

# Spiritual Fellowship Journal

Volume 3, Number 1

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**by Paul Davies**

## The Spiritual Fellowship of Students of The Urantia Book

A Spiritual Leadership Network Interested in *The Urantia Book* as a Resource in Living,  
Creative Service, Teaching, Preaching, and Writing.

### Guiding Network Principles

1. We believe *The Urantia Book* can make a significant contribution to the stimulation of spiritual creativity in churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions and their people.
2. We believe that at the present stage of spiritual development it is wise for ministers, priests, and rabbis to use *The Urantia Book* as a resource for preaching and teaching rather than referring to the book itself or directing attention to it. Almost every concept in *The Urantia Book* can be associated with some theologian, philosopher, or scientist in the past or present.
3. We believe that, although one should not be secretive about interest in *The Urantia Book*, one should use discretion in recommending it to people. The light of enhanced truth can frighten and blind as well as guide and illuminate.
4. We believe *The Urantia Book's* claim to a revelatory source and status is not germane to its usefulness in the presentation of spiritual truth. Truth has an inherent appeal, regardless of its source, and can be used to enrich one's preaching, teaching, and living.
5. We believe the Spirit of God works among us in a differential and evolutionary manner; therefore, we recognize that for whatever reason some clergy may not wish to read and critically evaluate *The Urantia Book*. This diversity should in no way stand as a barrier to our mutual respect, fellowship, and love.
6. We believe the leavening process of creativity stimulated by *The Urantia Book* should be ecumenical in nature.
7. We believe *The Urantia Book* will eventually be recognized by the great majority of the world's religious leaders as one of the most constructive spiritual messages our world has received since Jesus' ministry on earth.

### Network Recommendations

1. Read the entire *Urantia Book* to get its sweeping universe view of reality. Many of us started reading the book at Part IV, The Life and Teachings of Jesus. If you should like to get a quick overall view of the book you might read "The Gift of Revelation," a twenty-two page summary of the basic facts and truths of *The Urantia Book*.
2. Have the *Concordex* of *The Urantia Book* available to help in researching topics on which you are preaching or teaching.
3. Use the *Paramony*, which is a parallel and harmony of the Bible and *The Urantia Book*, to locate *Urantia Book* material on the Biblical text you are using in sermon preparation.



## *The Spiritual Fellowship Journal*

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### About the Editors

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## Editorials

### Signs of a Spiritual Renaissance

Last year Henry Grunwald, former U. S. ambassador to Austria and former editor-in-chief of *Time*, wrote an article for *Time* entitled, "The Year 2000: Is it the End—or Just the Beginning?" Following the fall of communism and new international arrangements, Grunwald says, "We are witnessing the end, or at least the decline, of an age of unbelief and beginning what may be a new age of faith." Management guru, Peter Drucker, says the 21st century has already arrived. It is "totally new and dynamic—and we are quite unprepared for it."

The new age of faith which is struggling to be born is a recognition of the limitations of modernism that rejected ontological transcendence (supernaturalism) and accepted the scientific world view as definitive. Traditional Christian conceptions of reality are equally disappointing. Fundamentalism, as Bishop John Spong (*Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism*) eloquently demonstrates, is intellectually untenable. Liberalism is often little more than a camouflaged version of secular humanism lacking in a transcendent view of spiritual reality. Mainline Christianity, concentrating on social action and institution building in the place of spiritual nourishment and the saving message of the gospel, has been steadily losing members and influence.

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The best hope for the revitalization of the church and the flowering of a new spiritual renaissance, I believe, is found in the superlative teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Its expanded view of spiritual reality and inspiring presentation of the life and teachings of Jesus will establish a new age of faith. During the last thirty-five years only the most progressive and courageous clergy have seriously examined the book. There is a modest Clergy Network which has discovered its rich mine of spiritual resources for preaching and teaching. But the power structures of the Christian clergy have treated *The Urantia Book* with deliberate and benign indifference.

What does this mean for the future of the Christian Church? Change should, indeed, be cautious and slow. But indifference is the road to spiritual stagnation. Will the church, in ignoring the most dynamic spiritual message to our world

since the gospel proclamations of Jesus, take the path of the synagogue in his day, and lose its opportunity to be the carrier of the "good news" to humankind in the future?

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Will the progressive evolution of religion be carried forward by new religious institutions as yet unborn? There are a growing number of people who are searching for identity and fellowship in an open church where new ideas are welcome. Over 200,000 *Urantia Books* are circulating in our culture, and I repeatedly hear these readers of the book say they are looking for a church where they feel comfortable. The relative indifference of the power structure of the Christian Church to the expanded spiritual vision of this seminal book may be creating a spiritual vacuum that will result in the advent of new religious institutions.

-MJS

### More About Jesus

There is a remarkable degree of unanimity about Jesus among contemporary Christians. Last year Interchurch Features commissioned a random selection survey of 6,000 readers of the official news publications of eight mainline denominations. Within the common circle of agreement, however, there were some interesting differences.

The United Church of Christ, which takes pride in being a non-creedal, non-hierarchical denomination, was the group most often dissenting from the norm. They disagreed more than others to the questions: Is Jesus the son of God? Did he rise from the dead? and, Will he come again? United Church of Christ members tend to see Jesus as more human than do members of other denominations. Over 50% of United Church of Christ and Roman Catholic people believe there are paths to salvation other than believing in Jesus.

Over the centuries, the stature of Jesus keeps growing throughout the world. People in all of the religions of the world, such as Mahatma Gandhi, are recognizing the high quality of Jesus' life, even while disagreeing with the dogmas of Christianity. Everyone from the "Death of God" theologians to secular humanists are magnifying the significance of Jesus to our common life. More best selling novels have been written about Jesus than any other personality.

This brings me to ponder the question as to why the 700 page life and teachings of Jesus in *The Urantia Book*, the most



inspiring life of Jesus ever written, is virtually unknown in our culture? The answer, I believe, is obvious. It is a part of a book purporting to be the Fifth Epochal Revelation to humankind. As such, it is feared and shunned.

If this life and teachings of Jesus had been published by itself as a novel written by a well known author, it would be the rage of church leaders as well as secular, literary people! Unfortunately, this has been the fate of new truth and epochal revelation on our world. But, doubt not, it will one day become the touchstone of a new spiritual renaissance!

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"The time is ripe to witness the figurative resurrection of the human Jesus from his burial tomb amidst the theological and religious dogmas of nineteen centuries. Jesus of Nazareth must no longer be sacrificed to even the splendid concepts of the glorified Christ. 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!" (p. 2090)

-MJS

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"When we are tempted to magnify our self-importance, if we stop to contemplate the infinity of the greatness and grandeur of our Makers, our own self-glorification becomes sublimely ridiculous, even verging on the humorous. One of the functions of humor is to help all of us take ourselves less seriously. Humor is the divine antidote for exaltation of ego." (549:3)

"We cannot judge religion by the status of its accompanying civilization; we had better estimate the real nature of a civilization by the purity and nobility of its religion. Many of the world's most notable religious teachers have been virtually unlettered. The wisdom of the world is not necessary to an exercise of saving faith in eternal realities." (1127:6)

"Some day a reformation in the Christian church may strike deep enough to get back to the unadulterated religion of Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. You may *preach* a religion *about* Jesus, but, perforce, you must *live* the religion *of* Jesus." (2091:5)

## Interface:

### *On Possible and Impossible Thoughts*

One of the ideas that many thoughtful people find a stumbling block when they first begin reading the *The Urantia Book* is the question of the existence of other universe intelligences. Not only do the number and nature of this hierarchy of beings strain our comprehension, but the very idea strikes many as more than a little improbable and esoteric.

Why should anyone be inclined to believe in such things? We haven't yet been able to establish beyond a doubt the existence of other planets like our own, let alone other beings like ourselves. And the discussion of other *orders* of beings sounds like the work of gnostic imagination or science fiction, something many people find very difficult to believe, if not absurd.

I would like to suggest, however, that perhaps we have it just backwards concerning what is truly absurd or impossible to believe, and I would call upon evidence from both the scientific and the religious communities to support this view.

The scientific community is rapidly accumulating evidence that life in other parts of the universe not only *might* exist, but *probably does* exist. While the issue is not yet settled, the evidence for the formation of other solar systems and planets is increasing rapidly. Many scientists now believe that planets like our own are probably more common than we once thought. At any rate, given the absolutely staggering size of the universe that we now know exists, even the slightest odds for the possibility of life elsewhere gets multiplied into the virtually inevitable.

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One of the world's leading astronomers, Fred Hoyle, argues that the processes that give rise to life simply cannot be confined to this planet. In fact, he believes that life on earth itself was seeded by contact with organic material from comets. The idea sounded wildly speculative just a few years ago, but his thesis of the presence of organic material in comets has now been clearly confirmed.

I am suggesting that we are moving toward a time when the evidence from astronomy and other sciences will push us to the point where belief in other intelligent life in the universe



is not only possible, but is the *only reasonable one*. Not to believe so will become increasingly difficult, if not absurd.

The next step, however, is much tougher. The idea of other orders of beings, such as angels, or divine overseers, is not only quite outside the realm of scientific confirmation, but remains for many in the religious community itself a quite impossible thought. This is true even though the Judeo-Christian tradition has long assumed their existence. Both the Old and New Testaments give ample testimony of such, from the affirmation of divine visitation to Abraham to Jesus' affirmation of the watchcare of guardian angels. From the philosophical idea of a "great chain of being" to faith affirmations of God's gracious purposes in Creation, from Aristotle to Aquinas to Karl Barth, persons of faith and reason have affirmed the possibility and probability of other and higher orders of being.

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That such beliefs have changed for so many people in the pews, as well as the secular world in general, demonstrates how thoroughly we have bought into the philosophy of scientific materialism. Ironically, we have a situation where vast numbers of churchgoers should not allow, by their own secular philosophical assumptions, even the possibility of God, let alone that of angels, et al. Such things for them are by definition mythical and unreal. This contradiction of beliefs, I think, forces many people into a kind of religious schizophrenia in order to maintain two incompatible views of reality.

Interestingly, this is at a time when our post-modern world seems rapidly moving beyond such a constricted viewpoint, realizing the assertion that only the material world is real is itself a dogmatic assumption—a metaphysical theory in its own right that science can neither prove nor disprove.

In addition, scientists are increasingly expressing a more balanced perspective, allowing for the proper consideration of philosophy and theology in areas that science cannot adequately address—including positing the necessity of intelligence behind it all.

Hoyle asserts that, "... the result we have now arrived at, namely the logical need for intelligence in the universe, is also consistent with the tenets of most of the major religions of the world."<sup>1</sup> Further, he says, "The general belief that is common to all religions is that the Universe, particularly the world of life, was created by a 'being' of incomprehensibly magnified human-type intelligence. It would be fair to say that the

overwhelming majority of humans who have ever lived on this planet would have instinctively accepted this point of view in some form, totally and without reservation. In view of the thesis of this book, it would seem to be almost in the nature of our genes to be able to evolve a consciousness of precisely this kind, almost as if we are creatures destined to perceive the truth relating to our origins in an instinctive way."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, Paul Davies, in his recent book, *The Mind of God*, speaks of how extraordinary it is that human beings can look and reflect so deeply into the secrets of the universe:

...glimpsing the rules on which it runs. How we have become linked into this cosmic dimension is a mystery. Yet the linkage cannot be denied.

What does it mean? What is Man that we might be party to such privilege? I cannot believe that our existence in this universe is a mere quirk of fate, an accident of history, an incidental blip in the great cosmic drama. Our involvement is too intimate... We are truly meant to be here.<sup>3</sup>

As we explore deeper and deeper into the mysteries of life, we seem increasingly forced to acknowledge the truth T. S. Eliot so well expressed: "Man is man because he can recognize supernatural realities, not because he can invent them. Either everything in man can be traced as a development from below, or something must come from above."

Both scientists and religionists have often been guilty of ignoring the insights of the other. In a recent editorial in *Sky and Telescope*, astronomer and physics teacher Chet Raymo reflects on the recent papal declaration concerning the Galileo affair in 1633. Following a 13 year investigation, the church concluded it had erred in condemning Galileo, stating that this had resulted from a "tragic mutual incomprehension," and this unfortunately became the symbol of the church's supposed rejection of scientific progress.

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The author suggests the rejection has not been, nor is it still, just "supposed." He relates Steven Hawking's account of a papal audience at the Vatican when Hawking and other leading cosmologists were told it was alright to study creation after the Big Bang but not the Big Bang itself because the moment of creation was the work of God.

Raymo points out the danger of religion continuing to look for God in the gaps of science, and suggests, prophetically, I think, that it is better to identify God with our knowledge rather than our ignorance. He also points out that a photograph accompanying the story of the church's admission of error in condemning Galileo showed the Pope:

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...dressed in Renaissance garb sitting on a Renaissance throne in a Renaissance palace, surrounded by other men (no women) also dressed in Renaissance clothes. All that was missing was the 70-year-old man on his knees on the marble floor. The photograph is symbolic... orthodox theology and science remain essentially at odds.<sup>5</sup>

I would suggest it is also symbolic of the mind set of most religionists today, and not just the orthodox. I am convinced that someday our present view of such things, from the standpoint of either religion or science, will seem sadly quaint. We poke fun of those who still believe in a flat earth, but our own view of greater life in the universe—not only like ours and below ours, but beyond ours—is just as parochial. Our knowledge of the *material* universe has expanded enormously since the time of Galileo, but our *spiritual* cosmology remains steadfastly pre-Copernican: we view God's spiritual domain, and therefore that of his Son, as that of the earth, and likely no where else.

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*I am convinced that someday our present view of such things, from the standpoint of either religion or science, will seem sadly quaint. ... Our knowledge of the material universe has expanded enormously since the time of Galileo, but our spiritual cosmology remains steadfastly pre-Copernican: we view God's spiritual domain, and therefore that of his Son, as that of the earth, and no where else.*

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Ironically, it may be science again that jogs us from our parochial understanding to a more prophetic one. What ever happened to Isaiah's majestic vision of God, who numbers all the worlds and calls them by name?

I would conclude by asking again: in light of both our religious and scientific understandings, which is more possible to believe—that there is likely a vast assemblage of intelligences in the universe, or that God, having no more imagination or love or greater purpose in mind, has created an unfathomably enormous universe and limited the experiment of life to this one small planet?

I find the first quite reasonable and plausible; I find the second increasingly absurd. The appearance of *The Urantia Book* seems timed to deal with the inevitable force of our growing knowledge and the necessity of a greater vision of God's plan for all Creation.

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<sup>1</sup>Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe, *Cosmic Life Force* (New York, Paragon House, 1990), p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 144.

<sup>3</sup>Paul Davies, *The Mind of God*, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1992), p. 232.

<sup>4</sup>Chet Raymo, *Righting Galileo's "Wrong,"* in *Sky and Telescope*, March 1993, p. 5.

-Merlyn Cox

## *The Urantia Book and Spiritual Renewal*

*This column features personal responses to The Urantia Book by both lay and clergy readers.*

### **My Mind-Expanding Experience with The Urantia Book**

Sue Tennant

Seventeen years ago, *The Urantia Book* beckoned to me from an obscure shelf in a private library. What a strange book it seemed, over two thousand pages of prodigious names and profuse details! After flipping through the pages I was curious about a section on the life and teachings of Jesus. What began for me was a story so compelling in its use of language and sense of authenticity that I could barely tear myself away to eat or sleep.

In the months that followed other sections were read very slowly and very thoroughly because much of the information was so new that I often felt skeptical. Eventually the foreignness of the book dissipated and I began to view it cautiously as one might a unique and adventuresome friend. For two years, this friend gave me a profound appreciation of the spiritual potential of human beings. Reading *The Urantia Book* was private, personal, and thrilling, in fact the most wonderful experience of my life, and though I craved to discuss it, I failed to find anyone interested in serious study.

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As reading continued, amazing questions surfaced from deep within me, then answers would suddenly appear on the book's pages, followed by new questions emerging. This process of asking and then discovering answers seemed tailor-made for learning. My mind stretched. Visualizing the distant past and the eternal future and thinking in complex abstractions became easier with time. Deity concepts, principles of universe pattern, evolutionary purpose and spiritual values became real and relevant in my life. I began to live more loyally to my own ideals and took some seemingly huge steps in faith. It was clear that I would spend the rest of my life sharing *The Urantia Book* and its teachings because this was truly something extraordinary—an incomparable revelation of the reality and purpose of God.



*My Mind Expanding Experience, cont.*

In time, connections were made with other readers and study groups and numerous conferences for students of *The Urantia Book* became an important part of my life. I began to understand that at the very least, this book would help facilitate the conceptual changes needed to solve the urgent spiritual, social, economic, and political problems of our world. Our conflicting diversities need a transcendent unifying principle and new spiritual inspiration if global progress is to occur. The root cause of divisiveness is the failure of individuals to understand their common spiritual potential, the fact of the indwelling presence of God, the source of unity and love. Our world desperately needs a new vision of reality. How important it is to share with humankind the good news that an unprecedented vision of God is portrayed in *The Urantia Book*, and that unimagined creative opportunities to serve the whole human family are revealed in its insights with stunning clarity!

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*Sue Tennant attended Wycliffe College, Toronto School of Theology, and is presently completing her final year at The New Seminary in NYC. She is a former Toronto publicist and author of "Crossing Cultures in Business."*

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### *In Time to Eternity*

This is the day that the Lord has made and we are glad in it.

Rejoice for ours is the wealth of the Kingdom of the Lord.

For we are altogether rich in spirit and strong in faith.

This is the week the Lord has made and we grow in it daily.

Rejoice for ours is the understanding of universal living.

For we have become brothers and sisters of the one Lord.

This is the month the Lord has made to care for others.

Rejoice for ours is the experience of the highest love.

For we have understood that to share is itself to live.

This is the year that the Lord has made for us.  
Rejoice in the joy of our understanding and experience.

For we have found His guidance to be sufficient and true.

This is the life that the Lord has given us and we are glad!

Rejoice that we are under the watch care of the Sovereign!

For we have become one under His love and shed our isolation from each other forever and forever!

For we have stumbled in our imperfection:  
In our solitude we have separated ourselves from His truth.

In our aloneness we have experienced the impotence of our ego.

In our isolation we have been blind to the cause of love.

In our arrogance we have refused to care for our fellows.

In our selfishness we have found a terrible emptiness

and there is no health in us, for we are lost without the guiding love of the Father.

And yet, in divine compassion:

He extends His mercy and forgiveness in eternal measure.

He pours out His love even to all of humanity.

He enriches our lives that we may know His truth.

He grants us eternal life in the victory of our faith.

What a miracle! What a miracle!

Indeed, this is the day the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it—forever and ever! Amen!

-Byrdestin



## Some Human Sources of *The Urantia Book*

Matthew Block

The authors of *The Urantia Book* acknowledge the importance of using human sources wherever possible in presenting new revelation. On pages 16 and 17 of the Foreword they tell us:

We may resort to pure revelation only when the concept of presentation has had no adequate previous expression by the human mind.

Successive planetary revelations of divine truth invariably embrace the highest existing concepts of spiritual values as a part of the new and enhanced co-ordination of planetary knowledge. Accordingly, in making these presentations about God and his universe associates, we have selected as the basis of these papers more than one thousand human concepts representing the highest and most advanced planetary knowledge of spiritual values and universe meanings. Wherein these human concepts, assembled from the God-knowing mortals of the past and the present, are inadequate to portray the truth as we are directed to reveal it, we will unhesitatingly supplement them, for this purpose drawing upon our own superior knowledge of the reality and divinity of the Paradise Deities and their transcendent residential universe.

The director of the commission authorized to present the life and teachings of Jesus, which is recorded in the last section of *The Urantia Book*, informs us:

In carrying out my commission to restate the teachings and retell the doings of Jesus of Nazareth, I have drawn freely upon all sources of record and planetary information...As far as possible I have derived my information from purely human sources. Only when such sources failed, have I resorted to those records which are superhuman...The memoranda which I have collected...embrace thought gems and superior concepts of Jesus's teachings assembled from more than two thousand human beings...In many ways I have served more as a collector and editor than as an original narrator. (p. 1343)

Many students of *The Urantia Book* have been intrigued by these references to human sources and have sought to track these sources down. Until recently, however, the findings were meager, consisting mainly of passages from the world's sacred scriptures. A few modern books had been identified as sources (e.g., *The Religion of Jesus* by Walter E. Bundy, *A Preface to Christian Faith in a New Age* by Rufus M. Jones and *The Dawn of Conscience* by James Henry Breasted), but

not enough to prove that books had figured largely among "the sources of record and planetary information" alluded to by the revelators. Most readers have supposed that the revelators accessed some sort of celestial concept registry or memory bank to locate appropriate human concepts and expressions, only drawing on published sources in exceptional cases.

In 1991 a couple of groups of *Urantia Book* readers decided, independently of each other, to collect all the human sources found so far. As a member of one of these groups, I took on the task of reading the above mentioned books carefully in order to glean all the parallel passages. As I read, I began to see that the parallels were far more extensive than previously realized. This led me to surmise that the revelators' use of books was not so extraordinary after all.

A few months later, while doing research for a paper on *The Urantia Book's* treatment of race and eugenics, I happened upon E. V. Cowdry's *Human Biology and Racial Welfare*. Published in 1930, this book turned out to be another unmistakable source. This discovery, which occurred in the spring of 1992, spurred me on to conduct a concentrated search for other source books.

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Below is a list of nineteen books which comprise the sources I have collected so far. All of these books, with a few exceptions noted in the list, contain sentences, paragraphs, or even whole chapters whose phrasings and organization of thoughts or information are so closely paralleled in *The Urantia Book* as to strongly suggest their use as source materials by the revelators. Most were discovered in libraries and used book stores in the Chicago area during the spring, summer, and fall of 1992, in the course of my research.

The research, so far, has been very fruitful mainly because none of these books were obscure. They were all written by authorities in their respective fields, often by professors from prominent American universities, and many were reviewed in the popular and academic press. The book titles themselves were often giveaways; by their very titles, for instance, I targeted *Purposive Evolution* and *The Architecture of the Universe* (listed below) as likely primary sources. It is quite probable that many more books by American scholars of the early 20th century will be identified as sources. It may also be that writings from other periods and milieus will prove to be similarly rich in source materials.

These books cover many fields, including religion, philosophy, archaeology, physics, astronomy, and history. The revelators explicitly acknowledge using the highest human



concepts and insights pertaining to God and the seven superuniverses (p. 17) and to the life and teachings of Jesus (p. 1343). But it seems strictly in keeping with their purposes to cull from other areas as well, since mention is made on p. 1123 that: "Revelation unifies history, co-ordinates geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology, and psychology." In their effort to produce a "new and enhanced coordination of planetary knowledge" (p. 17), involving the unification and integration of religion, science, and philosophy, it makes sense that the revelators would incorporate human understandings in all of these areas.

So far we have traced parallels in about fifty of the Urantia Papers. One book alone, *Origin and Evolution of Religion* by Yale professor E. Washburn Hopkins, figures in twelve. I estimate that writings published before 1936 are used in about one-third of Parts I and II and in at least two-thirds of Parts III and IV. Most of these works will probably be found within the next few years. Eventually we will be able to map out the whole *Urantia Book* according to which parts are original with the book and which are not. And, again, this will not be too difficult since the revelators, while studiously avoiding word-for-word borrowings, made no attempt to disguise their sources by departing widely from the original human expressions.

Clearly, these findings are of great importance to serious *Urantia Book* readers. In addition to providing further substantiation of the revelators' acknowledgements, they spark new insights into what this revelation really is, and how human and superhuman voices and viewpoints interface in its production. As we gain a better grasp of how original it is (in its function as of pure revelation), and how derivative it is (in its function of presenting superhuman restatements of human concepts and expressions), we will be better able to see how the revelation positions itself with regard to evolutionary human knowledge, wisdom, and faith.

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My own experience has taught me that, as a result of my former ignorance and underestimation of early 20th century thought, my sense of this positioning had been skewed. If unfamiliar with a concept or a piece of information presented in the papers—especially if it struck me as uncommonly beautiful, brilliant, or incisive—I would usually assume it was original with *The Urantia Book*, little realizing that it might have been common knowledge, in some form or other,

by some people of earlier generations. But in becoming more familiar with thought trends of that period and others, and with the discovery of more human sources, I've come to a better appreciation of the higher reaches of human thought reflected in the book, and can now begin to give the book's human side its proper due.

Along with this heightened recognition of the book's human component has come an awareness of how brilliantly the revelators re-worked these sources to serve their own purposes. In comparing the source materials with the corresponding passages in *The Urantia Book*, I am continually struck by the presenters' ingenious ability to seamlessly integrate human observations with revelatory supplementation or correction. Time and again they prove themselves deft and creative editors, performing the difficult task of remaining true to the original expression while at the same time slightly altering it to make the re-worded sentence(s) more congruent with revealed teachings.

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One illustration of this technique will suffice for the purposes of the present essay. In his discussion of chemical elements, W.E.G. Swann writes on page 64 of *The Architecture of the Universe*:

Starting from any one of them [i.e., chemical elements], and noting some property such as the melting point, for example, the property would change as we went along the row, but as we continued it would gradually come back to the condition very similar to that which we started...The eighth element was in many respects like the first, the ninth like the second, the tenth like the third, and so on. Such a state of affairs point [s] not only to a varied internal structure, but also to a certain harmony in that variation suggestive of some organized plan in building the atom.

Compare this with the parallel passage on p. 480 of *The Urantia Book*:

Starting from any one element, after noting some one property, such a quality will change for six consecutive elements, but on reaching the eighth, it tends to reappear, that is, the eighth chemically active element resembles the first, the ninth the second, and so on. Such a fact of the physical world unmistakably points to the sevenfold constitution of ancestral energy and is indicative of the fundamental reality of the sevenfold diversity of the creations of time and space.



Notice the care and elegance with which the second passage is restated. While retaining the original sentence structures and using similar wordings, the superhuman presenter departs from the speculative tone of Swann's last clause, inserting a revealed statement of decisive significance in its place. Scores of other examples of this technique appear in the books listed below; their cumulative effect is truly astounding. Other patterns of referencing, equally ingenious, are also discernible; these will be brought forward in later essays. (In this connection, it should be noted that in the listings, when I describe passages in some of the books as being "reproduced with little change" or "lightly rewritten," etc., the changes may be small in form but quite significant in substance.)

It must also be noted that these books have sometimes been of great help in further understanding the papers that use them. Often the presenters are obliged to present an abbreviated treatment of a concept or a history which is discussed at greater length in the human source. For instance, my understanding of the book's puzzling allusion to "cosmic self-maintenance" (p. 482) was greatly enhanced when I came upon this concept presented at length in the Noble book (see below). In light of these benefits to the comprehension of both content and context, I feel it would be helpful for the readership to be made aware of these sources, and perhaps some of these books with expired copyrights could be republished. It would also be very helpful to scholars who will someday be critically examining *The Urantia Book*.

The following listings are necessarily brief and incomplete. In the coming months I intend to analyze some of these books at greater length, detailing the often ingenious ways the revelators make use of them. My main goals in each of the essays will be: (1) to lay out the parallels between the book in question and *The Urantia Book*, (2) to show how the superhuman presenters enhanced the human statements with revelatory information or insights, and (3) to see whether and how the books shed light on the corresponding passages in *The Urantia Book*. In the meantime, I and other readers will be on the lookout for more human sources. If anyone knows of books not included in this list, I would be very grateful to hear from you.

### Current Source Books

**Aston, W. G.** *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1905.

*Compare:* *The Urantia Book*: Paper 131, "The World's Religions," section 7. Sentences from Aston's translation of the "Wa Rongo" collection of Shinto oracles, lightly rewritten or paraphrased, constitute the entire selection of Ganid's abstract of Shinto.

**Bishop, William Samuel.** *The Theology of Personality*. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1926.

*Compare:* Foreword, section 8. Although there appears to be no superhuman lifting of content here, Bishop uses the terms "trinity," "triunity," and—amazingly—"A Trinity of Trinities" in the exposition of his constructive theology. These terms are completely re-worked in *The Urantia Book*.

**Breasted, James Henry.** *The Dawn of Conscience*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933.

*Compare:* Paper 95, "The Melchizedek Teachings in the Levant," sections 2-5; Paper 111, "The Adjuster and the Soul," preamble. Breasted's analysis and assessments of early Egyptian social idealism and religion—including the teachings of Amenemope and Ikhnoton, the ka and the ba, Egypt's influence of the Hebrews—are incorporated into *The Urantia Book's* corresponding discussions.

**Bundy, Walter E.** *The Religion of Jesus*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1928.

*Compare:* Paper 196, "The Faith of Jesus," preamble, sections 1-2. Portions from every chapter of this book, whose thesis is that the human Jesus founded the religion of personal experience and that we must recover the religion of Jesus from the religion about Jesus, are deftly concentrated in Paper 196, with the retention of many of Bundy's exact wordings.

**Bundy, Walter E.** *Our Recovery of Jesus*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1929.

*Compare:* Paper 196, "The Faith of Jesus," preamble, sections 1 and 2. A companion volume to the preceding book, this one has material that parallels paragraphs in Paper 196 which were not paralleled by the preceding book. The two books together supply about 95% of the basis of the preamble and the first two sections. The last differs in tone and content and may be original with the midways.

**Burton, Ernest DeWitt and Matthews, Shailer.** *The Life of Christ*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900, 1927.

*Compare:* Part IV, passim. The content of this book does not appear to be used, but rather its chapter and section titles. Parallel titles include: "The Crisis at Capernaum," "Discourse on Spiritual Freedom," "The Widespread Fame of Jesus [Christ]," "The Man with the Withered Hand," "The Woman Taken from Adultery," and "[More] Parables by the Sea."

**Cowdry, E. V.** editor. *Human Biology & Racial Welfare*. New York: Paul B. Hoeber, Inc., 1930.

*Compare:* Paper 51, "The Planetary Adams," section 4; Paper 65, "The Overcontrol of Evolution," section 2; Paper 82, "The Evolution of Marriage," section 6. The revelators used essays by Hrdlicka, Conklin, and Davenport in their discussions of race differences, the dangers and benefits of race mixing and the feasibility of a modest eugenics program.

**Edwards, Tryon,** original compiler. *The New Dictionary of Thoughts*. London & New York: Classic Publishing Co., 1890-1934 and later.



*Human Sources, cont.*

**Compare:** Paper 48, "The Morontia Life," section 7. The vast majority of the 28 "statements of human philosophy" in the Morontia Mota section are taken well-nigh consecutively from the first 35 pages of this 750 page book, which is arranged alphabetically by subject. The subjects from which the revelators cull quotations include: Ability, Accident, Action, Adversity, Affection, Affliction, Anger, Anxiety, Art, Aspiration, etc. These quotes are not reproduced verbatim in *The Urantia Book* but are recast so as to have a more cosmic and spiritual tone.

**Fosdick, Harry Emerson.** *The Hope of the World*. New York & London: Harper and Brothers, 1933.

**Compare:** Paper 171, "On the Way to Jerusalem," section 7. "Goodness is effective only when it is attractive," on p. 1874, is the essence of Fosdick's sermon "The Fine Art of Making Goodness Attractive."

**Frost, Jr., S. E.** compiler and editor. *The Sacred Writings of the World's Great Religions*. New York: The New Home Library, 1943

**Compare:** Paper 131, "The World's Religions." This book is a selection from previous—and unfortunately, uncited—translations of various holy books. *The Urantia Book* appears to use the same translations of the Jain, Zoroastrian and Confucian writings as Frost, as well as the Aston Shinto translation. There is a remarkable overlap in the passages selected in the two books.

**Hartshorne, Charles.** *Man's Vision of God*. Chicago: Willett, Clark, and Co., 1941.

**Compare:** Foreword, section I. Hartshorne's list of seven conceivable types of perfection is reproduced almost verbatim on p. 3 of *The Urantia Book*. I suspect that Hartshorne published an earlier (pre-1935) presentation of this system in a journal, so it may already have been in print before the Foreword was written.

**Hopkins, E. Washburn.** *Origin and Evolution of Religion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1923.

**Compare:** The whole Paper 85, "The Origins of Worship," is taken directly from the first eight chapters of the book, each section in the paper corresponding almost exactly to a chapter in the book. Paper 92, "The Later Evolution of Religion," incorporates some of Hopkins' comments, as do Papers 86-90. The preamble and section I of Paper 104, "Growth of the Trinity Concept," are taken directly from Hopkins' chapters on "The Triad," "The Hindu Trinity," "The Buddhistic Trinity," and "The Christian Trinity." This book is the most extensively used one in the list.

**Jones, Rufus M.** *A Preface to Christian Faith in a New Age*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1932.

**Compare:** Paper 195, "After Pentecost," sections 5-10. Every chapter of the book is used in the revelators' discussions of Christianity's struggle to awaken to its spiritual mission in the face of modern secularism and its own institutional shortcomings. Virtually every paragraph of section 10, "The Future," is drawn consecutively from the last half of this book.

**Jones, Rufus M.** *The Inner Life*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1916.

**Compare:** Paper 102, "The Foundations of Religious Faith," preamble. Jones quotes the same two extracts of Bertrand Russell's *A Free Man's Worship* (1903) which the Melchizedek paraphrases in the first two paragraphs of the paper. Both Jones and the Melchizedek use these passages to illustrate materialistic despair, which can only be remedied by faith in God and a spiritual interpretation of the universe.

**Noble, Edmund.** *Purposive Evolution: The Link Between Science and Religion*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1926.

**Compare:** Paper 42, "Energy—Mind and Matter," section 11; Paper 116, "The Almighty Supreme," section 7. Noble's theory of cosmic self-maintenance (the universe is purposive) is referred to in *The Urantia Book* on page 482. Noble's chapter "Is the Universe an Organism?" (in which he gives a negative answer) seems to be responded to by the revelators on pp. 1276-77: "The Living Organism of the Grand Universe."

**Osborn, Henry Fairfield.** *Man Rises to Parnassus: Critical Epochs in the Prehistory of Man*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1928.

**Compare:** Paper 64, "The Evolutionary Races of Color," sections 2 and 4; Paper 80, "Andite Expansion in the Occident," sections 3, 8, & 9. This book seems to be the prime source for *The Urantia Book's* discussion of the successive human races in Europe from the Foxhall peoples to the Neanderthals, the Cro-Magnons, and the ancestors of the Nordics. *The Urantia Book* largely adheres to Osborn's geological, racial, and cultural chronologies, and to his characterizations of the cultures of these various peoples. Osborn's discussion of the Bretons is paralleled exactly on p. 899 of *The Urantia Book*.

**Palmer, George Herbert.** *The Autobiography of a Philosopher*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1930, reprint, 1968.

**Compare:** Paper 181, "Final Admonitions and Warnings," section 1. Palmer's assertion of the superiority of the inner peace resulting from faith in the Father's loving care, over the "two inferior forms of hardihood" (optimism and stoicism), is paralleled in *The Urantia Book's* discussion on pp. 1954-55.

**Sabatier, Auguste.** *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*. New York: Phillips & Co., 1904.



*Compare:* Paper 155, "Fleeing Through Northern Galilee," sections 5 & 6. The sections in *The Urantia Book* on "The Discourses on True Religion," which distinguish the religions of authority from the religion of the spirit, are an amplification of Sabatier's thesis. *The Urantia Book's* listing of the "three manifestations of the religious urge" on p. 1728 corresponds to Sabatier's "Three Degrees of Religious Evolution." Sabatier's book was quite influential; both Rufus Jones and Walter Bundy, among others, refer to the religions of authority and the religion of the spirit, attributing the origin of the latter to Jesus, as does Sabatier.

**Swann, W. F. G.** *The Architecture of the Universe*. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1934.

*Compare:* Paper 41, "Physical Aspects of the Local Universe," and Paper 42, "Energy—Mind and Matter," passim. Swann's opening chapter on "The Dogmas of Natural Philosophy," is reproduced with little change in section 9, "Natural Philosophy," of "Energy—Mind and Matter." Many of his temperature, size, and distance estimates relating to intra-atomic and astronomic bodies are used in *The Urantia Book* as are several of his analogies and illustrations (e.g., if the volume of a proton should be magnified to the size of the head of a pin, then, in comparison, the pin's head would attain a diameter equal to that of the earth's orbit around the sun).

### Interweaving the Human and the Divine

These findings are leading to the realization that *The Urantia Book* is the product of a masterful interweaving of human and superhuman perspectives and insights. The warp of the text was supplied, in the main, by the progressive lines of religious and scientific thought of the early 20th century. This period was in many ways a great age of expanding horizons and enlarging concepts; many progressive thinkers—including several in the list above—were beginning to perceive and assert the interrelatedness of science, philosophy, and spiritual insight. This burgeoning sense of cosmic unity was abruptly eclipsed by the Second World War, which cast a cloud of skepticism and chastened hopes in its wake. But this eclipse was only temporary, and the quest for the realization of cosmic unity is again being taken up by progressive and creative people in society today.

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The woof of the text was supplied by the superstructure of revelatory themes and concepts which co-ordinate and unify the human evolutionary insights. New and original information touching on origins, history, and destinies are introduced to shed light on the true meaning and import of evolutionary

perceptions, as well as to provide answers to questions which logically arose from these perceptions.

One probable reason that the human sources were left undisguised was to enable students to discern, through comparative analysis, how this co-ordination of planetary knowledge was actually effected. As mentioned above, the initial analyses have already proved tremendously illuminating in this regard. Another reason was to keep us aware of the book's anchorage in a specific time and place. While a very large part of the book is of timeless value and perennial applicability, some of its discussions directly address and respond to the world situation of the early 20th century. Thus, every generation will have to determine the relevance and applicability of certain of the book's teachings to its own situation.

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*Emerging from all these discoveries is the gratifying realization that The Urantia Book is exactly what its authors claim it to be. In their discussions of what true revelation is, the authors completely disavow certain traditional connotations such as oracles falling from the sky, or infallible prophecies written in stone.*

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Emerging from all these discoveries is the gratifying realization that *The Urantia Book* is exactly what its authors claim it to be. In their discussions of what true revelation is, the authors completely disavow certain traditional connotations such as oracles falling from the sky, or infallible prophecies written in stone. Rather, in characterizing authentic revelation, they state:

The proof that revelation is revelation is this same fact of human experience: the fact that revelation does synthesize the apparently divergent sciences of nature and the theology of religion into a consistent and logical universe philosophy, a co-ordinated and unbroken explanation of both science and religion, thus creating a harmony of mind and satisfaction of spirit which answers in human experience those questionings of the mortal mind which craves to know *how* the Infinite works out his will and plans in matter, with minds, and on spirit. (p. 1106)

In this passage, *The Urantia Book* captures the essence of its own magnificent achievement, an achievement which is truly without peer or precedent in the history of the world.

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*Matthew Block serves on the office staff of The Fellowship for Student and Readers of The Urantia Book in Chicago.*

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## The Service Motive Emerging

Larry Mullins

Less spectacular than the collapse of Communism, but equally significant, is the evolution of American business toward the service motive. In the last decade, the twin sacred cows of profit and power have been slowly losing primacy to higher ideals.

In enlightened companies, profit is no longer pursued as a sole business objective. In such companies profit is recognized as a side effect of superlative customer service. Power is less coveted and is being "pushed down" to lower levels in an effort to flatten out the organizational structures of companies and institutions.

Twenty-five years ago, when I was a young advertising executive, the admonition made on page 805 of *The Urantia Book* seemed impossibly optimistic:

Present-day profit-motivated economics is doomed unless profit motives can be augmented by service motives. Ruthless competition based on narrow-minded self-interest is ultimately destructive of even those things which it seeks to maintain. Exclusive and self-serving profit motivation is incompatible with Christian ideals—much more incompatible with the teachings of Jesus. In economics, profit motivation is to service motivation what fear is to love in religion.

The purpose of this article is to document some of the sweeping changes that are surging through American businesses, organizations, and institutions. My premise is that these transformations are evidence of the accuracy of *The Urantia Book's* prediction about the evolution of the service motive. More than this, I seek to show that some of the principles of Jesus are being broadly applied by enlightened businesses.

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*Though The Urantia Book admonition quoted above struck me as almost Pollyannaish when I first read it, I no longer feel that way.*

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These principles are generally used for their pragmatic value. The ideals are not ordinarily attributed to Jesus by those who use them; few are aware that Jesus originated many of them. But the principles are clearly Jesusonian. Though *The Urantia Book* admonition quoted above struck me as almost Pollyannaish when I first read it, I no longer feel that way. I have since met business leaders who openly declare that their most valuable assets are their people, and who vigorously promote customer service. I have read of many twentieth century business people who practiced, as well as preached, Jesusonian principles. One such business person was Arthur

Nash, whose book about his methods, *The Golden Rule in Business*, was published in 1923.

We are told in *The Urantia Book* that existing human concepts were used, whenever they were available, in its formulation. In my judgment *The Golden Rule in Business* is possibly one of the human source documents consulted by the celestial intelligences who transmitted the *Urantia Papers*. Aside from the general spiritual fragrance of *The Golden Rule in Business*, there are also to be found some impressive insights—insights that are expressed in similar terms in *The Urantia Book*.

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*"...what all the writers, who were so eagerly rushing into print were attacking and finding fault with was not Christianity at all, but the lack of it! Christianity had not failed, simply because Christianity had not yet been tried!"*

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In his book Arthur Nash wrote of his concern about the large amount of contemporary literature supporting the opinion that Christianity had failed. He tells of his quest to discover whether or not this view was true. On page 63 of *The Golden Rule in Business* he wrote:

I went down to the library—any number of articles were current at the time purporting to show that Christianity was an errant failure—and began to read up. And my reading soon brought me to see one great, stark, outstanding fact: That what all the writers, who were so eagerly rushing into print were attacking and finding fault with was not Christianity at all, but the lack of it! **Christianity had not failed, simply because Christianity had not yet been tried!**... In the individual life of many a saint of God it had been tried, and never once, when earnestly and sincerely tried, been found to fail. But of adoption in any national, or, so far as the Christian Church was concerned, universal sense, there had been none.

Nash went on to say that the phrase: "*Christianity had not failed, simply because Christianity had not yet been tried!*" had been borrowed from him by several writers during World War I. Now compare his quote with this excerpt from page 1720 of *The Urantia Book*:

Many intelligent and well-meaning men, even in the more enlightened age of these revelations, maintain that modern civilization could not have been built upon the teachings of Jesus—and they are partially right. But all such doubters forget that a much better civilization could have been built upon his teachings, and sometime will be. This world has never seriously tried to carry out the teachings of Jesus on a large scale, notwithstanding that halfhearted attempts have often been made to follow the doctrines of so-called Christianity.



## The Golden Rule in Action

Arthur Nash acquired a Cincinnati clothing business in 1916, just as America was becoming involved in World War I. Nash soon realized that in order to continue in the business he would have to persist in paying the grossly unfair "sweat shop" wages that had been established in the clothing industry. After much soul searching he elected to liquidate the business. Then he made a remarkable decision.

Nash decided to *raise the pay* of all his employees to reasonable levels for the short period of time that the business could stay afloat. In a meeting with the workers he announced his decision. The astounded employees were given increases from 20% to as much as 300%!

As weeks passed Nash became aware that sales were increasing, but he lost interest in carefully monitoring the business. He believed his dream of financial independence was being eroded away as he paid wages far above his competitors. After a few months he decided to check his company's finances. To his astonishment he was making record profits. Sales and production were nearly three times the previous levels!

Nash investigated. He discovered that his workers had responded to their wage increases by exerting superlative efforts and dramatically improving their performances.

There is a great deal more to the story than I can relate here. Briefly though, driven by his strong Christian values, Nash also improved the working environment. He insisted that no overtime be worked, and that workers' families be given priority over the business. He arrived at work before any of his employees, and usually stayed later.

Nash's success continued in the face of a post-war business turn-down. In 1920, clothing businesses and mills were closing down all over America; \$100,000,000 in textile orders were canceled in that year. Yet Nash tripled his gross sales over the year before. By 1922 his company *again* doubled its volume!

In his book Nash urged his methods be adopted by all businesses, declaring that humanity must turn to Jesus to survive. He summed up the success of his Jesusonian techniques with the statement: "...in the philosophy of Jesus, and in that philosophy alone, is centered the hope of the world. Remember, I am not talking about the fifty-seven varieties of philosophy *about* him, I am talking about *his* philosophy, and therein lies all the difference."

*The Urantia Book* expands upon a similar concept on page 2084:

Christianity has indeed done a great service for this world, but what is now most needed is Jesus. The world needs to see Jesus living again on earth in the experience of spirit-born mortals who effectively reveal the Master to all men... Modern culture must become spiritually bap-

tized with a new revelation of Jesus' life and illuminated with a new understanding of his gospel... And when Jesus becomes thus lifted up, he will draw all men to himself.

## A Modern Perspective

Nash is exemplary of a few exceptional business persons. There have not been an abundance of business people who would dare to actually apply the philosophy of Jesus as *practical economics*. And today, as in Nash's day, leaders are rare who will openly testify to their Christian faith as a pragmatic business touchstone.

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*...the climate is changing. A new philosophy of service—very much Jesusonian in its tone—is becoming the way to do business in the final decade of the twentieth century.*

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*Even so, the climate is changing. A new philosophy of service—very much Jesusonian in its tone—is becoming the way to do business in the final decade of the twentieth century. The Golden Rule is being paraphrased into common buzzword clusters such as: "Treat all employees as you want them to treat our customers," and "Treat the next operation as the customer." (The next operation may mean the one downstream in the production line, or the next person to whom paperwork is given.)*

A new concept called "Total Quality" refers to *customer driven products*—painstakingly designed and built with the customer's needs and convenience—not profit—as the primary goal of manufacturing. Concepts such as: "Drive out fear," and "End the practice of awarding business to vendors on the basis of price alone" are honored by enlightened companies such as Ford, Honeywell, Xerox, and many others.

This trend is not a fad. Popular business books are driving home that prophetic admonition of *The Urantia Book* and are clearly warning that profit-driven economics must be modulated by service motives:

A customer service crises is building throughout the business world, and most managers don't know it. Even those who do seldom understand how to cope. The price of their ignorance is high: by the 1990's thousands of businesses will be shaken and even shattered by their inability to render effective customer service. The spoils will go to those few companies that perceive this and learn how to out-service their competitors.<sup>1</sup>

The primary motive is still focused more upon profit than service. But even so, as greater economic discretion and power are exercised by consumers, adjustments are being forced upon businesses. There is a greater understanding of the need for excellent and timely customer service. Parts of the philosophy of Jesus are making slow, but important, inroads into business as viable management tools.



Tough, practical management consultants are urging clients to adopt service-driven policies. Read this excerpt from *Competing Against Time*, a book praised by several esteemed board chairmen, including Chairmen of the Board of Ford Motor Company, Apple Computer, Federal Express, and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce:

Management is faced with three choices when responding to demanding customers: 1) **Fight customers** by making them accept standard performance, product or service.... 2) **Insulate its organization** from customers by building mounds of inventory and getting them to do a lot of their own work.... 3) **Embrace them and make sure they are more satisfied with the service provided than they could have ever imagined.**

*Competing Against Time* was written by George Stalk, Jr. and Thomas M. Hout, two savvy business consultants to Fortune 500 companies. They selected number three (from the above options) as the only economically wise choice for a business that wants to survive. The writers define this option as *superlative customer service*. They emphasize the economic urgency of customer service as only a starting point—as table stakes—to insure business survival today. Stalk and Hout then focus upon the pragmatic strategy of satisfying the hardest to please customers:

The most attractive customers are often the most difficult to satisfy...If you can satisfy them they will be reluctant to take their business elsewhere. They become dependent, and dependency can be profitable.

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*One could argue that such motivations are plainly selfish, and not service in its purest form. But The Urantia Book declares the service motive must augment the profit motive not supplant it.*

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One could argue that such motivations are plainly selfish, and not service in its purest form. But *The Urantia Book* declares the service motive must *augment* the profit motive *not* supplant it. *The Urantia Book* also cautions against a precipitous abandonment of profit-motivated economics:

*The profit motive of economic activities is altogether base and wholly unworthy of an advanced order of society; nevertheless, it is an indispensable factor throughout the earlier phases of civilization. Profit motivation must not be taken away from men until they have firmly possessed themselves of superior types of nonprofit motives for economic striving and social serving—the transcendent urges of superlative wisdom, intriguing brotherhood, and excellency of spiritual attainment. (p. 805)*

The bankruptcy and disintegration of Communism took us by surprise. In a less sensational way, the long honored gods of power and profit are being modulated to secondary status

by wise business leaders. Some of the most profitable organizations today are afire with an almost fanatic dedication to superb customer service.

### The Flattening of the Pyramid

The trend to provide customers with faster and more satisfying service has forced organizational changes. Many businesses and organizations are “flattening out” their structures. No longer is the ponderous, classic management pyramid of power sacred; it responds too slowly to fill the needs of customers. In more enlightened companies, employees are exercising much more authority and power. Decisions to satisfy a customer problem are made on the spot, rather than waiting for an authorization from some manager who may not be available at the critical moment of customer need.

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*I must say, from a lay perspective, that the organizational structures of most organized religions lag behind progressive businesses.*

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New management structures require additional skills from managers. Possessing less actual power, their new role is to *empower* their subordinates. The old male archetype of tough, ruthless, infallible strength is obsolete. Managers are expected to be up-beat team leaders and coaches. They are still responsible to set goals for the team, but team leaders must also *empower, support, serve, and inspire* team players.

Organizations are now scrambling to train managers in new empowerment skills. A few of the techniques being learned are: *Active Listening, Win/Win Problem Resolution, Motivation through Empowerment Techniques, Team Building, Team Playing*, and many other hard to master interpersonal skills.

The image of authority figures is changing. Advanced public service organizations are training employees to regard the people they serve as valued *customers*. Police officers are cautioned to no longer see themselves in terms of: “I came, I saw, I conquered,” but rather, “I came, I analyzed, *I served the customer.*”

Progressive clergy have introduced concepts like *Servant Leadership*<sup>2</sup> and talk less of *feeding* the flock than *serving* the flock. I must say, from a lay perspective, that the organizational structures of most organized religions lag behind progressive businesses. Most are still patriarchal and authoritarian. But some churches are moving toward important change. Presbyterians are modifying their sixteenth century management structure—a model that has been copied by many organizations. It is being changed, at last, to a more participative, representative, and team-oriented pattern. *People* are openly acknowledged by many organizations as their *most important resources*.



## People are the Most Important Asset

In *The Urantia Book* the process of empowerment is often depicted as a requisite in the ministry of Jesus. From page 1765 (Jesus is speaking):

It is the purpose of this gospel to restore self-respect to those who have lost it and to restrain it in those who have it.... Forget not that I will stop at nothing to restore self-respect to those who have lost it, and who really desire to regain it.

The concept of empowerment through self-esteem enhancement is being adopted and urgently taught by leaders who are influential and respected in the business world. Note this comment from the pages of *Horizontal Management*<sup>3</sup>:

There is only one thing that counts in business—building the self-respect of your employees. Nothing else matters, because what they feel about themselves is what they give to their customers.<sup>4</sup>

There is a change in the ruthless old attitude toward employees as commodities—to use and put back into the market when an organization is through with them. People won't accept that anymore. *Respect for employees as the organization's most valuable assets is the requisite step for modern management success.*

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*There is a change in the ruthless old attitude toward employees as commodities.... Respect for employees as the organization's most valuable assets is the requisite step for modern management success.*

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Fear is no longer a reliable method to motivate human beings. Enlightened leaders know: Associates are best inspired by the *vision* and *values* of the organization. People can no longer be *pushed*. They must be allured and pulled along by the power of high-minded values—reality-values such as *truth, beauty, and goodness*.

## Values: a New Business Discovery

The "V" word is now a common topic in business; "values" are openly discussed, perhaps not with precise philosophical understanding or lofty motives, but certainly with impressive concern.

A feature article in *Newsweek* (June 8, 1992) expressed this growing recognition and respect for high values. The article was flawed by poor graphics, and had a misleading title: "Whose Values? Whose Justice? Whose Morality? Whose Community? Whose Family?" Yet, in spite of the distracting editorial treatment, the writer (Joe Klein), got a healthy message through and concluded with this uplifting statement:

The big ideas about values are the oldest and the simplest. 'A few weeks ago my wife got a flyer from a book club that promised: NO RISK, NO COMMITMENTS,' says New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley. 'Not a Spring, 1993

bad deal, but you can miss a lot in life by not taking risks or making commitments. There is the idea that the only way to achieve real happiness is in the service of others.' Now there's a thought; an old, simple, ever elusive goal, a principle all the great religions have in common. Perhaps it isn't a coincidence.

It is time for business consultants to dust off and study the "old-fashioned" philosophical values honored by Plato and Aristotle: *Truth, Beauty, and Goodness*, and to become acquainted with six great ideas: *Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Liberty, Equality, and Justice* emphasized by Mortimer Adler. In psychology, the brilliant (and neglected) works of Abraham Maslow also deserve careful reconsideration. Over three decades ago Maslow wrote:

Throughout history, learned men have set out before mankind the rewards of virtue, the beauties of goodness, the intrinsic desirability of psychological health and self-fulfillment. It's all as plain as A,B,C, yet most people perversely refuse to step into the happiness and self-respect that is offered them.<sup>5</sup>

Maslow's subsequent work with self-actualizing people shed new light on values. He demonstrated that Freud's dismal theories about values as the reins that hold people under control were valid only when applied to immature individuals. Maslow showed that in psychologically healthy people, values reappear in grander form and become the *horses* that pull people along toward their higher destinies.

But, of course, the ultimate source of the study of values is in the religious life of Jesus and *how he lived it*. This fact is obvious to a growing number of Christians, but not to many psychologists and philosophers. However, it is becoming more and more difficult for science and philosophy to ignore a leader who so inspired a handful of men and women that they left their obscure Roman province and went forth to turn the world upside down.

## A New Era for Business

The signs are clear: the planet is emerging from the grips of an age of materialism and fear. *The Urantia Book* declares that we are quivering on the brink of a new era. I believe this to be not only true, but an urgent call to all of us who want to make a difference. We should be alert for opportunities to act. *The transformation taking place in business should be acknowledged and nurtured.* The crippling cynicism of much of our leadership in the seventies is being replaced by uplifting ideals, and young leaders are buying into them.

These young leaders may see the process of service as simply a means to profit and power. They may sometimes do the right things for the wrong reasons, but the real fruits of service-driven motivation will prove to be worth many times the great effort they require. Then fewer and fewer "code-



words" such as *values, community, and family* will raise eyebrows in the inner sanctums of business chambers.

In my job as a management consultant, I have watched a very healthy trend in the last decade. I am now able to talk openly to even the toughest business executives about service and higher values. *My hope is to one day help lift Jesus up high, not just to Christian business people, but to all business people.*

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*In my job as a management consultant, I have watched a very healthy trend in the last decade. I am now able to talk openly to even the toughest business executives about service and higher values.*

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Many practical individuals, some of them wise Christian leaders, insist that such a time is far distant. Perhaps it is. For now we live in a society where people talk openly at cocktail parties about the dynamic magnetism of Hitler, and executives proudly quote from a book on the leadership secrets of Attila the Hun. And it is true that the ultimate code word, *Jesus*, is still not yet safe to use without discretion.

But surely one day a great business leader will ask the *ultimate question*. His or her words will clearly emanate across a polished board room table. The sophisticated pros and the young MBAs sitting around the table will not register surprise, but will seriously consider the question—because the question asked by this great leader will reflect what is recognized as the most profound business principle available: *"What would Jesus do?"*

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<sup>1</sup>*Total Customer Service: The Ultimate Weapon*, William H. Davidow & Bro Uttal, Harper & Row, 1989

<sup>2</sup>*Servant Leadership*, Robert K. Greenleaf, Paulist Press, New York, 1977

<sup>3</sup>*Horizontal Management*, D. Keith Denton, Lexington Books, 1991

<sup>4</sup>Mary Anne Rasmussen, President of World Wide Quality Assurance for American Express Travel Related Services.

<sup>5</sup>*New Knowledge of Human Values*, Abraham Maslow, Harper & Row, New York, 1959

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## *Significant Books*

### **The Mind of God**

#### **The Scientific Basis for a Rational World**

by Paul Davies

Simon & Schuster, 1992, pp. 232

Paul Davies is Professor of Mathematical Physics at the University of Adelaide in Australia. He is one of the world's leading theoreticians, a man of creative brilliance, who brings together the fields of physics and philosophy. Davies examines the philosophic grounds for reason and belief. He sees time and eternity as the fundamental paradox of existence: "No attempt to explain the world, either scientifically or theologically, can be considered successful until it accounts for the paradoxical conjunction of the temporal and the atemporal, of being and becoming." (p. 38)

The book examines what is known about the origin of the universe, the rational character of the laws of nature, and the remarkable correspondence of mathematics and reality. In computer games designed to simulate a Life universe, it was discovered that Life patterns cannot be predicted in advance. "It appears as if there is a kind of randomness or uncertainty (dare I call it 'free will'?) built into the Life universe, as indeed there is in the real universe, *due to the restrictions of logic itself*, as soon as systems become complex enough to engage in self-reference." (p.115)

Davies asks, "Why is the world the way it is?" The physical universe is both contingent and intelligent—it could have been otherwise. How do we explain the specific nature of things? "It seems to me," he observes, "that, if one perseveres with the principle of sufficient reason and demands a rational explanation for nature, then we have no choice but to seek that explanation in something beyond or outside the physical world—in something metaphysical—because, as we have seen, a contingent physical universe cannot contain within itself an explanation for itself." (p. 171)

There are many kinds of philosophical answers to this question. Davies examines solutions advanced by theoretical scientists, philosophers, and theologians. His conclusion is that the most reasonable hypothesis is that we live in a "Designer Universe"—a universe that was planned and executed with intelligence.

The last chapter of *The Mind of God* begins, "The essence of this book has been to trace the logic of scientific rationality back as far as it will go in the search for ultimate answers to the mystery of existence." (p. 223) Davies observes that the final answer to this mystery is beyond the limits of science and logic. He suggests that mystical intuition—a first hand experience of Reality—is the only kind of knowledge which can bring this kind of meaningful understanding.

-Meredith Sprunger



## Culture and Values

### Reflections on the Soul

Byron Belitsos

The term "soul" in the Christian faith is a somewhat ambiguous concept but usually refers to the vital principle in human nature which has immortal potential. The authors of *The Urantia Book* define the soul as a "morontia" substance, a state existing between the material and the spiritual. The soul evolves as a joint creation of the Thought Adjuster (indwelling spirit of God) and the human will, and is immortal. The following propositions are taken from various sources and are presented to stimulate thinking about the soul.

"We have lost our soul." So say the prophets of each generation. The soulless condition is the condition of indifference to the natural impulses of soul. Never have so many distractions imperiled the material mind's recognition of its true calling: to consciously cooperate with the indwelling spirit in the fostering of the growth of an immortal soul. But never have so many spiritual gifts been given to help man recover and care for his soul. (Cf. Robert Moore, *The Care of the Soul*, HarperCollins, 1992)

False values in perfectly-tailored suits. Phony media personalities who secretly know the difference. Greed that does not know itself. Religious hypocrites who cannot feel. A civilization dominated by the values of commerce. Against this stands the questing soul. "How then are souls to be made? How but in the medium of a world like this?" In such a world, the impulses of soul strike the mind as odd, uncalled-for, unnecessary, and often unacceptable. But the soul persists.

"Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an intelligence and make it soul? A place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways!" (John Keats, *Letter to his brother*, April 21, 1819)

*Soul-expansion begins when we question the meaning of these strange, self-existing impulses of our souls—these troubling and surprising urges to serve an unknown God, to love those who do not love us, to understand the apparently incomprehensible, to stop the daily routine and appreciate the world's endless beauty.*

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incomprehensible, to stop the daily routine and appreciate the world's endless beauty. We navigate within this cosmic terrain of the soul by asking "questions, more questions, and hopefully profound questions." The questing soul is the *questioning* soul—a soul activated by a need to know and motivated by the desire to serve.

Meeting God half-way. The soul as the meeting point between the two wills, human and divine. A half-way home, a place to recover from the vicissitudes of material struggle, a place to refresh and purify the human will, and to turn again to the quest of knowing the Father's will. A place wherein the Creator may come to "know man and attain the experience of the creature." (U.B. p. 1218)

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Soul as *responsiveness* to leadings. As the Father reaches down, we increasingly reach up in response. Moral consciousness, decisions to know the Father's will, create the soul. "Every time man makes a reflective moral choice, he immediately experiences a new divine invasion of his soul." (U.B. p. 2095)

Soul as mystery. But how and why do moral decisions effect contact with the indwelling Adjuster, thereby giving birth to the soul? How does the soul actually grow? How and why does it come to be a "new, original, and unique universe value" (U.B. p. 1218), altogether distinct from mind and indwelling spirit? What is morontia substance? Which qualities does the soul derive from the material mind? Which is from the indwelling spirit?

"The secrets of Ascendition include the mystery of the gradual and certain building up in the material and mortal mind of a spiritual and potentially immortal counterpart of character and identity. This phenomenon constitutes one of the most perplexing mysteries of the universes...." (U.B. p. 147)

"Our distinctions are Cartesian: between outer and tangible reality and inner states of mind, or between body and a fuzzy conglomerate of mind, psyche and spirit. We have lost the third, the middle position which earlier in our tradition, and in others too, was the place of the soul: a world of imagination, passion, fantasy, reflection, that is neither physical and material on the one hand, nor spiritual or abstract on the other, yet bound to them both." (From James Hillman, *Revisioning Psychology*, HarperCollins, 1975)

We are told that the soul resides between the indwelling spirit and human mind, that it acts as a repository of "spiritual



*Reflections on the Soul, cont.*

counterparts [of our] careers, morontia transcripts of [our] true advancing selves...." These records are unceasingly produced by the Adjuster using as its working material "every concept of the mortal intellect." What then is happening in this "middle position", this "mid-mind"? The soul is online storage for morontia concept-duplicates. The Adjuster as transcriber and editor, hand-picking higher concepts of the mortal intellect, converting them to morontia substance, then downloading these exalted concept-copies to the soul's meanings and values database. Here, the "worthy treasures of the mortal mind" become an eternal resource, endlessly retrievable by the surviving personality in its ascent toward fusion. (Cf. U.B. pp.1204-5.)

"The supreme value of human life consists in growth of values, progress in meanings, and realization of the cosmic interrelatedness of both of these experiences. And such an experience is the equivalent of God-consciousness. Such a mortal, while not supernatural, is truly becoming superhuman; an immortal soul is evolving." (U.B. p. 1097)

Values are felt without mediation of mind; the perception of value is *immediate* and existential. The mind adds meaning to values felt by the soul.

And Phaedrus knew something about values. Before he had gone up into the mountains he had written a whole book on values. Quality. Quality was value. They were the same thing....Quality doesn't have to be defined. You understand it without definition. Quality is a direct experience independent of and prior to all intellectual abstractions...Of all experience, it is the least ambiguous, least mistakable there is. (*Robert M. Pirsig, Lila, an Inquiry Into Morals*, Bantam Books, 1992, pp. 67 - 76.)

The locus of value-identification is in the soul of the one who experiences value. But soul is not mind. Mind as subject grasps objects, yielding meanings. The perception of value has no object and no subject, for values are self-existing. The activity of the soul in relation to the discovery of higher values is the experience of the *Beingness* of values—a sensitivity to existential qualities of experience.

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*The notion of Quality denotes existential realities independent of any particular subject or object. Values are discovered in and by the soul, not invented and held as an object by the material mind.*

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The notion of Quality denotes existential realities independent of any particular subject or object. Values are *discovered* in and by the soul, not invented and held as an object by the material mind. "Concerning...the recognition of moral values...all that the human mind can do is discover, recognize, interpret, and *choose*." (U.B. p. 2094) Philosophy might provide an unbroken explanation of things, meanings, and values, but values when first apprehended by soul bear no explanation, are *prior* to any explanation.

If dreams are the royal road to the unconscious, intuiting-feeling is the royal road to the soul. While the soul is much more than a registry for emotion, feeling is a guide to the soul's concerns. Feelings and intuitions—the distant echoes of soul-impulses now recognized by mind—lead to questions formulated by mind, and questions posed to the soul lead to progress in meanings.

...intuitive insights are registrations within consciousness of a loving guidance that is continually assisting and supporting growth...The first step to this is becoming aware of what you are feeling. Following feelings will lead you to their source. Only through emotions can you encounter the force field of your own soul. (*Gary Zukav, The Seat of the Soul*, p. 81; Cf. Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*.)

Through a questioning, dynamic relationship to Being—the feelings and leadings of soul—material mind recognizes the values felt by soul. Through interpretation and choice, mind achieves new levels in the comprehension of the meanings of these values. Quantitative growth of the soul is impossible where the range of human feeling-intuition is ignored, repressed or trivialized. When readily available and realizable meanings of experience are lost, the soul languishes, and the range of decision-action is diminished.

Soul-development occurs in two dimensions: God-consciousness and consciousness of the Supreme—quality of value-realization, and quantity of relation to cosmic actuality. But this growth is always conditioned by decisions, by the human will to do the divine will: the decision to intuit, then to think, and then to act in the light of faith. (U.B. p. 1211)

"The common cognomen of this world...is a 'vale of tears'.... What a little, circumscribed, straightened notion! ...Call the world a 'vale of soul-making,' then you will find out the use of the world." (*John Keats, Letter to his brother, April 21, 1819.*)

"Jesus hardly regarded this world as a 'vale of tears.' He rather looked upon it as the birth sphere of the eternal and immortal spirits of Paradise ascension, the 'vale of soul-making.'" (U.B. p. 1675) As the soul evolves, we develop another aspect of mind, a secondary or "mid-mind" awareness, and our identity gradually shifts from material self-consciousness to value, soul, or spirit consciousness. We are psychologically living more and more in "the kingdom of God."

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## Worship and Society

### The Quest for Indigeneity:

#### The Missionary Challenge

Jack Rogers

Of all the columns that I have written, this has been the most difficult. With the recent national election I took seriously the national vow to become part of the solution, not the problem. Yet, when I consider the missionary outreach of the modern church, it is easy for me to criticize, but difficult to offer practical solutions.

*The Urantia Book* explains to us that there are two primary types of religion. A revealed religion is personal, borne out of experience, and is nearly impossible to define as it is a part of the experience of each individual. In contrast, evolutionary religion is traditional, institutional, has established beliefs and dogmas, and tends to crystallize over time. The missionary effort of the modern church has a 2000 year evolutionary history. In my last column, I discussed the need for change in the missionary approach of the Christian church even though the institutional church has always been slow to accept change. *The Urantia Book* states:

Evolutionary religion makes no provision for change or revision; unlike science, it does not provide for its own progressive correction. Evolved religion commands respect because its followers believe it is *The Truth*; "the faith once delivered to the saints" must, in theory, be both final and infallible. The cult resists development because real progress is certain to modify or destroy the cult itself; therefore must revision always be forced upon it. (U.B. p. 1006)

#### The Need for Change

Indeed, the realities of the information age are forcing change upon the contemporary church. As cultures become militantly self-conscious and celebrate their indigenous diversity, the willingness to change as the result of external pressures will be increasingly resisted. The church has come to the realization that indigenous cultures are resistant to imported forms of missionary activity, and outreach methods are beginning to be questioned.

For centuries the missionary effort of the Christian church has been founded on the premise that to "go out and make believers" meant an imperialistic approach to evangelism. Such dogmas have often caused serious cultural damage and have produced a world-wide impression that Christianity is not just a religion, but is part of the culture, the artistic forms, and the ideologies of Western society. This impression is so

strong that in Muslim nations such as Egypt it is illegal to convert to another faith, particularly Christianity.

A dominant idea of the Western church is that we are the "saved" in a world of the "lost." That belief has been founded upon a perception of the superiority of our materialistic lifestyle and has justified cultural tyranny, enslavement, economic domination, materialistic greed, and thousands of wars. How does this translate into the missionary activity of the church? Again, *The Urantia Book* states:

Christianity suffers under a great handicap because it has become identified in the minds of all the world as a part of the social system, the industrial life, and the moral standards of Western civilization; and thus has Christianity unwittingly seemed to sponsor a society which staggers under the guilt of tolerating science without idealism, politics without principles, wealth without work, pleasure without restraint, knowledge without character, power without conscience, and industry without morality. (p. 2086)

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*The missionary effort of the latter part of the 20th century has lost the essence of Christ's message because it has become identified with the commercial messages of Western culture, ideals, and values.*

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The missionary effort of the latter part of the 20th century has lost the essence of Christ's message because it has become identified with the commercial messages of Western culture, ideals, and values. With increasing evidence that mainline missionary activity has not led to church growth in recent years, one must ask what is the appropriate missionary activity today? Though the answer to that dilemma may be difficult to define, the reason for it is clear. As *The Urantia Book* states:

Ecclesiasticism is at once and forever incompatible with that living faith, growing spirit, and firsthand experience of the faith-comrades of Jesus in the brotherhood of man in the spiritual association of the kingdom of heaven. The praiseworthy desire to preserve traditions of past achievement often leads to the defense of outgrown systems of worship. The well-meant desire to foster ancient thought systems effectually prevents the sponsoring of new and adequate means and methods designed to satisfy the spiritual longings and the expanding and advancing minds of modern men...Christianity is seriously confronted with the doom embodied in one of its own slogans: "A house divided against itself cannot stand." The non-Christian world will hardly capitulate to a sect-divided Christendom. [p. 2084-5]

The contemporary church has tremendous competition for the hearts and souls of the modern world. The religion of the modern age is the faith of religious secularism, the philosophy of humanism, and the commercial appetites of materialism.



### *The Quest for Indigeneity, cont.*

The world appears to be accepting the Western ideals found in the politics of democracy, the economics of the marketplace, the culture of consumerism, and the music of the rhythm section. In this competition for the attention of the world, the church has found itself ignored by an indifferent and busy population. Thus, in its effort to reach out to a "world gone mad," it is truly ironic that Christianity has suffered the same fate from the non-Christian world that it has given *The Urantia Book* revelation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ—indifference. It should not surprise the church leadership that the missionary message of the church has effectively been lost in the current climate of theological stagnation.

### **Renewing our Spiritual Message**

The church has a high calling to rise above the commercial din of contemporary society and offer a new word of hope. It must renew its spiritual message and forsake the cultural baggage and social implications of its traditional missionary message:

The hope of modern Christianity is that it should cease to sponsor social systems and industrial policies of Western civilization while it humbly bows itself before the cross it so valiantly extols, there to learn anew from Jesus of Nazareth the greatest truths mortal man can ever hear—the living gospel of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. [p. 2086]

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*Many people of the church have spent their entire lives parroting an age-worn theology that today is being questioned by mainline Christian theologians. Many members of the church persist in holding antiquated beliefs that were not founded by Jesus and are culturally ruinous.*

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The missionary effort of the modern church has evolved a crystallized and stagnant view of the cross that needs serious reconsideration. Many people of the church have spent their entire lives parroting an age-worn theology that today is being questioned by mainline Christian theologians. Many members of the church persist in holding antiquated beliefs that were not founded by Jesus and are culturally ruinous. The message of Jesus does not contain a hierarchy of those who have and the have not's. The message of the cross is much larger.

The cross is that high symbol of sacred service, the devotion of one's life to the welfare and salvation of one's fellows. The cross is not the symbol of the sacrifice of the innocent Son of God in the place of guilty sinners and in order to appease the wrath of an offended God, but it does stand forever, on earth and throughout a vast universe, as a sacred symbol of the good bestowing themselves upon the evil and thereby saving them by this very devotion of

love.... When thinking men and women look upon Jesus as he offers up his life on the cross, they will hardly again permit themselves to complain at even the severest hardships of life, much less at petty harassments and their many purely fictitious grievances. [p. 2019]

The realities of modern living are an open challenge to the church to present the life and teachings of Jesus without 2000 years of evolutionary baggage:

...paganized and socialized Christianity stands in need of new contact with the uncompromised teachings of Jesus; it languishes for lack of a new vision of the Master's life on earth.... Religion does need new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings. If Christianity persists in neglecting its spiritual mission while it continues to busy itself with social and material problems, the spiritual renaissance must await the coming of these new teachers of Jesus' religion who will be exclusively devoted to the spiritual regeneration of men.... The modern age will refuse to accept a religion which is inconsistent with facts and out of harmony with its highest conceptions of truth, beauty, and goodness. The hour is striking for a rediscovery of the true and original foundations of present-day distorted and compromised Christianity—the real life and teachings of Jesus. (p. 2082-3)

It is time for the leadership of the Christian church to face the fact that the complete life story of Jesus is available for study and instruction. A detailed history of the life of Jesus accompanied with lengthy direct quotes from his teachings and sermons has been extant in published form on this planet since 1955. Included in the text is detailed information about the organization and personalities of the universe of which Christ is Sovereign, the most thorough description of eternal life extant on the planet today, a significant discussion of the history of religion, and much, much more. You would think that a serious theologian would do everything in his or her power to obtain such information. Yet, in spite of its importance, after almost 40 years most Christian theologians and ministers are either unaware of the existence of *The Urantia Book*, or they refuse to seriously examine it and are indifferent to its significance. The ultimate price for this failure will be the continued deterioration of the mainline church's vitality.

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As the missionary effort of the modern church languishes in commercialized packaging using secular forms and methods, the spiritual brotherhood of humankind falters for a lack



of visionary leadership. Ministers of the church decry the sinful nature of the world from the pulpit while their own missionary efforts stagnate from a lack of wisdom.

### The Price of Fearful Leadership

Without courageous and wise leadership, the church loses its creative vision. In my opinion, one of the greatest problems of church leadership is spiritual cowardice. Church leaders are afraid to face this enhanced revelation of the life and teachings of Jesus. They are afraid of the changes it will bring in their lives and the life of the church.

Primitive man lived a life of superstitious bondage to religious fear. Modern, civilized men dread the thought of falling under the dominance of strong religious convictions. Thinking man has always feared to be *held* by a religion. When a strong and moving religion threatens to dominate him, he invariably tries to rationalize, traditionalize, and institutionalize it, thereby hoping to gain control of it. By such procedure, even a revealed religion becomes man-made and man-dominated. Modern men and women of intelligence evade the religion of Jesus because of their fears of what it will do *to* them—and *with* them. And all such fears are well founded. The religion of Jesus does, indeed, dominate and transform its believers, demanding that men dedicate their lives to seeking for a knowledge of the will of the Father in heaven and requiring that the energies of living be consecrated to the unselfish service of the brotherhood of man. (p. 2083)

This fear of change in the leadership of the church fosters an even stronger reluctance to change in the laity. Comfortable in their traditions, Christians around the world have developed a theology of convenience. From the comfort of the padded pew and the air conditioned auditorium, to the security of time honored rituals and professional prayers, their lives are no longer challenged to face the radical demands of the religion of Jesus. It is precisely because the leadership of the church has been so unwilling to strike out on the new horizons presented in the revelatory message of *The Urantia Book* that the church is lacking in spiritual vision and is defaulting in its missionary responsibilities.

Selfish men and women simply will not pay such a price for even the greatest spiritual treasure ever offered mortal man. Only when man has become sufficiently disillusioned by the sorrowful disappointments attendant upon the foolish and deceptive pursuits of selfishness, and subsequent to the discovery of the barrenness of formalized religion, will he be disposed to turn wholeheartedly to the gospel of the kingdom, the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. (p. 2083)

The indifference, ambivalence and failure of so many contemporary church leaders to live by the teaching's of Jesus instead of the theology *about* Jesus—influenced by the writings of Paul and Old Testament records—is probably the Spring, 1993

single greatest handicap of the modern missionary effort. If the church leadership want to see their people invigorated by the message of Christ, they themselves must be willing to strike out on the uncharted seas of spiritual revelation to live anew the religion of Jesus. To do this they must be willing to rethink and possibly abandon some elements of their religion about Jesus:

The world needs more firsthand religion. Even Christianity—the best of the religions of the twentieth century—is not only a religion *about* Jesus, but it is so largely one which men experience secondhand. They take their religion wholly as handed down by their accepted religious teachers. What an awakening the world would experience if it could only see Jesus as he really lived on earth and know, firsthand, his life-giving teachings! [p. 2083]

### The Call to a New Spiritual Renaissance

*The Urantia Book* clearly calls the world back to a religion of dynamic living and personal spiritual experience. It urges humanity to learn anew from the uncompromised teachings of Jesus. In our discovery of the truth of the life of Jesus, we will discover the difference between evolutionary religious experience and a living revelation of the religion of Jesus.

Theology may fix, formulate, define, and dogmatize faith, but in the human life of Jesus faith was personal, living, original, spontaneous, and purely spiritual. This faith was not reverence for tradition nor a mere intellectual belief which he held as a sacred creed, but rather a sublime experience and a profound conviction which *securely held him*. [p. 2087]

*As the leadership of the contemporary church witnesses the graying of its membership, the ineffectiveness of its evangelistic efforts, the draining off of its populations by the theatrical high-tech methods of the "mega-church" and conservative dogmatists, along with complaints about the lack of meaningful personal religious experience by congregation members, they must face the fact that something is lacking.*

After years of preparation and training for missionary service, I was compelled to leave this service because the basic premise of the missionary enterprise of many churches is, in my opinion, seriously flawed. As the leadership of the contemporary church witnesses the graying of its membership, the ineffectiveness of its evangelistic efforts, the draining off of its populations by the theatrical high-tech methods of the "mega-church" and conservative dogmatists, along with complaints about the lack of meaningful personal religious experience by congregation members, they must face the fact that something is lacking. Hopefully, ministers and theologians will come to realize that this new revelation of the life and teachings of Jesus is the key to the revitalization of the church and its missionary message.



### *The Quest for Indigeneity, cont.*

The church must strike out for a new indigenous form of worship and spiritual expression. The great strength of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ is that it crosses all cultural barriers with an eternal and spiritual message. Through direct knowledge of the life and teachings of the Master, all the peoples of the world will be able to practice the religion of Jesus using as many forms and styles of worship as there are indigenous peoples. It is not necessary for the church of North America to transplant itself in Africa, Latin America, or the far East. It would be better for us to serve the spiritual brotherhood with a new willingness to let the religion of Jesus be shaped by indigenous cultures as they flourish and grow. In our diversity we shall find strength:

The true church—the Jesus brotherhood—is invisible, spiritual, and is characterized by *unity*, not necessarily by *uniformity*. Uniformity is the earmark of the physical world of mechanistic nature. Spiritual unity is the fruit of faith union with the living Jesus. The visible church should refuse longer to handicap the progress of the invisible spiritual brotherhood of the kingdom of God. And this brotherhood is destined to become a *living organism* in contrast to an institutionalized social organization. It may well utilize such social organizations, but it must not be supplanted by them. (p. 2085)

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*The great strength of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ is that it crosses all cultural barriers with an eternal and spiritual message. Through direct knowledge of the life and teachings of the Master, all the peoples of the world will be able to practice the religion of Jesus using as many forms and styles of worship as there are indigenous peoples.*

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The quest for the personalization and indigenization of faith will continue throughout eternity as diverse peoples serve in the kingdom of God. Many varieties and expressions of faith will emerge and society will be enriched by this diversity. As we abandon our strategies of religious imperialism, spiritual creativity will flourish; and the world will be a much safer place in which to live.

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### Urantia Book Resources

The rich mine of universe knowledge and spiritual wisdom found in the 2097 pages of *The Urantia Book* tends to overwhelm the reader with its encyclopedic profusion. A detailed table of contents helps make the book manageable, but one soon realizes that reference tools are needed to find information hidden in its pages.

Clyde Bedell (1898-1985), a widely recognized author and speaker in the field of advertising, over many years compiled an index-concordance of words, concepts, ideas, topics, and themes found in *The Urantia Book*. He published the first edition of the *Concordex* in 1971. The third edition came out in 1986 and has over 110,000 references. The *Concordex* is an indispensable research tool for finding passages and studying topics in *The Urantia Book*.

*The Urantia Book* reader also discovers information in many sections of the book which parallels Biblical material. Numerous young friends of the editor did not become interested in the Bible until they read *The Urantia Book*. The two books are mutually enhancing. Recognizing this close relationship, Dr. Duane L. Faw, Professor of Law emeritus of Pepperdine University School of Law, spent six years compiling a parallel and harmony of *The Urantia Book* and the Bible. The *Paramony* was published in 1986 and contains 25,000 cross-references revealing the similarities and differences between the facts and concepts of these two great books. Dr. Faw has been a teacher of adult Bible classes for 40 years and a certified lay speaker in the United Methodist Church for over 25 years. The *Paramony* is an essential reference tool for studying relationships between *The Urantia Book* and the Bible. A long time scholarly reader of *The Urantia Book* describes the *Paramony* as, "a well-structured volume, indispensable for those engaged in serious hermeneutics, particularly of the gospels."

If your local bookstore does not carry *The Urantia Book*, it can be ordered from The Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, IL 60614. The *Concordex* and *Paramony* can be purchased from the Good Cheer Press, P. O. Box 18764, Boulder, CO 80308.