

Teamwork—Where do We See Ourselves as a Group of Pioneer Religionists for the Fifth Epoch?

KATHLEEN SWADLING
Australia

...we feel moved to improve ourselves and the world at large by learning more about these teachings, and to explore ways of spreading these teachings to our fellow human beings...

WHEN I READ *THE URANTIA BOOK* I FIND that many of the concepts seem to have been designed to act as a springboard. The concepts presented are merely ideas—they don't become real or meaningful and they don't really have true value unless they're pondered, embraced, and put into action by the reader/believer. If there is no action by the reader, if no important decisions are made internally about the truths gleaned, then the words are just words—dead, lifeless letters appearing on a piece of paper; the ideas stop at some intellectual level of indecision—inertia.

How do we see ourselves as a group of pioneer religionists who follow the teachings of *The Urantia Book*? Many of us have come to this point in time because of our love and interest in the book and because we've been mightily moved by the truths gleaned in it. Our inner lives have been so touched by the spiritual realities felt that we feel moved to improve ourselves and the world at large by learning more about these teachings, and to explore ways of spreading these teachings to our fellow human beings around the entire globe. How many of us have felt the call to service by this passage:

The religious challenge of this age is to those farseeing and forward-looking men and women of spiritual insight who will dare to construct a new and appealing philosophy of living out of the enlarged and exquisitely integrated modern concepts of cosmic truth, universe beauty, and divine goodness. Such a new and righteous



Teamwork tree illustration

vision of morality will attract all that is good in the mind of man and challenge that which is best in the human soul. [Paper 2:7, page 43:3]

So many inspiring and challenging calls are in this book. The “new and appealing philosophy of living” they tell us about *is* what will take the planet into the fifth epoch and it's not going to be done for us. In the true evolutionary, experiential way portrayed to us in *The Urantia Book*, it'll be up to us free will mortal creatures to figure out how to get this done. The powers on high have given us a fabulous tool and guide in *The Urantia Book* and all the spiritual help we could ever dream ▶

Continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Teamwork—Where do We See Ourselves as a Group of Pioneer Religionists for the Fifth Epoch?**
KATHLEEN SWADLING, AUSTRALIA
- 2 **Editorial**
SUZANNE KELLY, USA
- 6 **Discussion of Group Dynamics and Leadership as it Relates to the Conference Experience**
DAVID LINTHICUM, USA
- 12 **The True Value of Study Groups**
SHELIA KEEN LUND, USA
- 14 **Our Call—a New Revelation**
PRESTON THOMAS, USA

All the articles express the opinions of their individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of UAI as an organization.

© Registered trademark of Urantia Foundation. Used pursuant to license.



Greetings fellow *UAI Journal* readers

IN THIS ISSUE OF THE *JOURNAL* we will focus on Leadership in recognition of the upcoming Leadership Symposium in Chicago 13-17 July 2011. The word Leadership itself connotes several emotional reactions in everyone. With each mention of the word leadership we question ourselves and our individual ability to lead. We question our comfort in leading, our place in a leadership role—regardless of the circumstances wherein the need to lead arises. Leadership can take on many forms, however a crisis is not necessary for a leader to appear or leadership skills to develop. But the philosophy of any leadership act is defined by 2 venues; Transactional or Transformational. Although there are multiple definitions for each I will list only one.

Transactional leadership exchanges rewards and promises for our effort. Is responsive to our immediate self interests if they can be met by getting the work done.

Transformational leadership, builds on the need for meaning and is preoccupied with purposes, values, morals and ethics, while orienting long term goals without compromising those principles.

In the outworking of a revelation, I feel Transformational leadership should be the main philosophy, only tapping into the transactional structure when the foundation has been laid and the dynamic purpose has been identified.

The idea of transformational leadership was first developed by James McGregor Burns in 1978 and later extended by Prof. Bernard Bass as well as others. Neither Burns nor Bass studied schools or an educational environment, but rather based their work on political leaders, Army officers, or business executives. Although there have been few studies of such leadership in schools or education and the definition of transformational leadership is still vague, evidence shows that there are similarities in transformational leadership whether it is in a school setting or a business environment.

One of the best descriptions of transformational leadership has been penned by Prof. Bernard Bass, a renowned exponent of the idea. He says succinctly;

“Leaders are truly transformational when they increase awareness of what is right, good, important and beautiful,

when they help to elevate followers’ needs for achievement and self-actualization, when they foster in followers high moral maturity, and when they move followers to go beyond their self-interests for the good of their group, organization or society.” The Dalai Lama is an outstanding example of transformational leadership.

Our first contributor Kathleen Swadling in her presentation on Teamwork given at the Canberra Conference, clearly recognizes the cohesive agent necessary for a successful mission and one that is synergistic to the transformational leadership philosophy. Kathleen maps the terrain and the destination when she asks “How do we see ourselves as a group of pioneer religionists who follow the teachings of *The Urantia Book*...? How many of us have felt the call to service by this passage:”

The religious challenge of this age is to those farseeing and forward-looking men and women of spiritual insight who will dare to construct a new and appealing philosophy of living out of the enlarged and exquisitely integrated modern concepts of cosmic truth, universe beauty, and divine goodness. Such a new and righteous vision of morality will attract all that is good in the mind of man and challenge that which is best in the human soul. [Paper 2:7, page 43:3]

Every time I read this quote I am stirred to participate as well as contribute something! I love a challenge.

Our second article *A Discussion of Group Dynamics*, by David Linthicum, examines the teamwork energy required for any group or philosophy to succeed. “The whole universe is exquisitely organized with provisions for leadership at every level from Paradise on down to the local universes. It is said that when two are assigned a task in the universe adventure one among them is assigned as the leader.” How exciting to know there will be opportunity after opportunity for us to hone our leadership skills throughout the eternal adventure of finding God.

Our third contributor Sheila Keene-Lund has found the value of the essential mechanism that turns the wheel of progress for the revelation in her essay *The True Value of Study Groups*. Shelia further defines our goals stating “There are no short cuts or easy paths in this journey. In the short term, progress supported in the hearts and minds of every member will be reflected in our increased capacity for love, the health and growth of our organizations, and the increasing number of people drawn to the revelation.” The leadership endeavor for each of us is a simple daily act of living this philosophy.

Lastly have you heard it? *Our Call—a New Revelation* listen closely and you just might hear what Preston Thomas heard which prompted him to ask this thought provoking question: “How are we to find

URANTIA ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL

JOURNAL TEAM

EDITOR: SUZANNE KELLY

skelly@wtmi.net

ASSOCIATE EDITORS: James Woodward,
Alain Cyr, David Graves

TRANSLATION COORDINATOR: Suzanne Kelly

skelly@wtmi.net

TRANSLATION LIAISON, FRENCH: Alain Cyr

Jean Royer, Jean Annet

alain_cyr@sympatico.ca

TRANSLATION LIAISON, SPANISH: Olga López

TRANSLATION LIAISON, FINNISH: Seppo Kanerva

PAGE LAYOUT: Verner Verass

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Verner Verass

ISB MEMBERS: UAI DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Gaétan Charland – Canada

gaetan.charland3721@videotron.ca

VICE-PRESIDENT: Merindi Belarski – Australia

merindi@hotmail.com

TREASURER: Mark Kurtz – USA

makurtz04@maplenet.net

SECRETARY: Susan Owen – USA

susanowen@earthlink.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:

EDUCATION CHAIR: Sheila Keene Lund – USA

documentit@comcast.net

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Gary Rawlings

– United Kingdom,
Garyurantia@aol.com

COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR:

Verner Verass – Australia

vern@design.com.au

CONFERENCES CHAIR: Phil Taylor – USA

philtaylor@mindspring.com

EXEC ADMINISTRATOR OF UAI: Rick Lyon – USA

ricklyon@tctc.com

STUDY GROUPS CHAIR: James Woodward – USA

ubstudygroups@urantia-uai.org

DISSEMINATION CHAIR:

Michael MacIsaac – Sweden

mmacisaac@gmail.com

TRANSLATION CHAIR: Chris Moseley – UK

chrismoseley50@yahoo.com

CHARTER & BYLAWS CHAIR: Travis Binion – USA

gthb@earthlink.net

and decide upon our own ideal and best form of service? And upon rephrasing it, transforming it to the definitive call... “What service does God call us to?”

The question when spoken aloud and sincerely asked, will invoke a response in your soul and if you truly desire to lead – or serve, the moment will present itself. As... thoughts create energy, energy creates mass and mass creates reality; you reflect the image of God’s directive.

Each of these authors is led to lead and each follows the transformational philosophy in the fine-tuning of their message. And as we enjoy their ideals, the aspiration is to “listen to the message they hold out for us, and distil their leadership wisdom to our contexts” (Robert Bass, Ph.D.) — Happy & enlightened reading.

Suzanne Kelly ■

Spreading *The Urantia Book* cont. from page 1

of—mind, Spirit of Truth, Thought Adjusters, guardian angels etc—and even Jesus himself predicted this present era when he said to his apostles:

And when the kingdom shall have come to its full fruition, be assured that the Father in heaven will not fail to visit you with an enlarged revelation of truth and an enhanced demonstration of righteousness, even as he has already bestowed upon this world him who became the prince of darkness, and then Adam, who was followed by Melchizedek, and in these days, the Son of Man. And so will my Father continue to manifest his mercy and show forth his love, even to this dark and evil world. [Paper 176:2, page 1914:4]

This corroborates what they tell us in the section titled “The Gift of Revelation” where it says:

There have been many events of religious revelation but only five of epochal significance. These were as follows: ... [Paper 92:4, page 1007:4] and they go on to list the 5 epochal revelations as:

1. *The Dalamatian teachings*, which introduces Caligastia who became the prince of darkness, as Jesus described him.
2. *The Edenic teachings*—Adam and Eve
3. *Melchizedek of Salem*
4. *Jesus of Nazareth*
5. *The Urantia Papers*. The papers, of which this is one, constitute the most recent presentation of truth to the mortals of Urantia. [Paper 92:4, page 1007–1008]

But we know from studying *The Urantia Book* that the Father’s methods are to let us figure out many of the details ourselves. So how do we get practical about meeting the challenges that call us to bring about a spiritual renaissance to the people of the world? There are so many things we can all think of doing, both as individuals and as groups, to spread the teachings, but at some stage we need to get serious about banding together as pioneers for the new revelation—to move forward with a unity of spirit and purpose and to be useful hands and feet for the revelators who went to such lengths to present us with the fifth epochal revelation via *The Urantia Book*.

About the Power of Teamwork it has been said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead). *The Urantia Book* presents us with many challenges and insights about teamwork which I feel need to be explored and understood as we ponder the work we are called to do together. We need to understand something about the hurdles that can get in our way that limit the effectiveness of our efforts to work in teams. It tells us on page 312.1:

One of the most important lessons to be learned during your mortal career is teamwork. [And they emphasise the word “teamwork”.] *The spheres of perfection are manned*

by those who have mastered this art of working with other beings. [Paper 92:4, page 312:1]

And furthermore we are told:

Of all the problems in the universe requiring an exercise of the consummate wisdom of experience and adaptability, none are more important than those arising out of the relationships and associations of intelligent beings. [Paper 28:5, page 311:5] [emphasis mine]

We know from studying *The Urantia Book* that the mastery of working with others is one of the main features of the evolutionary, finite career of we mortals. If we study the section on the Edentia Training worlds on page 493 we see that it’s going to be a long and difficult road to master teamwork, and to get dignified in our socialisation. We will inevitably have conflicts—that’s a given because of our imperfect natures—but we sometimes need conflict in order to grow. Sometimes important truths come to the surface during a conflict. We should be careful not to get too hung up on the fact that there is conflict from time to time, and we shouldn’t really worry too much about the fact that we may not deal with it very well—rather we should be continually working on how to deal with it better next time, and helping one another learn how to get better at dealing with it. **What is inexcusable though is if we allow the conflict to destroy the relationship.**

We must learn to focus on common goals while often being confronted with the challenge of disagreeing with our dear friends. Friendships are put to the acid test of realness when confronted with such challenges.

Those of us who’ve chosen to serve the revelation by working in groups or in teams must learn how to work *effectively* together with our friends. We must learn to focus on common goals while often being confronted with the challenge of disagreeing with our dear friends. Friendships are put to the acid test of realness when confronted with such challenges. *The Urantia Book* gives us many lessons in working effectively together. If we, as teams of *Urantia Book* readers wish to change the world by introducing the book and its teachings to mankind, we must ever be mindful of the power of intelligent teamwork, coupled with wise leadership. We’re told:

In civilization much, very much, depends on an enthusiastic and effective load-pulling spirit. Ten men are of little more value than one in lifting a great load unless they lift together—all at the same moment. And such teamwork—social co-operation—is dependent on leadership. [Paper 81:6, page 911:2]

The essential ingredients needed for effective teamwork is for the team members to agree on the goals, and for each team member to recognise, adopt, and cooperate with the other team members and with the team’s leaders. This often means facing the challenge of having to go along with something we may not agree with. A couple of major hindrances to successful cooperation lies in the fact that many of us possess the immature tendency to revere individualism as well as to mistrust those with leadership

qualities or those who are in leadership positions. We can abort the effectiveness of the team by falling out with one another over differences of style or opinion.

The apostles, Nathaniel and Thomas make interesting case studies in effective and ineffective teamwork. In his final admonitions and warnings to the apostles Jesus said to Nathaniel:

“Nathaniel, you have learned to live above prejudice and to practice increased tolerance since you became my apostle. But there is much more for you to learn. You have been a blessing to your fellows in that they have always been admonished by your consistent sincerity.

When I have gone, it may be that your frankness will interfere with your getting along well with your brethren, both old and new. You should learn that the expression of even a good thought must be modulated in accordance with the intellectual status and spiritual development of the hearer. Sincerity is most serviceable in the work of the kingdom when it is wedded to discretion. [Paper 181:2, page 1960:2]

...the true value of any genuinely spiritual inner life experience is the extent we effectively share our true selves with others...

“If you would learn to work with your brethren, you might accomplish more permanent things, ... [Paper 181:2, page 1961:1]

Jesus also said to Nathaniel: *“If, therefore, you serve me with a whole heart, make sure that you are devoted to the welfare of my brethren on earth with tireless affection. Admix friendship with your counsel and add love to your philosophy. Serve your fellow men even as I have served you. Be faithful to men as I have watched over you. Be less critical; expect less of some men and thereby lessen the extent of your disappointment.”* [Paper 192:2, page 2049:1]

Note how Jesus tells Nathaniel: *“If you would learn to work with your brethren, you might accomplish more permanent things...”* and how he gave him a complete set of instructions on how to accomplish greater tolerance for his fellows.

We know from our reading on page 2051:4 however that Nathaniel could not work with Peter and the others after Pentecost as he was opposed to the shift in the proclamation of the gospel from sonship with God and brotherhood with man, to the proclamation of the risen Christ. So although he was right in the fact, he missed the essential truth of persevering with his fellows to work for the greater cause. Nathaniel was even described as being the *“odd genius of the twelve.”* [Paper 139:6, page 1558:5] If he had stayed and worked with the team Jesus went to such lengths to train, perhaps his greater understanding of the gospel message would have eventually had a positive impact on the direction the Christian movement was to take. As it was, he went off alone into India and no doubt did good work, but how much more could he have accomplished if he'd only taken heed of Jesus' preferred admonition for him.

While Nathaniel had a hard time working with those who he didn't agree with, Thomas on the other hand showed more tolerance. We're told:

In the councils of the twelve Thomas was always cautious, advocating a policy of safety first, but if his conservatism was voted down or overruled, he was always the first fearlessly to move out in execution of the program decided upon. Again and again would he stand out against some project as being foolhardy and presumptuous; he would debate to the bitter end, but when Andrew would put the proposition to a vote, and after the twelve would elect to do that which he had so strenuously opposed, Thomas was the first to say, “Let's go!” He was a good loser. He did not hold grudges nor nurse wounded feelings. Time and again did he oppose letting Jesus expose himself to danger, but when the Master would decide to take such risks, always was it Thomas who rallied the apostles with his courageous words, “Come on, comrades, let's go and die with him.”

[Paper 139:8, page 1562:2]

We can learn a lot from Thomas who showed an incredible willingness to go along with the program even if he didn't fully agree with the methods chosen by his leaders and fellow team players.

So my fellow students of *The Urantia Book*, my fellow pioneer religionists for the fifth epoch—wouldn't it be wonderful if we could demonstrate the true attitudes of our souls when working with one another. If we could learn to thrive and grow from our experiences with one another and form mighty teams of men and women willing to commit themselves to the work of the Urantia revelation. May we learn to cooperate with one another in order to achieve meaningful ends. May we remain united by focusing on our common goals and settle in for the long haul which is guaranteed to be difficult but no doubt exciting and rewarding.

I'd like to summarise by saying that the true value of any genuinely spiritual inner life experience is the extent we effectively share our true selves with others, the extent we genuinely love and serve our fellows and maintain that love through the storms of time as we work and strive with one another for the greater cause. On page 1096.6 we read:

Religion is not a technique for attaining a static and blissful peace of mind; it is an impulse for organizing the soul for dynamic service. It is the enlistment of the totality of selfhood in the loyal service of loving God and serving man. [Paper 100:3, page 1096:6] [emphasis mine]

When the believer is truly mobilized by the spirit power that comes as a result of the sincere consecration to the doing of the will of God, then the fruits of the spirit will truly manifest—the soul will become organized for DYNAMIC SERVICE.

Work for Pioneer Religionists of the Fifth Epoch

Urantia Book Related Groups

Publisher—Urantia Foundation

- Makes book available
 - distribution
 - translations
 - book fairs
- Answers Reader Inquiries
- Puts readers in touch with:
 - other readers
 - fraternal groups
 - study groups
- Keeps Text Inviolable

↑ SERVICE ↓

Fraternal Groups—

Urantia Associations (UAI), Fellowship Societies

- Education—Foster Study of the Book through:
 - study groups
 - conferences
 - seminars
 - study sessions
- Brotherhood
 - foster fraternal relations
 - social & friendships
- Secondary Works
 - encourage and support readers' secondary works efforts
 - assist in their distribution
- Development of teachers & leaders
- Outreach Projects

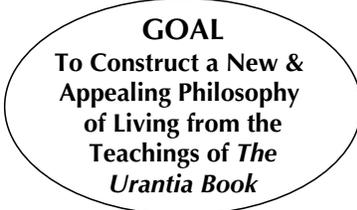
↑ SERVICE ↓

Study Groups—autonomous

- Dedicated to the study of the book
- Development of teachers & leaders

↑ SERVICE ↓

Individual Ministry



Stage 1—The material book & an entry point for new readers

SERVICE →

Stage 2—Developing an understanding of the teachings

SERVICE →

Seamless Connection

Seamless Connection

Non-Urantia Book Related Groups & Issues

Broader Community of Believers

- Christian Groups
 - Contentious issues
 - Social Service
 - Dogma & Theology
 - Traditional beliefs
- New Age groups
 - Conflicting doctrines
 - Smorgasbord of philosophies

Christianity in non-Christian Cultures

- India
- Korea

Broader Community

- Skeptics
- Anti established religions
- Professed atheists
- Agnostics
- Secular society
- Pleasure mania
- Materialism

Stage 3—The teachings at work in the world at large

Christian Cultures

- Judaic/Christian history—traditional thought
- Media exposure
- Controversial issues
- Politically correctness
- Secular society

Non-Christian Cultures

- Moslems
- Buddhists
- Hindus
- Sikhs
- Jains
- Shinto
- Confuscious
- Primitive

Social Issues

- Youth
- Family Life
- Education
- Politics
- Morality & Ethics
- Economics
- Science & Eugenics

So with that said, I'd now like us to take a look at the diagram above which I've put together showing how I see the varied approaches to achieving our goal of bringing about a spiritual renaissance to the planet with *The Urantia Book* and its teachings. We all feel moved in different ways to serve in different capacities and I firmly believe we can harness each of our individual calls to service and work in a coordinated and cooperative fashion as one vast team of reader/believers committed to a common cause. ■

Kathleen Swadling has been active within the Australian and New Zealand Association of UAI (ANZURA) for many years and has worked to grow the membership since the early 1980s. She currently serves as president of ANZURA.

Discussion of Group Dynamics and Leadership as it Relates to the Conference Experience

DAVID LINTHICUM
USA



Group dynamics illustration

WIKIPEDIA DEFINES GROUP DYNAMICS AS "...the study of groups, and also a general term for group processes. Relevant to the fields of psychology, sociology, and communication studies, a group is two or more individuals who are connected to each other by social relationships; ¹ because they interact and influence each other, groups develop a number of dynamic processes that separate them from a random collection of individuals. These

with respect to group members' concerns with task and personal relations (process) functions." ²

Phase	Task Functions	Personal Relations Functions
1	Orientation	Testing and Dependence
2	Organizing to Get Work Done	Intragroup Conflict
3	Information-flow	Group Cohesion
4	Problem-solving	Interdependence

In Gerard M. Blair's article "Groups that Work" he states that, "In simple terms, the group process leads to a spirit of cooperation, coordination and commonly understood procedures and mores." "Groups are particularly good at combining talents and providing innovative solutions to possible unfamiliar problems; in cases where there is no well established approach/procedure, the wider skill and knowledge set of the group has a distinct advantage over that of the individual." ²

Blair sees the group process as having four stages:

- **Forming**—the initial stage where the group first comes together where everyone is on their best behavior, there is seldom conflict at this stage, the groups are generally guarded and reserved.

...a group is two or more individuals who are connected to each other by social relationships; because they interact and influence each other, groups develop a number of dynamic processes that separate them from a random collection of individuals.

processes include norms, roles, relations, development, need to belong, social influence, and effects on behavior. The field of group dynamics is primarily concerned with small group behavior. Groups may be classified as aggregate, primary, secondary and category groups."

"Because people gather in groups for reasons other than task accomplishment, group process occurs in other types of groups such as personal growth groups (e.g. encounter groups, study groups, prayer groups). In such

cases, an individual with expertise in group process can be helpful in the role of facilitator.

"Various theories of group development exist. The model below combines elements of theories by Jones (1973), Tuckman (1965), and Banet (1976). In this model each phase of group development is looked at

1. Forsyth, D. R. (2006) Group Dynamics

2. The CEDA Meta-Profession Project. Group Process. Retrieved on: September 27, 2008

- **Storming**—the next stage is typically when the dynamics of the group come to bear, or as Blair comments, “...when all Hell breaks loose...”. The group members show little enthusiasm for communication as people are still unwilling to speak freely.
- **Norming**—at this stage the group begins to recognize the merits of working together for a common purpose, there develops a new spirit of cooperation and the members start to feel more comfortable, work methods develop and the group starts to function as a unified group.
- **Performing**—this last stage is where the group begins to see the benefits for working together and real accomplishments are possible. The members are feeling more comfortable and willing to have frank and open communications, an exchange of ideas. At this stage the group bonds and become supportive of each other and the decisions of the group.

Of course different groups will advance through these stages at varying rates. It is often advisable to appoint a group facilitator, someone outside the group and knowledgeable/trained in group functions/formation; this individual will assist the members’ transition through the group process steps.

However, the facilitator’s role should be short-lived. Once the group has progressed to the “Norming” stage the group is well equipped to move forward on their own; the facilitator should only rejoin the group if there is open conflict or inaction. It is also possible that a natural facilitator will emerge within the group which is the preferred outcome. The natural facilitator will often be recognized as the group leader by acclamation of the group.

Leadership is defined by Wikipedia as “the process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task.”³ “Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen.”⁴

There are several theories related to the aspects of leadership. A common theory is that leadership is an inherited trait also known as the “Trait Theory.” “Using early trait, researches conducted over a hundred studies proposing a number of characteristics that distinguished leaders from non-leaders: intelligence, dominance, adaptability, persistence, integrity, socioeconomic status, and self-confidence just to name a few.”⁵

Wikipedia also explores other theories which include the “Functional Theory,” Transactional and transformational theories,” “Neo-emergent theory,” and “Environmental leadership theory.” However, it is not the intention of this paper to discuss each theory and their respective pros and cons. Suffice it to say that there are legitimate points to each theory but the attributes mentioned above: intelligence, dominance, adaptability, persistence, integrity, socioeconomic status and self-confidence appear to be the overriding character traits of an effective leader.

Leadership Styles—it is commonly recognized that there are three distinctive leadership styles: 1) Autocratic, 2) Participative, and 3) Laissez-Faire. The autocratic style connotes that all decision-making is centralized in the leader; a form of dictatorship. The participative or democratic style favors decision-making by the group; the leader gives instruction only after conferring with the group. The third style is Laissez-Faire or free rein leadership style. In French, the phrase *laissez-faire* translates “let do” and in a leadership context is roughly translated as “free-rein.” Basically, the free-rein leader does not take a traditional leadership role but allows the group to chart its own course with much freedom in deciding their own policies and methods.

The different leadership styles are driven by particular circumstances of a given situation or event with each style being appropriate depending on the situation at hand. In the end, the most effective technique is the one that most effectively accomplishes the goals and objectives of the group or the situation where leadership is needed.

Leadership and *The Urantia Book*

The Urantia Book highlights several leaders beginning with the early mammalian family that eventuated in the birth of Andon and Fonta. Andon and Fonta are recognized as the first true leaders of the early human race. When the joint decision was made to forego the tribe and strike out on their own they exhibited many of the traits which are attributed to great leaders. It took courage, foresight, intelligence, planning and fortitude to leave the relative safety of the tribe. The course of humanity was forever changed as a result. Two years after their departure from the native tree-top homes their first child was born, Sontad; the human race was born and the Andonic clad quickly grew in numbers and began the first dispersion which eventually spread throughout the world.

Over the course of mankind’s evolution and development many leaders emerged and made great strides in fostering the development of language, culture, art, science and religion. We know many of their names: Van

Andon and Fonta are recognized as the first true leaders of the early human race. When the joint decision was made to forego the tribe and strike out on their own they exhibited many of the traits which are attributed to great leaders.

3. Chemers, M.M. (2002). Meta-cognitive, social, and emotional intelligence of transformational leadership: Efficacy and Effectiveness. In R.E. Riggio, S.E. Murphy, F.J. Pirozzolo (Eds.), *Multiple Intelligences and Leadership*.

4. Kouzes, J., and Posner, B (2007). *The Leadership Challenge*, CA: Jossey Bass

5. Bass, B.M & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass handbook of Leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications* (4th ed.). New York: Free Press.

and Amadon, Moses, Abraham, Machiventa Melchidezek, Seth, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, David Zebedee, John Zebedee and Jesus of Nazareth, our our Creator Son incarnated in mortal flesh.

The whole universe is exquisitely organized with provisions for leadership at every level from Paradise on down to the local universes. It is said that when two engage a task in the universe adventure one among them is assigned as the leader.

The Urantia Book and Groups

There are many examples of the formation and function of groups, from the first primitive family groups to clans and tribes. One of the most impressive examples is the Jerusem one hundred, the Planetary Prince's corporeal staff. *On going to a young world, a Planetary Prince usually takes with him a group of volunteer ascending beings from the local system headquarters. These ascenders accompany the prince as advisers and helpers in the work of early race improvement. This corps of material helpers constitutes the connecting link between the prince and the world races. The Urantia Prince, Caligastia, had a corps of one hundred such helpers.* [Paper 50:3, page 574:3]

Individually we can do small things; collectively we can accomplish great things.

The one hundred were organized in ten separate groups:

1. The Council of Food and Material Welfare which was presided over by Ang.
2. The Board of Animal Domestication and Utilization which was directed by Bon.
3. The Advisers Regarding the Conquest of Predatory Animals was headed by Dan.
4. The Faculty on Dissemination and Conservation of Knowledge under the direction of Fad.
5. The Commission on Industry and Trade was led by Nod.
6. The College of Revealed Religion whose body was headed by Hap.
7. The Guardians of Health and Life which was led by Lut.
8. The Planetary Council on Art and Science whose leader was Mek.
9. The Governors of Advanced Tribal Relations whose chief was Tut.
10. The Supreme Court of Tribal Co-ordination and Racial Co-operation which was ably directed by Van.

After the Lucifer rebellion and the dispersion of the one hundred into two separate groups the leadership of the loyal members was assumed by Van who, upon resettling in the highlands west of India, reconstituted these ten councils. *Van placed the administration of human affairs in the hands of ten commissions of four each, groups identical with those of the Prince's regime.* [Paper 67:6, page 759:5] Nod led the remaining rebels. *After the fall of Dalamatia the disloyal staff*

migrated to the north and east. Their descendants were long known as the Nodites and their dwelling place as, "the land of Nod." [Paper 67:4, page 758:0] Van, however, carried on and later established the Garden of Eden.

When Jesus set out to form his group of apostles he chose the first six and they, in turn, selected the next six. "Andrew, the first chosen apostle, was designated chairman and director general of the twelve." "Peter, James, and John were appointed personal companions of Jesus." "Phillip was made steward of the group." "Nathaniel watched over the needs of the families of the twelve." "Mathew was the fiscal agent of the apostolic corps." "Thomas was manager of the itinerary." "James and Judas the twin sons of Alpheus were assigned the management of the multitudes." "Simon Zelotes was given charge of recreation and play." "Judas Iscariot was appointed treasurer." *In this way the twelve functioned from their early organization up to the time of the reorganization made necessary by the desertion of Judas, the betrayer.* [Paper 138:10, page 1547:11]

In each of these examples, the individual members functioned as a group with specific functions and responsibilities led by chosen leaders. In the organization of Urantia Association International (UAI) provisions are made for the organization of the membership in local associations. It takes ten full members to form a local association who are administered by a four member governing board. National associations function as the representatives of the local associations; the President and Vice President of each National Association serving as representatives on the Representative Council. The International Service Board serves the needs of the National Associations. In this manner, individual readers of *The Urantia Book* are afforded an organizational structure which gives them a voice within the Urantia movement. This aggregation of groups serves to form the foundation upon which the goal of disseminating *The Urantia Book* is made efficient, goal oriented and functional. Study groups, made up of individual readers, serve to support one another and foster the understanding and comprehension of the Fifth Epochal Revelation. Individually we can do small things; collectively we can accomplish great things.

The Urantia Conference Experience

Various groups within the Urantia movement have hosted numerous conferences over the years where individual members gather to fraternize and attend workshops on various topics related to *The Urantia Book* and its teachings.

Typically, the individual attends a conference to meet other readers, meet with old friends, make new acquaintances and further their understanding of the teachings in *The Urantia Book*. This is the social function of conferences and seminars.

These events are basically instructional in scope with the conference attendees moving from one set of instructor led workshops to another over the course of the event. Several instructors are required to cover a wide range of

topics and the attendees are free to choose which workshop to attend. Often the attendee is faced with the decision as to which workshop is favored over another as individual workshops often overlap one another. Occasionally an attendee will attend a workshop that didn't quite measure up to their expectations only to hear from others how wonderful the other workshop, offered in the same time-slot, was. This can be very disconcerting at times as there is a sense of loss and wasted time.

Imagine a new reader coming to his/her very first Urantia conference. Upon registering they are given a program book which delineates the various plenary and workshops that are available. The individual studies the program and decides which workshop sounds interesting, based solely on the workshop title or the presenter's name, and then finds their way to the venue hosting the session. Along the way he or she meets others attending the same workshop; the greetings are usually general in nature and typically not of long duration as the workshops are slotted to fill a time period of about 45 minutes to an hour, then it is off to the next workshop. This is repeated over a three to four day period. In the end, depending on whether the individual is shy or outgoing, brief associations are made with other participants. After attending several conferences/seminars one gets to know the main "players" and becomes familiar with who is who.

Now, imagine that the conference participant is not the out-going type but is eager to attend the conference workshops and thoroughly enjoys the conference experience but, due to their shy nature, has not really developed any close associations with the other attendees. One can actually go through the conference experience and come away with a rather empty feeling. The workshops are tightly scheduled and the participant is busy moving from one workshop to another. There is no real opportunity to get to know the other participants other than cursory introductions.

Those who have been involved in the Urantia movement for many years tend to run in their own groups and are often oblivious to the new attendee. There is no mechanism, with the current conference model, for new attendees to be integrated with the "seasoned" readers/attendees. The result is that the new attendee may feel isolated or feel disenfranchised to the point of deciding to forego future conferences and return to their isolated state of reading and studying on their own. How often this happens is not known, there are no statistics, no way to track, no way to know what becomes of the new attendee.

With the current conference model the group of conference attendees rarely move beyond the "Forming" stage, everyone is on their best behavior, there is seldom conflict, the individuals are generally guarded and reserved, conversations between attendees are cordial in nature but over all limited in scope.

In military terms it translates to name, rank and serial number. The conversations typically involve a

familiar line: "Hello, my name is John." "Where do you live?", "How long have you been reading the book?" "What workshops have you attended?" These are "safe" questions but they don't tend to lead to further depths of understanding of the individual or the fostering of long-term relationships.

Some attendees use the conference opportunity as a form of vacation. When visiting a city/country for the first time it is not uncommon for attendees to forego some of the workshops in order to go sight-seeing. Attendees are allowed freedom of movement and there is no mechanism to ensure that people don't "wander off" and do their own thing. Some feel that if they are going to shell out hundreds of dollars to travel to and attend a conference they want to maximize their experience and get the biggest bang for their buck.



HOBV conference group of youth leaders

The HOBV Conference Experience

The Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBV) seminars have a fifty-two year history. Inspiring, Educational, Compassionate, Energizing, Enthusiastic, Motivating, Transforming, Long-Lasting, and Life-Changing

These are some of the words that students, schools, parents, alumni, volunteers and supporters use to describe HOBV. What does HOBV mean to you?

Founded in 1958, HOBV's mission is to inspire and develop our global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service and innovation. HOBV programs are conducted annually throughout the United States, serving local and international high school students.

HOBV programs provide youth selected by their schools to participate in unique leadership training, service-learning and motivation-building experiences. HOBV also provides adults with opportunities to make a significant impact on the lives of youth by volunteering. Over 4,000 committed HOBV volunteers plan and execute the programs each year, serving both at

Those who have been involved in the Urantia movement for many years tend to run in their own groups and are often oblivious to the new attendee. There is no mechanism, with the current conference model, for new attendees to be integrated with the "seasoned" readers/attendees.

the local HOBY affiliate level and on HOBY's Board of Trustees. Due to the selfless efforts of volunteers and the contributions of generous donors, nearly 9,000 students participate in HOBY programs annually.

Today, over 375,000 proud alumni make HOBY stronger than ever. HOBY alumni are leaders in their schools and communities, throughout the United States and the world, making a difference for others through service. Want to see the impact of HOBY firsthand? Get involved as a student, school, parent, alumna/us, volunteer or supporter—simply select the area of your choice.⁶

The HOBY Model

The Texas Gulf Cost HOBY seminar in 2010 had 209 student ambassadors in attendance at Rice University in Houston, TX. One sophomore “ambassador” is selected from each local area high school based on their demonstrated leadership qualities.

The HOBY experience is unique in that the participants are divided into groups at the beginning of the seminar. Groups may be identified by colors (Blue, Yellow, Green, etc.), by animals (Bears, Tigers, Monkeys, etc.) or other types. It is not unusual for the groups to have a mascot which exemplifies their group in the form of a stuffed animal or other type of representative tangible object.

Each HOBY group is assigned a senior and junior counselor. The senior counselor is over the age of twenty-one and often made of up volunteers from the various non-profit organizations that support the seminar and/or the students that attend (Lions Club, Optimists, Jaycees, etc.).

The HOBY groups ideally compose no more than ten per group and are situated at round tables in a great hall which holds all of the groups. Each group would have eight student ambassadors along with their respective senior and junior counselors. The junior counselors are always former HOBY ambassadors.

During the seminar there are typically five to seven panels of speakers covering the areas of business and industry, TV, radio and print media, politics, banking, medical services, the military, engineering, etc. Each speaker is introduced by one of the ambassadors chosen from the various groups. The speakers are allocated five minutes each to address their specific area of expertise. Twenty to thirty minutes of each panel session is allocated for questions and answers from the ambassadors. This allows the ambassadors a chance to ask questions that are relative to their own interests and curiosities.

During the seminar the various groups are tasked to come up with a skit which is performed before the entire group of ambassadors. Prizes are awarded for the best skit.

During the seminar the students are evaluated on individual participation, group interaction and exhibited leadership qualities. Toward the end of the seminar a

panel of judges interview the eight male and eight female ambassadors who are identified through the judging process. The goal of the judging process is to select one outstanding male and one female ambassador for the seminar site. These two ambassadors are then invited to attend the World Leadership Congress (WLC) which has been hosted in various countries including: China, Russia, India, Canada and others.

The most intriguing aspect of the HOBY seminars is the group dynamic that evolves during the course of the seminar. Since each ambassador is assigned to one group and stays with that group for the duration of the seminar the result is that the individual ambassadors are made to feel a sense of family – the HOBY family. They also develop strong and lasting friendships with their other group members. HOBY alumni are encouraged to keep in contact with one another through Facebook and other networking opportunities.

It has been observed that the groups move very quickly through the four stages of group dynamics: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. The facilitator role is performed jointly by the senior and junior counselors. The leader of the group is the senior counselor. By the end of the first day the groups are usually observed to be in the Performing stage.

This seminar model has been proven, over fifty-two years, to be highly successful. A number of mayors, congressmen and senators are HOBY alumni. This is not to say that these people would not have arisen to the leadership roles they now fulfill without the HOBY experience but each do assert that the HOBY experience was a contributing factor to their later success as leaders of business, industry and politics.

The 2011 Leadership Symposium

Exploring Leadership – Building Community One Study Group at a Time is the theme of UAI's symposium to be held July 14–17, 2011 at Techny Towers Conference and Retreat Center in Chicago, Illinois.

The idea behind the symposium is to bring together the leaders in UAI for a three-day event. The question is in how this symposium will be structured. Following the familiar and comfortable conference experience of workshops with instructional speakers is the easiest and perhaps safe alternative as it is the experience of many of the conference planners, instructors and participants who will be in attendance.

However, the goal of this symposium is to invite several of our international leaders who are may not yet be familiar with the model that has been followed by nearly every conference planner in the Urantia movement. It is recognized that there is an opportunity to do something different, something that will have a lasting impact on all participants.

Every seminar/conference is geared to provide information and training in various areas. This symposium will be no different. It has been clearly established that

each ambassador is assigned to one group and stays with that group for the duration of the seminar the result is that the individual ambassadors are made to feel a sense of family – the HOBY family.

6. <http://www.hoby.org/about.php>

there is a great need to identify leaders in the Urantia movement and provide them with the tools they need to be effective in their spheres of influence. There is a need to reinforce the understanding of UAI's Charter and Bylaws, how to run effective meetings, how to recruit new members, dissemination of the book, as well as techniques for the formation and support of study groups around the world. This alone could take up the entire three day program. It would be quite easy to structure this symposium to mirror the normal conference experience with individuals going from one workshop to another.

The question is whether this is the best method. Is there another alternative to doing the same thing we have always done? It is said that doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results is a form of insanity. So what do we wish to accomplish that is different?

An ideal outcome of this symposium would be to foster enduring relationships, on an international level, using a different model which incorporates the group experience similar to the HOBY seminar model mentioned above. Is this truly desired? Can we accomplish the afore stated goals of training leaders? Can we provide a model that would allow for the development of close personal relationships? Can we extract from the attendees the best and brightest ideas that will propel our organization to accomplish great things?

Imagine a conference experience where instead of the individual left to their own to attend a variety of workshops a model is presented where the attendees are grouped with others and each group experiences the conference and related workshops or presentations as a team. What would be the benefit in this?

Group interaction fosters the integration of the individual with others and gives them a sense of belonging to something bigger than themselves. It becomes a shared experience versus an individual experience. Individuals are less likely to "wander off" and do their own thing when they are part of a larger group. They are afforded the opportunity to get to know one another on more than just a surface level. They bond as a group and are more likely to develop relationships that will endure long after the conference or symposium is over.

It has been proven, in the HOBY model, that both instruction and the group dynamic can work together in a symbiotic manner. The unique aspect of the HOBY model is that minimal instruction is given and the group is allowed to provide feedback and add dimensions to the context that are not possible in a strictly instructional format. When the group is allowed to bring forth their own experiences and ideas a superior product is usually derived that surpasses the expectations of even the instructors—each learn from the other.

There are many dynamic events happening all over the world; different cultures develop varying methods to achieve their intended purposes. To be able to tap into these various methods and build upon them is a challenge but perhaps worth the effort. There is no one way to form a study group, conduct a meeting or disseminate *The Urantia*

Book. We need to devise a format that will allow the best ideas to come forth and then integrate those ideas and share them with all of UAI's members.

It could be that the symposium adopts a hybrid model which incorporates the well established method of instructional workshops along with the group dynamic model of the HOBY experience.

Imagine these attendees coming together and being joined to a group from day one. Each group would be assigned a group name, for instance: Adonites, Adamites, Nodites, Sethites, etc. which give them a relationship to the various groups in *The Urantia Book*.

These groups would then attend workshops together; they would go through the entire program as a cohesive unit. Perhaps the workshops could be formatted wherein the instructor introduces his topic and then allows the group to interact together to discuss their experience with the topic while being afforded an opportunity to share ideas among themselves; the instructor taking on the role of facilitator to ensure the groups stay on topic. Results of the group decisions/ideas could be recorded for further presentation to the larger body of attendees. Several groups could attend the same workshop and move, as a larger body of groups, from workshop to workshop. The ideal set-up would be to have all of the groups in the same room, a great hall, but space limitations may prohibit this approach.

...this group model of conference attendance could be fostered and implemented throughout the Urantia movement.

The goal of such an experience would be to cull the results of the individual groups into a cohesive collection which would then be shared with each attendee after the symposium has concluded. This collection would then be further shared by the attendees with their own local associations and/or study groups. Each is offered the opportunity to choose what works best for them in their given situation.

Over the course of three days of intimate contact with a small group close personal relationships will be developed. It would be encouraged that the groups stay in contact with one another to further share their experiences after the symposium. Greater levels of understanding among the individuals would be the result of such an experience. The Brotherhood of Man is enhanced when individuals, working together for a common purpose through shared experiences, are brought together.

Through proper planning this group model of conference attendance could be fostered and implemented throughout the Urantia movement. Imagine, after attending ten such conferences that the attendee has developed close personal relationships with up to 100 individuals. New readers/conference attendees are instantly made a part of a larger group. Friendships are made at a level that far transcends the typical conference model.

The question then becomes not why but why not? ■

David Linthicum has been active in community service for the last 25 years. He currently serves as president of UAUS.

The True Value and Purpose of Study Groups

SHEILA KEENE LUND
USA



Study group illustration

THERE IS AN INCREASING INTEREST IN fostering study groups throughout the world. This is logical—after all, the revelators instructed: “Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness when the battle for man’s liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind.”

...one additional responsibility and challenge that each member is called upon to earnestly undertake, and that is to uplift their capacity to actually live the religion of love and service revealed by Jesus.

But what defines a study group? What is its purpose and value? In general, a study group is defined as a small group of people who regularly meet to discuss shared fields of study. From this general perspective, all study groups provide the following benefits which should be periodically reviewed to reflect how our own groups are fulfilling their general mission:

1. Study groups can be helpful when trying to learn new information and complex concepts. They provide the opportunity to think out loud, share ideas, and learn from one another.
2. The group can “pick you up” when you find that your motivation to study is slipping. Group members can be a source of encouragement.
3. A small-group setting is more amenable to asking questions
4. Group members listen and discuss information and concepts during study sessions, adding a strong auditory dimension to the learning experience.
5. One or more group members are likely to understand concepts or bring ideas the individual never considered.
6. Valuable new study habits can be gleaned from other group members.
7. Comparing knowledge with those of other group members can fill in the gaps.

8. Teaching/explaining to other group members helps master information and concepts. Teaching brings with it the necessity for comprehensive knowledge of a subject.
9. It is said that study can sometimes be boring. Interaction in a group, however, can make studying enjoyable and give the opportunity to socialize.

Beyond the personal benefits described above, the unique focus of *The Urantia Book* study groups is to explore the latest epochal revelation and extend this knowledge to society wherever we can. However, there is one additional responsibility and challenge that each member is called upon to earnestly undertake, and that is to uplift their capacity to actually live the religion of love and service revealed by Jesus.

At this point, you *The Urantia Book* reader may be saying, “I’ve done that—I have never felt so spiritual.” You are not alone with this impression. Many of us have been long-time spiritual seekers, and have been praying and meditating for a large part of our lives. We have been doing service in our community, and when we came across *The Urantia Book* we incorporated into our worldview the concepts that resonated; we could not help feeling special that the tome had “found” us. Life took on a new meaning just as it does when the downtrodden and non-believers discover God, whether through the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, or the Talmud.

While this new knowledge and heightened experience may increase our vision of possibilities and elevate our ideals and values, it does not necessarily mean that our decisions and actions will automatically align with those ideals; history is full of manipulative, self-serving, destructive God-knowing leaders, as well as the complacent and fanatic, all full of what they consider good intentions. While a large part of our world is God-knowing, moral awareness and spiritual perception continue to play second fiddle behind technological advancement

The Urantia Book was first published during the post-WWII period and at the time American spirituality emphasized the importance of sacred places, such as the home, churches, and temples. In the 1960's American spirituality shifted to one based on "seeking"—looking for sacred moments and negotiating among the many complex and confusing meanings of spirituality. History has shown that both forms of spirituality—sacred place and sacred moment - are ineffective at sustaining a society whose citizens are progressively expressing an increased capacity to love and respect one another. The former encourages dependence on communities that are inherently undependable, focusing too much energy on place rather than the full round of human needs in a complex world. The latter is too fragmented to provide the social support needed to encourage the stability and dedication to grow spiritually and maturely in character.

Practice-oriented spirituality came into being as people wanted to deepen their relationship to the sacred, inspiring a renewed commitment to social service and worship. Individuals take responsibility to spend time regularly worshipping, communing, listening and gaining knowledge of the ultimate source of sacredness in their lives. However, practicing spirituality without the expansion of meanings is like exploring new lands using old navigational charts; we may locate the coastline but fail to find the precious calm of the harbor. There must be progress in meanings in order to distinguish authentic spiritual experiences from their faux feelings of goodness and transfer our experiences of the divine into meaningful activities that truly advance the establishment of the brotherhood of man in the world.

How then can study groups of *The Urantia Book* help us, one person at a time, to uplift society in ways that no other generation has been able to achieve?

First, study groups of *The Urantia Book* are not all alike. Some are animated and open to exchanging interpretations and experiences from their readings, with questions to more experienced readers from newcomers. Others have a more patented approach, reading predetermined passages without much thought of its personal application. However, the major contribution of all Urantia Book study groups is their potential to promote unity in the comprehension of God and the universe, one group at a time across the globe, through the efforts of its members to continuously discover new spiritual meanings and higher values in their spiritual experiences, intellectual assumptions, and interpretations.

The cosmic perspective presented in *The Urantia Book* was given to uplift all worldviews and to align actions with higher ideals. Attaining this knowledge and ability is not like going to church once a week or to Urantia meetings twice a month, feeling that you have serviced your spirituality for a while. Uplifting your worldview means engaging in a steady commitment to

reconcile personal beliefs with the challenging concepts presented in *The Urantia Book*. The goal is to construct a new and appealing philosophy of living that will consistently attract all that is good in the mind and challenge that which is best in the human soul. This commitment is a soul-shaker, and questions arise: How open am I to objectively exploring a new concept that I may not relate to, or even one that I consider totally wrong? Am I willing to spend enough time relating these new concepts to my current knowledge so that I may ask leading questions and better understand the perspectives of others? Gaining the inclusiveness given us by epochal revelation will uplift our personal philosophy of living. As study group members grow in assimilating the depth, breath, and accuracy of the worldview presented in *The Urantia Book*, a stereoscopic vision of spiritual development and the commitment to question, modify, and elevate their current approach will grow exponentially.

Second, Urantia Book study groups can provide the social support needed to encourage the members' stability and dedication to grow spiritually (in attunement with the Indwelling Spirit) and to mature in character—essential to consistently living the religion of Jesus.

We have become experts at "spiritual bypassing"—using spiritual practices and beliefs to avoid dealing with our painful feelings, unresolved wounds and developmental needs." *The Urantia Book* explains that growth itself is unconscious, but we must consciously and persistently nourish the favorable conditions for growth. New meanings in spirituality invoke new habits of thinking and being; we must be willing to eliminate spiritual bypassing and move out of our comfort zones. To do the work is an ongoing effort of the heart and mind, but we will gain the "Fruits of the Spirit" on our journey.

Study groups of *The Urantia Book* are organized to expand knowledge and understanding of the fifth epochal revelation. But this goal falls short of its potential unless members are increasingly elevating their capacity to live the life of love and service that Jesus lived; the advancement of the brotherhood of man requires the commitment of members to the intellectual, moral and spiritual work necessary. There are no short cuts or easy paths in this journey. In the short term, progress supported in the hearts and minds of every member will be reflected in our increased capacity for love, the health and growth of our organizations, and the increasing number of people drawn to the revelation. In the long term, society will reflect back to us the fruits of our joint and passionate efforts to truly live the brotherhood of man, the absolute goal expressed in the mandate given to us by the revelators.. ■

New meanings in spirituality invoke new habits of thinking and being; we must be willing to eliminate spiritual bypassing and move out of our comfort zones.

OUR CALL—A New Revelation of Jesus and His Kingdom

PRESTON THOMAS
USA

The call to service

THE URANTIA BOOK DECLARES THAT, “*living faith is God knowing and man-serving. . . living religious faith is more than the association of noble beliefs; it is more than an exalted system of philosophy; it is a living experience concerned with spiritual meanings, divine ideals, and supreme values; it is God-knowing and man-serving.*” [Paper 101:8, page 1114:6] In this short statement the revelators make clear that our service to others is an essential aspect of living faith. In fact we may easily conclude from this statement that if we are not engaged in such service to others, we are thereby lacking in living faith.

And who has not felt, from time to time, this call to service? this urge to serve our world, and immerse ourselves in the work to which we feel called? So much of what we do

in life is meaningless and without real import. But we know that the devoted service of God’s children here on earth is important. And when we are engaged in such service our lives gain new meaning and take on new value. We are no longer wasting the time and talents God has given us but are using them in a way that pleases Him.

But even though we realize that the unselfish service of others is good and right, and even though we may feel the urge to engage in such service, how can we know what form our service should take? How are we to find and decide upon our own ideal and best form of service?

To begin to answer a question of such importance I believe we should first and persistently look to God within. His answer cannot be wrong and we cannot go wrong if we follow his way. This was Jesus’ technique and we do well to follow his example. Like Jesus we should spend significant time communing with God, prayerfully seeking his guidance. In line with this approach, I suggest that we rephrase our question of what service we should undertake to, “What service does God call us to?”



Answering the call, illustration

The Urantia Book directs us to Jesus

If we begin with this sincere attitude of first and consistently looking to God within we are rightly prepared to use the other sources of guidance at our disposal. For us, the fortunate few who have been blessed to receive a new revelation of truth, I suggest that we further look to *The Urantia Book* for help and guidance. In what direction does it point us? What service does it call us to?

In seeking to answer this question we should recognize that there are many good causes to which the Urantia revelation might call us. But, does it point us in some one primary direction? If so, what is that direction?

We may make a good beginning to answering this question by first getting clear on something *The Urantia Book* does not call us to. *The Urantia Book* does not call us to go forth spreading Urantia Books to the world. That is a noble goal, and we may indeed feel called to do that personally or with our service team, but *The Urantia Book* does not call us to that task.

In fact, one of the many notable features of *The Urantia Book* is that it is not self-centered. Even though it is the fifth epochal revelation of truth, and as such might easily exalt its own importance, it consistently directs us, not to itself, but to Jesus. Listen to what *The Urantia Book* has to say concerning the importance of Jesus: ***Of all human knowledge, that which is of greatest value is to know the***

...how can we know what form our service should take? How are we to find and decide upon our own ideal and best form of service?

religious life of Jesus and how he lived it. [Paper 196:1, page 2090:4] [my emphasis]

Notice that the revelators could have said, “Of all human knowledge that which is of greatest value is to know *The Urantia Book* and what it teaches.” But they did not! The significance of this fact (that the new revelation directs its followers to a *previous* revelation, to Jesus) is often overlooked. With all its new revelation and the perfection of its teachings the natural focus of a reader/believer is on the Book itself. But even though it is the most recent epochal revelation of truth, *The Urantia Book* consistently extols *Jesus* and directs us to *his* life and teachings. We need to take this seriously if we would be true to the new revelation and sincerely use it to guide our lives. In other words, to truly follow the direction of *The Urantia Papers* is to clearly put Jesus first and *The Urantia Book* second.

Many times and in many different wordings *The Urantia Book* directs us to Jesus and calls for a new revelation of his life and teachings. One of the clearest and most specific is found on page 1866. Listen to what the revelators say concerning the immediate future of our world: **There must come a revival of the actual teachings of Jesus, such a restatement as will undo the work of his early followers...**

[Paper 170:5, page 1866:2] [my emphasis] Notice here that *The Urantia Book* is clearly **calling** for a restatement and a revival of Jesus’ true teachings. Notice also that the book is prophesying that this return to Jesus and his teachings will constitute *the next forward step in the religious evolution of our world.*

The Urantia Book not only directs the world to Jesus instead of itself; it also clearly states that the time for this return to Jesus is now. For example, on page 2083 the revelators state, **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.** [Paper 195:9, page 2083:1] [my emphasis] Notice the opening phrase, “The hour is striking”; this is a vivid and powerful image; its meaning is clear and definite. It means that the time for this rediscovery of the real Jesus and his saving message is not 100 years ago, nor is it 100 years in the future. It is **now**.

This concept of the present need for a return to Jesus is amplified on page 2084 where the revelators state: **Modern culture must become spiritually baptized with a new revelation of Jesus’ life and illuminated with a new understanding of his gospel of eternal salvation.** [Paper 195:10, page 2084:1] [my emphasis] Here the revelators use a very strong word, “must.” They say, “Modern culture must become spiritually baptized with a new revelation of Jesus.” Modern culture means *our* culture, here and now, and must mean that this spiritual baptism most certainly will happen.

The present need of our world for the true Jesus is also revealed in the following statement from page 2090, **The time is ripe to witness the figurative resurrection of the human Jesus from his burial tomb amidst the theological traditions and the religious dogmas of nineteen centuries.** [Paper 196:1, page 2090:3] [my emphasis] “The time is ripe”, means two things to me. First it obviously means that now is the time to work for the new revelation of Jesus, but second, it also means that the world has reached a state

such that it is ready to accept this new revelation, and therefore that such work has good prospects for success. Thus if we enlist in this effort we are not sailing against the wind, but rather we are working in harmony with the Supreme and the true needs of the time.

We began with the question, “What form should our service to mankind take?” I suggest that the answer given by *The Urantia Book* is clear: Our service should be focused on bringing about *a new revelation of Jesus and his actual teachings*. This is the direction we find repeated over and over again in its pages, combined with a further emphasis on now as the time for this new revelation.

And there is yet a third compelling reason for us to participate in this new revelation. For, although many will contribute to this rediscovery of Jesus’ true gospel, *only we* possess the incomparable record of Jesus’ life and teachings found in *The Urantia Book*. Make no mistake, this call is directed to **us, here and now**. And let us remember and take to heart the revelators’ warning on page 1918, “In accordance with the truth committed to your hands will the Master of truth require a reckoning.”

Jesus directs us to the Kingdom—the will of God

If we follow the advice of the Urantia Revelation and look to Jesus’ life and teachings, what do we find? That is to say, in what direction does Jesus point us? What is his most central and fundamental teaching?

When Jesus was on the earth he referred to his central message as the gospel of the kingdom. This tells us that his fundamental teaching was centered on the kingdom; he referred to it as the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God. He said, “*Seek first the kingdom of heaven,*” and devoted his entire life to its establishment here on earth.

However Jesus’ followers had trouble understanding his concept of the kingdom. Jesus knew that his disciples were confused and failing to grasp his central teaching of a purely spiritual kingdom involving God’s inner rule. They were too devoted to the concept of an outward political kingdom with Jesus, as the Messiah, at its head. On page 1858 the revelators state: **He was aware of the confusion which existed in the minds of his apostles and disciples regarding the meaning and significance of the terms, “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” which he used as interchangeable designations of his bestowal mission.** [Paper 170:0, page 1858:1]

Thus, even though we can identify Jesus’ central concept as “the kingdom of heaven” we are still left with another crucial question: “What is the kingdom of heaven?” What is Jesus’ primary teaching concerning this kingdom? The answer to this question should be clear to the world; but it is not. In fact most of the Christian world has lost sight of Jesus’ primary teaching and has substituted in its place various teachings about his person. Instead of the religion of Jesus, most know only a religion about Jesus. We however are once again most fortunate in having *The Urantia Book* to help us answer this question regarding the

...the world has reached a state such that it is ready to accept this new revelation, and therefore that such work has good prospects for success.

primary meaning of “*the kingdom*.” It even devotes an entire paper (#170) to this subject. Early in this paper the revelators emphasize that although Jesus taught numerous concepts of the kingdom his last word always was “*The kingdom is within you*.” So although Jesus did at times also teach the coming of a future external kingdom, his emphasis always was on the kingdom within. That is, his primary teaching was concerned with an inner spiritual kingdom in contrast to an external divine rule. As he said many times, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

At the end of this Paper on the kingdom (page 1866) the revelators give a very precise formulation to Jesus’ concept of the kingdom, one that we would do well to hold in memory. Here the revelators tell us that the primary concept of the kingdom taught by Jesus was, ...*the will of his heavenly Father dominant and transcendent in the heart of the believer*. [Paper 170:5, page 1866:2]

If we accept this definition of the kingdom we see that the goal to which Jesus directs his followers is nothing less than the expansion of God’s will in the hearts of our fellow man. This is a far greater goal than merely speaking good words, doing good deeds, or even expanding the number of believers in the Urantia revelation. It means that, as Jesus’ followers, and as believers in the Urantia revelation, we should be dedicated to actually establishing God’s rule in the hearts of our brothers and sisters here on earth.

Now, this effort to get others to submit to God’s spiritual rule, to actually undergo a change of heart so as to choose God’s control and direction for their lives, is a great and noble task. But how shall we go about this most important work? How can we be most effective? Here *The Urantia Book* gives us further valuable assistance; it emphasizes that the best way to establish the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of mankind is to foster a return to Jesus and his true teachings. To repeat the revelator’s call of page 1866, ***There must come a revival of the actual teachings of Jesus...*** [Paper

170:5, page 1866:2]

What are the “actual teachings of Jesus” that we are called to revive? What is Jesus’ true gospel that was lost in the enthusiasm of Pentecost? It is the great truth that we are all children of God, our loving heavenly Father. Listen to Jesus’ words from pages 2052 and 2053; they are directed not only to the apostles 2000 years ago, but to us today who seek to advance his teachings in our world: ***I admonish you ever to remember that your mission among men is to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom—the reality of the fatherhood of God and the truth of the sonship of man. ...Sonship with God, by faith, is still the saving truth of the gospel of the kingdom.... That which the world needs most to know is: Men are the sons of God, and through faith they can actually realize and daily experience this ennobling truth.*** [Paper 193:0, page 2052:4] [my emphasis]

In these important pronouncements Jesus clearly defines the gospel of the kingdom. He also definitely directs his followers to focus on this gospel truth above all others. He gives emphasis to the priority of this teaching by stating that it is “*that which the world most needs to know*.” Thus

if we look to Jesus we will center our efforts in his gospel teaching that we are all sons and daughters of God. This should be the one truth and the saving faith that we seek to transmit above all others.

Unlike our worthy efforts to expand the Urantia revelation this teaching of sonship with God is easily accepted and warmly embraced by most who hear it. This concept that “You are a child of God,” is especially easy to teach to children, both our own and those we come into contact with. Teenagers and young adults will also be found to be quite receptive to this inspiring message. In the end Jesus’ gospel of sonship with God is our most direct and effective way of expanding the kingdom.

A second reason to work for the Kingdom—“the present crisis of civilization”

Jesus directs us to the kingdom within and to work for the expansion of that kingdom. This is sufficient reason to dedicate ourselves to this work. But we who live in early twenty-first century earth have another very special and important reason. For we seem to live in a time of growing trouble and impending crisis. On page 2090 the revelators validate our concern as to problems and direction of modern society. They tell us that, ***This secularistic human society, notwithstanding its unparalleled materialistic achievement, is slowly disintegrating.*** [Paper 195:8, page 2082:2] [my emphasis] And on page 2081 they prophecy as to the immediate future of our society: ***Twentieth century secularism tends to affirm that man does not need God. But beware! This godless philosophy of human society will lead only to unrest, animosity, unhappiness, war, and world-wide disaster.*** [Paper 195:8, page 2081:5]

We who live in such a time of trouble, with threatening destruction looming in our future, should clearly recognize that in a time of great crisis only our direct kingdom connection with God will be of value. At such a time we cannot go to a book, a church, a theology, or a personal thought system for refuge and guidance. Something more is needed; an inner spiritual connection with God is required, and nothing less will do. As *The Urantia Book* states on page 1087, ***Only the real religion of personal spiritual experience can function helpfully and creatively in the present crises of civilization.*** [Paper 99:2, page 1087:4] [my emphasis] Remember this statement, it clearly reveals two important truths of our time: first, modern civilization is in a state of crisis and second, what is called for in such a time of crisis is the real religion of true spiritual experience, the religion of the kingdom.

This important dual concept of the crisis of modern times and the corresponding need for true religion is touched on repeatedly by the Urantia revelation. For example, on page 1086 the revelators state, concerning the world in which we live: ***...the soul of man, as never before in the world’s history, needs to carefully scrutinize its charts of morality and painstakingly to observe the compass of religious guidance.*** [Paper 99:1, page 1086:6]

And on page 1090 *The Urantia Book* presents this most revealing and amazingly accurate picture of our times and its needs: ***During the psychologically unsettled times of the***

...we will center our efforts in his gospel teaching that we are all sons and daughters of God. This should be the one truth and the saving faith that we seek to transmit above all others.

twentieth century, amid the economic upheavals, the moral crosscurrents, and the sociologic rip tides of the cyclonic transitions of a scientific era, thousands upon thousands of men and women have become humanly dislocated; they are anxious, restless, fearful, uncertain and unsettled; as never before in the world's history they need the consolation and stabilization of sound religion... [Paper 99:4, page 1090:2]

We who recognize “the present crisis of civilization” should prepare ourselves to help others face impending crisis and emerge triumphant. The inner kingdom taught by Jesus is each individual’s true lifeline in such a time of testing. And let us recognize that if a crisis succeeds in helping a person to enter or advance in the kingdom, then that crisis has become that person’s great blessing.

In attempting to prepare others and ourselves for impending world events, I believe we should look to Jesus and be directed by his words to the apostles on Mt. Olivet just before his death. Here he exhorted the apostles: *Have I not all this time taught you that your connection with the kingdom is spiritual and individual, wholly a matter of personal experience in the spirit by the faith-realization that you are a son of God? What more shall I say? The downfall of nations, the crash of empires, the destruction of the unbelieving Jews, the end of an age, even the end of the world, what have these things to do with one who believes this gospel, who has hid his life in the surety of the eternal kingdom?* [Paper 176:3, page 1916:2]

Here Jesus gives advice to his apostles as to how to weather their impending crisis, but he is, of course, also telling us how to survive ours. Look to God, look to your inner spiritual connection, your personal connection with Him. This is what we should do. This should be our reaction to any great crisis, and the reaction we teach to others.

Thus, whether we are preparing others and ourselves for crisis, or following Jesus’ and *The Urantia Book’s* direction for our lives, in either case, we are called to work for the expansion of the kingdom of heaven.

To expand the Kingdom, respect Christianity and use the Bible, especially the four gospels

How can we best do this? How should we go about this great work of expanding the kingdom? What policies and methods should guide our efforts?

The first thing to realize is that this revival of Jesus and his actual gospel isn’t going to come about through the *Urantia Book* directly, for this means the potential believer must accept a 2100 page revelation of new truth. This is just too much and it would take too long. Our world is in crisis; simple basic truths—the simple basic truths of Jesus—are needed, and they are needed now.

Let us also realize that good purposes do not insure success. We must be wise. I suggest that we again look to Jesus for guidance. Let us learn from Him. What policies and methods did he follow in seeking to expand the kingdom? All of his techniques are worthy of our study, but two are particularly relevant to our efforts today.

First, Jesus adapted his teaching to the ways and comprehension of his listeners. He put his truth in words they could understand, and he used examples that were close to their real life experience. And he did not

overteach. There was so much more that he could have said and done but did not. He knew that teaching his followers things which were too far removed from their capacity and experience would not work, and would detract from the clarity and comprehension of his central message.

Second, he exalted the good in teachings already accepted by his listeners. In his ministry to the Jews, Jesus affirmed the best of the Jewish religion. He didn’t seek to tear down the settled beliefs of his followers, and he always showed due respect for their ways and traditions. He often affirmed and employed the Jewish scriptures in his efforts to get across his own teachings.

We should do the same. Whereas Jesus lived and taught mostly among the Jews, the culture we live in is basically Christian. If we are to go to the world in which we live, the Christian world, we should first respect their traditions, second, affirm our commonly held beliefs, and third, present our expanded revelation of Jesus in a way that best harmonizes with their belief system.

Furthermore, it is most instructive for *Urantia Book* readers to clearly realize that *The Urantia Book* itself urges a very positive and respectful view towards Christianity. For example, on page 2082 the revelators exhort us: ***Do not overlook the value of your spiritual heritage, the river of truth running down through the centuries, even to the barren times of a materialistic and secular age.*** [Paper 195:9, page 2082:6] And on page 2085 they instruct us in our proper attitude towards Christianity when they tell us: ***It is the product of the combined moral genius of the God-knowing men of many races during many ages, and it has truly been one of the greatest powers for good on earth, and therefore no man should lightly regard it....*** [Paper 195:10, page 2085:4]

In fact, *The Urantia Book* goes so far as to say that the Christian Church is actually, ***...the cocoon in which the kingdom of Jesus’ concept now slumbers.*** [Paper 170:5, page 1866:4] Our job is to awaken and revive this kingdom concept and the revelators clearly direct us to work with and through Christianity. We are not called to destroy the cocoon, but rather to help the butterfly emerge. Listen to how the revelators urge us forward—in partnership with Christianity—in their magnificent visionary promise of page 2086: ***The great hope of Urantia lies in the possibility of a new revelation of Jesus with a new and enlarged presentation of his saving message which would spiritually unite in loving service the numerous families of his present day professed followers.*** [Paper 195:10, page 2086:2]

So, as Jesus often quoted and used the Jewish scriptures in his teaching, we also should make use of the Christian scriptures—the Bible. And for our purpose of expanding the revelation of Jesus and his gospel, we should especially rely on the New Testament books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four books have the special virtue of being devoted exclusively to Jesus’ life and teachings. And they have the further great advantage of being widely accepted as authoritative accounts of Jesus’ life and his sayings. They constitute the best of what *The Urantia Book* refers to as the river of truth running down to our materialistic age.

...Jesus affirmed the best of the Jewish religion. He didn’t seek to tear down the settled beliefs of his followers, and he always showed due respect for their ways and traditions. He often affirmed and employed the Jewish scriptures in his efforts to get across his own teachings.

Focusing on the scriptural teachings of Jesus and *exalting his teachings above all others* puts us in a very good position in relation to other religionists. It means we can both distinguish ourselves from the many Christian sects and also be accepted by most of them. In our personal lives we can speak easily to family and friends concerning Jesus and his kingdom. In the world at large, we can reach the widest possible audience in the shortest amount of time. We can speak to all without arousing antagonism; we can use existing and accepted materials to begin the work of the new revelation!

The Life and Teachings of Jesus provides a valuable tool

However, there are problems with using existing scripture to teach the truths of Jesus. The scriptural record lacks the wholeness of truth and purity we have come to know in the Urantia Papers. Furthermore, *The Urantia Book* calls for a new revelation that will undo the errors of Jesus' early followers. Therefore, we do not want to use materials that tend to suggest or affirm these errors.

This problem of how to teach Jesus' kingdom using the Bible and avoid the errors, misinterpretations, and false

teachings that got mixed in can be mostly solved by simply concentrating on the four gospels.

However there are other significant problems that still must be addressed. Errors (such as the virgin birth) and mistaken ideas (such as the atonement doctrine or the infallibility of scripture) are still associated with Jesus' true teachings. Words that Jesus did not say are attributed to him and misrepresentations of events (such as Jesus walking on the water or causing unclean spirits to enter a herd

of swine) are presented as facts. Further, the chronology of the events of Jesus' life is not always clear or correct. And instead of one easy to follow story of his life we have four different accounts. We need a better, clearer, and fuller picture of the true Jesus and his actual teachings.

It was considerations such as these that lead me (around 1985) to undertake the writing of *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*. In particular I wanted a book that would be a trustworthy source of truth that I could give to others for comfort and guidance.

The basic idea for the book was to take all the true verses from the four gospels and put them together in their proper sequence based on the chronology of *The Urantia Book*. Erroneous passages were simply left out. The goal was to produce a book of Jesus' life and teachings that would be fully acceptable to most Christians and at the same time be fully harmonious with the teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

For those who are interested in ministering and teaching Jesus' truths to the Christian world this book opens new possibilities. One especially useful feature of *The Life and Teachings of Jesus* is that it provides us with a *language of intercommunication*—words and truths acceptable to both believers in the Bible and followers of the Urantia

revelation. By collecting and organizing all the true verses concerning Jesus, this book concentrates a sizeable body of truth that we already share with many others. With it we can quickly find which truths are contained in scripture and are thus available for easy reference in teaching. We can use these words from the gospels to both teach new truth and to revive and deepen truths already accepted. And we can present these truths of Jesus guided by the new light of the Urantia revelation; in this way, we can use accepted scripture to revive Jesus' true gospel and undo the errors of his early followers.

I do believe this book can be a valuable tool in our efforts to expand the revelation of Jesus and his kingdom. It provides us with a restatement of Jesus' life and teachings that is wholly constructed from Biblical passages, while at the same time it is free from the errors, false doctrines, and religious dogmas generally associated with scripture. These words from the gospels are recognized and honored by all Christians and many others as well. In fact, the pure life and teachings of Jesus, freed from the surrounding Christian teachings and dogma, should also prove acceptable both to non-believers and to those of other faiths. The book itself is generally quite well received as a gift; thus it provides an acceptable and trustworthy revelation of Jesus that we can leave with others for comfort, guidance, inspiration, and enlightenment. Most importantly, it is a channel through which we may transmit the new revelation of Jesus and his kingdom, here and now.

A call to action

In summary: Our call is clear; we are to work for a return to Jesus and a new revelation of his life and teachings. This means we need to give priority to his central teaching, the kingdom of heaven, and to his primary concept of the kingdom, "the will of God dominant and transcendent in the heart of the believer." And further we need to concentrate on Jesus' true gospel of sonship with God as the most direct and effective way of expanding the kingdom. In this work we should be energized and activated by the realization that this call is to our time and our generation. And we must take seriously the obligations and responsibilities inherent in the fact that it is we, and we alone, who possess the new revelation of Jesus. Finally, we should be spurred to action by the realization that our present civilization is in crisis and needs the moral compass and true religion of Jesus as never before.

If we would be true to this call we are not without resources. We have God within, Jesus, and *The Urantia Book* to guide us. And for effectively and immediately bringing the true Jesus and his actual gospel of the kingdom to the world we have the scriptural record. Lastly, to help us bring about a new and expanded revelation of Jesus using accepted scripture, yet avoiding the errors of the past, we have *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*.

For those who would respond to this great call to service here are some suggestions for actions that can be taken immediately, even today:

First, we must realize that to successfully minister Jesus and his kingdom to others we should *first be in the kingdom*

...significant problems that still must be addressed. Errors (such as the virgin birth) and mistaken ideas (such as the atonement doctrine or the infallibility of scripture) are still associated with Jesus' true teachings.

ourselves. This means that God's will must truly rule in our own hearts. We should consecrate our wills to the doing of God's will and commune with him daily in an effort to know and do that will. We need to follow *The Urantia Book's* urging and grow accustomed to choosing and affirming, "It is my will that your will be done" in all life circumstances. And when it comes to a question as to our way or another we should develop the attitude and habitual practice of declaring, "Not my will, but yours be done."

Second, after making certain of the establishment and maintenance of the kingdom in our own hearts, we need to get mentally prepared for the work of establishing God's rule in the hearts of others. We need to dedicate ourselves to this work, to plan for the future, and make ourselves ready to act effectively as ministers of the inner kingdom. We must courageously choose and consciously work to become ever better proclaimers of Jesus and his true gospel of sonship in the kingdom.

Third, a powerful way in which we may work for the kingdom right now is to maintain a strong prayer life. We can learn to sincerely pray "God's will be done" in response to the problems and needs of both others and ourselves. For example, when we are faced with important decisions and difficult circumstances, we can develop the habit of praying "your will be done" in this situation. This reaction not only helps solve or dissolve the problem, but more importantly it helps us grow in the kingdom. Likewise, when we think of the problems and needs of family, friends, and acquaintances, if we pray, "your kingdom come; your will be done" in that person or situation we both work for the expansion of the kingdom in that person and help with their particular problem. Further, this reaction is an ideal and effective response to persons who cause us difficulty and pain; it is an ideal way to follow Jesus' admonition to "pray for your enemies." Finally we should pray regularly that "God's will be done" in our country and in our world. The full prayer Jesus taught us was: "Your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

Fourth, we should *center our teaching efforts on sonship with God*. This teaching that we are all sons and daughters of a loving heavenly Father is both easy to proclaim and readily accepted by most who hear it. And it is our most direct and effective way of expanding the kingdom. We need to increasingly realize our own sonship and then seek to spread this saving faith in every way we can.

Fifth, we should prepare ourselves and teach others to *look to the kingdom of heaven as our primary reaction to crisis*. *The Urantia Book* tells us in no uncertain terms that modern society is in a state of crisis and that what is most needed in today's disintegrating secular world is sound religion—the religion of Jesus; the religion of the kingdom. We should consciously and courageously choose to take refuge in the kingdom, our inner spiritual connection with God, as our first reaction to tribulation and crisis. And then we should teach this reaction to others. In this effort we may be energized and inspired by the realization that a time of crisis is also a time of great opportunity both for personal growth and for imparting kingdom truths. As *The Urantia Book* says on page 2082, and concerning our times: **...such times of great testing and threatened defeat are always times of great revelation.** [Paper 195:8, page 2082:8] [my emphasis] Thus

we can use crisis itself as a powerful tool to aid our ministry of the kingdom.

Sixth, we should remember that Jesus always sought to speak the language of his hearers, to put his truths into words they were comfortable with and could easily comprehend. We can most easily and effectively reach friends, neighbors, and the world at large through harmonizing with the best in Christianity and using the scriptures to help expand the kingdom. In *The Life and Teachings of Jesus* we have a trustworthy collection of Biblical teachings that we can give to others for instruction, comfort, and guidance. And because it is a purified restatement of the gospels it can begin to undo the problems created by the gospel about Jesus taking the place of the gospel of Jesus. In sum, we can minister the kingdom now and to the widest possible audience not by using *The Urantia Book* directly, but by making wise and effective use of the Biblical record of Jesus' life and teachings.

Seventh, although the preceding six actions act to harmonize us with the great call of Jesus and the Urantia revelation, more is required; we must seek to *find the personal form of kingdom service that God calls us to*. We each have individual situations and special talents that may be useful in the work of the heavenly kingdom. We need to look to God for that particular kingdom service he would have us perform, that service which is individualized to our own talents, abilities, and opportunities. The possibilities are many, but as we find the special kingdom service God calls us to, we find the high meaning and purpose of our lives. We achieve our destiny!

So let us go forward! We have our call and we have actions that we can take in response to that call. It is a noble task and a great undertaking, really a wonderful opportunity that should inspire us all. As *The Urantia Book* says on page 2084, **The call to the adventure of building a new and transformed human society... should thrill all who believe in him [Jesus] as men have not been stirred since the days when they walked about on earth as his companions in the flesh.** [Paper 195:10, page 2084:6]

Listen again to *The Urantia Book's* clear call to us: **Religion does need new leaders, spiritual men and women who will dare to depend solely on Jesus and his incomparable teachings.** [Paper 195:9, page 2082:9] [my emphasis] Let us be those new leaders! Let us be the "new teachers" *The Urantia Book* speaks of who are destined to provide the leadership and inspiration for the coming **...spiritual renaissance...** [Paper 195:9, page 2082:9] The future is in our hands, and our cause shall triumph! *The Urantia Book* promises this on page 2082; listen to this great prophecy: **A new and fuller revelation of the religion of Jesus is destined to conquer an empire of materialistic secularism and to overthrow a world sway of mechanistic naturalism.** [Paper 195:10, page 2084:6] [my emphasis]

So let us go forward! Our cause shall triumph! ■

Preston Thomas is the founder of The Einstein School in Charlottesville, Virginia and author of *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*.

Let us be those new leaders! Let us be the "new teachers" The Urantia Book speaks of who are destined to provide the leadership and inspiration for the coming "spiritual renaissance."



Subscriptions

The JOURNAL is available electronically free of charge. To receive hard copies, one may subscribe to the JOURNAL at these rates:

Annual \$25 US, \$28 Australian, \$28 Canadian, or €18 (Euro).

Single Copies \$6 US \$8 Australian \$8 Canadian, or €5 (Euro).

Other foreign language edition rates will be equal to \$25 US for subscription or \$6 US for a single issue in local currency according to international exchange rates at the time of subscription. Funds sent to Urantia Association International (USA) must be in US dollars.

To subscribe: mail check or money order according to subscription rate, payable to Urantia Association International, to:

UAI JOURNAL
559 W. Diversey Pkwy. #351
Chicago, IL 60614, USA

When paying by credit card, telephone orders may be placed by calling (773) 572-1180

Submission Policy

JOURNAL accepts all article submissions for consideration for current or future issues.

All submissions become the property of JOURNAL and none are returned. Any not used in the current issue are kept on file for potential future use. JOURNAL does not compensate any author through payment or in any other manner for such voluntary submissions. While JOURNAL attempts to contact authors during editing process, JOURNAL reserves the right to edit materials, as it deems necessary, for publication. While JOURNAL is grateful for and relies upon author submissions, it is unable to personally acknowledge each submission made; however, authors may contact JOURNAL to ensure their submission was received for consideration for inclusion in the JOURNAL.

Send correspondence or article submissions for the Urantia Association International JOURNAL to the Chicago address. For earliest consideration, direct your correspondence to: skelly@wtmi.net

Urantia Association International and the Urantia Association International JOURNAL are interdependent with Urantia Foundation, original publisher of *The Urantia Book*. For further information about Urantia Association International or UAI JOURNAL please contact the UAI Chicago office.

Any interpretations, opinions, conclusions, or artistic representations, whether stated or implied, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Urantia Association International, the National or Local Urantia Association, or the board of editors of the Urantia Association International JOURNAL.

The Urantia Book

<http://www.urantia.org/papers/index.html>

Links to websites

<http://www.urantia-uai.org/links.htm>

Journal archives

<http://www.urantia-uai.org/Journal/index.html>

® Registered trademark of Urantia Foundation. Used pursuant to license.

URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

JOURNAL

559 W. DIVERSEY PKWY. #351
CHICAGO, IL 60614 USA



Address Correction Requested