © 1955 URANTIA Foundation—used by permission.



The Father's Business



by **MATTHEW RAPAPORT**
San Francisco, California

"... 'the Father's Business' evokes images of two distinct kinds of ministry."

To my mind, "the Father's Business" evokes images of two distinct kinds of ministry. The first kind is highly spiritual in orientation, outwardly as well as inwardly. The second is, outwardly, more concerned with the secular affairs of the world, though it too must be, inwardly, spiritual in orientation.

God is spirit and His business, in the strictest sense, must also be spiritual. Here is the business of spiritual ministry which must, in the end, involve the sharing of the Gospel—Fatherhood, Brotherhood, and eternal life through faith—whether or not this message is associated with *The URANTIA Book*, bootlegged material from the Book, or any other information about the spiritual universe and our relationship to it. This ministry may include more than the Gospel. It may include elements of intellectual and material ministry to the needs of individuals, but it must, at least, encompass the Gospel. The Father's business in this sense is that of introducing people to God. After they have been introduced, it is also appropriate to help them expand their relationship to Him. Our Father may have many "businesses," but this must be the first, last, and most important of them.

Aside from purely spiritual ministry, most of us have multiple secular

responsibilities. We are parents, workers, students, and many other things. Done from the proper motivation, these too are the Father's business. It is our challenge as His partners in creation to do that which contributes to the growth of the Supreme. Our own souls grow in character, and the Supreme emerges in the Superuniverse as we make holy our secular responsibilities through dedication to God's will. Jesus lived this sense of his Father's business right up to the time of his baptism. He acted as dutiful son, student, father, employee, and volunteer. The way in which he carried out these responsibilities is a perfect illustration of living the Father's business in this sense, a sense in which most of us must live it through all of our lives.



There are common elements to the Father's business in whatever sense one considers it. Love for

and interest in one's fellows is always a part of doing God's will. Becoming more socially useful to one's fellows is the measure (outwardly) of personal spiritual progress, and of success in doing the Father's business.

There is, of course, nothing contradictory in combining the two senses of the Father's business. Jesus did this more and more as he grew up. His transition from dutiful child to full-time spiritual minister was gradual. This would seem to be a natural transition. It is made possible by the need for love and expressions of truth, beauty, and goodness, in any life shared with God. Yet while all work done in God's glory is holy, it is only natural that eventually, we should be led to yearn for the courage and ability to brighten the lives of others with the most true, beautiful, and good declaration of the Universes; the individual's relationship to a real, perfect, and wholly loving Father of Lights. ●

The one essential thing is that we strive to have light in ourselves. Our strivings will be recognized by others, and when people have light in themselves, it will shine out from them.

Albert Schweitzer



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Why The Urantia Book Now?



by MEREDITH SPRUNGER
Fort Wayne, Indiana

"After twenty-five years of thought and experimentation I am convinced that only The URANTIA Book itself can bring about a spiritual renaissance."

Editors' note: This article was first printed in the September 1981 issue of YOU-BE, a magazine of opinion published by The Tortoise, 1306 34th Avenue, San Francisco, California 94122. It is reprinted here by permission from both the author and the YOU-BE.

The growing edge of evolutionary religion today has arrived at basically the same religious philosophy as we find in *The URANTIA Book*. Many religious leaders are presenting views almost identical with *URANTIA Book* teachings. So it is philosophically appropriate to ask, "Why was *The URANTIA Book* given to our planet when evolution is accomplishing the same goals?" There are probably many more reasons for this action than any of us know; but, fundamentally, revelation is given because it is an effective expediter of evolution and saves aeons of time.

A second and related question is, "Why does God lead individuals to become missionaries of new and enlarged truth when this action causes opposition and persecution in their own families, among their friends, and in society?" The preponderance of rational thought and "sensible" human wisdom cautions against such controversial ministry. A committee of contemporary friends would have almost certainly

advised Moses against his mission to revitalize a group of Hebrew slaves and with this unlikely group spearhead a new religious awakening. They would have told Jonah that it was absurd that he should attempt to reform Ninevah. Paul was told that he was mad to assume the Christian gospel was the wave of the future and that he deserved death for going about stirring up religious and social unrest. The ways of God often do appear to be absurd, or even evil, to a great many people.

Many of these missionaries of the past have been reluctant messengers. Moses tried to escape by pleading inability. People would not listen to him. He was not a public speaker. Jonah fled to the sea. Paul suffered blindness and intense mental anguish; but eventually he followed God's inner leading in his life. Doing so does not usually lead to a life of ease or popularity.

I have long felt a calling to bring a knowledge of *The URANTIA Book* to the religious and educational leaders of our culture. I have tried to examine this sense of calling critically, to question it, even to ignore it. But, if I am to keep my integrity of soul, I cannot deny it. As Paul Tillich points out, we must have the courage to be, to actualize our authentic selves. I have tried, therefore, to follow this inner guidance. I believe

an outreach ministry of *The URANTIA Book* should be activated now; indeed, that it is past due. If this is the Father's will for me (which I believe), why? I'm not sure that I know. It is relatively easy to give "rational" reasons on both sides of this or any controversial issue. I am happy to share some of the insights which seem self-evident to me as to why *The URANTIA Book* is needed in our culture now.

After twenty-five years of thought and experimentation I am convinced that only *The URANTIA Book* itself can bring about a spiritual renaissance. Evolutionary bootlegging the teachings of the book merely adds, on the same level, to that which many religious teachers are now doing. Only the integrated message of *The URANTIA Book*, in my judgment, can transform our society in time to save our world from much evolutionary disaster and suffering.

The growing edge of religious development in our society has already arrived at the essential truths of *The URANTIA Book*. It is evolutionarily important that this vanguard of religious leaders know about *The URANTIA Book*. Fundamentalists are even now denouncing the book and it is wise to acquaint mainline religious leaders with the book before reactionary

See "Why?"

Continued on p. 18.



Our Commission

by CLYDE BEDELL
Laguna Hills, California

"... we must all awaken to the great difference between reading for our own enlightenment and pleasure alone, and reading with intention to help change the world."

Christ Michael - the Creator of our entire local universe - has commissioned you, and me, to a crucial, day-to-day, every day job that must have greater attention from all of us than it has been getting. Jesus again and again demands that his followers and believers, *not just his apostles and disciples*, proclaim his message to the world. (1543B, 1584A, 1608B, D, 1804D, 1824D, 1930B, 1931D, 2033B, 2034A, 2042A, 2043B, 2044C, 2052D, 2053B, 2054A, 2057C, D.) These are *directives* in today's Revelation, yours, mine, the world's, for *now*. They are not simply to tell us what people were told 2000 years ago.

Jesus commanded his brotherhood of believers to continuously "effect the spiritual transformation of successive generations of mankind." (2083D) *The URANTIA Book* is here to minister to - to transform spiritually - a desperately jeopardized world. A great deal of what is wrong with our Movement's ineffectual achievement stems from our failure as a whole, officially and unofficially, to recognize our inescapable responsibility to evangelize. There is no way on earth we can do our job but by evangelization. "Evangelization" means the promotion and expansion of Jesus' Gospel. This may be done in infinitely various ways by infinitely varied people.

Jesus established a training school - a camp - for evangelists.

Peter was in charge. In five months several thousand lay people - imperfect human beings then, as we are today - were instructed at the camp. (1657C) They were trained in meetings exactly like those we call "sales meetings" today. Jesus daringly made evangelists of women as well as men. Training requires informed, dynamic leadership. How much calculated, earnest training are we doing - or getting? Self-training is far better than none.

It is your duty, if you are a true believer, to evangelize. To evangelize within your own capacity, of course. We are all different. But we can all learn to feel for the sensitive areas in the soul-hungering and spiritually confused around us. There are people around you who need precisely whatever is the type of soul-help you can provide. That is God's truth - it is true of all of us - there are NO exceptions. We need only awaken to our responsibility and to the potentials within us - talents, a yearning to serve, personal concern for others, and outreach - that match the responsibility of our "commission."

With God's help and guidance, let us, all of us, from high to low, and wherever we are, at least double our deliberate conscious effort to be guided by our Great Revelation in the purpose for which we are on earth - to serve our fellow man and to become more Godlike. We need to go far beyond being *URANTIA*

Book readers. We must, we simply must, if we take Jesus and our Great Book seriously, become *URANTIA Book* evangelists. This we are emphatically commissioned to become, again and again. How dare we ignore what Jesus and the Book insist we do?

If our movement is to fulfill its obligation, and the expectation of the Master to become a monumental influence on earth, we must all awaken to the great difference between reading for our own enlightenment and pleasure alone, and reading with intention to help change the world. To do the latter, along with self-improvement, is the purpose for which the Revelation was given us. Making speeches and writing articles primarily for our own consumption does little to spread and to proclaim the gospel to the world.

"Jesus required his followers [not just his apostles] to react positively and aggressively to every life situation.... He never exhorted his followers patiently to bear their obligations but rather with energy and enthusiasm to live up to the full measure of their human responsibilities and divine privileges in the kingdom..." (1770A and C) I believe this paragraph applies to me. Does it not apply to you?

The time is past for hiding our heads and our Gospel - our Revelation - in the sand. It is time for a Great Awakening, for all of us to

shrug off our Movement's unreasonable strictures, its lethargy, its failures to move. It is time to make plans, annual plans, five year plans. Time to do effective fund raising, to assert priorities and goals. Time to provide alternate plans for starting of, and programming for, far more study groups. Time for our conferences and meetings to emphasize the spiritual - and our responsibilities - more, and more seriously. Time to get back to the customary channel of book distribution - through wholesalers, if we hope to become successful in the marketing of Books. Way past time for the Trustees to be aided by a continuing advisory board of some of the outstanding and capable big league readers who could help radically in multiplying our Movement's effectiveness and success. It is time for the mustering of experience and brain power for the raising of money for translations, time for projecting appeals to the precisely selected foundations that could provide such funds. It is time for stimulating anew the heart and soul of our movement. If the intelligence and talents of the extraordinary people of our Movement are not used on behalf of the Movement, its achievements will continue to be ordinary, very ordinary.

Please, dear reader, if you prayerfully ponder Jesus' commissions to us, his followers (as cited earlier), you will sooner or later be seized with an urgent and startling realization of the immensity of your personal responsibility to evangelize for this - an EPOCHAL - Revelation. Think of it! Only the fifth in the world's vibrant, accelerating onrush of history. *The URANTIA Book!* It is coming to Urantia - one of the greatest occurrences of all Urantia time! And you are chosen to play a part in its

unfolding before the world. For what other reason do you think you became a *URANTIA Book* reader-believer?

An occasional reader likes to say: "Take it easy. The world is not yet ready for *The URANTIA Book*." And that is true. But it was given to us early so that all of us could thenceforth diligently work at *making* the world ready. Making the world ready is a colossal job, a job that needs doing now, not a generation from now. Jesus directed all of us in the present tense. His was an insistent "now" command for each succeeding generation. Nowhere did he say: "Sometime in the future, proclaim my Gospel."

We must all - old-timers and Trustees, activists, readers, and novice readers - convert our beliefs into actions (1769D) that will in time become so numerous and effective and widespread that they will give a universally notable

Jessonian coloration to all possible earthly affairs. Realize in the depths of your consciousness that that is what the Book is here for. It is God's fifth epochal effort of the kind on this earth. It's in our charge. It must get its momentum from us alone. When do we face it? Does this sound too vast a job, too great an objective? Does it sound too improbable and heroic to realize? After all, we are so inadequate! But - the Book is here to realize precisely that - through us, and more, and ever more, reader-believers. If the magnitude of this imposing truth has not gripped and possessed your heart and mind, it is because from top to bottom we have not inspiredly pursued the declared objects for which our organizations were set up.

The Declaration of Trust which is the sole sanction under which the

See "Commission"

Continued on p. 18.



HEART TO HEART

Heart to heart, the creature's and the Creator's,
Sensing our oneness, the Father and the child,
The boisterous booming of the Permeator's
Consciousness and energy and wild
Expansions from the Center and the Source
Extends to my intelligence nearly far.
Love-gravity is running through its course,
Bathing each planet, every soul, each star,
And as its pulsings circuitize my heart,
A flooding passion of heartfelt unity,
Of oneness with the Whole and every Part,
Enraptures me in oceans of divinity.
It opens all the portals of my soul
And teaches that my heart contains the Whole.

by David Glass
Brandenton, Florida





For a Union of Souls

by **BYRON D. BELITSOS**
Berkeley, California

"I believe it is time for the URANTIA movement to assess the unbalances that obstruct the personal and collective functioning of the missionary impulse."

In his discourse on the "Religion of the Ideal", Rodan defines true religion in terms of one of its effects: the missionary impulse. To paraphrase Rodan: the evidence that your religious experience is genuine is that you positively desire to be an evangel of your gospel. Jesus, the paragon of true religion, was of course a very positive and very persuasive evangel of his gospel. Jesus' personal and public missionary work is the model for effectiveness in evangelical communication. This I believe flows from the fact that he had experientially attained a perfectly unified, symmetrical human personality. (See "The Acme of Religion," p. 1101-03.) He was able to integrate deep feeling for divine values, profound reflection on cosmic meanings, and actions grounded in a sane awareness of facts; and all this was perfectly unified because of his devotion to the will of God.

Let us contrast this picture with that of ordinary *URANTIA Book* readers. We are like the apostles; our personality development and expression is asymmetrical. Each of us has an unbalanced or at least awkward integration of feeling, thinking, and action. One of us takes delight in the feeling and intuiting of values; another tends to thrive by extended reflections on the meanings of the Word; a third may be most interested in simply doing something to change the planet, (while perhaps lacking in profound

understanding or deep feeling.) These biases characterize everyone's approach to communicating spiritual truth.

I believe it is time for the *URANTIA* movement to assess the unbalances that obstruct the personal and collective functioning of the missionary impulse. What is it, in each of us, in our study groups, in our societies, that prevents us from being an effective community of evangelizers? I have no specific answer to this crucial question, but I would like to present a simple scheme that can provide a starting point for religious self-criticism.

In the following diagram, the column down the left side indicates levels of universal reality: fact, meaning, value; this correlates with the items in the column on the right side, which are major modes of personality function. Across the top is the traditional three-part division of the communication process used in rhetorical theory: author, message, and audience. From this we can get a typology of extremes of evangelistic styles, if the boxes are filled by using specific correlation of terms.

The correlation of terms that result in the romantic, the intellectual, and the pragmatic types is based on a logic that is suggested both by *The URANTIA Book* and by personal observation during my six years of participation in the *URANTIA* movement. My experience over the years has shown me that each of us tends to be dominated by one of the above fragments of the missionary impulse. But we are fortunate, of course, in having a detailed account of the life of someone who was a perfect blend of these elements. The following remarks are my speculations on what these three styles might look like in broad outline, as basic prototypes of missionary behavior that lack ideal integrity.

I. The Romantic's Gospel

The romantic *URANTIA Book* reader "proclaims" his gospel primarily by the exhibition of religious feelings. This is because the romantic religionist is concerned with the purity of feelings that lie too deep for words. (1091 D). Such a person may find a worthy end in the morontial gestures of painting, music, dance, or poetry. And indeed,

	author	message	audience	
values	ROMANTIC			feeling
meaning		INTELLECTUAL		thinking
fact			PRAGMATIC	action

the feeling of experience that develops through artistic discipline does contribute greatly to true religious growth. However, a creative shaping of religious emotions is not adequate to the task of spreading the Gospel of the Kingdom to the world.

Rhetorically speaking, the gospel of the romantic emanates from the idea of personal "authenticity." If the romantic religionist could speak, he would say: "Through devotion to high values, I have become an 'author' for the true representation of spiritual truth. What matters to me is the purity of the creative energy, the creative energy from which emanates the gospel message, and not the mere words of the message." The romanticist wants to radiate the pure and high quality of spiritual energy regardless of his audience's comprehension or needs.

II. The Pragmatic Missionary

The action-oriented missionary lives the gospel before an audience that he believes needs to be informed of the goodness of God through righteous action. When it is time to proclaim the gospel, this task requires informing people of a fact that they may not know in their minds: that God is our Father and that we are consequently brothers and sisters. Providing this information is also a form of righteous action. Pragmatically speaking, this is the deed we are literally called to perform: to live and to preach the simple gospel to all people, in the most straightforward manner. This kind of spiritual simplicity is effective because it has the greatest appeal to people in general. It meets a basic spiritual need that most ordinary people have.

III. The Intellectual as Apostle

Shall we complete the typology? Now when the intellectual sets out to share his religion, he presents

the gospel as a message of deepest meaning. His message is an intellectual product, not a spontaneous overflow of powerful religious feelings. Nor does he orient toward the simple needs of a mass audience. Our "thinker" wants to deepen the religious understanding of an already well-educated audience, leading them forth in the comprehension of the Word of truth. The intellectual missionary dresses plainly, chooses an audience like himself, and puts all his effort into the sophistication of the message itself. His interest is in the meeting of minds around the profound discrimination of cosmic meanings.

IV. Toward a Union of Souls

Are you a romantic in tendency, when it comes to spreading the beautiful insights of the gospel? Or perhaps you are the "thinker" in your study group, always writing essays on this or that issue. Or maybe you tend toward a goodly pragmatism in your approach to evangelizing. I believe that the URANTIA movement should adopt the goal of blending these three tendencies, just as they were so exquisitely unified in the personal and public missionary work of Jesus. Rodan's notion of "The Union of Souls" (see p. 1776B) provides us with one way of conceiving the

form of personality association we need.

The following is a simple application of this concept: The pragmatists must be careful not to turn the gospel into empty slogans, in their appeals to mass audiences. Criticism from "intellectuals" could help here. Intellectuals, on the other hand, need to take care not to over-emphasize the esoteric meanings of the gospel message, meanwhile turning people off by the lack of appeal in their actual lives and in their manner of expression. Both pragmatists and romantics can be corrective influences here. And the romantics, in their turn, need to be able to explain the content of their religion as well as express themselves beautifully.

The union of souls that I propose has two basic premises:

1. The inspiration we discover through the example of the balanced nature of Jesus' evangelical communication.

2. Our consequent awareness that in order to pursue our great missionary task, we must unite as an evangelistic corps to integrate the elements that Jesus so majestically united in one body.

It is indeed time for each individual and each study group to begin anew this sacred work. ●

The Infinite Invitation

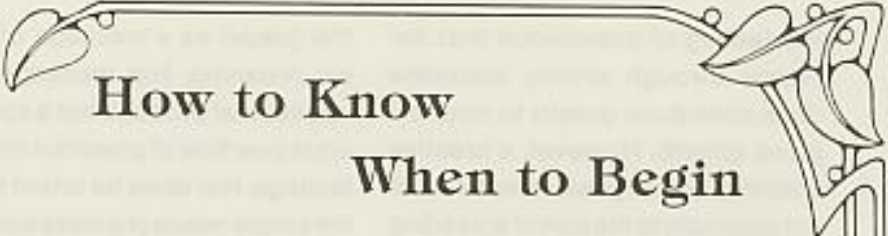
*Do you know the way to Paradise?
Have you been soul enticed, to find
the way to Paradise?
To capture its rapture,
the past-now-hereafter.*

*by Dennis Ray Nisbet
Rye, Colorado*

The *URANTIA* Book has been with us for 26 years. The movement consisting of students of its teachings has existed even longer. There is an ongoing debate among those within the movement regarding whether the time has arrived to take more positive steps to promote the book and its teachings.

In the past, the book has been spread by personal contact. This has had desirable effects on the nature of the emerging movement. The movement has great strength because it grew around the teachings of the book rather than around the personality of some great charismatic leader. Those who have joined the movement have generally been serious students of the book rather than seekers of the sensational or exotic. The slow growth of the movement and the non-sensational nature of it have helped to create a more stable and enduring entity. It has been said that the book was introduced early in order to allow time for training a corps of teachers, who would be in readiness when the world was ready for the book.

Is the world ready for *The URANTIA Book*? There seems to be a great spiritual hunger among many in our culture, while simultaneously there is a decline in the belief in the authority and relevance of the institutional church, except among some fundamentalist sects. We see at the same time, the emergence of paternalistic cults who will gladly run your life for you. The Christian churches still stand splintered on matters of belief, unable to overcome this hurdle and unite in common faith. Can we expect them to open their arms to us when they cannot open their arms to each other? With cult paranoia running high in our culture, these seem like dangerous times to stand on our soapbox in the park proclaiming



How to Know When to Begin

by DICK BAIN
St. Petersburg, Florida

"Let us do our day's work well, so our lives will be a beacon, lighting the way for those who follow us."



the Fifth Epochal Revelation. Happily, there are some encouraging trends among the discouraging ones. The plethora of new religious movements is a sign of spiritual restlessness and seeking. Among those who reject both the traditional institutional church and the 'carved in stone' fundamental approach, there seems to be developing a more individualistic or more personal approach to religion. It is an approach that places more emphasis on the inner spiritual life of the individual rather than on the external socialized religious practices. These are the people who may respond well to *The URANTIA Book*. We naturally ask ourselves how we may find all these spiritual seekers in our world.

The personal individual approach to introducing the book to someone is always valid. Our lives, if they are lived in the spirit of Jesus' teachings, will act as a spiritual magnet to attract people to whom we may wish to introduce *The*

URANTIA Book or just some of its teachings.

What would be the next logical evolutionary step beyond individuals? I would say that it would be appropriate to begin approaching selected groups with the book. How can we know this is the time? Unfortunately, those in the process of living out history seldom have the insight of those who study it later. In all enterprises it is appropriate to first seek God's will through prayer. Then we can act upon what we feel His will to be with our best wisdom and judgment. Already there are those pioneers who are approaching selected groups of people, groups who will not be antagonistic to a new source of ideas on the nature of God and man's relationship to Him. Life is the great experiment. If we wait to begin something until conditions are absolutely correct, we will probably have started too late.

There will come a time when the book and the movement will be-

come public knowledge even if we do nothing to promote such knowledge. Even as we cannot hide a city on the hill because its light can be seen for miles around, so our increasing numbers will someday bring us to the attention of the general public. If on that day we have many friends throughout our culture, it will help prevent the "choosing up sides" game and dilute the "not invented here" syndrome. By friends, I don't refer only to students of the book, but also to those who may not have a detailed knowledge of the book but who do have a favorable opinion of the book and the movement. These are people whose only contact with the book may have been a lecture on it that they attended. They would have an idea of the very positive spiritual nature of the teachings in *The URANTIA Book* (and hopefully of the people in the movement!) They might speak up when someone condemned us as a satanic or bizarre cult.

What of all those teachers that are coming forth from the study groups—who will they be teaching? There are many people in all cultures who lack the ambition or ability to tackle a book that is as difficult (at times) to fathom as *The URANTIA Book*. These people are nonetheless spiritually hungry and will crave a teacher to lead them through the concepts in the book. Let us also consider our children. Today we are their teachers, but perhaps some day we will actually organize classes for them. There are those pioneers who are already laying the ground work for this.

There are other ways in which our movement will become visible to others in our culture (and in other cultures.) As each of us grows spiritually, we increasingly feel the urge to serve our fellow mortals. As we

become more keenly aware of the fact that we are all brothers and sisters in the family of God, can we continue ego gratification to the exclusion of reaching out to the afflicted? Again there are pioneer groups within our movement who have started some sort of outreach program. As people in this movement of students of *The URANTIA Book* increasingly manifest the fruits of the spirit in their lives, they will not only gain the joy found in service to others, but they will also help to build a beautiful image of this movement for the world to see.

The social evolution of cultures (and planets) may at times occur in sudden steps, but in general, changes seem to occur gradually

(at least to us mortal whose life spans are such short flickers in a planet's whole history). We can see the remnants of past cultures and ages existing in our present age, along with precursors of the coming eras. In introducing *The URANTIA Book* into our complex and variegated culture, we would do well to consider Jesus' admonition to be wise as serpents but as harmless as doves. After seeking the Father's will in our undertakings, let us then proceed with all the wisdom and love that we can muster. Let us do our day's work well, so our lives will be a beacon, lighting the way for those who follow us. ●

*Song of the URANTIA Book**

*A blessed path of knowledge
beside the stream of life,
A miracle I've come to know and trust.
A vantage place,
A work of grace,
A song above the strife,
A way at last to know the things I must.*

*The story of the ages,
of God, the past, the plan,
The picture from the highest point of view.
The same loved truths,
The light set loose,
The better way for man,
The love of God proclaimed on earth anew.*

*My long awaited answer,
My summons from on high,
My value spelled in words of destiny.
My promise now,
My faith shown how,
My way beyond the sky,
My invitation to eternity.*

*by Troy Bishop
Silver Spring, Maryland*

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Troy Bishop*

The Book Is For Now

by DAVID BIGGS
Flint, Michigan

"If the Book was to be used later, it would have been given later."



It seems to me that our URANTIA movement is dividing into two groups - immediate heralds of the word and those who would hold and wait for some perfect time in the future. This future time will not arrive until Light and Life, and at that time, we will not need *The URANTIA Book* or its teachings.

For myself, I feel spiritually driven to (in my opinion) fulfill the Father's

will by spreading His truth to as many SEARCHING souls as possible. I do not talk about *The URANTIA Book* indiscriminately. In my conversations, even with strangers, it seems that from time to time, a door opens which allows some segment of the Book to be brought into the conversation without notice. The other person either grabs it and asks for more, or passes on to

something else.

Those that have no interest never hear the work "Urantia" and never know the source of the material. The others question, expand and draw me out. This is how I know who is ready, and this difference is, in my opinion, the result of the efforts of the indwelling Thought Adjuster relative to that individual's personal will.

Because of my faith in our spiritual helpers in our great effort, I do not fear the problems that many sincere believers do. The Revelators selected the timing. If it was to be used later, it would have been given later. ●



Anchorage is what most people pray for when what we really need is God's great open sea.

Elbert Hubbard



Welcome

We are pleased to announce a new section to be included in *The Circles - Outreach*. URANTIA Book Readers across the country are feeling an urge to action. It is our hope that sharing news of outreach activities around the country, and eventually the entire planet, will stimulate and encourage even more action. We are delighted to welcome Meredith Sprunger as our **Outreach** editor. Meredith has a dedicated interest in the fostering of outreach service as well as an acquaintance with readers throughout the movement. Meredith himself is actively pursuing his own outreach ministry for which he has laid careful plans and spent long years of preparation.

The editors





ANONYMOUS



Children Are the Father's Business*

"Every child is part of tomorrow and we are privileged to touch that moment which will belong to the future."

"The destiny of eternity is determined moment by moment by the achievements of the day by day living. The acts of today are the destiny of tomorrow." (p.557)*

Over the past few years I have become increasingly concerned about the children at the various conferences. At one conference in particular a preteen was rejected at a social gathering because he was not an adult. As a parent with my own children that alarmed me. I wondered what the effect would have been on one of my children.

As adults finding *The URANTIA Book* we often become steeped in its rich idealism to the extent that we crave fellowship with others who can communicate on our level. All too frequently we ignore or overlook our collective children. We tend to forget that we can include the children in our common play time. Instead we seem to spend the majority of that time with adults. We stand in the Father's presence constantly, and looking at a child should remind us of that fact. Never should we reject a child, telling him he is too young for our adult parties. If we do not want our children to be included in what we are doing, do we want the Father to be a part of it? If not, maybe we need to

reevaluate our actions in the light of truth, beauty and goodness - the Father's will.

When we attend a conference to take in spiritual energy it should reinforce our belief that any child is our child and that every child learns *The URANTIA Book* quickest from the actions of every adult associated with it. "Little ones" are actually small individuals who need our positivisms desperately in order to cope with a world bound to question their attitudes (perhaps with much hostility). We can provide an

environment friendly to their expressions in growth. How can we feel (self) righteous when we have devoted only an hour or so to the children saying that we have done our part? Every child is part of tomorrow and we are privileged to touch that moment which will belong to the future.

Let us not drag our children along putting them off while we play adults, trusting that they will accept the book when they are older. Let us include them, especially in our social gatherings where they see us practice what we preach in a relaxed, fun-loving atmosphere. The future is shaped by our daily experiences. Small incidents combine to create a total picture, and we are the artists who do the painting. Both children and adults are the artists. Let us, therefore, paint together, side by side, our mutual destiny.●

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The Inner World

The inner world is of nothing but caring, love, forgiving, hope, and sharing. Its duty is of nothing but goodness. This inner world is called heaven. But the good can love this world even down on earth.



*by Lydia King, Age 9
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

by CAP VAN VALKENBURGH
Atlanta, Georgia

The Urantia Book Teachings in the Organized Church*

A Layman's Perspective

"It is through and with this body of believers that we have the biggest opportunity for proclaiming Jesus' gospel!"

Most students of *The URANTIA Book* would probably agree that we all have a responsibility to further the truths of the religion of Jesus as contained in *The URANTIA Book*. Jesus himself admonished us over and over to carry his gospel to all the peoples of the world. For example, Jesus said to his apostles (p. 1824), "Nevertheless, go into all the world proclaiming this gospel to all nations, to every man, woman, and child." Further, the Constitution of *URANTIA Brotherhood* states in Article II, "The purposes of *URANTIA Brotherhood* are . . . the promotion, improvement, and expansion among the peoples of the world of the comprehension and understanding of . . . the teachings of Jesus Christ . . ." Thus it is not a question of whether we should be carrying the gospel of Jesus to others but rather a question of how! What is (are) the most important and effective way(s) of promulgating these truths? In my opinion, the answer is through and within the organized church. But however it is done, it is each one of our responsibilities to take the light of Jesus' teachings and illuminate the lives of others in whatever ways we can. Anything less is failure to meet the requirements laid down

by Jesus.

Now let us focus on the organized church. In spite of its shortcomings and misdirections, it is still the best game in town! It is altogether necessary and of value! Read *The URANTIA Book* on page 2085 where we are told that, "Jesus did not found the so-called Christian church, but he has, in every manner consistent with his nature, fostered it as the best existent exponent of his lifework on earth." On page 1864 we read, "But doubt not, this same kingdom of heaven . . . will yet be proclaimed to this Christian church, even as to all other religions, races, and nations on earth . . ." *The URANTIA Book* all but tells us to bring the Book to the church! On page 2090 we are told, "What a transcendent service if, through this revelation, the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and be presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!"

The organized church - and I mean all religions - have had and continue to have an enormous influence on the peoples of Urantia. Morality, culture, education, and all of society could not have progressed without the involvement of the

church. Today millions of devout believers seek the will of God in their own creedal way. Of course there are hypocrites and backsliders in every congregation, and because the members are mortals of the realm (as you and I), all is not always a bed of roses. But much, much good comes from the church and here is a body of believers, most of whom are earnestly seeking the will of God! It is through and with this body of believers that we have the biggest opportunity for proclaiming Jesus' gospel! If we can succeed in supplanting portions of the religion about Jesus with the enhanced truths contained in the religion of Jesus within the church, we will surely have brought our planet a big step of the way toward eventual light and life.

But today, relatively few students

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of *The URANTIA Book* are actively involved with the church. Most have a background in the church but became disillusioned for one reason or other and left. These folks often are reluctant to go back and try again, perhaps because they feel they have the "answers" with *The URANTIA Book*, and they have little "in common" with the church and its membership. However, I would suggest that denominations differ widely in doctrine and ritual, and even within a denomination you will find sharp differences between individual churches. And through the years I have noticed with interest the great diversity in theology of lay members even within a given congregation. Too, the differences among church doctrines (including *The URANTIA Book*) are more on emphasis than on basic theology. Few if any of *The URANTIA Book* concepts are totally new; most are already held by significant numbers of lay persons within the church. Thus there is a church "home" to meet the needs of almost everyone!

So first go forth and seek out a church, synagogue, temple, etc. of your own choosing. Remember there are all kinds - and there's sure to be one that you can feel comfortable with. Maybe it's right around the corner! Some ideas and suggestions regarding what you may wish to do - and not do - are as follows:

1. Remember that our objective is to spread God's love (see p. 1289), and to do so requires understanding of others. And understanding requires personal contact (see p. 1098). So get to know people in your church - not superficially but really get to know them - and to love them!

2. Be willing to participate in

church activities even if you don't accept all of the ecclesiastical utterances of the church.

3. Don't expect smooth sailing all the time - we're all human! But your own actions and example smooth out a lot of rough water.

4. Don't expect overnight results. Have patience! Start by bringing the expanded truths of *The URANTIA Book* to your fellow parishioners. Then, as the situation evolves, you may choose to introduce the Book itself. You may never get to give away a single *URANTIA Book* yet you can help so many people redirect their lives more Godward!

5. Don't criticize others' views. Don't tell them how *wrong* they are. Do tell them how *right* they are and then build from there. Let the new truths crowd out the erroneous thinking (read what Jesus told Simon on p. 1592.)

6. Disagree by giving an alternative such as, "maybe you could express that another way ..." or, "did you ever think of it this way...?"

7. Listen to others and understand why they think as they do.

This will greatly help you in ministering to these folks.

8. Teach adult Sunday school and any other groups you can. Teachers are always in demand! Be careful how you present new material. It sometimes isn't wise to carry in a big blue book!

9. Don't try to "convert" anyone.
10. Study the Bible and use it as a reference whenever possible. Interpret scripture in terms of *URANTIA Book* truths.

11. Avoid controversial areas whenever possible. Accentuate the positive! Don't haggle over nits like the virgin birth, Davidic lineage, and "only" son.

12. Pray a whole lot - and seek the Father's will!

In closing let me say that I am maintaining an active status in our Methodist Church by teaching in two adult Sunday school classes (I have taught high school kids using many *URANTIA Book* concepts). I would like to help other *URANTIA Book* students in any way possible in becoming more involved in the church and I welcome any questions and feedback. ●

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Being

About

our

Father's Business

by DAVID GLASS
Bradenton, Florida

"An individual with an authentic religious life with God is already in an advantaged position to one who has only an epochal revelation."

Our Father has undertaken an immense enterprise: He has made possible the creation, to date, of well over five trillion inhabited mortal planets with four billion persons populating this one sphere, Urantia. At that average, there would be approximately twenty sextillion, 20,000,000,000,000,000,000, mortals alive on these planets during any *one generation*, while these planets endure for hundreds of millions of generations. And the Father, through various means, including our "Mortal Messengership," an avenue of service open to us as planetary mortals has chosen to find ways of illuminating *each one* of these countless individuals with the great messages of sonship, eternal life, and perfection attainment. That, for the current universe age, is the Father's business, so far as we know. It is, without doubt, the primary purpose with which we as mortals are to be associated for the duration of our fleeting planetary lives. We must never allow our provincial involvement and participation in planetary and spiritual affairs to diminish our revelation-inspired appreciation for the enormity of the project of Supremacy. This appreciation which will free us from the propensities to limit, reinterpret, and reorient the truths we have been given into exclusion, localized, more distorted channels of communication. At the same time, we must find means of communicating something of our recent revelatory inheritance to our planetary fellows.

Examining, for a moment our own unusual planet, Urantia, we see that mankind has been dependent *primarily upon evolutionary religion* throughout most of his history, inasmuch as *all* of the first four epochal revelations to our planet were to some degree compromised or limit-

ed in effect. This spectrum of evolutionary religion reaches back through recorded history to ancient Hinduism in India, the world's oldest major faith, and moves forward through the origination of many other major world religions, hundreds of sects and cults, and literally thousands of religious varieties in the course of the intervening centuries. And throughout the entirety of this evolution, *primitive religion* has continued to prevail

"Teacher, how many paths are there which lead to the Father's abode?"

"There are, my son, as many paths as there are children."

throughout large sectors of the pre- and semi-civilized world. The twentieth century has witnessed not only the revivification of hundreds of these near-dead religious interests, such as shamanism, but also the proliferation of hundreds and thousands of "new" religious, spiritual and other related practices and teachings, all aimed at the variegated effort of awakening man to his spiritual dimension and informing him of the cosmic purpose of Deity, however variously conceived. Beyond this multiplicity of *primary* religious concerns, hundreds of *comparative, interpretive, and philosophical* religious approaches--syncretisms, mergings, and schisms--have arisen throughout the East and West. Culturally, we are aware that we have on our one planet localized expressions of every Planetary Mortal Epoch from Pre-Planetary Prince Man to Post-Bestowal Son Man all existing simultaneously on our patchwork planet.

Given this virtually *maximized* religious and cultural diversification,

Urantians (by which I mean the inhabitants of this planet) are confronted today with a variety and richness of spiritual diversity which is very probably highly rare if not unique in the cosmos. In light of this *extreme* differentiation, I hold centrally in this article that we *cannot uniformize our thinking* about religious and spiritual needs of our planet in such a way that we imagine that contact with the fifth epochal revelation is the *sin qua non* or the focal juncture of religious progress on this planet. I earnestly feel that it

is not. On an objective level the majority of our planet's populations are not only innocent of the English language, but are themselves indigenously illiterate. No translation of the fifth epochal revelation, short of a living recitor of its contents, could reach all of them--and we can imagine how inefficacious such a rendering of the revelation would be to a particularly anti-social and counter-evolutionary pig herder of rural Borneo, a son of God we acknowledge and proclaim. On the contrary, only the most informed

minds and the most cross-culturally aware individuals in our civilizations, East or West, are in a position, I believe, to achieve a perspective on the true potential impact of the revelation on our planet as *it is*. We are all working coordinatedly on this visionary project. We may study the Paper on the *generalized* Planetary Mortal Epochs and we may become inspired by the great planetary goal of light and life, but we can *only* become aware of how this great goal is going to be uniquely realized on Planet 606 of Satania



Live with the Gods. He lives with them who offers them a heart content with all they appoint and ready to obey the will of that divine monitor, that particle of himself, which Zeus has given to every man as a ruler and guide.

Marcus Aurelius - The Meditations



by studying the needs and opportunities of this particular planet. Reading the fifth epochal revelation, we have discovered, does not put an individual in a position to be of any service to this planet without further study of the context of the contemporary planet itself. Familiarization with the revelation is only the beginning of the educational prerequisites of the Soldiers of the Circles in their total mission!

I do not believe that the burden of communication lies with the world in its need to relate to us as representatives or student-teachers of the revelation. Rather, it is our task to inform and educate ourselves about our planet and its traditions, its potentials, and its resourcefulness, in order to be of improved service to our world. Furthermore, I do not believe that we may allow ourselves to become so blinded by the intensity and scope of the revelation that we fail to appreciate the authenticity of the re-

ligious realities and experiences of the world's populations that are already going on around us day by day. An individual with an authentic religious life with God is already in an advantaged position to one who has only an epochal revelation. Because of the diversity of our spiritual world, the relevance of our newly stated message of revelatory status must seek to reach levels of diversification in its applicability and outreach to our planet to a degree equal to or greater than the religious multiplicity that is already existent, since we apprehend that the revelation is eventually destined to serve the entire planet. We must not allow the hardware distribution of *The URANTIA Book* to become our primary objective. It is far too easy and unimaginative simply to push the book at people. The sons and daughters of God deserve better than our indiscriminant and impersonal service and response. Jesus individualized his message for each

person he met. He deliberately avoided the easy and unimaginative means of bringing attention to his mission, such as walking out on the air from the Temple pinnacle. He chose the difficult but effective means consistently, and even in his outrageous and inhuman death he revealed and taught only love to his condemning adversaries and to

Teach us, good Lord, to serve
Thee as Thou deservest:
To give and not to count the
cost . . .
To labour and not ask for any
reward
Save that of knowing that we
do Thy will.

St. Ignatius Loyola

the universe. Overrevelation can stifle the creative imagination, the book teaches, and we must not allow ourselves to depend solely on the revelation to the neglect of our own resourcefulness in disseminating the message of sonship and brotherhood. Religious authenticity's realization should be our primary goal, which will result ultimately in the planetary universalization of religion, not distribution of the book. *The URANTIA Book* is only a description of religious authenticity--the personal achievement of such a goal is an exclusively personal matter. As the book itself states, descriptions of things beautiful cannot inspire as the direct experience of such realities.

Of course, we must not imagine that we are achieving the doing of the Father's business only when we have succeeded in communicating some idea or concept from the revelation to another human mind. Jesus served hundreds of individuals throughout his life sim-

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Letters to the Editors



April 17, 1982

Dear Editors,

After reading "Letters to the Editors" (Winter-Fall 1982 issue), I felt moved as both a URANTIA Book student and a member of the URANTIA Brotherhood (FUSLA) to respond.

There are many arguments as to "Fair Use" that I've heard, and I personally agree it should be changed as well as a few other policies. My response is not to argue for or against these issues, but to challenge those students who wish change to work within the present framework and become an ACTIVE DOER.

In my years as an active URANTIA Book student I have seen many

people come and go, many opinions both pro and con, yet so very few real soldiers of the circles. It always seems to be easier to complain than to act.

It is my belief that this 5th revelation's success may or may not be seen in our lifetime. More than likely the latter. We in our time are but laying the foundation for its universal acceptance. We are planting seeds for the many generations to come. Until then we should busy ourselves not only by studying The URANTIA Book but most importantly adapting its principles to our daily lives. In closing, I'm not saying, "shut up." I'm saying, "instead of standing on the outside of the arena shouting your opinions, why not step inside where your voice can be heard and is surely needed."

My final challenge is this: become actively involved; join a study group, form one, encourage others to do so; get more books in libraries; form societies; become formal members of the URANTIA Brother-

hood. Make your arguments heard through the present structure. Through time, work, and patience, the angels of progress will guide us and this wonderful revelation through these present times and into the far distant future. Then The URANTIA Book will be a beloved staple in every home on this beautiful planet. I have two quotes to leave you with. One on page 1436:5 on patience and a challenge by a midwayer on page 2084:5. I hope my thoughts have stirred up a few thought adjusters. My love and best wishes to all.

Peace,

Jonathon Johnson
Redondo Beach, California



ply through his smiles. An infinity of potential service techniques beckon us for utilization and implementation. Why should we limit ourselves--our serviceful instinct--and the Father's business by insisting on the exclusive enterprise of proliferating the revelation itself? The Father's business is *maximally* multiplicitous--He is dealing in *everything of creature value*, from families, to vocations, to art, to statesmanship.

A final word about Truth and Love: We must resist the attitude that there is one universal solution to man's spiritually diverse problems and challenges--much more so that we exclusively have it. But if there were a universally applicable solution for mankind's spiritual diversity and dilemmas, we would probably have

to agree that it is Love. Prejudice and fear are identified by the revelators as the chief inhibitors to growth. Truth will counteract the effects of prejudice and ignorance (enforced prejudice), while Love will address those of fear, Love's opposite. If we can communicate only Love or Truth in a given circumstance, we would do better to emanate Love, for Love alone will lead to Truth--Love is a Truth--whereas Truth alone can lead to crystallization and dogmatism, the stagnators of spiritual development. The human circulation of Love is of primary concern, because Love is the dynamic upon which the expansion, spiritualization, and integration of the personality depend; and upon the integration and sta-

bilization of the personality depend planetary civilizations and the cosmos itself--the Supreme for growth and unification. In the progress of Love on our planet, we must find means of *individualizing* Truth and Love to *each planetary citizen*, rather than insisting that he join our campaign of revelation proliferation. Divine Love is always outreaching *before* it can become ingathering. We must continue increasingly to complexify and diversify our planetary appeal of Truth and Love as we *expand* our appreciation of the diversity of the human community, while we remain grounded in the *universality* of the Father's Love and his Truth of eternal sonship. That, as I see it, is the Father's business for today and tomorrow. ●

"Why?"

Continued from p. 3.

zealots distort information about it. The angels of the churches are in charge of supervising developments in the first one hundred years of the *URANTIA* movement. This illustrates the importance which the revelators place on the Christian Church being introduced to the fifth epochal revelation. One fourth of this critical period has already passed with no serious, systematic ministry of outreach to church leaders. It would be tragic to default in this crucially significant missionary responsibility.

It may be later than we think. Demoralization and crime are

commonplace. Much of our world is experiencing chaotic conditions. Terrorism threatens the social order in many areas. Nuclear holocaust is an ever present possibility. Our world is in critical need of spiritual foundations which are large enough, solid enough, and have the spiritual power to both prevent catastrophe and give guidance and stability to the new age which is struggling to be born. I believe *The URANTIA Book* has the greatest potential for serving in this capacity of any philosophical-religious resource now available to man. It may be crucially important to the future of this planet. In such a situation, to be primarily concerned

with individualistic pursuits and cultish, ingroup preoccupations may be analogous to Nero's fiddling while Rome burned. To have spiritual resources which the world desperately needs and fail to share them is difficult to understand or justify.

Do not misinterpret my concern. I am not trying to persuade anyone else to engage in outreach ministry. These observations are simply some of the reasons for explaining objective aspects of my own subjective sense of calling. You must follow your own inner guidance. ●

"Commission"

Continued from p. 5.

Foundation operates, says: "The object for which this Foundation is created is the promotion, improvement, and expansion among the peoples of the world . . . of the true teachings of Jesus." The Brotherhood's Constitution echoes these words. They apply to every reader-believer. Isn't it time we took them seriously?

If you truly believe in Jesus you must read the references at the beginning of this article. On page 177D we are told we must be loyal to the Sovereign Son of God. And we must - as Jesus did - put loyalty to the Father's will above every other consideration. (1521D) Beyond the "rose garden" of *URANTIA Book* reading, we cannot avoid the "testing ground" of sacrifice and intent. We cannot share our supreme loyalty to Jesus and the Father with any material (or brotherly) devotion. (1803A)

Think hard and you will understand the sunbright truth as to where your loyalty should be fixed. And you will understand the sobering truth that "...he who loves father



Farewell to Christy

*For anyone who may not be aware of it yet, Christy has left us en route to the Resurrection Halls of Mansonia Number 1. Christy was the last of the mortal contingent of the contact commission which produced *The Urantia Book* in material form. In mortal form she radiated the soft spiritual glow of one who has been privileged to assist in God's work on our world.*

Her passing in early May is perhaps symbolic of the passing of responsibility from generation to generation. Each of us who has been fortunate enough to have been given the Book at this early stage of the revelation share in the responsibility and privilege of giving it to the world for whom it is intended.

Thank you, Christy



(A memorial service was planned for late May. Christy requested that donations be made to Urantia Foundation and Urantia Brotherhood in lieu of flowers.)

or mother more than this gospel is not worthy of the kingdom." (1682B)

The olden Jews were believers in God and assiduously devoted themselves to a creed, as we do to reading the Book. But they were "spiritually stagnant." (1727B) Will we be (are we) judged spiritually stagnant? Will we, you and I (will most devoted URANTIA Book readers) be judged "slothful, barren, and unfaithful" stewards of the truth we have been given? (1876) In telling of these servants Jesus said to all of us: "... so should you go about the work of the Father's business, now and henceforth, even forevermore." (1917C) "Work?" That's what it says. What could be clearer? If his instruction was for that past time only, why the "now and henceforth, even forevermore?" If it was intended to be an instruction for apostles only of 2000 years ago, why would it be placed with many like admonitions in a Fifth Epochal Revelation for this and a coming age? It is impossible to believe that Jesus intends to except any of today's believers, chosen in love, from being bearers of our new Revelation's blessings and illumination? If you are profited by *The URANTIA Book*, what does Jesus' positive statement of the Golden Rule say to you?

You cannot take seriously the advice of those who say: "The time is not ripe," and at the same time follow the repeated injunctions, commands, and admonitions, of Jesus and of our Book. You know whom you should follow! And when!

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Our Father Sits . . .

*Our Father sits in His place
at the center of all creation.
His reach stretches outward
beyond the farthest reach of any mind,
of any imagination.
He holds in Himself
all of what is known
and all of what might be
and all of what might be thought
or dreamt
or one day reached.*

*Our Father sits.
He sees, hears and knows.
He knows each and every being
in His creation.
And He knows the route of each election.
He feels the movement of every star.
He lives through every life in this universe
takes joy at every sunrise
and weeps with every pain.*


*Our Father shares
all of this.
He feels with us
and learns the life that we lead
because we share with Him.*


*In all of time and space
there is not one experience
which He does not share
not one which He cannot find
a way to use.
In all the patterns He has set for us
all the children He has sent
and all that we have shared with Him,
the thread runs through:
The Father's love is being expressed
His beauty learned anew.*

*He shares in our adventure
and listens while we learn
And smiles with a warm
and loving smile
as we learn the lessons He has planned.
He lifts us up
not even step by step
but smaller yet:
atom by atom
replacing us
with a new divinity
a new being
as shining as He.*

*Age upon age we live through this journey
becoming that which He knows we can.
And He waits
very patiently
at the center of the Universe
to greet us
when at last we find Him,
to welcome the being
that we have become.*

by Kaye Cooper
Arlington, Texas





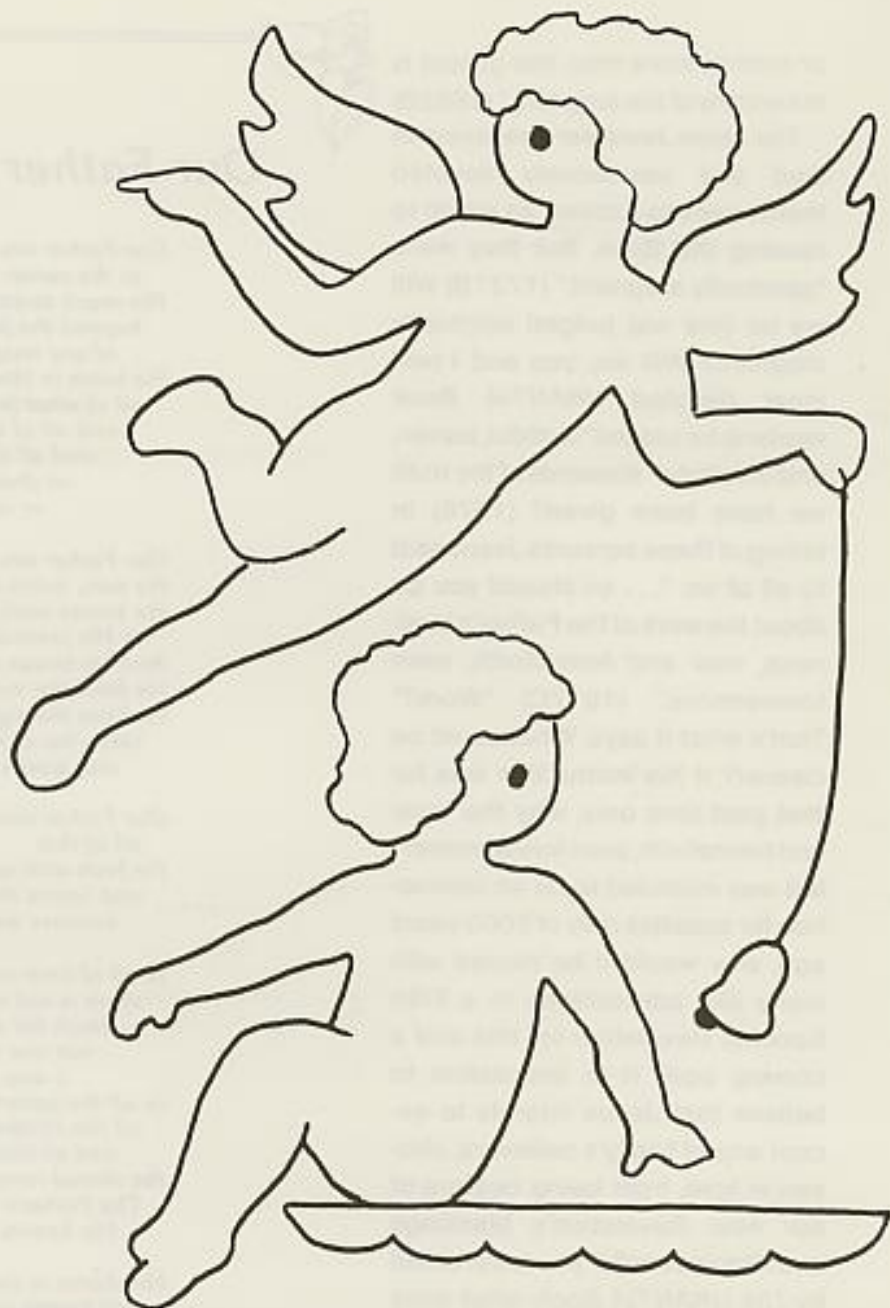
Help for our Friends

Innumerable spiritual and morontial beings reside on this planet and work diligently day in and day out to our benefit. Perhaps we need to give more thought to the question of how we can help them. How much more might the angels, midwayers and possibly other celestial beings be able to accomplish if in our daily meditations we offer ourselves as aides - if we become alert to the opportunities to help as we go about our day-to-day affairs?

The Circles winter issue will have the theme:

Help for our Friends

Our plans have changed. The issue on Our Friends has been delayed so there is still plenty of time to send your articles, poems, art work, etc. Send your ideas on how we can help our friends by August 30, 1982 to The Circles, 2001 Woods Drive, Arlington, Texas 76010. Please remember we prefer to limit articles to three double-spaced typed pages.



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Outreach

Vol. 1, No. 1

Spring, 1982

WHY OUTREACH?

We believe the time has come to have a communications center, a clearing house, for outreach activities in the URANTIA movement. Outreach will attempt to serve as an expeditor of outreach ministry. We hope to present philosophies and methodologies of sharing truth, to disseminate information about outreach activities throughout the country and world, to aid in the co-ordination and integration of outreach work, and to encourage and promote creative activity contributing to a spiritual renaissance on our world.

The actual inception of this publication, which will be a companion of The Circles, occurred in February at Oklahoma City. While discussing outreach projects with Bill and Kaye Cooper we mutually agreed that Outreach would be an appropriate successor to both The Celestial Signal and The Christian Fellowship Journal. This projected action was later approved by The Circles editorial staff and The Christian Fellowship trustees.

Philosophy and Purpose

We cannot govern ourselves wisely and consistently until we have a clear view of the hierarchical order of values and purposes in our lives, until our priorities are clarified, accepted, and acted upon. Most of the errors in living stem, first, from our confusion regarding supreme values; and, second, from our poor judgment in selecting the means to actualize these priorities.

The supreme value in the universe is Ultimate Reality, which we know personally as the Universal Father. Man's highest purpose and greatest privilege is to love and worship him and strive toward the divine perfection enjoined by his indwelling spiritual guidance. The greatest and most determinative action human beings can make

is a faith-grasp and acceptance of sonship with the Universal Father coupled with loving attitudes and actions toward God and their fellowmen. These reality relationships of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are, therefore, the most important truths man can share with his fellows. This message was the gospel (good news) which Jesus taught.

One of the chief forms of service in life is to communicate this gospel to others. The channels through which we do this are means to accomplish this basic purpose, this highest good. We should recognize that almost all of the substance and mechanics of human life deal with means and that these means are very important because they are the channels through which this gospel message is communicated.

Levels of Ministry

For purposes of simplification and clarification, we may classify these means of gospel communication or ministry on five basic levels.

First Level - Living the gospel - doing good as we pass by in life (Living Level).

Second Level - Social service - amplifying the gospel through systematic social action (Social Level).

Third Level - Traditional concepts - communicating the gospel through traditional Christian frames of reference or other traditional religious teachings (Traditional Level).

Fourth Level - Contemporary concepts - communicating the gospel using all contemporary resources, including bootlegging URANTIA Book concepts (Contemporary Level).

Fifth Level - URANTIA Book concepts -

communicating the gospel through the fifth epochal revelation (URANTIA Book Level).

We should engage in outreach ministry on all five communication levels. Which level we use at any particular time should be determined by the evolutionary readiness status of those with whom we are interacting and the objectives of our specific ministry. It is my judgment that almost all of the people of the United States are evolutionally prepared to receive the gospel message on the first three levels of communication but that a minority are not psychologically or socially ready to receive it.

I would estimate that social and cultural evolution has conditioned from twenty-five to thirty-five percent of our population to be receptive to the gospel message on the Fourth Level of intellectual-spiritual communication; but philosophical materialism and skepticism causes a substantial minority of this group to be psychologically and socially unprepared to accept it.

A large number of those who live at the Contemporary Level of cultural literacy are prepared for the concepts and cosmology of The URANTIA Book. I believe that from ten to twenty-five percent of the population of the United States is ready, from an evolutionary point of view, to receive the gospel message on the Fifth Level of conceptual understanding; however, very few of this group are psychologically or socially ready to realistically consider the possibility of "new revelation."

Evolutionary Approach

Contrary to wide-spread popular opinion, our planet has been marvelously prepared for the higher truths of the fifth epochal revelation. As much as twenty-five percent of our population is evolutionally at the URANTIA Book Level of cultural-philosophical comprehension. We are experiencing a spiritual hunger analogous to the spiritual readiness of the first century A. D. It is abundantly clear that the resources of the first four levels of spiritual ministry are inadequate to serve as the spiritual catalyst of the new age which is struggling to be born. Only a new revelatory breakthrough has the spiritual power to precipitate a new age. In

view of these facts, should we then initiate a vigorous, all-out campaign of outreach ministry using Fifth Level or URANTIA Book centered communication?

I do not believe such an all-out approach is necessary or wise. It is time to actively promote a systematic Fifth Level outreach ministry. Such a program should have been started years ago. Our philosophy and methodology of evangelism, however, is conditioned by the nature of the fifth epochal revelation. It is a book. This makes it possible to engage in a more selective and evolutionally-g geared outreach ministry. We should be forthright and courageous, but also wise and discriminatory.

Whenever possible, it is good to have new ideas and new revelation come into society with as little disruption and conflict as possible. We should not be afraid of conflict, but it is seldom wise to deliberately seek it. Since it is also good for us to participate in the basic institutions of our local communities and to have warm and accepting relationships with the members of our in-group, I would recommend three basic approaches to those interested in outreach ministry at the Fifth Level of communicative comprehension.

After discovering The URANTIA Book and sharing it with our close friends and relatives with varying degrees of success, we face the puzzling question: where do I go from here? My first recommendation is that you select creative channels in the first four levels of ministry, emphasizing the Fourth Level to introduce or emphasize frames of reference which are important to Fifth Level comprehension. Using Fourth Level communication - if you are knowledgeable in the areas of theology, religion, philosophy, the social sciences, and the physical sciences - you can introduce and use all of the basic concepts germane to Fifth Level communication.

In speaking and writing, in classes and discussion groups you are able to lead people to Fifth Level insights. Whenever it is natural and appropriate, you can openly introduce Fifth Level communication. Using this Fourth Level approach, I was able to introduce The URANTIA Book into college reading assignments without fanfare or conflict. Others using this method have led Sunday School classes into discussing Fifth Level topics using Third

Level and Fourth Level concepts and language. Fourth Level communication has been used to introduce many people to The URANTIA Book - even to start study groups in distant lands. Finally, it is an excellent method of preparing the ground for openly communicating the gospel on the Fifth Level - using The URANTIA Book as the primary focus in outreach ministry.

URANTIA Book Ministry

Those who realize that only the enlarged and integrated truths of The URANTIA Book and the faith-power of new revelation will bring about a spiritual renaissance may find Fourth Level ministry unfulfilling or even a waste of time. If you are seriously considering Fifth Level outreach ministry, you should understand that such activity could substantially handicap your potentials of ministry on the other four levels, jeopardize your vocational situation, and bring you into conflict with your in-group in the local community. Furthermore, you should know that such pioneering ministry will meet with a high incidence of disinterest, rejection, and even hostility. If you are a person who needs the reinforcement of success, this probably is not the type of service you will enjoy.

After considering these limitations, if you still wish to participate openly in Fifth Level outreach work, my second suggestion is that you consider an approach which may reduce negative repercussions in your work and social contacts. Select people who are not members of your close vocational and social in-groups to introduce to The URANTIA Book. In this way the subtle coercions associated with friendship, social status, or vocational rank will not influence their reaction to or evaluation of The URANTIA Book, and you will not be endangering your social or vocational relationships. Your friends will ask you about The URANTIA Book when they are interested.

Initially you will want to work out some systematic basis for selecting people who have the scientific and cultural backgrounds to appreciate URANTIA Book frames of reference. Having solved this problem, you will need to devise a way to contact these people. I have found the best approach to these people is to send

them a letter and enclose a pamphlet like "The URANTIA Book and Our Christian Heritage" or "Leavening Our Religious Heritage." After a few days the letter is followed by a telephone call to set up an interview. At this time the individual will indicate a lack of interest or schedule a time to see you. The rest depends on the dynamics of your discussion.

Another approach to this level of outreach work which may minimize social conflict is to wait to initiate this ministry until you are retired from vocational or social institutions which might suffer from your nontraditional evangelical activity. To some degree an effective ministry requires a relative amount of financial, social, psychological, and intellectual independence coupled with a great deal of courage and wisdom. When you have achieved these desirable prerequisites, you are better able to engage in outreach work with systematic concentration and freedom.

Be Creative

The foregoing suggestions regarding outreach ministry are not intended to restrict or discourage any missionary activity you regard as creative or wise. Remember, The URANTIA Book is an experimental venture on our planet. It is a new approach to revelation in our local universe. Introducing the book into our culture, therefore, is necessarily an experimental adventure in service. The need for the fifth epochal revelation on our world is so great we should not be inhibited by the fear of rejection or failure. At this point in time it is almost always better to participate in some form of outreach activity, even if we fail, than not to act at all. The most short-sighted and unwise view one could entertain toward the challenge of outreach service is a "bury your treasure in the closet - do nothing now" attitude. God can work with almost any form of positive action more effectively than with stagnation or a spiritual vacuum. We should always strive to serve as active channels through which the divine initiative of revelation can inspire and uplift our world.

Movements become a social reality when the truths and vision of a better way of life they project become indigenous in

the lives of people in local communities. Pioneering ministry is never easy; it demands vision, courage, wisdom, and perseverance. Each of us has an unusual opportunity to shape the future of this planet by helping introduce a new revelation to our culture. Such a fortuitous event on our world comes to a generation only once in thousands of years! We are standing at the beginning of one of the most promising eras of human history. May you find fulfillment and joy in sharing with your fellowmen the best Good News of this century!

TRADITIONAL MINISTRY

Jesus was active in the religious institution of his society - the synagogue. He continued ministering there until he was barred from doing so. Serving in our churches and synagogues is the most accessible and evolutionally appropriate channel of spiritual ministry in our society. The URANTIA movement would have a much stronger evolutionary base if more students of The URANTIA Book followed the example of Jesus in becoming active in local religious institutions.

Cap VanValkenburg of Atlanta has been a leading advocate of service in the church. Cap is a Sunday School teacher in an adult couples class in his local United Methodist church. This year, through his tactful and effective leadership, his class is discussing the following topics:

- Ministering Spirits of God
- The Indwelling Spirit of God
- Prayer and Worship
- The Religion of Jesus
- The Meaning of the Crucifixion and Resurrection
- The Next Step in Our Eternal Adventure: The Mansion Worlds
- The Trinity
- The Evolving Experiential Deity
- Love: What Jesus Taught and How We Can Share It
- The Fall of Man: Adam and Eve
- The Lucifer Rebellion: Satan's Rejection of God
- Matter, Mind, and Spirit
- Personality: A Gift of God
- Organization of Inhabited Space
- Revelations of God: Past, Present, and Future

- Evolution of Religion
- John the Baptist
- Sermon on the Mount
- The Faith of Jesus

This is an excellent example of using Third Level and Fourth Level concepts and language to discuss Fifth Level topics and insights. In January his class was discussing God's indwelling presence and influence and came to the realization that traditional language was inadequate in the description of this guidance; so they decided to coin a new term "Thought Adjuster" to refer to this spiritual influence. This illustrates what can be done through Traditional Level ministry. We hope that increasing numbers of URANTIA Book readers will become active in local religious institutions. It may be the most effective means of eventually establishing thousands of study groups.

LIBRARY PROJECT

The Domestic Extension Committee of URANTIA Brotherhood is promoting a library placement project. They would like for all of us to participate in this campaign. Experience has shown that the only effective way to place books is through personal contact. Probably the best approach is to write the head librarian or person in charge of acquisitions a brief note in which you say that you will be calling soon to set up an appointment to talk about placing a URANTIA Book in the library and enclose a copy of "Leavening Our Religious Heritage" or other explanatory literature. In this way when you call on the person they will be oriented on the purpose of your discussion. You may have a better way to contact librarians; if so, use it and share your method with us.

If you can help in this project please contact Tom Allen at 2322 N. W. 19th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73107. They will send you two books to be placed in libraries in 30 days. At the end of 30 days, you return any books not placed so that the books will be available elsewhere. Think of the possibilities for outreach ministry if every university and city in the country had URANTIA Books in their libraries!

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Write us of your outreach experiences.