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Remembrance is everyday

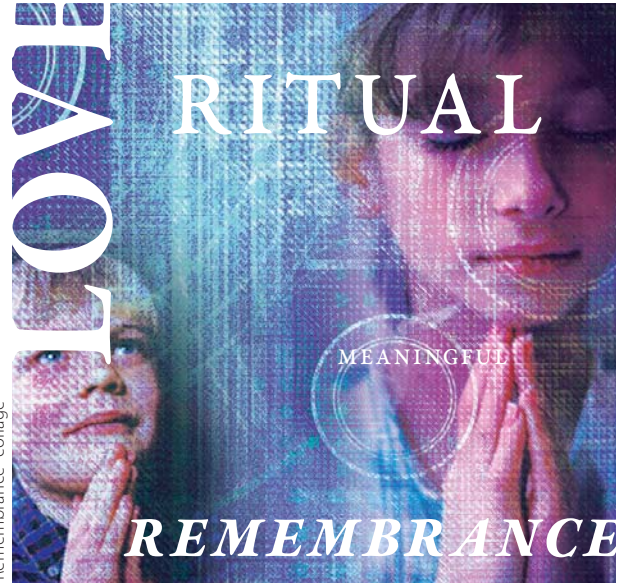
CAROLYN PRENTICE
United States

Get a group of religionists together, and you're bound to witness some rituals. People sing and dance, read from sacred texts, assume certain postures to pray or meditate, recite certain words together. Rituals are a part of human group life because they give meaning and order to an otherwise pedestrian life, they inspire and excite us, as well as give us a sense of security and belonging.

NEVERTHELESS, ONE OF THE THINGS that has marked the Urantia movement is that we have so far rejected rituals. We are a diverse group of believers who come to the book from different backgrounds and cultures—and bring with us different emotions about those backgrounds. For example, I grew up Catholic with all its fossilized rituals, which I both loved and hated because they provided a routine and rhythm to my life. Even though I now attend another church, I often miss my old rituals because the rituals of my new church just aren't that familiar and don't provide me with that sense of meaning and continuity that my old rituals did. If you were raised in a specific religion and are now a reader of *The Urantia Book*, you might feel the same thing at times: You sometimes miss your old rituals, even if they don't seem that meaningful any more.

If you were raised in a specific religion and are now a reader of The Urantia Book, you might feel the same thing at times: You sometimes miss your old rituals, even if they don't seem that meaningful any more.

But people are different. Perhaps you're on the other side and have gladly let go of your old religious rituals because they never made much sense to you anyway. Or you may feel that you were so misused



and manipulated by your childhood religion that you want to flee from anyone and anything that vaguely hints at the need for religious rituals. We readers of *The Urantia Book* are a diverse bunch!

But the truth of the matter is that people like rituals to some extent, and rituals have some usefulness—even *The Urantia Book* says so:

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

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Hello Dear Siblings,

IN THIS ISSUE, WE WISH to lend a hand to everyone who is in perpetual discovery of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Of course, this includes any and all new readers. Because when we look at things from a universal standpoint, we are all beginners. God's evolutionary plan does seem to have included a pattern in which our personal development is inherent to an inevitable succession of time sequenced events, leading us always to higher levels of comprehension and awareness concomitant with our worthy values as they are registered in the ever expanding soul which we should so dearly nourish. So somehow, we are all in a constant beginning. It is likely that eternity has something to do with this.

While this issue is comprised of variety, each article has a linking bond. They are all oriented in either demonstrating actuality of existence, teaching to others how all of this works out and finally, finding ways to help others teach about all these marvels. And as progress leads us to new understandings, we can rely on the teachings of *The Urantia Book* as they seem to be very much in pace with contemporary discoveries.

In this issue, Carolyn Prentice reflects on the value of remembering what Jesus did and how many rituals take their origin from simple acts. To remember is to be there in mind and spirit, and this can be an everyday thing. And how about a little sparkle from Bill Sadler, Jr. in a presentation on "The Absolutes." Bill's pragmatic way of explaining things holds historic value and worthwhile reading. And concern-

ing his way of explaining things, we have incorporated a useful "Letter to the Editor" on this subject. We also have a narration on the quality of *The Urantia Book*, presented by Halbert Katzen. It is amazing how science is continually confirming the authenticity of *The Urantia Book*. Finally, we will complete this edition with a few words from Gaétan G. Charland, who has great insight on what training leaders and teachers is about.

The staff wishes you good reading.

Alain Cyr, Chief Editor ■

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Letter To The Editor

Dear Alain,

Welcome to the editor position for the UAI Journal. In the February 2008 issue, I read with great interest the page 1 article “Some Comments on the Foreword to *The Urantia Book*,” by Bill Sadler, and would like to share a bit of feedback.

As a transcription of a live presentation, it is challenging to convey all of the points of reference which the audience in attendance must have had. I am referring specifically to several paragraphs on page 11, where the topic changes back and forth from segments of God the Sevenfold to the three Absolutes of Potential. I spoke with Carolyn Kendall, a Forum member, and she indicated that Bill Sadler almost always used a blackboard to list items, and pointed to various portions for his audience to follow his lectures.

As you can see (*in the second paragraph of page 11*) he is speaking of the subabsolutes, and then immediately states “These three Absolutes are...,” in reference to the functions of the Deity, Unqualified, and Universal Absolutes.

Though I’ve never seen it before, most likely this article has been published elsewhere in the past, and it is the property of the Urantia Foundation or some other group who periodically gives permission for it to be reprinted. Nonetheless, I believe that without extremely careful reading, the shifting comparisons are at minimum confusing, if not unintentionally misleading.

I strongly feel the article needs an editorial aside (just like the page 1 description of the alamite gun) that states that the shift of topic is happening mid-paragraph, something which a live audience could easily follow, but a reader of a transcript would not readily understand. A follow-up clarification for your readership and, just as important, feedback to the owner of the document, would be very helpful to avoid future repetition of the same unclear text in these confusing paragraphs.

(Please note that I am very intentionally not trying in any way to modify the opinions, understandings, or interpretations being expressed by the author.)

There are two other minor points I would mention, each related to the text on page six of the “Journal.” First, the statement “Now, I’ll make sure you don’t...” is a phrase and not a quote and should be handled accordingly. And second, the paraphrased items from the list on page 3 of

The Urantia Book are slightly misnumbered. #6 needs to be split into #6 and #7.

Even as a paraphrase, it should be “6. Relative and imperfect in association.” With the other portion as “7. Imperfection in all aspects.”

The currently labelled #7 “I would say in human beings...” is just a concluding statement that should not be a numbered item or part of the list at all.

Thank you for your consideration on these items. And again, I wish you the best for your term as Editor of the much-enjoyed UAI “Journal.”

Sincerely,
Ken Keyser
Chicago, USA

Dear Ken,

Your comments are most welcome as they greatly contribute to the better understanding of the context in which Bill Sadler Jr. expressed his opinions on this subject. As in this current issue we have another discussion topic from him, I certainly advise all readers to use this material as an inspiration tool, making sure for themselves that what they understand can be validated with substantial meaning. The best way I found for this is by sharing my beliefs with people who have common interest on such subjects.

So we are inspired to invite all readers of UAI Journal to voice out their opinion on any text we publish if the additional information can be practical for the readership.

Many thanks in friendship,

Alain

The Urantia Book: A Unique Quality of Credibility

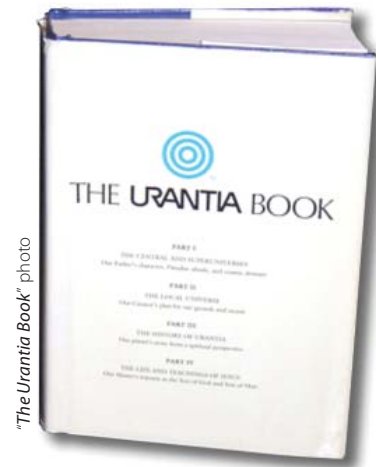
HALBERT KATZEN

JD, creator of UBtheNEWS.com

The Urantia Book exhibits a unique quality of credibility. The good news is that The Urantia Book is doing more than standing up to the test of time; like a fine wine, its quality is improving over time. Simply put, there is not another document anywhere on the planet that so specifically addresses such a wide range of historic and scientific issues AND also can boast the peculiar pattern of having assertions corroborated that were at odds with or not yet considered by science and scholarship when it was published.

TO APPRECIATE THE IMPLICATIONS OF this change in *The Urantia Book's* credibility we need to consider three aspects of this emerging pattern. First, we need to educate ourselves about this development so that we are reasonably familiar with the reality of what has transpired and are confident about making such a bold assertion. Second, the fact-meaning-value relationship presents some challenges. It is challenging because of the tendency to think that scientific facts lead to scientific meanings and values. In this case, they do not. They lead to extraordinary outreach potential. As well, like learning about the information in the book but on a much smaller scale, the amount of time necessary to learn about how science is catching up to it can have a tendency to so occupy our focus that we do not balance out learning the facts with appreciating their meaning and value. It is easy to fall into the trap of ingesting, but not digesting, what we learn. Third, we must honestly face how our past experiences with sharing *The Urantia Book* can become a serious obstacle to embracing the new opportunities that are now available in light of recent developments.

The UBtheNEWS project started in January 2007. Since its inception, three things have happened that justify the assertion that *The Urantia Book* is not what it used to be regarding its outreach potential. 1) Reports on post-publication corroborations are written for people without a background in science and who are unfamiliar with *The Urantia Book*. 2) These reports are posted on the Internet in a way that is designed for outreach. 3) Some of the most impressive post-publication corroborations were not written up



prior to the UBtheNEWS project. This last issue is a comment about the nature of the corroborations, not the author(s). Researching new subjects is an important part of the UBtheNEWS project. Even the reports on topics written about prior to the project are enhanced because they needed to be re-researched and updated.

The Times They Are A-Changing

UBtheNEWS.com is fundamentally a research, reporting, and outreach service. The website provides a variety of material in a manner designed to give people a powerful and positive first impression of the book: an introductory pamphlet, a 35-page overview of *The Urantia Book* (developed as syllabus material for Denison University's World Religion classes), audio recordings, articles, and study aids created by one of the foremost scholars of *The Urantia Book*, Dr. Chris Halvorson.

Since launching the UBtheNEWS project, over eighty study group presentations have been done across the country. Along with educating approximately one thousand Urantia Book readers about the UBtheNEWS project, this effort also resulted in a foundation of grassroots support and the development of a team of people dedicated to helping move the project forward.

Notwithstanding that the focus in the first year was on educating Urantia Book readers about UBtheNEWS, about ten percent of the presentations were direct outreach, non Urantia Book audiences. These included presentations at three university classes, four churches, one interfaith group, a Theosophical Society, a business-networking group, and two at Capstone House (a "futuristic learning center"). Additionally, several meetings with researchers whose work has been used in UBtheNEWS reports took place.

All this is mentioned not to catalogue accomplishments but rather to emphasize that our community is becoming more aware of the potentials inherent in doing a new type of introduction and that non Urantia Book

readers are receiving this very well. The non Urantia Book communities regularly request return engagements. Documenting for non Urantia Book readers the ways in which science and scholarship has been catching up to the book is an idea whose time has come. This development marks a dramatic shift in our ability to give a quick, positive, and powerful first impression of *The Urantia Book*.

When we are speaking with someone who has never heard of or knows next to nothing about *The Urantia Book*, we can provide an introduction that is inspiring, interesting, and intriguing. It only takes about one minute. All we have to do is convey the following information:

1. *The Urantia Book* was published over fifty years ago.
2. It is richly detailed with a wide variety of scientific and historic information.
3. Much of this information contradicted or was not yet given consideration by the scientific and scholarly community when it was published.
4. Science and scholarship have increasingly and dramatically been catching up to *The Urantia Book*.
5. Verification of this information is freely available at UBtheNEWS.com and is written for people who are unfamiliar with *The Urantia Book* and who do not have a background in science.

Introducing the book in this way sets up a completely new conversational dynamic. It establishes that *The Urantia Book* provides uniquely credible information and has a fifty-year track record that is constantly improving. Starting with the book's unique quality of credibility turns the tables one hundred eighty degrees with respect to the awkward issue of authorship. Information about authorship that formerly sounded strange can now be heard as an internally consistent and objectively verifiable explanation of the assertion about its credibility.

The possibilities of this approach become particularly apparent when we appreciate that introductions are not a time to try to convert people or to try to convince them about anything. The benefit of this wisdom requires more than applying it as a tactical tool; it requires embracing it as a respectful and loving way to relate to others.

If you have not tried this approach before, it is like breathing fresh air. But do not make the mistake of judging its merits by how things go the first time. Like any new conversation it takes a little time to develop one's ability to do it smoothly and to graciously handle the variety of responses that reflect human diversity. As well, it is important to judge the value of this method for introducing *The Urantia Book* by how it is generally received. This means that we have to give ourselves the benefit of a sample population AFTER we have become

adept with the conversation. If we go through these steps, then we are in a position to compare it to the other approaches we have used to introduce it.

By informing people about how they can verify this information for themselves for free whenever they want to, we have liberated ourselves from having to be "an expert" about the various corroborations. Naturally, if we also let people know that the website has a Topic Summaries page that allows visitors to get a quick overview, the conversation will become all the more powerful because people will understand that it does not take a lot of time to learn about *The Urantia Book's* unique quality of credibility.

Sometimes people will ask us to provide examples. Sometimes we need to ask if people would like to hear a few examples. Fortunately, little time is needed to learn how to summarize the reports.

- *The Urantia Book* says that Adam and Eve lived about 37,000 years ago and that they were responsible for significant changes in human genetics. Genetics research done in the last couple of years correlates with its story about Adam and Eve in six different ways.
- In describing the Garden of Eden and how it sank to the bottom of the eastern Mediterranean Sea 33,000 years ago, *The Urantia Book* gives numerous details regarding its size and shape. When it was published, we did not have detailed maps of the Mediterranean Sea's basin. Today these detailed maps show correlations with all the details provided in *The Urantia Book*.
- *The Urantia Book* asserts that all animals have a sensitivity to the earth's magnetic field. In 1955 the scientific community thought this field was too weak to be detected by animals and knew of no biological mechanism that could do the job. We have now confirmed that many animals can sense this energy and have discovered various biological mechanisms related to this sensitivity.
- It describes aspects of our atmosphere that were totally at odds with science when *The Urantia Book* was published. Videos taken from space shuttles now reveal an atmospheric phenomenon that strongly supports what it describes.
- A supernova that exploded in 1572 is said to have had a double star origin, which is to say that a couple of stars orbited around each other. Eventually the larger one pulled in enough matter from the smaller to cause an explosion. The nature of this supernova explosion was not verified until the 1970's with additional support coming in just the last few years.

- *The Urantia Book* says that the Native Americans came across the Bering Strait land bridge 85,000 years ago. Scholars in 1955 believed that Native Americans entered by this route about 12,000 years ago. Today, discoveries in both North and South America have pushed this date back as far as 60,000 years ago.
- *The Urantia Book* says the Vikings reached North America around 1000 A.D. This was not widely believed until Viking settlements were excavated in the 1960's.

Learning how to list several examples to support an introduction is easy and gives us confidence in making the assertion that *The Urantia Book* exhibits a unique quality of credibility. Becoming familiar with the various reports allows us to pick topics that may be of special interest to the person with whom we are speaking.

Like the tide that raises all ships, starting out with *The Urantia Book's* extraordinary quality of credibility will uplift everything else we have learned about conversing with people who do not know about it. However, suggesting that we start with its credibility does not mean that we should focus only on this issue or attempt giving as many examples as possible.

The UBtheNEWS project marks a new and joyous opportunity for service. Now we can all quickly provide a powerful and positive first impression of The Urantia Book as we pass by.

Giving a good first impression of *The Urantia Book* requires not only beginning the conversation well but also ending it well. The key is to allow

the other person to direct the course of the conversation once we have provided the essential introductory information (Of course, because people new to a topic often do not know how to ask good questions, we need to respond wisely.) By monitoring their interest level, we will know when they have heard enough. At that point it is time to initiate a gracious end to the conversation.

As quickly as we are willing to embrace the blessing, we are liberated from the awkward authorship issue. The UBtheNEWS project marks a new and joyous opportunity for service. Now we can all quickly provide a powerful and positive first impression of *The Urantia Book* as we pass by. Of course, the UBtheNEWS project can be helpful to us in talking about *The Urantia Book* with those who are part of our daily lives. But I suggest starting with those beyond our inner circles. We can learn the value of this new approach better when the stakes are lower and there is no history of disinterest.

Fact, Meaning, and Value

The Urantia Book's emerging pattern of credibility presents a relation between fact, meaning, and value that is challenging for both Urantia Book readers and non Urantia Book readers alike. The challenge is that the presentation of the facts can easily misdirect

our attention away from the meaning and value of these facts. The tendency to over-focus on the facts is exacerbated when we find their meaning and value to be personally challenging with regard to our attitude about outreach.

The meaning is clear and simple; *The Urantia Book* is now enjoying a unique and extraordinary quality of credibility. The value for Urantia Book readers is that it presents an opportunity for doing much more effective outreach.

In order for us to develop confidence about this growing forest of credibility, we must take the time to appreciate the various trees in this forest, the facts. Most people are only willing to sit and listen for so long during a presentation. Far less time tends to be given to reading through the website. (Programs provide data that tracks the pages that people view on UBtheNEWS.com and how long they stay on.) This is not an implied criticism. It is a necessary perspective for appreciating the process that we are collectively engaged in. Some time must be invested in considering the quality of the individual trees before we can step back and appreciate the forest (the meaning and value). The good news is that overcoming this challenge is simply a matter of time. Eventually, from varying degrees of exploration and osmosis, we will all see the awesome implications of this growing pattern.

Fortunately humanity is hardwired to appreciate this type of credibility. We all tend to conclude that a pattern of stating information in advance of its widespread acceptance means that the source, no matter what it is, is credible. Generally, people who are new to *The Urantia Book* will not jump to the conclusion that the best parts of it are not directly related to why it has a unique quality of credibility; we need to tell them. And, of course, the value for them has to do with being informed about something that is intriguing. Just as this new opportunity for service, for sharing good news, inspires each of us to varying degrees, non Urantia Book readers also respond in a variety of ways.

The Past

There are a number of issues related to the past that need to be considered in order to appreciate the present circumstances and realize the potentials of future outreach efforts. We need to take an honest look at ourselves both individually and as a group. Of course, only the group dynamics can be addressed here.

Because our individual experiences are varied and personal, we may find ourselves more or less related to the generalizations that will be made here about our collective experiences. These comments come not only from over twenty-five years of experience with Urantia Book readers, but also from all the study group presentations and one-on-one experiences that have come with spearheading the UBtheNEWS project.

There has been an emphasis on identifying ourselves as “reader-believers” in the last fifty years. New cultural movements must of necessity start with congealing “true believers” in order to generate enthusiasm and create a foundation for future growth and development. The process we have been going through, the challenges we have faced and the differences we have had, in a general sense, are common to all new cultural developments.

Ironically, the attitude that was necessary and appropriate in this initial developmental stage also made it harder for us to effectively introduce *The Urantia Book*. Our personal identification with it and the emphasis on being a reader-believer had a tendency to alienate and repel those who are not part of the group. The previous epochal revelations had incarnate beings associated with them. This justified some degree of “hard sell” tactics because evangelism was reliant on interpersonal dynamics. A book requires a different approach. Most people are disinclined to become “true believers” who are dedicated to creating a new cultural movement, no matter what it relates to. People are especially and reasonably cautious about wholeheartedly embracing new spiritual source material. When people pick up even the slightest hint that someone is trying to convert them, they tend to go running for cover.

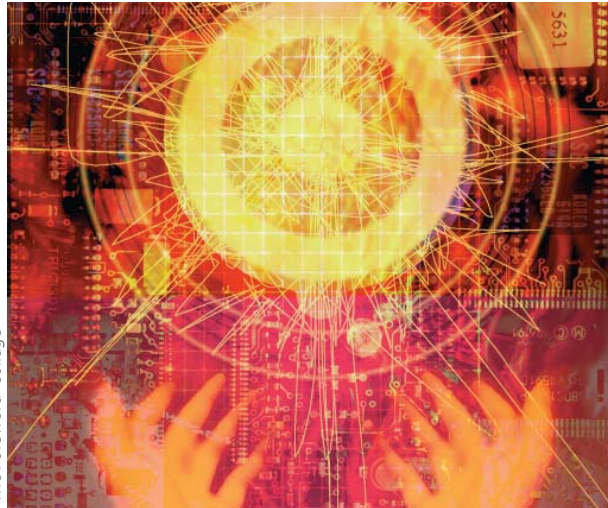
What were the factual circumstances we faced?

The Urantia Book claims to be written by celestials. It came filled with scientific and historical information that was inconsistent with the science of the day. The first two thirds are very challenging to read even with a good education. It has mysterious origins. It is over 2000 pages. Not a pretty picture for quick and broad social acceptance.

To make matters worse, reader-believers, for the most part, have not been particularly interested in the scientific and historic material, except for the parts on cultural development. Consequently, for these and other reasons, our collective ability to appreciate and make use of *The Urantia Book's* emerging quality of credibility has been hampered because scientific credibility was never that important for us.

How did we handle the initial lack of scientific and historic credibility?

We avoided talking about the issues with science and history. We learned how to become apologists when we could not avoid the subject or if we happened to be interested in those aspects. We learned to quote phrases like “very rigorously limited by the instructions of superiors,” or “not at liberty to anticipate the scientific discoveries of a thousand years,” and especially “the physical sciences will stand in need of revision in consequence of additional scientific developments and new discoveries.” That last one has been a big favorite.



“The Foreword” collage

This is not intended as a critical commentary on our community. Quite the contrary, it was good wisdom for the day. We needed to learn how to become good *Urantia Book* apologists.

This initial stage of cultural development must now be seen as by-gone days and good riddance to them.

What was our psychological response to these challenging circumstances?

Introducing people to *The Urantia Book* and inspiring them to read it was tremendously challenging in the first fifty years. We passionately tried to introduce the book to our family and friends. It was inherently a difficult task and our unrefined zealotry made it worse. For the most part we failed miserably. With our failures came embarrassment and marginalization, being ostracized, ridiculed, disrespected, and worst of all, simply ignored.

Not surprisingly, we had a natural reaction to these experiences. We felt hurt and disillusioned. We stopped talking about it openly. We created a filtering system that excluded most people and only brought it up to those who seemed “ready for it.” We concluded that America was not ready for it. A lot of resources and time were spent on translations and international outreach, thereby deemphasizing the wisdom of the revelators, who wrote it in English and placed *The Urantia Book* in the United States.

Fortunately for our collective psyches, because slow growth was all we were capable of anyway, early leadership fostered a policy of “slow growth.” Whether this was good wisdom or came from superhuman sources is not the issue. The point is that we are past this point. (An interesting side note is that Prof. Fein from Denison University considers that in comparison to other

The opportunity to make a positive and powerful introduction on a person-to-person basis is significantly different today than it has been in the past. Society is different. And most importantly, the opportunity to communicate that The Urantia Book has a unique and extraordinary quality of credibility is very different.



new religions, appreciation for *The Urantia Book* has developed reasonably well for the first fifty years.)

The opportunity to make a positive and powerful introduction on a person-to-person basis is significantly different today than it has been in the past. Society is different. And most importantly, the opportunity to communicate that *The Urantia Book* has a unique and extraordinary quality of credibility is very different. All of this merits reconsideration of our person-to-person approach and how enthusiastically we “should” inform people “as we pass by.” It is time for the whole process of personal outreach to be reconsidered.

The Present

The pattern of corroborations supporting *The Urantia Book’s* credibility is extraordinary. This type of credibility, generally speaking, resonates well with most people. Many people in the United States are especially hungry for harmony between spirituality and science because the controversy between evolution and creation is constantly in our media, bogging down our legislatures, and undermining our educational systems.

People may reasonably be disinclined to believe an assertion about the book’s credibility when they hear of it for the first time. People may embrace a theology that requires them to discount the value of this type of credibility once they find out more about its theological positions and purported origins. People may not be psychologically ready to deal with something that exhibits superhuman qualities. People may be preoccupied with other concerns when we bring it up and simply not be ready to hear it at the moment. But all these considerations are accompanied by a general human appreciation for anything and anyone that provides factually accurate information in advance of its widespread acceptance.

Humanity is hardwired to appreciate the type of credibility that *The Urantia Book* now exhibits. This is today’s version of epochal superhuman credibility. The first epochal revelation had an immortal staff of one hundred. The second epochal revelation had the even more impressive and immortal Adam and Eve. Melchizedek came without lineage, apparently did not age, and left as mysteriously as he came. Michael’s

appearance was marked by many miraculous events. All epochal revelations are designed to have a particular quality of superhuman credibility. And this one is no different, notwithstanding that it is developing over time and comes in book form.

Today, informing people about *The Urantia Book* is a lot like showing them a gradually unfolding miracle that they can go see for themselves. Leveraging this quality is timely and part of the plan.

Being of service to others means we need to get beyond our own relationship to the book. The relevant question is: What type of introduction stands the best chance of intriguing someone who has never heard about *The Urantia Book* before? It is necessarily true that most all of us who are reader-believers became so in the absence of the type of credibility that the book now exhibits. This does not mean that this issue of credibility should not be important to others. Having an attitude about how the corroborations of science and history are not its most important aspect, though true, is not helpful.

Who are we to ask people to trust our experience with *The Urantia Book* when a verifiable, superhuman quality of credibility is available?

Life is a smorgasbord of spiritually enriching opportunities. The essential element of a good introduction is to impressively distinguish *The Urantia Book* from everything else. Unless they succumb to sophistry, people long for harmony between spirituality and science, especially science (and history) that is ahead of its time. We would do well to honor and encourage the natural human desire to have spiritual beliefs be in harmony with scientific developments. People are starving for *The Urantia Book’s* revelatory credibility and we hold the keys to the pantry.

I was first introduced to *The Urantia Book* when I was working for Greenpeace over twenty-five years ago. The job was going door-to-door on membership drives. I thought the most important thing to talk about was the work that Greenpeace was doing on nuclear weapons, waste, and energy issues. The problems associated with these issues seemed to put everyone’s life in danger. Naturally, this was more important to me than saving the whales. Eventually, after needlessly missing out on the opportunity to sign up Greenpeace memberships, I learned that what I thought was most important was not what was most inspiring for others. And besides, once they became members, they would get a monthly newsletter to inform them about all the other issues. Similarly, we need to respect where people are at, if we want to be of service in a manner that is gracious and effective.

The point here is not that most people are into scientific issues or that its emerging pattern of credibility proves its authenticity or that this type of introduction will immediately “turn people on to *The Urantia Book*.” The point is that most people want to get a sense of the

book's unique quality of credibility first. People will naturally assume, or at least be willing to consider, that if the book can be ahead of science, then it probably is worth checking out for its spiritual, philosophical, theological, and cosmological content. And they would be right. There IS a direct link between these issues. Starting with the book's credibility both prepares the soil and plants the seed. And sometimes people are so ready the fruit ripens very quickly.

Traveling around the country this last year giving UBtheNEWS presentations has taught me a lot about the diversity of our community.

On one end of the spectrum, some people are immediately intrigued and inspired by the UBtheNEWS project. They are already passionately interested in the ongoing process of learning how to upgrade their outreach efforts. On the other end of the spectrum are people who are not inspired to develop themselves as evangelists of the Urantia revelation. They are not particularly interested in doing the "as we pass by" type of introductions. They are cautious and suspicious of using the angle encouraged by the UBtheNEWS project. Near as I can tell we are quite evenly distributed over the breadth of this spectrum.

There are several not-so-surprising factors that influence how open Urantia Book readers are to the UBtheNEWS project. These factors include how long people have been reading the book. Is the "new reader" zeal at play? Geographic considerations have an impact. Some of us have got the "Bible-Belt blues." How much are we still feeling the hurt from when we unsuccessfully tried to introduce the book to family and friends? The early history of corroborating science and history in *The Urantia Book* was not suited for outreach and some of it did not pan out. Are we jaded regarding this approach? Many of us simply are not interested in the subjects that relate to the corroborations. So to varying degrees and for various reasons our community varies in its appreciation for the approach to outreach promoted by the UBtheNEWS project.

Outreach brings up issues that can be challenging for us to confront. "Where am I in that spectrum between the Alpheus twins, who returned to their nets, and the preaching of Simon Peter?" Ironically, the easier it is to introduce *The Urantia Book*, the more we find ourselves confronted by issues that we can no longer pin on "the people who are not ready for it yet."

Just as it is important to be gracious with people when making an introduction to *The Urantia Book* and to be respectful no matter what their response might be, we also need to be gracious and respectful with each other. The quality of the emerging pattern of credibility is a subjective experience and our personal dispositions and experiences are diverse. Fortunately, we know that God loves us just as much no matter where we fall in the spectrum that runs from "private life" to "public preaching."

The Future

When I got involved with the Urantia community over twenty-five years ago, people were rarely quoting phrases like, "the historic facts...will stand on the records of the ages to come," or "authoritative elimination of error," or "co-ordination of known or about-to-be-known facts and observations," or "restoration of important bits of lost knowledge," or "information which will fill in vital missing gaps in otherwise earned knowledge."

I expect we will hear these quoted a lot more in the future!

When it comes to advancing the fifth epochal revelation on Urantia, the greatest challenge we face is the person staring back at us in the mirror. We are the wellspring to the world for wisdom relating to the fifth epochal revelation. The current cultural circumstances, particularly in the country where this gift was bestowed, are well suited for receptivity. The real question is: Can we let go of the past, embrace the present, get out of our own way, and move boldly forward with the exquisite opportunity for service that lies before us?

The first step is our willingness to find joy in simply letting people know that *The Urantia Book* exists. Then, when we are willing to develop skills with this new type of introduction and be the kind of people who measure success in terms of whether or not we open our mouths, we will find enormous satisfaction in sowing seeds destined to grow and in harvesting some of the low hanging fruit.

There are even opportunities here for planting seeds in the conservative Christian community. Consider a conversation with someone from this community in which we express the following (after we have gotten beyond the initial introduction of the book's unique quality of credibility):

"I can easily appreciate and respect that when you came to accept Jesus as your savior, you felt you had to choose between Jesus and science. You made an excellent choice. If I had found myself confronted with such a choice, I might have done the very same thing. As it turns out, my belief in Jesus has developed in such a way that it allows me to accept Jesus as my savior as well as appreciate and respect the discoveries of science.

"On the most important issues, you and I share the same beliefs. We both believe in his combined human and divine nature and that he resurrected and ascended to the right hand of our Heavenly Father, where he had all power in heaven and earth placed into his hands. We both believe that he performed miracles and even raised Lazarus from the dead. We believe in his teachings and that he is the way, the truth, and the life. We believe that he will one day return as he promised. *The Urantia Book* even says that, of all knowledge, knowing about

Life is a smorgasbord of spiritually enriching opportunities. The essential element of a good introduction is to impressively distinguish The Urantia Book from everything else.

the religious life of Jesus and how he lived it is the most important.

“I just wanted to share what I thought was good news and do not wish to continue the conversation if it is not being mutually appreciated.”

Consider what opportunities are now available for the Thought Adjuster to work with that person’s mind and soul.

When Spirit knows that we are willing to introduce the book in this way, then Spirit has an opportunity to guide us to those individuals in the conservative Christian community who would be most open to this approach. We will not experience the dead statistics if the living Spirit knows we have developed and are willing to use a new talent.

The good that comes from introducing *The Urantia Book* is something that we will often not get to see directly. This is simply the nature of informing people about something for the first time. Often people need to be exposed to new things several times before they are willing to take an interest. But one thing is for sure. This type of introduction raises the bar. It lets people know a book exists

...most aspects of this project do not require these qualities, especially when we consider that the most important thing to do is share the good news as we pass by.

that does more than harmonize spirituality and science; it is also exhibits a unique quality of credibility in this regard. Even conservative Christians will have to respect that we see validation in our text in a way similar to how they often attempt to validate the Bible.

It is high time we stop sizing up people we have never met before and making excuses about how they are the ones who are not ready. The real issue these days is whether we are ready to embrace a shift that has already occurred.

Reconciling The Urantia Book Is Not The Same. Are You?

The shift in *The Urantia Book’s* relationship to science and history, coupled with our ability to provide reports on these developments to the whole world as quickly as we can get them done and for very little money, changes everything when it comes to introducing the book. The Internet has also changed our ability to do good research and to collaborate with each other in the process of providing quality reports on the emerging corroborations. The question we need to ask is: How much of our time are we willing to invest to make this happen?

Using the emerging pattern of corroborations to demonstrate *The Urantia Book’s* unique quality of credibility is not a brilliant idea or original with the UBtheNEWS project; it is an idea whose time has come. This is the transition period when the harvest is great and the laborers are few.



“Book and Peace” collage

It is true that some of the activities necessary to develop the UBtheNEWS project are best suited to those of us with a good education, writing skills, and presentation skills. But most aspects of this project do not require these qualities, especially when we consider that the most important thing to do is share the good news as we pass by. If you want to make a big difference in how quickly and powerfully *The Urantia Book* reaches the world, get involved with the UBtheNEWS project at least by using it as a tool for your own outreach efforts. Learn from and tell people about UBtheNEWS.com.

This project is one of the most efficient and rewarding ways that you can use your time to foster the development of the fifth epochal revelation to Urantia. There are so many different aspects to this project that any amount of time you are willing to spend and talents you have can immediately be put to good use.

The most important thing is to learn anew how to introduce *The Urantia Book*. Generally speaking, we all meet people that no other Urantia Book reader is likely to meet in the near future. These are the souls that need us to inform them about the Urantia revelation. On this increasingly incredible planet, credibility is increasingly hard to find. Feed the hungry, lost sheep.

I am not suggesting that we do away with all we have learned over the years about introducing the book. We have developed a lot of talents because it has been so difficult. Rather the suggestion is that by first making sure the other person in the conversation knows about its unique quality of credibility, all these other skills we have learned over the years will become all the more powerful. These days, credibility is everything. Interestingly enough, by first talking about the impersonal and verifiable aspect of *The Urantia Book’s* credibility, we enhance our own personal credibility.

Since starting this project, my life has been opening up in well nigh miraculous ways. I believe in the teaching that the individual is not important, the work is. The obvious implication of this precious wisdom is that you too can similarly experience the exquisite joy and extraordinary response of Spirit that comes with engaging yourself in this new and timely opportunity to share *The Urantia Book*, the fifth epochal revelation, with our brothers and sisters everywhere. ■

Remembrance is everyday

Continued from page 1

It is difficult for religion to survive as the private practice of isolated individuals. This has ever been the error of the religious leaders: Seeing the evils of institutionalized religion, they seek to destroy the technique of group functioning. In place of destroying all ritual, they would do better to reform it. [1076:4]

Ritual is the technique of sanctifying custom; ritual creates and perpetuates myths as well as contributing to the preservation of social and religious customs. Again, ritual itself has been fathered by myths. Rituals are often at first social, later becoming economic and finally acquiring the sanctity and dignity of religious ceremonial. Ritual may be personal or group in practice--or both--as illustrated by prayer, dancing, and drama. [992:3]

Now, I submit that's quite a paragraph, isn't it? Thus, rituals are a means for individuals to sanctify everyday life and for groups of people to bond. Much of what makes a group cohesive is that they share meaningful rituals.

A specific ritual that is enacted within the Urantia community from time to time is the ritual of the Remembrance Supper. All of the Remembrance Suppers that I have witnessed in the Urantia community have drawn some details from communion services at Christian churches. Most of these occasions have been very ceremonious, with solemn readings and ritualized motions. There is a place for such formality, solemnity and ritual—and I don't mean to denigrate these practices.

That said, I think we need to take a look at how Jesus established the Remembrance Supper and what specifically Jesus and some revelators in the book said about the practice. By examining the text we can perhaps come to understand what Jesus had in mind and perhaps frame this ritual in a new way. So let's look at what *The Urantia Book* specifically says about the Remembrance Supper and how and why it was instituted.

The first occurrence of the term supper of the remembrance occurs halfway through the book, in a section entitled "The Social Aspects of Religion":

Jesus did not require of his followers that they should periodically assemble and recite a form of words indicative of their common beliefs. He only ordained that they should gather together to actually do something—partake of the communal supper of the remembrance of his bestowal life on Urantia. [1091:1]

Notice that in this text, the presenter, a Melchizedek of Nebadon, strikes a contrast between assembling to recite words and assembling to actually do something. So it appears that the heart of the Remembrance Supper has nothing to do with the ritualistic words or anything else we might say or read. It's about doing something—specifically, remembering Jesus' life on Urantia through a communal supper.

The only other occurrences of the words supper of the remembrance or remembrance supper appear in Paper 179, The Last Supper, in Section 5 entitled "Establishing the Remembrance Supper," pages 1941-1943. Since that is too much to quote in an article like this, I suggest that you get out your book and read these few pages carefully before we continue. Do it now.

A Fresh Look

You have read that although Jesus tried NOT to establish a precise ritual with precise meanings, his followers ignored his wishes and fossilized the remembrance supper into specific formulas and standards for perfect practice. *The Urantia Book* admonishes us NOT to do this because human beings have a history of obsessing over the details of rituals:

The essence of the ritual is the perfection of its performance; among savages it must be practiced with exact precision.... And so for tens of thousands of years endless rituals have hampered society and cursed civilization, have been an intolerable burden to every act of life, every racial undertaking. [992:2]

This obsession with the details of rituals is why Jesus was inexact and somewhat casual about establishing this ritual: Jesus meant it for everyday use in a broad range of contexts. He didn't mean it to be performed in only one way. We are told that he specifically tried not to establish a formula for a sacrament:

In this way he sought to prevent successive generations from crystallizing his teaching and binding down his spiritual meanings by the dead chains of tradition and dogma. In the establishment of the only ceremony or sacrament associated with his whole life mission, Jesus took great pains to suggest his meanings rather than to commit himself to precise definitions. [1942:3]

I believe that Jesus' intention for everyday use is evident in the words that he used. As a communication scholar, I suggest that we examine the specific text and look at what those words mean. Other people have looked at what Jesus said during the ritual and have made those words into the ritual. I want to look at what Jesus said about the ritual, after he was done:

When Jesus had thus established the supper of the remembrance, he said to the apostles: "And as often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me." [1943:2]

The first thing I notice about this quotation is those words: *established the supper of the remembrance*. These words imply that Jesus had in mind that the supper of the remembrance would actually become a practice, a habit—if not precisely a ritual.

The second thing I notice in the quotation is *remembrance of his bestowal life*. What I find in most communion and remembrance suppers is that they tend to focus on remembering the Last Supper and the establishment of the Remembrance Supper or

communion, but rarely do they meditate on other events in Jesus' bestowal life.

The next question I ask is grammatical in nature: What does the word 'this' refer to in the sentence above (1943:2)? 'This' is a pronoun without an antecedent, which means that the sentence doesn't make clear what 'this' refers to specifically. 'This' could mean, "This solemn offering of bread and wine with ritualized words among a community of believers." That definition is, of course, the narrow definition that most Christian churches recognize. But 'this' could also mean, "Sharing food with friends," or even more broadly, "Eating." Since Christian churches have defined this so narrowly, let's explore how the meaning changes when we define 'this' broadly.

Analyzing further, let's look at the phrase *As often as you do this*. With 'this' defined broadly, we must ask ourselves, how often do we eat? The answer, of course, is "very frequently." Our lives are punctuated by eating, from the first day to the last. From the first day when our mothers held us as newborn babes to their breasts, through all the days of childhood and family life, old age and death, we eat several times a day on almost every day of our lives. In addition to ordinary life, we also celebrate major events by sharing food with people: birthdays, graduations, weddings, even funerals. Holidays are marked by special food and drink.

So when Jesus tells us that as often as we do 'this', do it in remembrance of him, maybe he is telling us that everyday, several times a day, as we eat we should think about his human life. 'This' is not a fossilized ritual to be enacted only on Sundays or at special Urantia meetings. As we read on, Jesus gives us more explicit instructions about how to remember him:

... And when you do remember me, first look back upon my life in the flesh, recall that I was once with you, and then, by faith, discern that you shall all some time sup with me in the Father's eternal kingdom. [1943:2]

What Jesus seems to want us to remember is that he is human just as we are. He wants us to think about how we are feeling at that moment, and to look through his life for a time that he experienced the same feelings. The enhanced view of Jesus' life given to us by the midwayers in Part IV provides us with a rich resource of exploring Jesus' human emotions. When we eat daily, we can reflect on how Jesus might have had a day just like the one we are experiencing: Jesus had a full life that had many happy moments with his family and friends. He told stories and enjoyed music and played with children and listened to the stories of travelers. He gave thanks for the health and happiness of his family as they shared an evening meal together. He tasted food not so different from the food we eat, and he felt emotions very similar to ours as he communed happily with his family and friends.

He had days that were neutral and ordinary. He worked, he was tired, he was worried, he was alone—just as we often feel spent and dull.

Jesus—the Creator Son of our local universe—also had bad days. There were days of awkwardness in the family because Jesus had been lost in the temple or because his brother Jude had done some unacceptable thing. There were days when Jesus was tired from working so hard to keep his family from utter poverty. There was that awful day when the family received word that Joseph had been injured, and Jesus had to remain behind with the little children and give them something to eat while he waited with uncertainty and fear. There were the days he ate with his family, but he was wondering how he could tell Rebecca that he wasn't going to marry her. And there was the night Jesus sat down with the people he loved best and knew that he was going to leave them. He was heartbroken that one of these whom he loved best had already betrayed him. In his short life, Jesus experienced all the vicissitudes of human emotion that we experience in our lives. I think this is what Jesus wants us to recall about his life, that he was once with us, was one of us.

Besides simply remembering events from Jesus life, we can also feel his feelings because this simple practice of the remembrance can become a total experience, one that involves all the senses. While you are eating and drinking, engage all your senses: taste, smell, see, feel, and hear. Then stop a moment and think that Jesus had a moment like this moment on some day of his life. If you are tired, think about how tired he felt from working all day in the caravan shop or on the rudder of the boat. If you are having a good time with friends, think about how Jesus loved to be with people and to laugh and tell stories with them—just as you do. Stop for a moment, taste, smell, and feel the food in your mouth, look around, listen, and think about Jesus in a moment like this in his life. Share your feelings with him.

Let's not forget the final line of the quote: *discern that you shall all some time sup with me in the Father's eternal kingdom [1943:2]*. In that moment of remembering the human life of Jesus, you should also look to the future when you will experience him in a more direct way.

It's fine to have Remembrance Suppers among believers as a way to formally symbolize our beliefs when we all get together. But this little daily practice, your own little ritual, has the potential to uplift you everyday, several times a day, whether you eat alone or with others.

An Everyday Ritual

So therefore I suggest this little practice for you: When you sit down to eat everyday, stop and ponder that Jesus, the Creator Son of our universe, sat down at a table just as you do now and felt the same kinds of feelings that you are feeling right now. In that moment you will share a human experience with him, and his spirit will commune with you.

Why wait for a church service or a planned Remembrance Supper to ponder these things? Instead, honor Jesus' recommendation, that as often as we do this—eating—we should look both backward and forward to our growing intimate relationship with him.

Try it! ■

Discussion of the Absolutes Part I

BILL SADLER

William Sadler, Jr., better known as Bill, was a gifted student of The Urantia Book who also had a talent for distilling its most complex teachings into conversational language. Some of his informal talks were recorded and this article was developed from a transcript of such a presentation to a study group sometime in 1958 or 1959. The following excerpt has been edited to remove extraneous comments and remarks from the audience. Headings have been added to aid the reader in following the structure of the presentation.

YOU'LL RECALL, OVER ON PAGE TWO, IT talks about total Deity. It gives the seven levels on which total Deity is functional. Then it suggests an eighth level on which total Deity is functional but only in a certain sense. What we're doing when we talk about page two—we start out talking about the section entitled, "Deity and Divinity." Levels of functioning and levels of reality—that section describes the beginning of all things, how it would have been if it ever had actually started in sequence. Now, when you go back of the fourth level here, when you deal with statics, potentials, and associatives apart from the creative function of Deity, you are going back of reality. In other words, you are going back to Havona in the Central Universe. We all want to do this, because we all want to get a start. But when we attempt this start, we should understand that—like Alice—we are going through the looking glass.

There really isn't any room there. It just seems to be a room. We are conceptually violating reality. We are saying, "What was it like before there was an Infinite Spirit and a Central Universe?" All right, let's go through the looking glass. This is what time sequence thinkers want to do. They want to go back to number one. I visualize the static function of Deity as a condition in which we are looking at infinity as a unity. There aren't any actuals or potentials yet. All actuals are, as yet, unexpressed. Potentials are something pre-potential, because a real potential exists as a potential only in relation to some actuality.

A Useful Metaphor—The Fried Egg

I visualize the picture of infinity at this point as a nothingness. What I am looking at is a fried egg against a cosmic backdrop. I like the concept "fried

egg" because you can't be afraid of a fried egg. If I talk about the totality of absoluteness, this is a frightening term. But a fried egg—what's with a fried egg? Well, what's with a fried egg is that there's a nucleus and a cytoplasm. There's a yolk and a white. And the papers say you never can go back to the place where there was just a oneness— even in your thinking. You must assume a possible two-ness. In other words, the yolk of the fried egg symbolizes a possibility for self-will. The white of the fried egg symbolizes the possibility for a reaction to some volitional act. This fried egg doesn't stay together. As long as it's together quietly, then we have the static function of total Deity. Now, please remember, as we develop each of these succeeding functions, the earlier functions are still continuous. Deity still functions in a static, self-contained sense. None of these terminate. They all go on to further differentiations.

The next step is the appearance of something potential. I visualize that by watching the yolk of my egg move out away from the white, and the white flows together. So now I've got two kinds of circles. I've got a yellow circle and I've got a white circle. The yellow circle is the volitional part, which is separating itself from the unvolitional part. This is total Absoluteness now, but it's separated. The yolk moved. The white didn't. The white couldn't move. No self will. The yolk could move. It had self will. Since this yolk moved, it qualified itself in some way. It separated itself. This is the Qualified Absolute. That which did not move is the Unqualified Absolute.

But you don't stop with a two-way relationship, because if you say one plus one, you have three factors there—you have a plus sign. The white and the yolk are still related, and the name which the papers give to the relationship between the Deified and the Undeified, between the Qualified Absolute—the yolk—and the Unqualified Absolute—the white—the name which the papers give to that relationship is the Universal Absolute, the unifier of that which has differentiated or separated. In the presence of the Universal Absolute, in a sense the egg is still united, functionally united. Now, we have an actuality, the Qualified Absolute. We now have the potentiality of the Unqualified Absolute. And we have the unity between them. This is the appearance of potentials.

God Breaks Free of Absoluteness and Relationship Happens

This is the beginning of the jailbreak of the Universal Father, as he continues to be Absolute, but one by one he strikes off the shackles of Absoluteness so that he is not imprisoned in the awful prison of Absoluteness. What the Father is doing at this point is what Archimedes dreamt of in Syracuse long ago when he said, "Give me a place to stand, and I'll move the earth." The Universal Father is getting a place to stand on. He is creating room for creatures like us to appear in. If he filled all things totally, there is no room for anything else, is there? He is producing a void, because a void has

a virtue. It can be filled. We were quoting Lao-Tze. And when you realize you don't know nothing, this is when you can start learning something. As Lao-Tze said in 600 BC in the Tao te Ching: "The virtue of an empty vessel is that it can be filled."

These relationships personalize. Here. When a human mind is impregnated by the invasion of a Spirit Adjuster, the relationship between the mind and the Adjuster is the soul, a living reality. All these relationships tend to personalize. Conceptual relationships are personalized. When the Father and the Son jointly entertain an identical concept, they personalize that concept as a Creator Son. Such was the origin of Michael of Nebadon, who once lived on earth as a carpenter. Divinity always seeks expression in personalization. These papers are unique in that they will not validate a monad. A monad is what we would have if we took our original egg in the raw state and scrambled it. That would be a monad, a homogeneous oneness.

The papers will validate only a non-homogeneous oneness, because the minute you start with a monad, you can't get off first base. What breaks the deadlock? Over on page 1154 they say—I'll paraphrase it: "When we violate reality and give you chronology for events in eternity, (which is to say we describe them as though they'd happened in time), then we have to say that there was a time at which the yolk separated from the white" (1154:1). In other words, this is a separation of The Infinite One from The Infinitude. The Infinite One is the Qualified Absolute, or the yolk of the egg. The Infinitude—this name suggests no personality—is the Unqualified Absolute. Then they say, "Please remember the Infinity still continues," which is to say, the union of the two still continues. The yolk has moved out away from the white. Yet, on another level and in another sense, the yolk is still in the white. Do you follow?

These things happen on many levels. Then they say, "You can look at it from this standpoint: The union is achieved by the function of the Universal Absolute, who makes it as though it had never separated." You have three concepts there: It's still the way it was. It's separated, but is united as though it had not separated. Yet it's separated. Now look, if your thinking is troubled by things of this sort, I don't think I'd let it worry you, because we are engaged in unscrewing the inscrutable.

Digression on the Limitation of Language

In a previous discussion about the Bantu, we asked everyone to consider the problem of executing an assignment for the State Department. The assignment is that you go to Africa, and you write a series of papers—about a two thousand page dissertation—describing the American way of life. You've got a good interpreter. You are now writing paper number 112, entitled, "The Functions of the New York Stock Exchange." This is part of the American way of life. Or "The Financial

Functions of Wall Street," a broader title. You start dictating, and pretty soon you get a feedback from the translator: "No word in Bantu for 'common stock.' No word for 'cumulative preferred.' No word for 'convertible debentures.' No word for 'debentures versus securities, borrowings.'" No word for growth equities." So little by little, you start paraphrasing your presentation.

At one point, you consider eliminating this paper entirely, because little by little, as you perceive the limitations of Bantu, it dawns on you that you're going to describe the Stock Exchange in terms of a State Fair with barter and exchange of produce and animals. And either you make that compromise, or you omit the chapter altogether. Now, we are much closer to the Bantu than the Divine Counselor is to the English language. The problem of translating from English to Bantu is simple compared to his problem. What is the tribe in Africa that has, "One, two, three, and many?" That's the numerical system. One, two, three, many. That's their counting. How're you going to differentiate between a large many and a small many; between a hundred and a million? [Thus consider that the Divine Counselor may have difficulty putting divine concepts into our human language.]

Returning to Discussion of the Absolutes and Personality

At any rate, now potentials have developed. I think at the third level, I visualize something taking place within the yolk. I think of the essence of the Father within the yolk as the "most eternal" reality we know. But there are realities which I conceptualize as being "more eternal" than other realities. In this sense, the Eternal Son is "more eternal" than the Infinite Spirit, who is eternal, and the Father, who is "most eternal." It's ridiculous, isn't it? But we're working in Bantu now. We're discussing common stocks. One, two, three, many. At the associative level, I see it beginning when God divests himself of absolute personality. Here again, he is escaping the limitations of absolute personality. In this transaction, he constitutes himself Father of the absolute personality, who is the Son. The Universal Father is not the absolute personality. That is the Eternal Son.

The Eternal Son is the pattern personality. All personality is fashioned after the similitude of this absolute pattern in varying degrees. The Father simply steps aside from the absolute personality. In so doing, he possesses himself of Father personality. I can best understand that by thinking, "If he can be father of the absolute person, he can be father of any person." At the same time, he builds the absolute machine. He builds it for the same reason that men build machines: to act as a material governor, to perform repetitive acts. This absolute machine is the Isle of Paradise. It's the only machine which the Father ever built personally. It is just as much a revelation of the Father, or of God, as is the Eternal Son. The Father is the source of Paradise as he is Father of the Eternal Son. The Eternal Son, then, is the

Universal Father minus everything which is non-deity, extra-divine, and other-than-spiritual.

This is why the Son remains as the everlasting revelation of the Father, because when we want to know the Father, we want to know that aspect of the First Source and Center which is divine, which is deity, which is spiritual. In the Son, we see this, and this only because this is concentrated in the Son. If you want to be puzzled by the First Source and Center, consider Paradise. This also is a revelation of the First Source and Center. The first association, the original association, is between the Qualified and Unqualified Absolute, and between the Father and the Eternal Son. This is not a completed association. You see what's happening over here in the yolk? The Father is beginning to fix it so that he no longer pervades the wholeness of the yolk. He no longer fills the Qualified Absolute. First he separated himself from the Unqualified Absolute. Now he is differentiating himself within the Qualified Absolute.

This differentiation is completed at the fourth level of total Deity function when, standing on Paradise—which is their actual power platform for operations—the Father and the Son unite in the first act of creation. This results in the appearance of their infinite associate, the Third Person of Deity, and the Central Universe of eternity. This creative act completes existential associations, because at this point the three Deities—not as persons, but as a corporation, as the Paradise Trinity—now fill the yolk of the egg. Now we should change the name of the yolk. We should no longer call it the Qualified Absolute. We should use its currently functional name.

This is the Deity Absolute referred to in the papers. And now, the Father has completed his jailbreak. He not only has separated himself from being diffused as a pantheistic Deity throughout the totality of infinity, he first concentrates free will and sets up in opposition to it the capacity to react. Then, within the area of free will—within the area of total Deity function—he further segregates himself so that now he's got a place to stand on, he's got associates he can work with, and the show can hit the road. This is the beginning of reality. At the fourth level, we hit reality. We're back through the looking-glass, into a real room. This is an imaginary exploration. The mere fact that you can't get the square root of a minus one doesn't mean that the symbol $\sqrt{-1}$ doesn't perform a valuable function in mathematics.

The Absolutes, Reality and Time

These are imaginary things we've been dealing with. From here on out, it's real, because reality starts with seven absolute beings in existence: the Unqualified Absolute, the Universal Absolute, the Deity Absolute, the First Source and Center, the Second Source and Center, Paradise Source and Center, and Third Source and Center. And one functioning universe, consisting of the twenty-one satellites of Paradise, one billion perfect worlds, and the dark space bodies encircling

Havona. This is the beginning of eternity. We have now reached the dawn of eternity. We have now reached the unbeginning start of the first universe age, the universe age which has an end in time, but has no beginning in time. We've been using such silly words as eternal, more eternal, and most eternal.

But this is the way it would have happened had it happened in time. Since we think in terms of time, we cannot understand sequence apart from time. The papers admonish us that mind of the Paradise level is perfectly aware of non-temporal sequence just as much as they understand non-spatial area. But to us, sequence and time are inseparable. We're talking about source relationships here. There's no question about it: The Son came from the Father. There's equally no question: There never was a time when God was not Father of the Eternal Son. This is a relationship in eternity which we are most crudely symbolizing by analogous relationships in time. But from here on out, we have time. The sequence is a temporal sequence. Almost. Not quite entirely. We'll discuss that. It's funny.

The Seven Master Spirits

The associated level is consummated in the Paradise Trinity. It goes on in other experiential Trinities. The creative function of total Deity inaugurates the Paradise Trinity, and it still goes on. Creation is the characteristic earmark of the birth of Havona, and creation is going on right out here in time and space, isn't it? The Seven Master Spirits are of origin on the fourth level. They were created by the Infinite Spirit as the active agency.

I think of this: the Infinite Spirit sat down and painted seven pictures. He painted the Father. That's Master Spirit Number One. He painted the Son. Master Spirit Number Two. He stood in front of a mirror and painted himself. That's Master Spirit Number Three. Then he sat down and pictured the Father and Son. What would it be like if they were one? He painted a composite portrait. That's Master Spirit Number Four. He said, "Well, what would it be like if the Father and I were merged?" He painted a fifth portrait. This is Master Spirit Number Five. "Well," he said, "there's one I haven't tried. What if the Son and I were alike--what would it be like if the third and second person of deity were one being?" He painted the sixth portrait. This is Master Spirit Number Six.

Then he said, "What would it be like if all three of us were merged as persons?" This is not the Trinity, now. This is a personal portraiture. These are not the three deities sitting down as the "Board of Directors of Undivided Deity, Incorporated." These are three people. They're not in the boardroom. They're down on the street. They're having lunch. Fried eggs they're eating, no doubt. This is Master Spirit Number Seven.

End of Part One: In the future issues, we will continue printing excerpts from Bill Sadler's presentation on the Absolutes. ■

To Train Leaders and Teachers

GAÉTAN G. CHARLAND
Canada

THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT GENERATES A lot of discussion and sometimes some controversy among the readers of *The Urantia Book* community whether they are member of an organization or not. In 1956, during the early days of the publication of *The Urantia Book*, the Brotherhood initiated the creation of a school that was established in the Chicago area. This school had an objective to train leaders and accredit teachers in the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. It is believed that the committee of education in which Dr. Saddler was a member was following the directives of the Revelators to initiate such a project. Unfortunately, because of a lack of students, the school had to close in 1975 after a decision was made by a group of about fifty leaders. It did accredit a few leaders and teachers during its years of operation. What became of those teachers, I do not know, but it would be very interesting to have them relate their experiences during and after their attendance to that school if any of them are still alive today.

What is left materially of this initial effort are the workbooks that were created by Dr. Sadler to help train teachers at that time. Those workbooks are still available from Urantia Foundation for anyone wishing to acquire or study them. Another attempt to train leaders and teachers was made by the Fellowship, this initiative took place in Boulder Colorado, but again the school failed to stay open for lack of material support. Later on, another initiative to create a school to train teachers and students alike was begun under the name of "School of Meanings and Values." This enterprise is on hold at this time to reorient its objectives; it is the last in such a hopeful line of initiatives.

What are we to learn from those past initiatives? Are their failures to attract sufficient interest in the readership a sign of their inadequacy to respond to the task of training teachers in our modern day world, or is it us who are too critical or disinterested in such initiatives or objectives? Many comments were made on different discussion lists from readers who believe that to engage in the task of training teachers is not far from the idea of creating a new religion by inaugurating a new



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era of priesthood! Many others claim that to proceed in such a direction would transform us into a cult oriented organization or be perceived as one! Are we to forego any attempts to train teachers based on those claims and beliefs, or should we seek new ways on how to train others or ourselves as teachers? No, we should not abandon our mission to train teachers and yes we should explore and seek new ways to train and to teach.

We have both within and outside our organizations the means and the resources to accomplish the mission of training teachers. There might be some light at the end of the tunnel. Some readers are exploring different means of approach, and some of those approaches are based on a personal relationship with the Indwelling Spirit to guide them in this spiritual task. We can assess those means if we are willing to let go of our preconceived ideas about Adjuster's communication and about teachers and training. We also have to transcend our fears of becoming a new religion or a cult, our mission is not to make one or the other.

If the old ways of training teachers did not work, what could possibly be those new and better ways? What are the prerequisites to become teachers? How can we train teachers? Where can we learn to train teachers and leaders? Who can train us as teachers? These are some of the questions we can ask ourselves and there are probably many more that we could think of at this time. Let's try to answer a few of them and see where it leads us!

Who can become teachers and what are the prerequisites?

This is a very important question and one we should all try to answer to the best of our knowledge with utmost care to the spiritual insights that might surface in our mind.

When we are faced with the question of who can become a teacher, in light of what *The Urantia Book* tells us about learning and teaching, we all have in various degrees within ourselves the ability to teach. I believe that when God created man and gave him the ability to learn, he included with it the ability to teach; one cannot go without the other. How well we teach spiritual truth

is a very important matter that needs to be addressed with great and profound respect for the Indwelling Spirit and the Spirit of Truth. We also have to be acutely aware of the spiritual needs of the person to whom we are teaching.

So, if we are teaching spiritual truth or if we intend to spiritually enhance the reception and understanding of others, we need to be spiritually connected to a divine source, in this case our Indwelling Spirit.

Teaching can be accomplished on many levels and the more we have integrated a truth in our lives the less effort is required of us in order to convey that truth when we are teaching it. Whether we teach unconsciously by examples or consciously by any other methods, academically or by ways of a presentation, a speech, a lecture, an explanation or by simply answering a question, our intent and dedication to do it in partnership with God will dramatically influence the results. How can we improve our teaching if not by inviting God in our efforts to serve others? Can we learn from others how to do this more effectively? I believe so; Jesus has showed us the way in Part Four of *The Urantia Book*.

If we have to train others and ourselves in the art of teaching spiritual truths, it would make sense that we need to improve the relationship we have with our Thought Adjuster. We need to train ourselves in the art of spiritual communication, we need to find ways and methods to explore and improve those avenues of communications. There are individuals who have explored and perfected such methods, others who have learned from them; we could learn from them also if our desire for service is strong enough to permit us such a consecrated learning experience. We know from *The Urantia Book* that Adjusters communicate with each other, we can infer from that fact that they can help us communicate spiritually with each other. Wasn't it how Jesus taught, in partnership and cooperation with the Thought Adjuster of the person he was teaching? Who is better than our Thought Adjuster to know exactly what we need to know and how to learn it? Examples of that are numerous in *The Urantia Book*, specifically in the life of Jesus.

We can agree on a few things. To become better at something, we can learn from someone who is knowledgeable in what we want to learn and in doing so, we save ourselves a lot of unnecessary mistakes. We can become better by practicing often and regularly for practice makes perfect. We need good programs; Jesus elaborated a teaching and training program with the Apostles that lasted more than three years. If we have good programs we can save ourselves a lot of frustration, mistakes and lost time, any regular teacher can tell us that. We often times fall in the trap of believing that *The Urantia Book* will accomplish everything by itself; that the only things required of us is to make *The Urantia Book* known to others. One could say *The Urantia Book* is not

a means to an end – it is the means of a new beginning as long as we believe we are essential to that beginning.

I see *The Urantia Book* as a tool to help us in our efforts to improve ourselves and by doing so, help others. It is like doctors, they have studied many books and some of them are probably better than others. They probably cherish one book more than the others and yet, when we are consulting one of these doctors, he is not trying to convince us to read his preferred book! He is only applying what he has learned from his books to our present needs. If on the other hand we would be a patient interested in studying medicine or becoming a doctor, he could probably give us a few advices on which book to read based on our previous knowledge or intentions.

A spiritual teacher is a bit like a doctor, instead of teaching ways to improve physical health, he is teaching ways to improve spiritual health and growth. A spiritual teacher is not only a teacher but also a doctor of the soul, for in this world there is a lot of sickness and not all of it physical or mental. So, next time we have the urge of giving *The Urantia Book* to some one, what exactly are we trying to achieve? Are we by-passing a greater opportunity, the one to teach?

What are some of the other and new ways? I can think of a few that are readily accessible to us.

Internet school:

A few years ago, the Urantia Foundation has initiated a new kind of school, one that could be accessible to anyone anywhere as long as they have a computer, an internet access and can speak the required languages in which the courses are given. While there is no person-to-person contact between the teachers and the students, the school is able to achieve a certain amount of success in training teachers and recruiting students. For anyone that is isolated, cannot participate in study groups or attend conferences, the Internet school is by far a more effective way of learning the teachings of *The Urantia Book* than by subscribing to any discussion list or forum that might be in existence and related to *The Urantia Book*.

It helps the students explore, focus and study a specific subject that can be scattered across the many pages of *The Urantia Book* while giving them the opportunity to share with others their findings and understanding. It also greatly helps the individuals who are volunteering as teachers by giving them a firsthand opportunity to acquire organisational skills and most importantly teaching skills. So far, the Internet school has enjoyed growing success by attracting more and more students from the many regions of the globe. One of its greatest challenges at this point is to recruit new teachers to respond to the incessant demands of a growing community of readers from many diverse cultures and languages.

I see The Urantia Book as a tool to help us in our efforts to improve ourselves and by doing so, help others. It is like doctors, they have studied many books and some of them are probably better than others.



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Study groups:

While study groups are mostly the result of personal initiatives on the part of readers, they offer tremendous potential for exploring intellectual understanding, fostering spiritual stimulus and insight, encouraging group wisdom and participation. They offer many opportunities to promote leadership while most importantly fostering the emergence of the spiritual brotherhood of men. There are many ways to host a study group and one thing remains common to them, they are all part of the big plan for the orderly dissemination of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*.

We are but the actors in the grand design that the Revelators are unfolding on our planet for its spiritual welfare and emancipation. When we come to realize the importance of study groups and of our participation in them, we can better appreciate their role in the mission

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that we were given. There is no denying that when we want to go somewhere we need to know where we are going and how we will get there. Even the simple idea of having a study group contains the flicker of a goal, if

only to meet with others and share our understanding of the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Would it not be worthwhile to have greater goals?

Let's say we would want to help others acquire the skills to start their own study group, what better place than within one to do so, by sharing the responsibility of its orderly organization. Is this not in some small ways training leaders? What about when we ask everyone in the group to share their own understandings of what they have read, isn't that encouraging the emergence

of teaching skills? What if we would deliberately and intelligently pursue those goals while we would enjoy studying and coming together as a group, wouldn't that promote individual growth? Let us for a minute imagine if every person hosting a study group would meet with other hosts regularly as a group and share their own experiences on how to improve intellectual, social and spiritual growth in the participants of their study group. Let us take this a step further and imagine what would happen if the majority of persons hosting a study group would have clear goals and strategies to help the emergence and training of leaders and teachers while fostering intellectual, social and spiritual growth?

Study groups offer a firsthand experience and place where we can individually or as a group embark on a project to train ourselves and others to become better teachers. Carolyn Prentice has written a series of five articles that were published in the UAI Journal in 2007 in which she gives us a method based on how Jesus taught and which we can easily use in the confines of a study group to explore, experiment and train ourselves as teachers. It has the great merit of being accessible to a single individual or a group; it is also very personal in application and understanding and relies entirely on the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. It might not be adequate for everyone, but it is a good start.

Conferences

We can use study groups to organize workshop conferences if they have the advantage to take place in an area where a Urantia association happens to be and in which it is desirable to offer workshop conferences to the readership. Such initiatives have already taken place inside the jurisdiction of some UAI associations and the benefits that were gained by the organizers and participants of such events are manifold. They have

offered firsthand experiences on organizing skills, on presentation skills and on team efforts to coordinate the objectives of all workshops and presentations as an opportunity to learn and teach.

The skills acquired in the experience of organizing workshop conferences in study groups can eventually be oriented towards the organization of regional, national and international conferences. Such conferences would offer greater firsthand experience in fostering and pursuing the emergence of leaders and teachers. The idea of using study groups as a first level training ground is not new, it was already there when the first group was started but was not recognized as such. Many things happen in study groups that we are often not aware of, this in itself does not prevent those unconscious happenings from unfolding and bringing forth the fruits necessary to the success of our mission.

If we are to organize conferences, why not plan them in furthering the experiences acquired in study groups. We should see our endeavor as a big training ground to train leaders and teachers while we minister to the readers that are attracted to our mission. Conferences, like study groups, need not be all the same all the time but they need to show continuity in our efforts to train leaders and teachers by providing the necessary opportunity to foster those goals. Leaders, wherever they are within our organization or in study groups, need to have a clear understanding of the mission that is attached with *The Urantia Book*. When we will come as one to seriously engage ourselves in developing, fostering and promoting programs that take root in our mission to train leaders and teachers and use the opportunities available to us in study groups and conferences to achieve this goal, we will then be very close to accomplishing our full mission.

If we would integrate programs in conferences to train leaders and teachers while pursuing the promotion of intellectual, social and spiritual growth to the individual readers, then would we have quite a task at rethinking how those conferences could accommodate such goals. The three-year conference cycle based on having conferences of different levels of complexity within subsequent years addresses this issue in part but does not answer all the challenges that we face as an international organization. We have to think about the aspect of the different cultures, which generate different perceptions and perspectives. It takes more than actions and goodwill to accomplish the task of training leaders and teachers; it takes spiritual unity in the achievement of our mission, our goals and strategies.

We have to use the opportunities that the many conferences give us to organize workshops in the art of hosting study groups, in the art of teaching and training leaders. We have to build workshops dedicated to the leaders of every association where they can learn the basic and advanced principles of simple organization to promote and work at the mission we have to accomplish. While conferences offer a place to meet, rejoice and

socialize with other readers, they should always offer opportunities to learn and to teach. The choice of topics and speakers and how the speeches are given must reflect our true sense of purpose and serve in the attainment of our goals and objectives.

Speakers at conferences must, in their speeches, reflect the lessons of the teachings of *The Urantia Book* as they apply to the spiritual experiences of their life. They have to provide opportunities for attendees to ask questions that their presentation might arouse in their minds. In allowing such opportunities with the support of a presentation based on spiritual experiences, we enhance the quality of the conferences by providing a more enlightening learning experience on the part of both the attendees and the speakers. Living spiritual experiences when used in conjunction with the teachings of *The Urantia Book* provide a very powerful means of teaching.

Will we be able to take the challenge or will the world have to wait for another organization or Revelation to do so, history will tell.

Local and personal initiatives

What are local or personal initiatives? What are the handicaps of looking for such initiatives?

I will answer the second question first. It is very difficult and yet simple to achieve this objective. If we are to explore such an avenue, there is one thing that we have to let go of, our prejudices against spiritual teachers and that is more so for readers of *The Urantia Book* than any other group that I know of. Why us more than others, could we ask? Basically on account of our spiritual and intellectual culture, we are mostly individuals who have acquired our intellectual and spiritual freedom after much efforts, research and soul searching and suffering. We hold that freedom very high in our hearts like a cherished possession; there is always the fear of losing it. The best antidote for that is faith and trust in the Spirit of Truth and the Indwelling Spirit.

What I am about to tell you is based on my personal experience in researching ways to learn to teach while acquiring a technique that could be universal in its appeal to different races, gender, cultures or religions. It's not a simple or easy goal to find a method with those qualities when you are not in the least an accomplished teacher. I needed tangible proof that what I would find was the real thing. I needed to rely on facts, for facts are the corner stones of any good teaching methods. So like most of us do when we need something out of our reach, we pray, so I prayed.

Living spiritual experiences when used in conjunction with the teachings of The Urantia Book provide a very powerful means of teaching.

The amazing conclusion to this exposé will be presented in our next issue of UAI Journal. ■



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