



William Wentworth

President's Report

This is the first *Arena* since the Sydney Conference in October, so I'd like to thank the Sydney Study Group for hosting the conference. As usual, the annual conference is the highlight of our year giving us opportunities for catching up with readers from far away and re-acquainting ourselves with rarely seen friends. There were readers from the four eastern states as well as guests from Finland.

The AGM produced no real surprises electing two new board members to replace Julian McGarry as Vice-President and Rita Schaad as Treasurer, both of whose terms have expired. We are grateful for the way they served during their terms.

Trevor Swadling takes over from Rita as Treasurer, a position he has held before some years ago. Neville Twist becomes the new Vice-President, and ex officio a member of the Representative Council of Urantia Association International (UAI). This means that there are now two New Zealanders on the ANZURA Board, and I don't recall this having happened before. Ian Campbell now holds the position of New Zealand Representative.

Phillip Marriott continues as Secretary.

At the AGM we were reminded that we previously created

the staff positions of Administrator and Administrative Assistant, currently filled by Kathleen Swadling and Rita Schaad respectively. These two perform most of the work of the day to day affairs of running the association such as replying to reader enquiries, keeping track of events on the calendar, banking, collecting, collating and editing the content of *Arena*, reminding the board of its responsibilities, making sure we remain within the requirements of the constitution, and in general being those we call on when we need help with the affairs of ANZURA and UAI. They have access to records going back for decades, and maintain the data base inherited from Kathleen and Trevor's experience with the old >>

In this issue...

News

<i>President's Report</i>	1
<i>Conference Report-Sydney 2015</i>	2
<i>Announcement-2016 Conference Tasmania</i>	4
<i>NZ Corner-Ian Campbell</i>	13

Contributions

<i>The Path of Faith-William Wentworth</i>	5
<i>To Catch a Fraud-Daniel Swadling</i>	12
<i>Skype Study Group-Bernie Belarski</i>	15
<i>Value of Prison Outreach-Marion Stewart</i>	16
<i>About ANZURA followed by Membership Application Intro</i>	17
<i>Mining the Archives-Brotherhood of Man-Ann Bendall</i>	18
<i>ANZURA Facebook Group</i>	19
<i>Interesting Projects & Websites-Calling All Philosophers</i>	20
<i>The UB Endeavour</i>	21
<i>Study Groups in Australia & New Zeland</i>	22

from the President cont.

Foundation office in Sydney. They remain at the heart of the activities of ANZURA, and on your behalf I thank these two outstanding volunteers.

Finally, I noticed that the number of attendees at the conference was down a bit from previous years. The number of members in ANZURA has not been increasing. There could be all sorts of reasons for this, but we encompass

only a small number of those who read the book in Australia and New Zealand.

It may be a good time to remind those readers who receive Arena of the advantages which accrue to them from membership, the enhanced understanding of the revelation which contact with other readers provides and the extra opportunities for service which result from it.

William Wentworth ■

Faith & Courage

the Pathway to Paradise and Beyond



Australia and New Zealand Urantia Book Readers' Annual Conference | Sydney Academy of Sport & Recreation
Wakehurst Parkway, Narrabeen, NSW, Australia | 9-12 October 2015

Sydney Conference Report

This year's Australia & New Zealand Urantia Association (ANZURA) conference was held at the Sydney Academy of Sport & Recreation on the shores of the beautiful Narrabeen Lagoon on the Northern Beaches of Sydney. The members of the Sydney Study Group hosted the conference and apart from the Sydney readers, other attendees travelled from Brisbane,

Canberra, Finland, Hobart, Melbourne, Newcastle, New Zealand, NSW Central Coast, Queensland's Gold Coast and Wollongong. A special thank you goes to our visitors who travelled all the way from Finland, Irmeli Sjolie and Matti Hokka.

Given that the members of the Sydney Study Group are keen to hone their skills in presenting topics from *The Urantia Book*, the conference planning committee >>

New Contact Details for ANZURA

Please note that the Administrator for ANZURA has moved, therefore the contact details for the Central Administration office have changed. The new contact details for ANZURA now are →

ANZURA
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Warriewood, NSW 2102
Phone: 0481 508 782
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2015 ANZURA Conference Group photo

decided to allocate short presentation time slots to allow for a diversity of presentations. Not only did this approach give the presenters a unique opportunity to delve into an in depth study of their topic and to exercise their presentation abilities, it also kept the conference attendees engaged and interested and left them with much food for thought.

Following is a list of the presentation titles and their presenters:

- ▶ **The Path of Faith**—William Wentworth
- ▶ **Courageous Cosmic Thinking**—Trevor Swadling
- ▶ **Ordination of Faith & Courage**—Bernie Belarski
- ▶ **Daring to Launch—beyond where reason and wisdom can go**—Nigel Nunn
- ▶ **Meditation—the pathway to mental, physical and spiritual activity**—Neil Francey
- ▶ **To Catch a Fraud**—Daniel Swadling
- ▶ **Faith from a Personal Perspective**—Neville Twist
- ▶ **The Act is Ours, the Consequences God's**—Phillip Marriott
- ▶ **Follow the Yellow Brick Road**—Kathleen Swadling

These presentations will gradually be published as study articles in this, and the next few issues of the *Arena*.

As well as the presentations there were several other engaging events:

- ▶ A break out study session where we all read Paper 196, *The Faith of Jesus*.

- ▶ An “Open Space” session facilitated by Marion Steward where spontaneous discussion groups were created around subjects chosen by various participants.
- ▶ An inspiring Sunday morning worship session skillfully orchestrated and facilitated by Julian Martin, Christian Birch and Rita Schaad.
- ▶ A Discussion Panel, facilitated by Merindi Belarski where questions were posed to members of the panel on their personal spiritual journeys. This also stimulated much discussion in the wider group.
- ▶ A relaxing stroll around the lake shore.
- ▶ An hilariously entertaining evening with the *Courageous Capers All Star Talent Show*, MC'd and master minded by Julian Martin, whereby attendees had an opportunity to entertain the group with their very talented (or not so talented) creative performance abilities. A panel of four extremely critical judges critiqued each performance and gave out scores. And boy, were they tough 😊. Funky prizes were given for first, second and last!

Then of course we can never hold a conference without making time for ANZURA's AGM. The usual business matters were discussed and elections for Vice President and Treasurer were held. Neville Twist was elected as Vice President and Trevor Swadling as Treasurer. William Wentworth continues as President and Phillip Marriott as Secretary. Ian Campbell replaced Marion Steward as the New Zealand Representative. Julian McGarry from Hobart volunteered the crew in Tasmania to host next year's conference. Stay tuned for more details on that one. ■

~ Announcing ANZURA's 2016 Urantia Book Readers' Conference in Tasmania ~

16-19 September, 2016



View to Blackman's Bay from verandah of Maryknoll Retreat and Conference Centre



Julian McGarry



Sun Room at Maryknoll Conference Centre

Theme

Becoming Spiritually Equipped to be Teachers of the Religion of Jesus—Why, How, and When?

Venue

Maryknoll Retreat and Conference Centre

15 Home Ave

Blackmans Bay

Tasmania

Set in the delightful surrounds of Tasmanian bush and Blackman's Bay, looking out to the Tasman Sea, the Maryknoll Retreat and Conference Centre is only a 20 minute drive from Hobart airport.

Stay Tuned for more details ■



Maryknoll Retreat and Conference Centre



The Path of Faith



William Wentworth, Canberra

*Presented at the Annual Conference,
Sydney 2015*

Introduction

Faith can be looked on in many ways. Being a fundamental element of any consideration of religion, it receives the attention of the revelators in so many ways that the word is mentioned 543 times in *The Urantia Book*. You are all familiar with the importance of faith, so I am treading familiar ground.

At bottom, faith is about trust. What we trust is where we put our faith. And we often use the term faith colloquially to apply all sorts of events and experiences. We bargain in good faith, we have faith in people or groups or teams, we discharge duties with faith, we have faith in theories or arguments and so on.

I propose to put aside all these colloquial uses of the word, and focus on the principal usage of the revelators, namely faith in deity, and in particular God, the Universal Father. The underlying meaning of trust still applies. We have faith in God because we trust Him, and we trust Him because we have faith in Him. I don't know which way around to put it. But since faith is a personal experience perhaps it varies from person to person. The point

is that faith is personal—it is your faith and my faith—but in order to talk about it we have to generalise it as well. These generalisations are what the revelators consider when trying to teach us about it. But we experience faith personally—it is a personal experience—and that experience varies from person to person. We can help one another a lot by comparing our different experiences of faith, even though the experience may be “too deep for words”.

Here are a few quotes I found on the internet from children.

- “Faith is following your own path. If you never have faith you will always follow someone else’s path.”
- “Faith is courage.”
- “Faith means trusting in something you can’t see.”
- “Faith is trusting the voice within.”

These give us some idea of how faith appears to children—they were about 12 or 13 years old.

Uncertainty

The aspect of faith that I wish to emphasise today centres on the idea of uncertainty. Faith is how we cope with uncertainty. This is expressed in the *Bible*—quoted in *The Urantia Book* on page 1091.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. Hebrews 11.1

Here Paul of Tarsus is putting his point of view to

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believers among the Hebrews. Notice that as well as hope Paul is talking about uncertainty—“the evidence of things not seen”. When we see things—detect them with our physical senses—we know them. I know that often we make mistakes about how well we actually do know them, but Paul is drawing the distinction between “knowing” by seeing and accepting by faith. For those things we believe, but cannot see, we can have faith.

Faith and belief are not identical. Faith is experienced when a belief has come to determine our approach to life. But belief is necessary for faith. It is almost as if we develop trust in our belief—trust enough to live our lives by that belief. The plain matter of fact is that, as is pointed out on page 51, we always know less than we can believe.

Belief has attained the level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. A state of mind attains to faith levels only when it actually dominates the mode of living. [Paper 101:8.1, page 1114.5]

Belief of some kind is clearly a precondition of faith, but believing is not the same as really trusting that belief. It is when we have the courage to place so much trust in that belief that it motivates our entire mode of living that we experience faith.

And it is the uncertainty of our belief—the fact that we don’t “know” it by seeing or touching it—which requires courage to live by it. To be convinced of the correctness of an interesting theory, to weigh up evidence for and against a proposition which is of no real concern to us—these sorts of activities lead to beliefs which do not affect our attitudes to life. But to entertain a belief in something for which there is no material evidence requires a different kind of response. And that takes courage.

There is no material evidence for God’s reality. We cannot see or touch Him. But we believe He is real in spite of the taunts of credulity we hear from non-believers. And it is by trusting our belief, by allowing it to dominate our mode of living—by having faith—that our uncertainty is nullified. We become internally convinced without actually being demonstrably certain. We are certain within ourselves without being able to demonstrate that certainty to others. Uncertainty has not been replaced by certainty. We are still uncertain in the worldly sense, but within ourselves we have that faith which transcends uncertainty.

In knowledge alone there can never be absolute certainty, only increasing probability of approximation; but the religious soul of spiritual illumination knows, and knows now. [Paper 102:2.4, page 1120.15]

I must say I sometimes wonder how this can be. How can we be so certain of something which it requires faith to know. And faith after all is lack of certainty. I think the answer is that it is not actually our conscious mind that is certain about God. It is really our soul which is conscious of God, not our conscious mind, and our consciousness is not fully aware of the soul. The soul is above our conscious

mind, in our super-consciousness, and our conscious mind is only dimly aware of it. It is the adjuster which infuses some awareness of the soul into our consciousness, enough to give us the conviction of knowledge.

By some means we maintain faith in conjunction with uncertainty. The revelators say it so well.

Uncertainty with security is the essence of the Paradise adventure-uncertainty in time and in mind, uncertainty as to the events of the unfolding Paradise ascent; security in spirit and in eternity, security in the unqualified trust of the creature son in the divine compassion and infinite love of the Universal Father; uncertainty as an inexperienced citizen of the universe; security as an ascending son in the universe mansions of an all-powerful, all-wise, and all-loving Father. [Paper 111:7.1, page 1223.3]

And it is worth mentioning that we are potentially to be classed with the Agondonters, those who can maintain faith under conditions of extreme uncertainty because of isolation due to planetary rebellion.

Part of our ability to be certain within uncertainty is due to our desperate need for God. Because of the planetary rebellion and subsequent Adamic default we do not have the harmonious social conditions which would, on a normal world, give cultural support to faith in God. So truth seekers feel a personal urgency to find help.

And it is not so much what mind comprehends as what mind desires to comprehend that insures survival; it is not so much what mind is like as what mind is striving to be like that constitutes spirit identification. It is not so much that man is conscious of God as that man yearns for God that results in universe ascension. What you are today is not so important as what you are becoming day by day and in eternity. [Paper 111:1.5, page 1216.6]

When we are confused, floundering around for something secure, something which won’t let us down, we cry out to God. There seems nothing else to help us. But neither can we be certain of His help other than by faith.

Our journey towards eternity is by faith—uncertainty with security.

The Evolution of Faith

1. Proto-Faith

When Andon and Fonta responded to the seventh adjutant mind spirit and became humans, they received personality and the cosmic mind activated the potentials of the three cosmic intuitions.

There exists in all personality associations of the cosmic mind a quality which might be denominated the “reality response.” It is this universal cosmic endowment of will creatures which saves them from becoming helpless victims of the implied a priori assumptions of science, philosophy, and religion. [Paper 16:6.4, page 191.7]

This response reveals itself as three cosmic intuitions >>

which are innate in the cosmic mind which endows will creatures. These three realities are:

1. Causation—the domain of the physical senses.
2. Duty—the domain of philosophy and reason.
3. Worship—the domain of religious experience.

Ever since then all mortals on Urantia have shown potential response to these intuitions. And it is the third intuition which is the antecedent of faith.

It is important to understand that every normal minded person is born with the potential of faith as long as that potential is not actively discouraged or ridiculed.

There are present in all normal mortals certain innate drives toward growth and self-realization which function if they are not specifically inhibited. [Paper 100:1.6, page 1095.1]

But there is a long road before anything much like faith evolves. To begin with men are dominated by fear—fear of the unknown—and nearly everything is unknown. The worship urge, derived from the sixth adjutant, becomes the only antidote to fear. After the appearance of the six sangik races the most extraordinary measures are taken to deal with dreams, ghosts, evil spirits and other terrifying manifestations of the imagination. Magic, taboos, sacrifices were all employed to alleviate fear of the spirits and influence their supposed behaviour.

After many millennia there begins to evolve a more systematic approach, and something like religion begins to appear in attempts to organise—to develop cults and priesthoods, with whole tribes believing more or less the same things. But it is not until revelation attracts attention that much that we would categorise as faith emerges. Only slowly does the notion evolve that the universe is orderly, and not totally random in its effects on humans.

This is the era of sacrifice as the antidote to fear. The awful dread of those unknown dreams and figments thrown into conscious life by the sixth adjutant led men to propitiate spirits, demons and multitudes of gods by sacrifice—of animals and people—as gifts to win their favour, so that these fearsome entities would leave them alone.

Very few people received adjusters in this era, but some did. Andon and Fonta had received adjusters although few of their progeny did. But the Andonic race did have its great revival in the time of Onagar, and all of the sangik races similarly produced great leaders who had adjusters. But the great majority were not capable of receiving adjusters, and many of those who did received them only on loan as candidates for spirit fusion.

The revelation associated with the Planetary Prince and Dalamatia disappeared virtually without trace following the Lucifer Rebellion. Van and Amadon kept the ancient traditions alive, but to only a very small group in limited territory. They managed to establish the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve, but their subsequent default deprived the world of the cultural stability which would otherwise have resulted in the widespread adoption of genuine faith in God.

As a result, the monotheism of Dalamatia and Eden had been short-lived with most of the world in polytheistic barbarism or even more primitive notions of nature worship or spiritism.

There is some genuine faith here and there among individuals, but the general population languished without it. Monotheism had been all but forgotten.

2. Collective Faith

Up to this point it has been predominantly evolution which has governed the worshipful inclinations of the bulk of humanity. Revelation has been introduced twice, but the planetary rebellion has prevented its influence except in isolated and unusual circumstances.

It was the revelation of Machiventa Melchizedek which began the establishment of faith as we recognise it today. He revealed God as reliable and trustworthy rather than erratic and capricious as He was previously considered to be. As “the priest of El Elyon, the Most High, the one and only God” he interacted with Abraham, established a monotheistic tradition, and portrayed God as a powerful monarch who was nevertheless predictable and trustworthy.

At long last the vision of a god who was reasonable made its appearance. El Elyon was not given to capricious or arbitrary likes and dislikes. He made bargains and kept His word. You could trust Him.

As the revelators tell us, this ideal gave rise to Moses and the Hebrew prophets, with the establishment of the Jews as a people in the Middle East—though after a long period of exile in Babylon.

Melchizedek’s influence over much of the inhabited world was profound. His followers made widespread missionary drives into central and southern Asia to the extent that in the sixth century BC there was a major flowering of religious culture following the appearance of great teachers among the people of those regions. They modified Brahmanic teaching in India, established Buddhism in India and China, stimulated Lao-tse and Confucius also in China, as well as Zoroaster in Persia and gave impetus to what became Judahism.

This was an era of tribal and city state collectivised faith. Members of the various cultural groups adopted and adapted the teachings of the Brahmans, Gautama, Lao-Tse, Confucius, Moses and others into collective belief systems followed by their fellows, sometimes under political compulsion to establish civic unity. The progression from polytheism through henotheism to monotheism was undertaken especially by the Hebrews, and was attempted by others, notably Ikhnaton in Egypt and Zoroaster in Iran, though both of these failed and their peoples reverted to polytheism. But the Hebrews under Moses and the line of prophets who followed him maintained monotheism among enough of the people to prepare them for Michael’s final bestowal as Jesus.

But faith during this era was tribal and national rather than personal. Even though it was real faith which >>

dominated the lives of the people, it was faith in a national deity, not so much a personal one. They knew God as a powerful supernatural being, but He was interested in the tribe or nation rather than the individual. People followed the rules, particularly of sacrifice, because to do otherwise deprived the tribe of divine favour. But God was seen as a personal being, even though He displayed many human characteristics, and people did allow their belief in Him to dominate their behaviour.

This was real faith, stepped up by Melchizedek's revelation from the purely evolutionary faith which preceded it.

3. Institutionalised Faith

The incarnation of Michael of Nebadon as Jesus of Nazareth was the greatest revelation of God the world has ever received. His great contribution was the amplification of the conception of God as a father.

Jesus did not invent the idea of God as a father, there had been inklings of it among the more advanced descendants of the Nodites and Adamsonites, but his teaching and his person were the impetus which established fatherhood as the fundamental nature of God's relation to men.

When all is said and done, the Father idea is still the highest human concept of God. [Paper 196:3.3 page 2097.3]

This notion of the fatherhood of God, with its corollary the brotherhood of all men, resonates to this day with the followers of Jesus as the most fundamental truth about our situation. This conception of the persons of the entire cosmos as constituting a family, God's family, is so profound and yet so simple and obvious, that people of faith can readily accept it.

'The kingdom of God is within you' was probably the greatest pronouncement Jesus ever made, next to the declaration that his Father is a living and loving spirit. [Paper 195:10.4, page:2084.4] emphasis added

And to put this together with Jesus' pronouncement that God relates directly with persons from within, without the need for priests, or other intermediaries laid the foundation for the future advent of personal religion, as opposed to the institutional religions now extant.

As we know, Jesus was not able to establish his teaching immediately, and Peter and Paul re-interpreted his teaching into what became another institutional religion—Christianity—a religion about Jesus himself rather than his teaching. But the revelators insist that his message will eventually become the norm, and in the distant future the whole world—indeed all Nebadon—will worship our Universal Father and be as siblings to our fellows.

But the immediate result of his revelation was the establishment and crystallization of the institution of the Christian church. This institution preserved the notion of God as all powerful and merciful, but His fatherly aspect was preserved more as a powerful, demanding and vengeful figure rather than a loving father as we understand it. Quite possibly, fathers in those days tended to be tyrannical compared with modern fathers, so the fatherly

aspect did not imply what we mean today. Possibly also this is related to the fact that later Christians were unable to follow Jesus in accepting the equality of women.

For a number of reasons, the church became hard and tyrannical—the revelators describe it as “totalitarian”—and the old idea of sacrifice for favour re-emerged in the form of Jesus sacrifice for the world's sins. But the faith those days was intense. People died for forms of words which expressed their faith. They were tortured, burnt alive, beheaded, all for the sake of their faith which they misguidedly thought depended on mere words. Their belief really did dominate their lives—it was real faith. Jesus' releasing of the Spirit of Truth allowed adjusters to indwell all normal minded humans, so adjusters were at work in the world in unprecedented numbers. And many of those who were indwelt exhibited faith in God beyond any notion of God's real nature.

Part of the problem was the persistence of the idea of Hell which so terrorised many people that they would endure great suffering to avoid heresy, which they thought would consign them to an eternity of suffering. The revelators do not reveal exactly where this idea originated, but the notion implies universal duality—good and evil—which possibly entered Christianity from remnants of Zoroaster's philosophy. But there was always disagreement about what was heretical and what was just progressive reform. Hell waited for you if you got it wrong. And I personally remember what a relief it was for me to accept that Hell was a human invention which did not actually exist.

As so called heresies multiplied, the church divided into factions which linger on to our time as denominations. Jesus simple message of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man became submerged in complicated rationalisation and theology, based as much on preserving the influence of the church as on Jesus' teaching, and that seems to be where we find ourselves today. To a large extent Faith has been perverted.

Although the revelators do not depict all the details, they make it clear that all religions of this era, and particularly the three monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—were afflicted with theological disputes, heresies and sectarianism. These problems are the result of demanding uniformity of belief rather than unity of faith, the concomitant of the institutionalisation of faith.

For now, those of us who practise personal religion must face the fact that in everyday common usage, we do not practise religion at all. To most of today's people, if you do not practise Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism—or some one of the institutional religions—you do not practise a religion at all. Of course to us, our faith says otherwise.

The answer Jesus gave to Thomas' question covers this matter so well that it is worth drawing attention to it. It is too much to quote in full, but Paper 155:5 & 6, page 1728.3 to 1733 covers it. We find here one of those brilliantly lucid portrayals of Jesus' teaching which illuminate the whole nature of religious faith. >>

4. Personal Faith

The Urantia revelation amplifies Jesus' teaching that God relates to all personalities as a father. The human analogy for the reality of the universe is the family, with its intimate relationships, its mutual dependence, its tolerance of honest mistakes, its warm hearted encouragement for progress, its acceptance of differences—all those things which the best families aspire to. Add to this Jesus' insistence that the human personality requires no intermediaries between it and God, and the religion of personal experience is launched. No institutions, priests, prophets, saints, mystics or any other intermediary can intervene between the truth seeker and the Universal Father. The individual seeks the will of God for himself, with the help of the indwelling adjuster and all associated co-ordinate spiritual agencies. And truth is a process of each person faith-discovering God for himself.

No social system or political regime which denies the reality of God can contribute in any constructive and lasting manner to the advancement of human civilization. [Paper 195:10.7, page 2084.7]

Those of us who practise the personal religion of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man live in faith that this true religion will eventually supplant the institutional religions. For ourselves, we hope that faith will start us out on the path to Paradise and beyond. Faith makes it easy to accept.

The world is filled with hungry souls who famish in the very presence of the bread of life; men die searching for the very God who lives within them. Men seek for the treasures of the kingdom with yearning hearts and weary feet when they are all within the immediate grasp of living faith. Faith is to religion what sails are to a ship; it is an addition of power, not an added burden of life. There is but one struggle for those who enter the kingdom, and that is to fight the good fight of faith. The believer has only one battle, and that is against doubt—unbelief. [Paper 159:3.8, page 1766.4]

Maintaining our faith starts us on our journey.

The Journey

After receiving personality and making our first moral choice we receive our adjuster, and begin to grow our soul, and it grows in response to freewill personal choice. The soul is actually a morontia phenomenon, being a blend of material and spirit substances derived from personal mind and adjuster influence, and we are not conscious of it. At this stage we know almost nothing and are guided by the faith of a little child. The qualitative status of the soul is entirely dependent on faith, but its quantitative growth depends on action, progress through the psychic circles. The psychic circles are more than purely spiritual, they are cosmic, embracing our relation to the Supreme. But faith is required through every stage. As we respond to auto-revelation from the adjuster—and also to any epochal revelation we are fortunate to encounter—our faith grows to that of an adult. As Jesus said:

“Increasingly, must you yield the fruits of the spirit as you progress heavenward in the kingdom of God. You may enter

the kingdom as a child, but the Father requires that you grow up, by grace, to the full stature of spiritual adulthood”. [Paper 193:2.2, page 2054.3]

This may require some faith testing experiences. There are times when we blunder and the consequences can be painful. At such times we may be tempted to abandon our spiritual quest, but the revelators point out that:

Few persons live up to the faith which they really have. Unreasoned fear is a master intellectual fraud practiced upon the evolving mortal soul. [Paper 48:7.4, page 556.4]

Life on an evolutionary planet is not a bed of roses, but we learn to have faith in the ultimate benevolence of God's universe, even though we are beset by fear and confusion. At such times we can remember that:

It is not the mission of the Mystery Monitor to smooth your ruffled feelings or to minister to your injured pride; it is the preparation of your soul for the long ascending career that engages the attention and occupies the time of the Adjuster. [Paper 108:5.6, page 1192.1]

We need to be tough as well as sensitive.

The Local System Cluster

As we progress through our life here on Urantia, we may learn a bit, but progress is entirely by faith. When we are resurrected on the mansion worlds as morontia beings we go through the remedial regime to make up for what we failed to achieve in material form. It is interesting to note that the remedial therapy eradicates procrastination, insincerity, problem avoidance, unfairness and ease seeking. Anyone who thinks this will be easy doesn't know these vices as I do!

Eventually, we complete the psychic circles and begin conscious interaction with our adjuster after achieving the first psychic circle. This must be an amazing experience, to find ourselves able to communicate with, and receive advice from our adjuster, who is still separate from us while being within us. Our spiritual progress is much accelerated, but the really astonishing experience is still to come when we fuse with our adjuster. This usually takes place on the fifth or sixth mansion world and is one of the high points of our entire career. And it has come about by our faith—faith in the Universal Father, faith that our adjuster is a fragment of the Father, faith that if we follow the adjuster's leading into the unknown we are doing what we are alive to do, faith that it is worthwhile doing that, faith that we will never again be separated from our Father. But even after fusion our adjuster can't teach us much. He can only impart what we are capable of receiving, and that capability must evolve with experience. This is a peculiar situation because after fusion the adjuster is a part of the “us”, so I am a bit confused myself as to what “we” really means. There is only one personality—the one we start with here which the adjuster comes to share—so the fact that the absolute aspect of “you” can't reveal itself to the finite aspect of that same “you” is a little hard to grasp. There is part of us which is composed of absolute reality—God—and there is >>

that part of us which is composed of relatively primitive morontia reality progressing by creature experience.

Faith transmutes potentials to actuals in the spiritual world, but potentials become actuals in the finite realms of the Supreme only by and through the realization of choice-experience. [Paper 110:6.16, page 1211.2]

We have to evolve enough through experience for the adjuster to increasingly reveal its knowledge to the joint “us”.

Notice that we are called “faith sons of God”. We know God by faith, not by “sight”. And because Urantia is isolated on account of the Lucifer rebellion, we are known as agondonters, meaning *...evolutionary will creatures who can believe without seeing, persevere when isolated, and triumph over insuperable difficulties even when alone.* [Paper 50:7.2, page 579.1]

The implication is that on isolated worlds, knowledge is exceptionally restricted, so faith must be even stronger than usual for progress to occur. This situation persists on the mansion worlds.

So by the time we get to Jerusem, the system capital, we have more or less eradicated our bad habits, fused with our adjusters and begun our education. Knowledge has grown, but so has faith. We will have experienced life in eight different morontia bodies, one for each mansion world and one for Jerusem itself. But we still navigate by faith.

The Constellation Cluster

After Jerusem we proceed to the Constellation cluster of worlds, of which there are 70 study worlds each with ten satellites, followed by Edentia itself, requiring 71 new morontia forms. (But now, because we are adjuster fused, we no longer need to be unconscious when we are re-keyed). Here our studies are sociologic and ethical, and we must learn to live with the univitatia as well as with one another in ever larger groups. The univitatia are the permanent citizens of Norlatiadek, but they are different from us and we have to learn to live with them in harmony. Our faith will be severely tested! But apparently this is the way to learn ethics, learning to transcend all those nagging little irritations which close contact with strangers can bring out. We are much helped by the Celestial Artisans through our 71 lives on the constellation headquarters. We know a lot more but we need a lot more faith as we are still living in uncertainty with security. We also learn about how the Most Highs conduct Norlatiadek—and I hope we get to know something of how they “rule in the kingdoms of men”, because that has always been a bit of a mystery to me.

The Melchizedek University

After our stay on Edentia, we proceed to the Salvington cluster, and enter the Melchizedek University.

Here we are being progressively spiritised. You’ll recall that our morontia bodies are composed of the interweaving of matter and spirit. Every time we progress to a new

world there is an increase in the quantity of spirit in the weave, and we have had 79 bodies before Salvington, and 491 more in passing through the Melchizedek university and arriving on Salvington. It is on Salvington, in the presence of Michael of Nebadon himself, that we become first stage spirits ready to be launched into the Orvonton circuits. And we are still navigating by faith.

Indeed, most of the personalities of the local universe are dependent on faith, because with the exception of those who have been to Paradise and had personal experience of the Universal Father, no-one can be certain enough to be able to operate with the certainty of “sight”. This is particularly significant when we consider the rebellions in Nebadon, all three of which have originated with faltering of faith on the part of Lanonandek Sons. Because Michael deliberately created his Lanonandek sons so that they could comprehend the weaknesses of planetary mortals, they exhibit the possibility of succumbing to these same weaknesses, and every now and then some of them do. The Satania rebellion resulted from Lucifer, our System Sovereign, losing his faith in the existence of the Universal Father. Lanonandeks are not indwelt by adjusters, and as they have never been beyond Nebadon, their faith in Michael’s reign can be shaken.

In Lucifer’s case, he was highly competent, but could not respect the finaliters he encountered as he administered Satania. He thought they were part of Michael’s deception that all Nebadon, and everything beyond is dependent upon the upholding of God the Father and the other Paradise Deities. He could not detect the Father, and could not believe that Michael was His son. He thought he had seen through a massive fraud which was inhibiting his ability to complete his work, and decided to challenge Michael’s authority by putting in place his own scheme of development, which as we know, did not work.

To return to our journey, by the time we are first stage spirits we have fused with our adjusters, who guard us against such loss of faith—but we are still using faith to reveal our path. The adjuster knows, but cannot reveal to the composite “us” what is known until the requisite experience makes “us” able to comprehend it.

The Minor and Major Sector Clusters and Uversa

As young spirits we take off for Ensa, our minor sector, whose capital is Uminor the Third ruled by the Recents of Days. Here we study the physical aspects of energy control and stabilisation on the seven study worlds surrounding the capital under the supervision of the Master Physical Controllers who train us in administrative knowledge. Upon completion of these studies we have become second stage spirits and proceed to the major sector headquarters, Splandon, where our training is intellectual on the seventy study worlds around the capital. And we meet the Perfections of Days not just of Splandon, but also those of the other nine major sectors of Orvonton, before advancing as third stage spirits to the 490 study worlds of Uversa, the superuniverse capital, where we undertake our spiritual preparation for Havona. On Uversa the regime of the Ancients of Days governs the entire superuniverse. >>

So in the superuniverse we have studied physical reality in the minor sector, intellectual reality in the major sectors—all ten of them—and spiritual reality in the superuniverse capital, in preparation for our Havona career. But we are still faith sons. We have learnt a lot, but we still use faith to find our way towards the Father.

Faith most willingly carries reason along as far as reason can go and then goes on with wisdom to the full philosophic limit; and then it dares to launch out upon the limitless and never-ending universe journey in the sole company of TRUTH.

[Paper 103:9.7, page 1141.5]

Faith drags reason along, and then takes up with wisdom in preparation of the endless quest for truth. Faith has taken account of science and philosophy, incorporated them into its reality, and pursues Truth with everything it has been able to encompass.

Things are hotting up!

Havona

We arrive on the seventh circuit of Havona as sons whose faith has been perfected. We are not perfect in any other way—only in purpose. Our faith has been tested and we are now immune to disappointment. But we still navigate by faith, and when we reach the sixth Havona circuit and begin the recognition of the Supreme we become fourth stage spirits. The fifth circuit from where we visit Paradise to recognise the Infinite Spirit, and the fourth circuit from where we recognise the Eternal Son, are the preliminaries to the great goal, the attempted recognition of the Universal Father on Paradise. And this coming face to face with God finally allows us to navigate by “sight”. The perfection of our faith has absorbed our faith into direct personal incontrovertible knowledge of God.

Paradise

At this point we become fifth stage spirits domiciled on Paradise, in training to be mustered into the Corps of the Finality, and upon taking the Finaliter Oath we become sixth stage spirits. We then return to the superuniverse to serve in whatever capacity is required of us. In many cases this service is at an apparently lowly level, something which was noticed by Lucifer at the time of his rebellion in Satania, and used by him as an argument that the Paradise ascension scheme was fraudulent. How wrong he was! Finaliters may serve humbly, but their faith is impregnable, and reinforced by personal incontrovertible knowledge of the Universal Father Himself.

Eventually, and partially as a result of the finaliters’ own efforts, every local universe in the Grand Universe enters the era of light and life. Notice that the finaliter oath is not to the Father, but to the Paradise Trinity, and the oath is administered by an Architect of the Master Universe—a transcendental being associated with absonite reality and the four outer space levels.

The Master Universe

Well what happens next? The Grand Universe completes its growth, God the Supreme emerges as a personal deity

and the age of the first outer space level is inaugurated. The finaliters begin the invasion of the transcendental Master Universe and encounter absonite reality. Now we discover that our knowledge of God is only partial and relative. Our task of discovering Him as an absonite reality, as superpersonal, transcends our discovery of Him as personal, and we are once again required to navigate without knowledge. So what do we do? We fall back on faith, our faith which led us to God through the finite universe, and which we now employ to get us through the absonite universe, through the four ages of the outer space levels. The traversal of each one of these space levels consumes an entire universe age, for a total of four complete universe ages—trillions upon trillions of earth years. And at the end of that journey, we find the Father as superpersonal, and we find Him by faith. So after having found God as absonite, once again we have **knowledge** of Him. Once again faith has led us to knowledge of God, this time as a superperson.

What an adventure! What a romance! A gigantic creation to be administered by the children of the Supreme, these personalized and humanized Adjusters, these Adjusterized and eternalized mortals, these mysterious combinations and eternal associations of the highest known manifestation of the essence of the First Source and Center and the lowest form of intelligent life capable of comprehending and attaining the Universal Father. [Paper 112:7.18, page 1239.7]

Epilogue

And on it goes. Will something analogous occur after the entire Master Universe is settled in light and life and God the Ultimate emerges, and the finaliters begin the penetration of the Absolute? Probably. Once again they will navigate by faith in order to deal with absolute reality, trying to discover God as absolute. But they never can come to the end of this journey, because God the Absolute cannot emerge until the entirety of the Deity Absolute has been exhausted by experience, something which is impossible since the potentials of the Deity Absolute are extended by the very experience of which it is the source.

It may be possible that the finaliters will partially attain the Deity Absolute, but even if they should, still in the eternity of eternities the problem of the Universal Absolute will continue to intrigue, mystify, baffle, and challenge the ascending and progressing finaliters, for we perceive that the unfathomability of the cosmic relationships of the Universal Absolute will tend to grow in proportions as the material universes and their spiritual administration continue to expand. [Paper 9:8.8, page 116.9]

Consequently, we see that the finaliters will be navigating by faith forever in the absolute. We began as faith sons here on Urantia, and we end up in absolute reality still dependent on faith, always learning more but always encountering more to discover— and discover by the technique of faith.

And that’s the path of faith. ■



To Catch a Fraud



Daniel Swadling, Sydney

*Presented at the Annual Conference,
Sydney 2015*

I began this presentation with a simple experiment. Without any warning I caused a very loud, totally unexpected noise that startled the audience and elicited the typical gasps, shrieks and jolting movements from everyone as you would expect. I informed the audience that I had just activated their fear responses and pointed out that they were right now as one body, behaving in unison through their fear and asked, isn't that great we're all united like this together? Isn't that what we're all seeking? some kind of togetherness that leads to brotherhood for us to live in peace and harmony and on to eternal life?

Well that way, my friends I hope to show today, is a complete fraud. Fear has a role to play in our survival, granted, but we know through *The Urantia Book* teachings that survival on its own is not enough. There must be **growth** to pass through time and into eternity. Growth is necessary on the pathway to Paradise and beyond.

*Few persons live up to the faith which they really have. Unreasoned fear is a **master intellectual fraud** practiced upon the evolving mortal soul. [from Morontia Mota No. 2 Paper 48:7.4, page 556.4] emphasis added*

Fear is a fraud. It says one thing and delivers another—to our disadvantage. While fear may assist us in avoiding an immediate and short-term threat, enabling us to survive a little longer, sustained and unreasoned fear actually impedes our longer-term growth, affecting even the growth of our soul. Thus fear threatens the eternal survival we seek. It is retarding the growth of our souls and slowing our path to God.

Survival is necessary to begin with, because you have to start somewhere, but to thrive in this life and the next there must be ongoing growth. This is the universal pattern of life, whether it is for a seedling becoming a tree; a child becoming an adult becoming a spiritual entity; primitive to current world religion on to planetary light and life, etc. So in exploring the link between faith and courage today, I wanted to explore one of the most obvious things holding us back. Fear.

Fear is pervasive; it's everywhere. From our kitchens to the streets, from schools to workplaces and governments, in the media, between nations and between persons. Fear is active within us, and it's stopping us from being better people, better partners, better leaders and world citizens. We fear flying, heights, the dark, snakes & spiders, public speaking, failure, rejection, commitment, intimacy, death. The list goes on! We play with fear in the plots of movies, novels, games and theme parks.

Fear and anxiety are real and incredibly devastating to our wellbeing; are debilitating physically, mentally, socially, economically. They cause us pain and ill health, obliterate our self-confidence, and hold us back from taking that next vital step.

Anxiety-based disorders are on the rise and becoming more widespread. They present across all communities and all demographics, they don't discriminate. It is reported that 1 in 5 of our population are affected at a clinical level. 20% of the population have some kind of fear-related disorder! This poses a huge cost burden on economic, social and personal levels—the cost of healthcare, lost productivity and opportunities, loss of progress.

It need not be so.

And of course fear is in the Church. What an irony that is, for their Lord's catchcry is 'Fear not!' The old religions have forever known the power of fear and use it to keep people united. Instilling the fear of the >>

devil, like parents scaring children of the bogey-man, has always held the congregation to maintain its morality and virtues. This works but, as we are seeing with the deterioration of the old authorities, only up to a point.

Sydney held a Study Group recently where we looked at the interesting role fear has played in our religious history. We learned that:

- Inherited from our animal ancestors, fear is obviously essential to survival. If we removed the ability to respond to real threats, **we'd be dead before we knew it.**

- **Fear gives birth to religion; it**

...drove primitive man to envision the supernatural and thus securely laid the foundations for those powerful social influences of ethics and religion which in turn preserved inviolate the mores and customs of society from generation to generation. [Paper 68:4.3, page 767.3]

- Religion evolved through progressive upgrades eventually arriving at the concept of a real God.

Evolutionary religion is born of a simple and all-powerful fear, the fear which surges through the human mind when confronted with the unknown, the inexplicable, and the incomprehensible. Religion eventually achieves the profoundly simple realization of an all-powerful love, the love which sweeps irresistibly through the human soul when awakened to the conception of the limitless affection of the Universal Father for the sons of the universe. [Paper 90:0.3, page 986.3]

- Superstitious fear is scaffolding for the God concept. Once an advanced comprehension of Deity is attained,

...evolution sets in motion those forces of thought which will inexorably obliterate the scaffolding, which has served its purpose. [Paper 90:3.10, page 990.5]

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New Zealand Corner



Ian Campbell, Auckland New Zealand

Thanks to the NZ members for electing me as your representative on the ANZURA Governing Board. Or, since I was elected unopposed, maybe I should be saying thank you for not standing against me. I am honoured to be awarded the position and, for the next two years, am determined to live up to the trust you have placed in me.

I would like to thank Marion Steward, our outgoing NZ Rep, for her four years of dedicated service in the position. Marion was obliged to relinquish the role this term because it can be held only for four years running. If this had not been the case I suspect that she would have been willing to continue and would have been elected unopposed again as in previous terms. Thanks Marion, you will be a hard act to follow.

The ANZURA annual conference held in Auckland last year had a galvanising effect on many of the Kiwi readers. Since then:

- There has been a 3-day national get-together in Taupo.
- An ANZURA-NZ local Facebook page has been started.
- Skype meetings have been trialled.
- Wellington readers have had several meetings.
- Recently the Auckland study group was hosted at Hamilton (a 90 minute drive from Auckland). This is something we are looking forward to doing more often.
- The Auckland study group has been experimenting with a software product called Trello to develop topics for study and to organise meetings.

Trello is a free Web-based product similar to Facebook, but its strength lies in assisting collaboration within teams of users. It can be accessed by any device (desktop, laptop, tablet or phone) that is connected to the Internet.

Teams (or individuals) can create one or more boards (like whiteboards) and then add a number of vertical lists to each board (usually entitled: "To Do", "Doing", "Done"). Lists then have cards (like "Sticky-Notes") added to them. Cards also have a title and represent tasks to be accomplished by the team. They would normally be added to the "To Do" list where they can be dragged up and down the list to establish priorities. Eventually cards will be dragged to the other lists as their tasks are started and then completed.

Clicking on a card expands it and allows the addition of: description, checklists, attachments, Web links, team members responsible for the task, member voting, member comments (like Facebook, but on each task), due date reminders, email notifications, and more.

So far Trello seems to be well suited to allowing all members of a study group to participate in: suggesting, developing and voting for topics to study, arranging meetings and events, and recording minutes. It's also possible that it could be useful for organising ANZURA conferences and other projects.

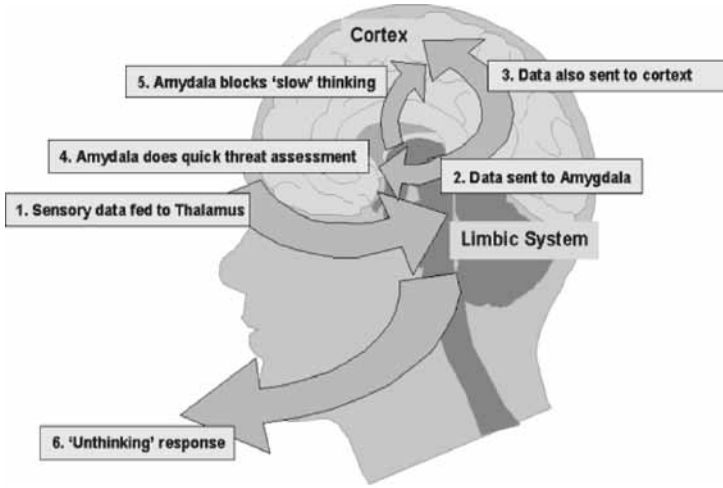
If anyone would like to see how the Auckland study group is using **Trello** please email me:

ian.campbell@xtra.co.nz ■



So, to paraphrase one of my country's famous tax collectors, it's the fear we had to have. Critics of religion are correct to observe that religions came about through fear, what they are yet to realise however is that religion is still evolving and that scaffolding is starting to come down.

Anatomy of Fear



Now, I want to have a look at what's actually going on when we experience fear (a very simplified version, a 'neuroscience 101'). Referring to this diagram of how fear works in the brain; the Limbic System—in the oldest, most primitive part of our brain:

- Threats are perceived by our senses – threat to life, or personal/social wellbeing; threat of the unknown; can be real or imagined.
- This information is sent to the Thalamus and Amygdala (centre for emotions and alarm system)
- If danger is immediate, thinking/processing time needs to be minimal, the Amygdala sends information to the Frontal Cortex but blocks lengthy processing there and instead sends fight or flight response to the body straight away. That is, it **interferes with the higher brain processing**.
- The Amygdala's functions, while it ensures survival, prevents the danger being fully thought through and sound decisions made on how to respond to the threat.

So how is this a problem for the soul?

Again:

*Unreasoned fear is a **master intellectual fraud** practiced upon the evolving mortal soul.* [from Morontia Mota No. 2 Paper 48:7.4, page 556.4] emphasis added

Firstly let's just review, what is the soul?

From Paper 111, *The Adjuster and the Soul*, there are three factors in the evolutionary creation of an immortal soul.

1. *The human mind ...*
2. *The divine spirit indwelling this human mind and all potentials inherent in such a fragment of absolute spiritual*

ity together with all associated spiritual influences and factors in human life.

3. *The relationship between material mind and divine spirit, which connotes a value and carries a meaning not found in either of the contributing factors to such an association. The reality of this unique relationship is neither material nor spiritual but morontial. It is the soul.* [Paper 111:2.4, page 1218.3-5]

If every time we are faced with threats, frightened by a challenge, terrorized by the new and unknown, if we allow our higher thinking to be bypassed and allow an unthinking response, we are removing the interaction between our mind and spirit **when we need it the most**. For it is in those moments when we are pushed to our limits and tested that we improve and grow. We know this is the case for our physical bodies and minds, we have learned from these teachings it is also the case for our spiritual selves.

Here we see the true fraudulent nature of fear. Fear has no place in bringing us closer to God, rather the opposite! **Fear wrecks the mind-spirit relationship**, poisoning the growth of our soul and thereby keeping us further away from God.

The angels, the book tells us, are not that much different from us.

Divested of material bodies and given spirit forms, you would be very near the angels in many attributes of personality. They share most of your emotions and experience some additional ones. The only emotion actuating you which is somewhat difficult for them to comprehend is the legacy of animal fear that bulks so large in the mental life of the average inhabitant of Urantia. The angels really find it hard to understand why you will so persistently allow your higher intellectual powers, even your religious faith, to be so dominated by fear, so thoroughly demoralized by the thoughtless panic of dread and anxiety. [Paper113:2.5, page 1243.2]

Prevention—catching the fear

Fear management is mind management. Our phobias can be treated.

There is much science that shows we can reduce our fear and cope with phobias. We have developed treatments that work: therapies that recondition our thinking processes, and drugs that can treat any underlying physiological factors. We know that we can't live without fear. It's our fundamental alarm system. But we have also learned that we don't have to suppress it, rather we can just control it, manage it.

The aim of fear management is don't try to eliminate the fear, rather change the way you experience it and respond to it. For example, learning through exposure: by exposing yourself to a fear safely, the brain will adapt to it and learn not to be afraid of it. This is known as 'habituation' or 'conditioning'. Fear can be managed in such a way before it becomes an anxiety disorder. We know that if we can slow down and choose our responses to fear, this re- >>

sults in being less reactive to the Amygdala, thus our sense of fear is reduced. If we have the time to make a decision, this allows us to take more into account.

Training the brain is like training muscles, requires ‘working out.’ Training means exposure, habituation, familiarity, experience, preparation, meditation is a proven approach, to gain confidence and assurance that **you will be ok despite the threat: the brain will override fear impulses and despite feeling fearful you will be able to choose courageous action anyway.**

The point is: change is possible. We can change fears into respect.

“It’s not what happens in our life that causes stress, rather our reactions to it”—we can’t change what happens to us; we can change how we react.

Now, if we can do all this on physical and cognitive levels, there’s no reason to say we can’t do this on a spiritual level as well.

Remember The Adjusters Problem:

*Much of my difficulty was due to ... [among other things] the fountain of **faith polluted by the poisons of fear** ... [Paper 111:7.5, page 1223.7] emphasis added*

And (part of) The Adjusters Mission:

*The Thought Adjusters would like to change your feelings of fear to convictions of love and confidence; but they cannot mechanically and arbitrarily do such things; that is your task. **In executing those decisions which deliver you from the fetters of fear, you literally supply the psychic fulcrum on which the Adjuster may subsequently apply a spiritual lever of uplifting and advancing illumination.** [Paper 108:5.8, page 1192.3] emphasis added*

We all know fear, we let ourselves be victims of fear, and we know how it operates. And since you know fear, this puts you in the best position to catch the fear, arrest it, and overcome it before it destroys you. By slowing down your responses to fear you give your higher mind a chance to properly process it, releasing you from its slave-bondage grip, and allows your indwelling spirit to connect with your mind in that moment and further grow your soul.

And of course the crucial ingredient that will help us slow down our reactions to fear, is faith. Courage comes with the confidence and certainty that faith provides; a certainty which cancels all doubts and unknowns that can lead to fear in the first place. Faith provides certainty through adversity, arms you with courage to conquer fear.

Said Jesus:

“The Psalmist exhorted you to ‘serve the Lord with fear’ – I bid you enter into the exalted privileges of divine sonship by faith; he commands you to rejoice with trembling; I bid you rejoice with assurance. He says, ‘Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish when his wrath is kindled.’ But you who have lived with me well know that anger and wrath are not a part of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men.” [Paper 155:1.2, page 1725.3]

*“... It is not the purpose of true religion merely to bring peace but rather to insure progress. And there can be no peace in the heart or progress in the mind unless you fall wholeheartedly in love with truth, the ideals of eternal realities. The issues of life and death are being set before you – the sinful pleasures of time against the righteous realities of eternity. Even now you should begin to find **deliverance from the bondage of fear and doubt** as you enter upon the living of the new life of faith and hope. And when the feelings of service for your fellow men arise within your soul, do not stifle them; when the emotions of love for your neighbor well up within your heart, give expression to such urges of affection in intelligent ministry to the real needs of your fellows.” [Paper 157:2.2, page 1745.1] emphasis added*

Fear not. ■

Weekly Skype Study Group



Bernie Belarski, Wollongong

Do you have access to the Internet? Do you have difficulty attending a study group due to distance or other circumstances? Perhaps there are no other readers within a 100km radius to you. Have you considered joining a Skype study group?

Merindi and I have been hosting a weekly study group, via Skype, for over a year now and it is a truly marvellous way to study the book, and stay in touch with other readers. We are in Wollongong and we have a reader join us from Sydney, one from Newcastle and another from Canberra. Using the Skype premium service, we can connect up to 12-people at a time.

We all know the value of regular reading with other people. So much more can be gained from listening to each other insights, and sharing your experience with the book. Having our Wednesday night studies, albeit in front of the computer, brings about the same sense of fellowship and sharing that you get face to face. And the same wonderful insights are gleaned from the group study.

So if you are keen to try something like this, get in touch. We ‘meet’ (virtually) around 8pm every Wednesday evening—normally reading for about an hour and a half. Our Skype address is bernie.belarski. Or you can contact us via email—belarski@bigpond.com, or by an old fashioned phone call p—0400 929 626. All are welcome!

Or start your own if Wednesdays don’t suit.

Or join one of the International Skype study groups. You can find them by searching the Study Group Directory (<http://urantiastudygroup.org/find.php>) and click on ‘find a virtual study group’. Antoinette and Pato’s groups, hosted four times a week, are fantastic.

Why not get online and get studying! ■

The Value of Prison Outreach



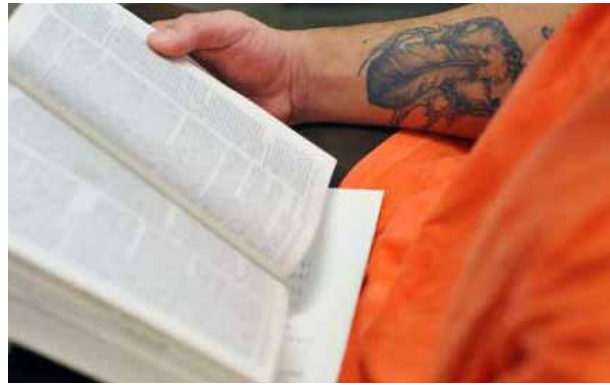
Marion Steward, Auckland New Zealand

In my role as the New Zealand Representative for ANZURA, I have corresponded with a number of inmates over the past ten years or so.

I wrote in the New Zealand Corner in the Arena of Summer 2007 about a surprise visit from a newly released reader, and since that time I have corresponded with several more. Some have settled down to a reasonable life, as far as I know, and some have gone back into prison, unfortunately. This began in 1998 when a New Zealand reader, Warren Taylor, managed to get a book into all the prison libraries in New Zealand. At that time there were only seven, although a few more have been built since then.

Earlier this year I took this contact with prison readers to another level, and initiated a visit to a *Urantia Book* reader I had been corresponding with for about two years. He had initially contacted me asking for a *Urantia Book*, and for any information or extra material on the book and its ideas. Over the past two years he had requested a number of books for fellow inmates, and had started sharing with me his responses to the book and asking questions. He had originally been in Christchurch, but in late 2014 was transferred up to Auckland, and I had conceived the idea of actually going to visit him in prison. The last time I had visited anyone in prison was many many years before, when I visited an old school friend who had ended up inside. On that occasion, I simply drove up to the prison at visiting hours, and was let in. No search, no prior application, some supervision in the visiting room, but the inmates wore their usual clothes. The situation now is quite different. I had to apply for permission to become an approved visitor, which took about a month. When asked to describe my relationship with the inmate (who I shall call John), ‘religious correspondent’ was my response. Once I had been granted approval, John then had to apply for a visitor’s pass for a specified day and time, and post this to me ahead of time. Visiting is only on Sunday mornings at this particular prison.

I was feeling quite a bit of apprehension as I drove up to the gate on the morning of my first visit and announced my purpose to the disembodied voice of the guard—I had never been to Auckland Prison before, and really didn’t know what to expect. It was infamous, in a way, for being a maximum security prison, so I was not surprised by the significant amounts of razor wire surrounding the fences. Security was tight to get in to the visiting area. I had to announce my name and who I was visiting before I could get through the first gate, and then show my visitor’s pass, and have a metal detector wand passed over me at the door. I wasn’t allowed to bring anything into the room except the visitor’s pass, so left my keys with the guard. Having read through the instructions before coming, I had left my handbag and phone locked in my car. The room was reasonably full of men in bright orange overalls, sitting in groups of three or four, with women, children, older couples,



and other obvious family members. The atmosphere was very relaxed, a little bit like the visiting room of a hospital, or maybe the lounge of a retirement home—people were chatting, and laughing and enjoying each other’s company. It was totally unlike the impressions I had got of prison visiting on TV programs, with the phones through a thick glass pane.

So on this first Sunday morning, I found a seat in the visiting room, and waited for the guards to go and get John and bring him in. I was nervous at this point too—I had, after all, never met him, and didn’t even know what he looked like. So in he came, (looking, naturally, quite different to how I had imagined!), and we sat down and started to get acquainted. I realised later that I hadn’t actually thought about what we would talk about. I suppose I had assumed we would discuss *Urantia Book* ideas, but I had not considered how it was first of all more important to establish some kind of human, more everyday connection. He reminded me of my mother in one particular way—my mother is quite housebound, and doesn’t have a lot of people to talk with every day, so every time I visit, she doesn’t stop talking for quite a while. John was a bit the same—I was a new person to talk to, and not another inmate, and we had already established a shared interest in spiritual things, so he talked a lot about his own spiritual journey, and the things he had discovered through many years of reading widely across a range of different religious/spiritual belief systems.

I visited John 3 more times, each time finding out a bit more about his past, and also sharing ideas about *The Urantia Book*, and how it had influenced and continued to influence our respective lives. He was then, unfortunately, transferred back to Christchurch, but we have continued to correspond.

I asked John to write something for the Arena about how he met *The Urantia Book*, and this was his response:

“As an inmate I am aware that prison supports a large amount of ‘Readers’. Reading and studying literature is a part of doing prison time for many inmates.

“Each prison has a library and each inmate has access to the institution’s library and education facilities so, there are two areas one could work with in order to get the knowledge and copies of *The Urantia Book*.

“Most prison libraries, if not all of them, rely on >>

donations. Their funding is truly limited so, if an organisation was to offer funding then it could possibly take off big time.

“Posters and information could be supplied to the prison library system, flyers, brochures, even competitions could be run through the prison library system.

“I have shared Urantia understanding and books with many inmates and they have snapped it up! I rarely say anything to these men other than: ‘I’ll let *The Urantia Book* speak for itself.’ I leave them with my copy for a few nights and *The Urantia Book* sells itself, so to speak.

“Inmates truly love to read, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, but most of all religious material. I believe *The Urantia Book* offers those who aren’t into religion an opportunity to study aspects of religious areas that only religions offer. I have also found when those that are religious or attached to a church study *The Urantia Book*, it can be used to enhance their own journey towards the almighty creator.

“I myself found my first copy of *The Urantia Book* in a prison library and haven’t looked back. I convinced the prison librarian to swap their copy to me for 10 of the bestsellers on the bookshelves at that time. The offer was accepted and I had a copy.

“From the moment I opened my first copy I knew I had to have it. World religions, history and science? *The Urantia Book* had it all and more, much much more. Something to think about.”

I have found that the experience of visiting a reader inside prison has changed my perspective on the role of prisons in a fundamental way. I was challenged to view every person in there as a human being with a Thought Adjuster, and of equal value to our Father, just as it states in our book. It is one thing to read these words, but it is actually quite another to share a room with ‘hardened criminals’ and still have the ‘faith and courage’ to act accordingly.

So the value of prison outreach is definitely not just in stretching out a hand to a fellow human and encouraging them in their spiritual journey, but also in being challenged to truly be about the Father’s work and put into action the principles expressed in *The Urantia Book*.

This ongoing experience has encouraged me to do more—a first step is to contact all the prison libraries, and offer to donate copies of *The Urantia Book*, and to replace any that inmates wish to keep as their own personal copy. I will explore whether they would allow brochures about the book to be displayed in their libraries too. I urge readers in Australia to do likewise. I don’t know if there is any prison outreach programme operating there, but it clearly has the potential to be of benefit to an unknown number of inmates who may be just waiting for this book to appear on their library shelves. Perhaps it will make a difference in their lives, and perhaps it won’t, but as it says in the book:

The act is ours; the consequences God’s. [Paper 48:7.12, page 556.12] ■

~ ABOUT ANZURA ~

The Australia and New Zealand Urantia Association was created in the early 1990’s by a group of students of *The Urantia Book* who held a common desire to provide services that would foster the study of *The Urantia Book* and assist in the dissemination of its teachings throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Some of ANZURA’s functions are:

- To encourage a deep understanding of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*
- To facilitate the formation of Urantia Book study groups
- To organise an annual study conference of readers of *The Urantia Book*
- To enable readers to make contact with other readers
- To publish the [Arena](#) newsletter
- To ensure that *The Urantia Book* is readily available
- To undertake library placement and other gift book programs
- To undertake any other activities that assist the spread of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

ANZURA functions under a constitution providing for democratic procedures and participation of members. It is affiliated (as a National Association) with Urantia Association International which consists of readers from many nations and cultures who want to assist the dissemination of *The Urantia Book* and its teachings throughout the world.

Members of ANZURA prefer to concentrate on the steady person-to-person approach to dissemination, rather than dramatic publicity. It is recognised that social improvement depends on the prior improvement of those who comprise society, and that while such improvement will be slow, it will rest on a strong foundation.

ANZURA welcomes any and all readers of *The Urantia Book* who may be interested in joining us in our attempts to uplift our world by applying, to our own lives, the supernal teachings of this fifth epochal revelation.

ANZURA’s Programs

Annual Conferences

ANZURA organises an annual conference of readers which is held in a different location each year. Here readers can exchange views and ideas, deepen their understanding of the book and develop warm friendships as they discuss and fraternise over meals and in informal discussions.

National Study Days

Every year ANZURA arranges a day when a particular paper is studied on the same day by all those study groups around the world who choose to >>

participate. Any reader who wants to take part can do so by contacting their nearest host, whose contact details are published in advance. It is a moving experience to study a paper in the knowledge that so many other groups, all over the world, are studying the same paper at the same time. The *Arena* newsletter publishes reports from groups willing to share their deliberations with the wider readership.

Arena Newsletter

Published three times a year, the [Arena](#) keeps readers informed about events and activities pertaining to readers of *The Urantia Book*. It also publishes articles derived from the insights and observations of readers which may be of interest to fellow readers.

Reader Services and Referral Services

ANZURA provides a service to readers through email, mail and telephone, answering reader enquiries, providing information on study groups and news and events, and assisting readers to locate other readers and study groups. (No contact details are ever revealed without the permission of the contactee.)

Book Expos and Gift Book Program

ANZURA sponsors a gift book programs to donate books to libraries and other relevant learning centres in Australia and New Zealand. It also encourages readers to organise Urantia Book stalls at local book expos, fairs or market places to expose the book to the public and to answer questions from anyone who shows an interest.

For more information on our activities and programs, or on becoming a member of ANZURA [click here](#) to visit our website, or call us on 0481-508-782, or email: anzura@urantia-anzura.org ■



Urantia information booth

~ MINING THE ARCHIVES ~

From the Six-0-Six Newsletter March/April 1989

Ann Bendall, Nambour QLD

Brotherhood of Man

We are advised in *The Urantia Book* that there are sources of energy still undiscovered by us and one of these, I believe, is the energy force of love. The power of potent prayer, generated in true altruistic desire for the progress of our planet toward 'Light and Life', has the capacity to generate a power field far beyond our material mind-thought influential sphere.

Love is the force to which the universe responds. Science is starting to recognise the potency of the 'collective consciousness', and the Brotherhood of Man will come into being based on the same principles.

The Urantia Book says:

You cannot truly love your fellows by a mere act of the will. Love is only born of thoroughgoing understanding of your neighbour's motives and sentiments. It is not so important to love all men today as it is that each day you learn to love one more human being. If each day or each week you achieve an understanding of one more of your fellows, and if this is the limit of your ability, then you are certainly socializing and truly spiritualizing your personality. Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious. If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man.

[Paper 100:4.6, page 1098.3]

Wow! Not the beginning of the brotherhood, but the actual realization.

There are lots of people on this planet who can declare ignorance. We readers are denied this excuse. Numerous are the Christians who sit down and pour over their Bible, clasp hands together, and kneel in prayerful stance, seeking guidance from our Father as to what to do, how to 'be perfect as our heavenly Father is'. We Urantia Book readers have had all the guesswork removed. We are the spoilt children. The book placed in our laps clearly and simplistically enunciates what we have got to do, with no opportunity to plead ignorance.

The Brotherhood of Man is a possibility now, >>

in our lifetime, if we can devote all our efforts into living with intelligence and wisdom. We must take our thoughts and emotions to task, and ensure that they become such as would please our Father. Look at our thoughts—they are so petty, so judgemental. Instead of thinking what our loved ones should do, learn to love them as they really are. Their life path is different, the hurdles, the mountains, to you may be mole hills, but they are not yours.

Every person walking this planet is our brother and sister. The fact that they may not recognise this may have the effect of making interaction inadvisable, or impossible. But what about a great big prayer that our Paradise Father's will waxes daily in their lives, as you go whistling off, smelling the roses.

So many people we meet have great difficulty communicating their innermost feelings as a consequence of which we cannot really understand them. The emotional pool within them lags very much behind their intellect, and inside is a frightened child, very confused about life, love, and you. Pray that someone will come along more suitable to guide them, should they reject you.

By learning to understand yourself – the stupid petty fears, the restrictions you place on your own growth, the false attitudes towards others, and expectations of them which naturally lead to disappointment: this self-understanding will give you invaluable insight into your close-minded brother's state of being.

I verily believe the emotion—love—has an aura around it which registers on the senses of all with whom you contact, either by thought or physical meeting. The mind of the person may put up a barrier against contact, but deep within a little seed of love is sown within that person.

Back to the excerpt quoted—'*...the sentimental emotional stream of humanity...*'. Is this what scientists are calling the 'collective consciousness'—which, they are starting to discover, is choked up with guilt and fear born of erroneous beliefs accumulated over centuries? Beliefs which help the growth of society but at the expense of the individual to the stage that, in the twentieth century, we feel guilt ridden because, try as we might to be and think and feel like other people, or as they want us to, our Thought Adjuster won't let us, because it is not reality.

There is a sentimental emotion-stream of humanity—the power of love—that's far greater than any other emotion. Let's start generating our own little

~ ANZURA FACEBOOK ~



Facebook allows us to share with others what you desire to share, ask public opinion, ask questions etc. You can share your pictures, videos and what you have been up to with your facebook friends. You can control how much information you want to share with whom and similarly, other people share their information with you.

ANZURA facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/415732735156958/> is a new and effective way of collaborating in discussions and this one is specific to readers in our region, one of hundreds of Urantia-based facebook groups already in place... **ANZURA DOES NOT NECESSARILY SUPPORT THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED ON FACEBOOK.** ■

love dynamo with our Father's blessing, that all our brothers and sisters will open their minds to ever growing truth, beauty and goodness.

Man's mind has made a mess of this planet—that same mind can rectify the mistakes made. We are caretakers of Michael's planet and, in the twentieth century we have converted it to a rubbish tip. We have denuded and polluted oceans and forests etc. etc.

As *Urantia Book* readers we must not decry the current mess, but look to tomorrow, and the results of our prayers of faith, and love, and belief in the efficacy of same—governments will change, scientists will make discoveries.

We live in very exciting times. ■

~ INTERESTING PROJECTS AND WEBSITES ~

Calling All Philosophers

Discussion topic on *Urantia Association International Forum*

<http://urantia-association.org/forums/topic/calling-all-philosophers/>

Many interesting topics are discussed which are open to the general public to observe and engage in. Rick Warren initiated this one by asking; **How can philosophers interest a world that doesn't especially like the word philosophy?**

January 13, 2016 **Bonita wrote:**
at 9:07 pm



MidiChlorian
Participant

Excellent question. I think it starts with leadership and education. But we won't have adequate leadership without an excellent education. The theme of education today stresses inclusion, equality, diversity, avoidance of competition and the denial of failure. In other words, mediocrity. How can minds be open and thinking deeply if they are half-asleep, indifferent and uninspired? What good is a mind if it cannot accept the reality of God, a person who has been put to death by modern educators?

I agree that Rick poses "excellent question[s]" and your assessment of "leadership and education." However, would it not indicate that in *The Urantia Book* "education" has been replaced by "experience" but, then what type of experience—life-experience—sometimes know as the school of hard knocks? Although, much of my education/experience has taken on a more hands on approach than actual schoolroom studies, and much of that has been supplemented by reading the various historic philosophic works as expressed sometimes by others. My primary study has been of how people think, as compared to how I know of my own working of mind. I agree with the "ideology" aspect as presented, although it would seem that "ideology" can be changed, over time, through and with the understanding of "wisdom" as it applies to "self", "knowledge" and how one defines or sees universal "reality." My philosophy has been indicated in the following, which I have presented in the past, which I attribute more to a muse interaction with: **The Reality of knowing what Wisdom is, is in the Experiencing of the Philosophy of using Knowledge.** Where "knowledge" does not come from education as was presented in schooling, where sometimes there is only a little truth presented therein.

Bonita wrote:

People of all ages need to wake up and realize they are free from the suffocating stranglehold of ideology. **How to wake them up is another issue.** I don't think pushing a book in their face will do it though. I think they just have to grow tired of the low oxygen levels and finally open the windows of their minds. It seems to be governed by some sort of evolution. ■

ANZURA Conference—Tasmania 2016



Maryknoll Retreat & Conference Centre

15 Home Ave
Blackmans Bay
Tasmania

(20 minute drive from Hobart airport)



THE "UB ENDEAVOUR"

The *UB Endeavour* is a fundraising initiative for the purpose of raising funds for ANZURA. We ask if you would consider making a contribution to help us spread *The Urantia Book* and its teachings throughout Australia and New Zealand.

ANZURA has adopted much of the work of the former Australian office of Urantia Foundation which closed in 2012. It holds a small inventory of Urantia Books and other Urantia associated material such as study aids and secondary works that are available to readers for dissemination projects. As ANZURA's main objective is to *foster the in-depth study of The Urantia Book and to disseminate its teachings* there is continually work to be done in an effort to fulfill this mission.

ANZURA provides a reader referral service that helps readers find other readers and study groups in their towns or regions. Volunteer staff respond to enquiries about *The Urantia Book* and associated reader activities that come to us via the internet and telephone. We maintain a website that services readers and curious truth seekers alike with information, study aids, secondary works, and the entire text of *The Urantia Book* online with an efficient search engine. Each year ANZURA sponsors and organises two major study events: the National Study Day and the annual Urantia Book Readers' Conference. We sponsor a gift book program where books are donated to libraries and relevant learning centres as well as study groups and individuals who wish to assist in this seeding program. A four-part introduc-

tory DVD is being developed as a study aid which will be a useful tool to use when introducing people to *The Urantia Book*. And of course, none of this can happen without an administration centre that requires basic office equipment such as computers, printers, a telephone line and stationary.

All of the above require funds. Would you please consider helping us by making a contribution? For the average income earner we recommend regular small donations such as a dollar a day (or \$30 per month) automatically debited from bank accounts.

If you decide to assist us with the promotion and dissemination of *The Urantia Book* by contributing to the *UB Endeavour*, please either fill out the tear-off contribution form below and return it with your contribution to:

ANZURA
PO Box 1581
Warriewood, NSW 2102

Or alternatively you may direct debit into ANZURA's bank account:

Account Name: ANZURA
 BSB: 082-183
 Account Number: 67 899 2437

Please consider a perpetual monthly or quarterly donation. For enquiries phone 0481 508 782 or email: anzura@urantia-anzura.org ■



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The Australia and New Zealand Urantia Association (ANZURA) is a National Association of the greater Urantia Association International and is designed to serve readers of The Urantia Book throughout Australian & New Zealand.

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- [ANZURA Programs](#)
- [ANZURA Upcoming Events](#)
- [The Arena Newsletter](#)
- [ANZURA Study Group Directory](#)
- [ANZURA Conference Presentations](#)
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Summer Thought Gem

Though you cannot find God by searching, if you will submit to the leading of the indwelling spirit, you will be unerringly guided, step by step, life by life, through universe upon universe, and age by age, until you finally stand in the presence of the Paradise personality of the Universal Father.

[39:04]

January 12

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*The Arena is a quarterly publication
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and understanding among readers of*

~ The Urantia Book ~

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