



Cultivating Mind: Choosing the Right Tool

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF FAITH AS
A TOOL OF MIND CULTIVATION

MICHAEL HANIAN
France



A VERY GOOD DAY to everyone!
Let me first say that I'm happy to be here with you, to see my old friends, and to make new friends, hopefully.
It is quite challenging to attempt presenting a well-structured talk to a community of *Urantia Book* readers. Frankly, I never volunteered to make this presentation, but I accepted this opportunity with gratitude. I will try to share with you some *personal* ideas, born out of reading and re-reading of the text of *The Urantia Book*.

Before I begin, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have made my participation in this conference possible through my scholarship.

My talk is titled *CULTIVATING MIND: CHOOSING THE RIGHT TOOL*, with the subtitle *A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF FAITH AS A TOOL OF MIND CULTIVATION*.

I will talk about faith and mind, *my* faith and *my* mind – the mind which stubbornly tried to deny me those truths that are so beautifully presented to us in the book.

My hope is to be sincere.

My hope is to be able to share with you things precious to me, for, as we are told, *The God-knowing man describes his spiritual experiences ... for the edification and mutual satisfaction of believers.*

[30:5]

In 1986 I had a dream. I was on a beach. The weather was beautiful; there was no wind; the sun shined gently. Out of the blue, a giant wave descended on the shore, taking me with it. I was powerless, flopping about and trying instinctively to catch hold of something. Strangely, there was no fear.

And then I felt something in my hand. Next moment I was washed on the shore, and there, in my hand, was a book.

Four years later I found *The Urantia Book*.

Looking back, I see this dream as a clear message and a promise. And the most important part of this message

is: *fear not*. In four years these words, found so often in the book, became a magnificent and vibrant *call* and a *promise* to become a motto for the rest of my life.

So, was it my mind that I should be eternally grateful to? Not exactly. At that time, as so often in the following years, my mind did everything to *stop* me from pursuing the right cause. It offered flawlessly logical explanations of the divine magic presented in *The Urantia Book*; it explained the

The stronger my hope grew, the weaker was the fear. At a certain point I stopped, took a breath, and tried to ponder all this. Why was the ever-present fear losing its grip?

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1** Cultivating mind: choosing the right tool
Michael Hanian, France
- 2** Resolutions or decisions-actions?
Guy Perron, Canada (Editorial)
- 3** Science cannot replace religion
Antti Roine, Finland
- 9** Preparing teachers and leaders
Phil Taylor, USA
- 12** Paul and Abner
Olga López, Spain
- 16** Dissemination: an overview and a plan
Rick Warren, USA

Continued on page 6



What is my choice:

Resolutions or decisions-actions?

Knowledge is possessed only by sharing; it is safeguarded by wisdom and socialized by love.
[557:12]

“You haven’t learned anything until you can teach someone else what you know.”

RECEIVED A PHONE call from Dorothy Elder (remember the picture on the cover of the last issue) about an hour ago and during our conversation she told me that for 30 years, she used that sentence with her second graders in order to get them to share what they learned. What a powerful sentence, powerful because it is filled with truth, doesn’t matter if you are a second grader or a reader of *The Urantia Book* for 40 years. I could have stayed on the phone with her for a few hours, at least we did for an hour. Her enthusiasm, joy and eagerness to serve others is so contagious. She is so alive that I felt I was talking to a young lady in her twenties. That is what the Father does to you when you finally get it

When we live God in our daily life, we start to notice how God orchestrates everything perfectly.

and start devoting your life to serve others and bring them closer to Him, to our Heavenly Father. *When man consecrates his will to the doing of the Father’s will, when man gives God all that he has, then does God make that man more than he is* [1285:3].

When we live God in our daily life, we start to notice how God orchestrates everything perfectly. Here is a great example: in our last issue, Phil Taylor talked to us about how we need to prepare teachers of *The Urantia Book*. Well, my friends, my brothers and sisters, we have a wonderful opportunity for you. *The Urantia Book* Internet School needs you as a teacher. You

read it in the last issue, now you can live it. You only need to make a decision-action. It might take a few months, but don’t forget we have eternity. Nevertheless, we should get on with the program ASAP. Why wait! The Father needs us... now. Look around you, don’t you think that this planet is in dire need of a spiritual upliftment? There is a lot of work and not enough workers. There is so much demand but there are not enough teachers. Demands from Poland, Canada, United States, Colombia, Austria, Australia and on and on. Dorothy told me that there are thousands of readers, tens of thousands over the world, and the UBIS is a wonderful opportunity for them to live the brotherhood of man, the spiritual brotherhood of man and even better to live the union of souls in order to increase their wisdom.

Union of souls—the mobilization of wisdom. Every human being sooner or later acquires a certain concept of this world and a certain vision of the next. Now it is possible, through personality association, to unite these views of temporal existence and eternal prospects. Thus does the mind of one augment its spiritual values by gaining much of the insight of the other. In this way men enrich the soul by pooling their respective spiritual possessions. Likewise, in this same way, man is enabled to avoid that ever-present tendency to fall victim to distortion of vision,

URANTIA ASSOCIATION
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JOURNAL TEAM
EDITOR: Guy Perron / 514-795-3337
guypertron3@sympatico.ca
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Carolyn Prentice
cmp9q3@yahoo.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND TRANSLATION LIAISON,
FRENCH: Alain Cyr /450-466-2496
alain_cyr@sympatico.ca
TRANSLATION LIAISON, SPANISH:
Olga López
TRANSLATION LIAISON, FINNISH:
Seppo Kanerva
ART DIRECTOR: M. Caoile
COMMITTEE CHAIR: Will Sherwood

ISB MEMBERS: UAI DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT: Gaétan Charland – Canada
gaetancharland03721@sympatico.ca
VICE-PRESIDENT: Seppo Niskanen – Finland
seppo.niskanen@mediakoti.fi
TREASURER: Mark Kurtz – USA
makurtz04@maplenet.net
SECRETARY: Shirley Pelland – USA
shirleypelland@comcast.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:
EDUCATION CHAIR: Carolyn Prentice – USA,
cmp9q3@yahoo.com
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: Gary Rawlings
– United Kingdom,
Garyurantia@aol.com
COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR:
Will Sherwood – USA,
will@thesherwoodgroup.com
CONFERENCES CHAIR: Eddie King – USA,
edwinking@bellsouth.net
STUDY GROUPS CHAIR: Rick Lyon – USA,
ricklyon@tctc.com
DISSEMINATION CHAIR: Rick Warren – USA,
rewar@swbell.net
TRANSLATION CHAIR: Peep Söber – Estonia,
psober@hot.ee
BY-LAWS CHAIR: Jerry Prentice – USA,
gobearfoot@yahoo.com

prejudice of viewpoint, and narrowness of judgment. Fear, envy, and conceit can be prevented only by intimate contact with other minds... And since wisdom is superknowledge, it follows that, in the union of wisdom, the social group, small or large, mutually shares all knowledge. [1776:1]

Continued on page 5

Science Cannot Replace Religion

ANTTI ROINE
Finland

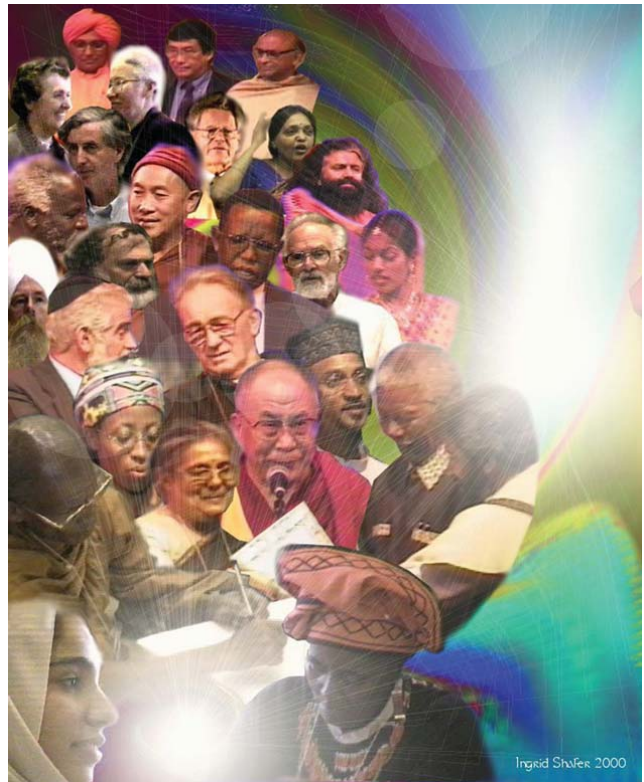
SCIENCE FINDS OUT HOW nature operates and then gives names to new issues and phenomena. Science specifies new natural laws through experimental work and using chains of evidence. Earlier proven issues and methods are always used as the primary evidence for new ones because effects cannot exist without causes. If we have the courage to pursue this chain of evidence to the very end and meet the original cause, then we will always end up with God; i.e., we will find the primary reason, which has no cause. Atheists try to wriggle out from this logical problem by inventing some name for this primary reason, such as the Big Bang.

All matter, energy, life and spirit was compressed into a space smaller than a pinhead 14 billion years ago, according to the current official scientific belief. Scientific facts may, however, change because we still know less than one percent of the existing natural laws and matters. Today we know at least 100 times more scientific facts and data than some 100 years ago, and this trend will continue at exponential speed. However, our wisdom will not increase at the same rate unless we have the courage to re-evaluate old scientific and religious assumptions. Science changes and improves our understanding of the universe all the time; however, we will always find God at the end of every scientific footpath, now and forever.

Beauty, wisdom, justice, love and faith cannot be measured with a gauge, nor with any physical or chemical instrument. They do not react with matter or energy, but they still are as real as granite because the human spirit makes them visible. Consequently, we are pure spiritual beings, who have been temporarily locked into our bodies. We notice this spirit when we meet our friend's eyes and listen to his opinions; this is not the voice of the material.

Different Domains

Science does not speak out about the questions that are of fundamental importance for the human spirit, namely, right and wrong. It is religion that finds the



"Parliament of the World's Religions, Capetown 1999"
Collage ©2000 Ingrid Shafer

answers to these questions. Real science bravely finds out which material issues are true and which are false. Using science, we may improve the welfare of our bodies. Real religion finds out the spiritual issues which are true and which make our soul happy. These positive and permanent effects may be used to identify true science and true religion from the false and the fake.

With real and honest information, we can fight against those cults, clans, black magic, voodoo and other mind control groups, which hypnotize our children and offer only temporal relief by removing the own free will of the followers. A false religion, philosophy or science guides humans and their neighbors to the desperation of suicide and to economic and ethical bankruptcy, whereas real religion and science helps humans to face and solve their daily problems in harmony with each other.

This day, the one we are living right now, is always the most important stage for us, because it is the only time where we can make changes and improvements. Real science and religion support each other. The misleading contradiction and disagreement always arises from false scientific or religious assumptions and interpretations. However, in the long run, renewable and dynamic science and religion will converge in agreement.

Our life and world has been designed exactly and precisely just like it is, so that we can make a free choice between faith and atheism. We could not make this free choice if we could prove the existence of God or some higher force using some scientific procedure. Mercy, justice, love, the flowers in the meadow, the atom or the

Science does not speak out about the questions that are of fundamental importance for the human spirit, namely, right and wrong.

whole universe are all valid evidence of God for the Hindu or Catholic, but the atheist may look at the world from a different perspective. The final proofs are “I am” and “You are” for the religious human, but the atheist has the full right to believe in accidents, luck and fate.

Atheism and skepticism need much more blind faith than faith in Jesus does because science cannot prove that God does not exist. A Lutheran, Orthodox, Moslem or Jew can be absolutely sure of God, because they do not base their faith on scientific evidence but instead on the God’s Adjuster which lives in our minds. This tiny fraction of God makes our survival possible and wakes up our religiousness.

We Need Courage

We need courage to find the scientific or religious truth. The truth is difficult to find if we do not have the courage to study and explore all the information, taboos and even sources which have been branded as suspect. The truth does not depend at all on the information source, author or ism; the truth is based purely on verified scientific and spiritual facts. We should also listen to the voice of our own sense and conscience, which is the main reason for having them.

We should be aware that even a tiny virus or small seed contains more sophisticated engineering than any humanly created device.

We can find a lot of truth, for example, from the Koran, Bible and also from *The Urantia Book*, which gives a logical explanation of why we are here, where we come from and where we are going. Our world and language are changing all the time; we do not need to persist with thousand-year-old assumptions and interpretations in science and religion. We should have the courage to revise and update old source material using modern language and concepts. We have enough old rituals, holy icons and empty phrases. Instead, we deserve dynamic and living science, faith and religion, which really affect our decisions, choices and activities in our daily life.

The continuous development of dogma and religious content is the most important challenge for Lutheranism, Hinduism, Buddhism or any other religion. An honest and dynamic renewal, reformation, re-vision and dialogue are needed to increase the harmony and understanding between different religious groups. We should also understand that salvation does not depend on the name of the ism; the only requirement is faith with love and charity without hypocrisy.

Philosophy and Ethics

Philosophy and ethics solve similar issues as religion; however, many conclusions may be different due to different basic assumptions. Materialistic philosophy assumes that we live only some 80 years, but religious philosophy conclusions are based on the idea of eternal life. This gives a totally different perspective to daily life. The religious perspective gives a much more logical

explanation for our day-to-day hardship and struggle than a purely philosophical point of view. For example:

- We could not understand **courage** if we did not meet fear and disappointment.
- Without pain and suffering we could not strive for **pleasure and joy**.
- We could not find **altruism** and **humanism** if we did not face social inequality and injustice.
- We could not internalize the **love of truth** if error and falsehood did not exist.
- We could not comprehend **hope** and **trust** if insecurity, accidents and diseases were not always present.
- We could not understand **justice** if greed and inequality did not exist.

We can strive for these valuable qualities only in a world like this, where we can trust only in the mercy and love of our Creator. In a perfect and error-free universe we could not reach these targets. The few years that we spend on the earth is the first day of our eternal journey of exploration; therefore, we should always do our best. We often imagine that all our achievements are based on our own skills, but this is not true. Nearly all our own victories are based on the work done by our fellows and hundreds of earlier human generations; we live on the giant’s shoulder. Therefore we should “pay it forward” and do our share to improve this world in which we live.

In this world we will never reach full equality and independence. However, the point is that we can strive for these values. Some lucky people are born to rich families, and some poor ones, to the street; some of us get a beautiful body, and some, a sick and distorted one. However, at the moment of death we all are equal; at this stage we must make the final decision between death and eternal life. This is the only truly sovereign and independent decision that we can make in our life on earth; nobody can help us at this final stage.

Our universe, atoms, material and life have been created using such vast wisdom and skill that the creation of a perfect paradise would have been a much easier task. We should be aware that even a tiny virus or small seed contains more sophisticated engineering than any device created by Man. Creation means the soul, life, gravity, photons, elements, space and laws of nature. Evolution means the consequences of these basic building materials of our world, for which the evidence may be found in geological strata and sediments.

We have a much more elevated goal than just obeying rules and observing laws; instead we should also listen to our sense and conscience to find out what is right and what is wrong. The exploitation of our poor and fragile brothers or sisters may be possible by law but not in a true religious philosophy. Our world is changing all the time, and therefore, our God does not need robots but humans who can make their own wise decisions and have faith without material evidence or miracles.

Religious groups should gradually realize that WE HAVE THE SAME GOD but we just call him by different names. We are not enemies, we have the same

destination, and we can learn a lot from each other. We should notice that the main difference is the rituals and cults, but the God is the same.

Philosophy without God is like a thermometer with an unlocked calibration point. Materialistic philosophy may offer a temporary relief and survival like a drifting buoy in the ocean, but religious philosophy leads the way to eternal survival like a lighthouse on a granite base.

God Is the Source and Destination

God brings unity and a point of calibration to philosophy and ethics. Philosophy cannot attain equality between all humans without the concept of one God or Creator. Only this concept and idea can make all of us brothers and sisters with equal human rights. This is the only way to reach the light and worldwide peace. This simple concept will also lead us to serve and worship our fellowmen instead of serving holy relics and empty rituals. God does not live in fetishes but in our minds as God's Adjuster. Therefore, the businessperson may worship God by making fair deals; the engineer, by creating green processes; and the artist, with cheerful and entertaining work.

To science God is a cause, to philosophy a hypothesis of unity and to religion a living person. For the human being God is the source like a father and mother, but he is also the destination because our soul desires for fusion with this tiny fraction of God, which lives in our minds. The human being is a dualistic creature, composed of female and male parts with equal rights. These two poles are different but equally important, and they make our life fascinating and exciting because they both give us a different perspective to our world. The dissimilarity and

variations are not defects but a strength, which increases the richness of our life and makes us stronger.

I want to change the world into a better place for Christians, Moslems, and atheists. The only way towards this target is the idea of one God and Creator, which makes us equal. Otherwise, we tend to consider our own God, philosophy, race, religion, gender and country as superior to the others. This misapprehension will always justify the oppression of our neighbor. I would like to change the world to a place:

- Where we do not need barbed wire fences between different religious groups.

- Where the verdict of the court does not depend on the prosperity of the defendant.

- Where religious rituals cannot replace the esteem of our fellow man in daily life.

- Where women have equal rights with men.

- Where the illusion of national sovereignty cannot be used as an excuse to start wars and conflicts.

- Where we don't have to hide our personality behind walls and pseudonyms like rats in holes.

- Where justice and empathy are more important issues than traditions, cults and bureaucracy.

Two thousand years ago, cowards shouted "Free Barabbas" and "Crucify Jesus." Many of us may imagine that this does not affect us; however, at the moment of "departure," each of us will face this very same personal choice. ■

—Antti Roine, January 1 - 14, 2006

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Resolutions or decisions-actions?

Continued from page 2

For most of us, we are able to interact, to live this personality association live, one on one or with a group. For many readers that are isolated, it is impossible. That is when the UBIS becomes such a great experience for those readers and for anyone who lives the experience, students and teachers. What a great way to use that great impulse to go out and publicly proclaim the gospel of the kingdom that comes from within, from inside out:

About one o'clock, as the one hundred and twenty believers were engaged in prayer, they all became aware of a strange presence in the room. At the same time these disciples all became conscious of a new and profound sense of spiritual joy, security, and confidence. This new consciousness of spiritual strength was immediately followed by a strong urge to go out and publicly proclaim the gospel of the kingdom and the good news that Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter stood up and declared that this must be the coming of the Spirit of Truth which the

Master had promised them and proposed that they go to the temple and begin the proclamation of the good news committed to their hands. And they did just what Peter suggested. [2059:1; emphasis added]

Wow! Now that Michael is guiding us, now that we have spiritual joy, security, confidence and spiritual strength, don't we have that strong urge . . . what else do we need to start? My friends, let's get out of our comfort zone and let's get involved in becoming the teachers we should all be, NOW! Remember *Sharing is God-like—divine* [1221:2].

It is all about God and getting closer to Him.

May the love and the peace of God be with you and within you always.

Your brother in Spirit and in service ■

—Guy Perron

Montréal, Canada

Cultivating mind: choosing the right tool

Continued from page 1

recklessness of moving away from my daily routine of making a living; it hugged every possibility to stick to the respectable, well-proven, widely accepted theories and notions. It was doing the utmost to assure me that it, my mind, was my true friend, ready and willing to serve me with those indispensable tools of logic, skepticism, facts of life, and the five senses, whose data it would faithfully and readily communicate and interpret for me.

Still, something—or *someone*—never failed to offer different explanations, different counter-arguments to all those arguments my mind was presenting. And what *struck* me always was the *tone* of that someone: it was so gentle, the music of the messages was so wonderful, that all the logic, all the facts to the contrary were losing their significance.

So I kept reading, and I kept listening to that someone. And I started to learn *to choose*.

My first choice was to give it a chance. To read *The Urantia Book*, to *allow* it to bear fruit in *my* life. I never regretted that choice.

Since then, something new has appeared in my mind.

Yet, I had *made up my mind* that I would *turn the faith into the tool*. And so my mind began looking for instructions. And they were forthcoming.

That something was *hope*. Before, I had *longed* for a hope, but there was never a *real hope*. On the contrary, my understanding of the world could lead only to *abandoning* all hope, not to *fostering* it.

That new sensation was inspiring and wonderful. The stronger my hope grew, the weaker was the fear.

At a certain point I stopped, took a breath, and tried to ponder all this. *Why* was the ever-present fear losing its grip? *Why* was I ready to trade all the logic in the world for the wonderful feeling of hope? *Why* was this growing faith of mine *already* so powerful?

I kept reading, and I kept finding the answers.

I also started paying attention to certain word combinations in *The Urantia Book*, and gradually I started to get deeper into their meaning.

Living truth, living love, and living faith. What does this word “living” actually mean? Enlarging the context, we find out that “living” means vibrant, resonant, appealing, inspiring, spontaneous, and – *creative*.

Being a composer, I found the idea of *creativity* to be the most appealing to me. For creativity is ultimately calling into being *a new reality*. And that is something that makes us, if not creators, then at least *co-creators*.

My next conclusion was just waiting for the right moment to materialize: *creativity and faith go hand in hand*.



And right after this perception came another one: I can learn to use my faith as a *tool* that will enable me to cultivate my mind and develop my creativity.

I was finally reassured after reading those wonderful words:

Faith is the inspiration of the spiritized creative imagination [1459:5, emphasis added].

Creativity...

Our mind is inherently creative. Reading *The Urantia Book* I could single out four different cases as to the *level* of finite creativity:

The highest level is that of the *wiseman*. Whereas there's no such thing as creating wholly out of one's mind—except for probably the First Source and Center—for the sake of making a definition let us *assume* that a wiseman—or should I say a wise person?—is someone who creates, first and foremost, out of his or her own mind. We know that Jesus left no scriptures. He used living words, as opposed to dead letters. So he was, among other things, a *wiseman*.

Well, who listened to him? His pupils, and the multitudes of both friends and foes. Knowing well that Jesus did *not* want to leave anything in writing, that he had destroyed *that little* which had been put down by him in his early years, the disciples did not write after him, and for 40 years the Spoken Word lived as a spoken word. Still, the Gospels are written text. And so the first author inevitably became a *scribe*.

Scribe is not a swear-word. If it were not for scribes, there would be no proliferation of knowledge as we know it. Still, a scribe *tends* to capture the dynamic and living thought and crystallize it into something *changeless*.

Now, let's get to those who *use* these *scriptures*, the end product of a scribe's creative efforts. Again, for the sake of simplicity we *assume* that the next mind type does nothing but use that which others have created. When this is the case, we deal with a type that can be called the *sciolist*.

Sciolists are those who pick up ideas and definitions without offering anything in return. All they know is *acquisition* of knowledge. They have the tools and know the means of acquiring data. They differ from *scientists* in the same way that a living flower differs from an artificial one: the image is alike, but the substance is completely different.

This is a widely spread mind type. But in the today's world it is being outgrown by still another type, which I would call the *copy-paster*.

Copy-pasters are those who only know how to copy and paste. Copy from one place, and paste into another. Copy a brilliant quote of one of our outstanding predecessors—and paste it into a compilation, devoid of any *trace* of freshness.

Copy-pasters are a face of the brave new world of intellectual and creative sterility. Instant access to data is seductive and spoiling. All too often it deprives one of

the keen pleasure derived from the *process* of searching for knowledge.

Surprisingly, all this has to do with the story of Jesus and his teachings. For this shows how, in shifting from a divine mind which is creativity itself, to a mind which exhibits predominantly *mechanical* qualities, we come to explain how mechanical thoughtlessness *contributed* to rejecting Jesus by so many of his contemporaries.

Copying and pasting does not presuppose hi tech or modern times. It is just a barren method of dealing with intellectual property, and as such it has existed in every time period. What exactly makes a mind *reject* free creativity and stick to mechanical copying instead? One of the factors is, *again*, fear.

It was *fear* that made Pharisees and scribes shut their eyes to the living truth of the glad tidings and choose slavish *repetition* of old scriptures. It was *fear* that made them denounce the Son of Man and *demand* that the multitude remained *just that*—a multitude, and not a group of *individuals*, each possessed with a power to *choose* the Truth. But in order to be able to *choose*, one has to be able to *think* and think *co-creatively*; whereas what the agents of the Sanhedrim imposed on the crowd was *copying* and *pasting*—they were offering *ready* solutions, demanding that these solutions be *copied* by the minds of those they approached and *pasted* onto each and every mind.

Let me say this again: my black-and-white definitions are offered for the sake of making a point. In reality we shift from one *modus operandi* to another, at least most of us do, and that's pretty normal. I believe it's the *preference* and the *overall balance* that make the difference here. It's *what I do when I'm at my best* that matters.

From this perspective, what we do here, at the conference, is try to sustain the *living word*, for most of the time we discuss, we communicate, we share, and we respond. All this *is* being creative and co-creative; this *is* drinking from the refreshing well of spontaneity; this *is* living the spirit, and not just the letter.

Let me continue with my personal story about faith and mind.

In the beginning it was a bumpy ride. I guess, it was about distance. When two people try to tell each other something, they come closer, so that they can hear better and won't have to shout. So what happened was this: My newly-born faith, my precious baby, was all happy and joyful; so happy and so joyful that for some time it did not notice my mind, which was left in the dark, all by itself. The mind could *feel* the presence of light, somewhere in the end of the tunnel, but the description of that light was too vague to make an impression. And it was about the language, too: my faith hadn't yet mastered the *language of communication* with the mind. It hadn't found the *right words* yet. Its magic brush wasn't there yet to paint and portray the wonders of the *spiritual* joy in *full color*. My wondering and anxious self was right in between, torn by sudden dashes of faith on the one hand and down-to-earth reasoning of the mind on the other.

Yet, I had *made up my mind* that I would *turn* the faith into the *tool*. And so my mind began looking for instructions. And they were forthcoming. A set of instructions was preceded by this title:

A SPIRITUAL TOOL CALLED FAITH FOR CULTIVATING ONE'S MIND

SPONSORED BY A RESIDENT
ADJUTANT OF WORSHIP

Warning: before proceeding,
read instructions carefully.

1. Purpose of the tool: to encourage religious living.
2. Operating environment: day-to-day life.
3. Safety precautions:
 - Handle with care: faith is both powerful and delicate. When abused, it can lead to convulsions of fanaticism (1207:5)
 - Don't expose the tool in a hostile environment: do not cast pearls before swine (1571:5).
 - Preserve well: although there is no "best before date" on the package, prolonged inactivity will result in the tool getting rusty. That means, use your faith.

So what is fear? Fear is the antipode of love. Love and fear are mutually exclusive. These two substances do not mix. Where there is fear, there is no love. Where there is love, there is no fear.

But not a word on *how* to use it!

I didn't know then that there *couldn't* be any instructions to *copy*. I didn't know that one *always* has to find a *personal* way of exercising faith.

What was even more important, I didn't know exactly *why* I would be applying my faith, what *goals* I would set for myself—in other words, what I wanted to *achieve* through faith.

What do you *really* want, I asked myself. I wanted a lot of things. But there was one thing I desired *most* of all: I wanted to get rid of *fear*.

It became my second rational, intellectual *choice* on the road to a better cultivated mind. So why did I choose fear as the key target?

If I had to single out just one negative quality impairing my whole life, that would be fear. It is so rightly said in *The Urantia Book: Fear is man's chief enslaver* [1596:2]. We are told that fear has been inherited from the animal kingdom. A Life Carrier admires the horse, but bewails the fact that the horse is so easily frightened. Well, here is a message to *us* humans: whereas a frightened horse flees, man *kills out of fear*. Or gets killed: we are told that *fear can kill* [971:2]. We are further told that *fear is a master intellectual fraud practiced upon the evolving mortal soul* [556:4]. And it is quite obvious that this fraud is practiced through the agency of *the mind*.

What exactly does fear *do* to one's mind and personality? A Divine Counselor warns us, that we *distort*

our mind by useless anxiety (103:5). And anxiety is a by-product of fear. A Solitary Messenger states that fear pollutes the fountain of faith (1223:7).. Midwayers point at fear that *prevents the honest souls . . . from accepting the new light of the gospel* [1768:5, emphasis added].

So what is fear? Fear is the antipode of love. Love and fear are mutually exclusive. These two substances do not mix. Where there is fear, there is no love. Where there is love, there is no fear. It is eternally true that *love of God . . . casts out all fear* [552:6]. That is why the Adjuster would like to change . . . [our] . . . feelings of fear to convictions of love [1192:3].

But maybe fear is useful? It sure is—for the *body*. It warns, it prevents, it makes us cry for help. But the more we understand the Master's words that "*Man cannot live by bread alone*" [1777:2], the less we need fear. And the more we need love. And the more faith becomes the bridge over the troubled waters of our mind.

Once I started using the new tool, it showed some pretty unexpected—and wonderful—qualities.

I can be confident that I have chosen the right tool. Unlike other tools, intense use only makes it sharper. All I have to do is to keep it handy.

It revealed a unique capacity to grow. It grows *in space* occupying more and more of it. It grows *in time*, pointing into the *future* on the one hand and finding its foundation in the things of the *past* on the other.

Like with so many other things, there was a turning point in the fight between my faith and my fear.

It occurred during one of those routine debates. "What are you going to eat?" cried my mind, powered by fear. "You are not being responsible! You have a family! You should stop writing your music that gives you next to nothing and start doing what everybody else does: earn a living." I tried to respond, but my answers were feeble. Suddenly, my little girl entered the room. "Daddy, will you play me this song?" "Which one?" I asked. "The one you wrote for me yesterday." So I did. And I saw how happy she was. And I realized that all that was *really important* in my life was already there. And I understood I could do without fear.

Fear is a generic name. In fact, we deal with its many faces, its many forms: anxiety, mistrust, suspicion—to name just a few. And every time it is a sign of the *absence of love*. Fear is rational—love is irrational. Fear is incarcerating—love is liberating. Fear is stressing—love is relaxing. They are mutually exclusive. Like day and night. Like light and dark. You cannot mix them. You can only *choose* between them.

So the problem of *choice* again. A choice between now and some time later. A choice between material and spiritual. A choice between thinking and believing.

At the end of the day, it's a choice between believing and *not* believing. For if you *truly* believe in God, there can be no fear. We only have fear to the direct proportion of not having faith. So *fear not* becomes another way of saying *have faith*.

The problem of combating fear is the fundamental problem of allowing faith to take the upper hand in human affairs.

"*Fear not*" was the watchword of the Master, because when you fear, you can't truly love. It was *fear* acting through its different materializations—jealousy, mistrust, suspicion, envy and vengefulness—that ruined Judas. *Fear* for his life led Peter to a very dangerous state of denying his Master—wasn't he close to following in the steps of Judas? *Fear* of material loss led Matadormus to rejecting the Master's offer. Was this fear substantiated? No: the midwayers disclose to us that Matadormus would have got all his treasures right back had he only accepted his new role. *Fear* of troubles with the Jews led Pilate to giving in to their outrageous demands.

Fear is blinding. Fear is disconnecting. Fear is treacherous. Fear is murderous.

Fear is the irrational outcome of a purely rational behavior.

Fear saves us today, only to doom us tomorrow. Fear is another name for short-sightedness. It is a caution that has outgrown itself. It is a precaution left unattended. Fear offers us a *dime* but robs our *fortune*. Fear saves from us bruises but afflicts permanent injury.

Fear not! These words should become not only a watchword, but also a part of a daily prayer: "O Lord, deliver me from the fetters of fear! Do not allow its poison to distort my mind! Substitute it with peace of the mind, everlasting calmness of the soul, and all-encompassing love."

God is love. Absence of love is fear. So fear is absence of God. And so it is unreal, because there isn't a place where God wouldn't be. THAT IS WHY IT IS CALLED AN INTELLECTUAL FRAUD. Fear is what's *unreal*, but it tends to deny and substitute everything which is *truly real*.

You cannot kill love. But you can ban it from entering your mind.

You cannot stop God. But you can ban Him from cultivating your mind.

Faith is my hack and my sword. It's the only tool and the only weapon I will ever need to help my mind *win* the ongoing battle with fear, *which is disbelief*.

As time goes by, I notice that the distance between the newly born faith and the mind, the distance which used to be a problem, is getting shorter, for the two are getting closer, and they are mastering a common language. I am beginning to see that *Faith [is] the supreme assertion of human thought* [51:8], that *faith . . . is reasonable* [1137:6], that *faith is a vision of the spiritualized mind* [25:3].

I can be confident that I have chosen the right tool. Unlike other tools, intense use only makes it *sharper*. All I have to do is to keep it handy.

For me, it all started with a *supposition* that I can do without fear, that fear is a useless state of mind.

It continues with a *trial period*—a ban on fear.

One day it will become a *habit* of living without fear. And a *habit* is something *the mind* is quite happy with.

The mind making a choice to *fear not*.

Thank you. ■

Preparing Teachers and Leaders

Part 2 of 2

PHIL TAYLOR

Urantia Association
of New England

This presentation is the second in a two part series attempting to define teachers and leaders in the context of the fifth epochal revelation. The concept of teachers and leaders is taken from the instructions contained in the publication mandate from our unseen friends to “prepare teachers and leaders.”



IN THE LAST ARTICLE I discussed the defining characteristics of a teacher. But teachers need individuals and organizations to support and nurture their pursuit of greater service opportunities. Individuals and organizations are also needed to support those thousands and thousands of study groups which we have been instructed to foster as well. In light of this need for organization we must define what an organization is and how leaders and individuals can function effectively in pursuit of common ideals. Let us then begin to define a leader and the type of organization leaders need to be effective.

How Do Leaders Function In An Organization?

Leaders do not exist outside of an organization or a group. I suppose it could be said that no leader exists unto himself. For one to lead there must be fellow participants or “followers” who share the same ideals. It appears that most leaders function in and with an organization and in most cases these organizations are institutional in nature. Often the structure of these organizations represents a hierarchy. If you would imagine a triangle with the point at the top and the base at the bottom, you can begin to visualize this type of group structure.

In such an organization the leaders function in small numbers at the top or at the peak of the triangle, while the base represents the much larger body of the group’s members. This type of organization is energized by leadership and growth coming from the top and projecting downwards toward the bottom. That is to say, growth or

the impetus for growth comes from the top down.

In many ways this type of an organization is a legacy of humanity’s tribal inheritance. Such an organization reflects a military structure where there are generals and soldiers. The effectiveness of this organization is the result of a command and subordination relationship where the generals issue orders to be executed by their subordinates—soldiers operating not out of free will but because of a subordinated will. The vast majority of participants in

this organization are not independent thinkers but blind faith followers functioning under the penalty of fear or punishment. It is the old way of organizing, which may be effective for conducting wars, but is largely ineffective for disseminating religious truth. This is especially true in a religious organization where free will is of supreme value and that free will is freely subordinated to the will of God.

As a result these “followers” are not really followers at all, but rather active participants within the movement who have taken on the responsibility of leading and guiding themselves.

The Most Efficient Type of Organization

In spiritual matters this is obviously not the most efficient way to run an organization. How effective can such an organization be when the burden of work falls upon those at the top? How genuine is such a movement when its momentum and velocity is not founded on the majority but on a few individuals? Is there a better way that we can organize collectively and function together, where leadership and growth is coming from within rather than from the leadership above?

There is a more effective type of organization. In reality it is a new organization that has begun to appear in the last fifty years of this planet’s history. Such an organization is known as a “grass roots organization.” This type of organization grows not from the top down but, as the name implies, from the bottom up or from within the

hearts of every participant. In this type of group, growth, leadership and momentum come from within the base of followers as well as from the leaders at the peak.

If you can once again imagine a triangle to represent this organization, but this triangle, unlike the one that represents an institutional organization, is a much flatter triangle, where the peak is much closer to the bottom and the base is much broader and flatter. The shape of this flat triangle represents the broad-based participation of a grass-roots organization. Unlike an institutional organization, this new type of organization experiences growth upwards and from within the base of its “followers.” The “followers” in this organization are dependent less on the work of a few individual leaders and instead shoulder the weight of the movement. As a result these “followers” are not really followers at all, but rather active participants within the movement who have taken on the responsibility of leading and guiding themselves.

It is in such a manner that spiritual organizations should function. Spiritual organizations as well as the Urantia organizations should have active involvement at all levels. And the individuals within this type of organization bear the burden of moving the organization forward and upwards as well as taking on more of the leadership roles for themselves. In such an organization the participants are required to be self-led. They must recognize their roles as leaders unto themselves.

Our organization of believers has many who have their hearts dedicated to God, but we need more than this. We also need their minds dedicated to God, for organizations do not prosper on good intentions alone ...

Where Does True Leadership Come From?

But how does such an organization function effectively? How is leadership coordinated? If all these participants are taking on the responsibility to lead for themselves, then how is it that we can avoid anarchy? To answer this question we must go back and find the source of leadership. Where does true leadership come from? Whose vision do we seek to guide this revelation and protect it for generations to come? True leadership comes from within—the indwelling spirit of God. For is it not true that the greatest source of leadership for this movement and for the individuals within the movement is God himself? Whose plans do we wish to implement for this organization—ours or God’s? If individuals are to function effectively in such an organization, wouldn’t they be required to seek God’s leadership from within? By seeking God’s plans or God’s will in our own lives we can not only begin to find our individual place and purpose within the organization, but we can also begin to recognize God’s plans for the movement as a whole. This is true of God’s leadership but it is also true of Michael’s leadership. It is dependent on us to depend on them for guidance and direction for us to be an effective, service-minded organization.

To be able to discern these plans for our organization, we must once again return to the technique of seeking the Father’s Will. It is this same technique of recognizing

in our own minds the highest consciousness of truth, beauty and goodness that we can begin to recognize God’s Will in our individual lives but also as members within an organization.

Sharing Our Understanding of the Father’s Will

It is by sharing our collective understanding of God’s will that we come to understand the Divine Plan for this movement. It is therefore dependent upon these individuals not only to rely on God’s directions to find their place in the organization but also to help each other achieve a higher understanding of God’s plans for the organization. It is this spiritual sharing that must become a part of our Urantia organization’s culture.

If there are to be leaders, then let those who would be great leaders be great teachers. The greatest contribution a leader can make to a spiritual organization is to teach others to lead themselves—that is, to become divinely led and spiritually liberated. The ultimate goal of these leaders then should be to lead others to God’s divine guidance so that every individual within the organization will understand His Purpose and Plans. Teach others to share in the joy of work and service through dependence on God. It is through such methods that an organization can function organically. Each follower knows his place and purpose because he has experienced this place and purpose in his own life and in his own experience with God. Each individual becomes motivated at the most basic level, and this motivation allows the individuals to carry the weight of the movement collectively.

The second responsibility of leaders should then be to work towards a collective understanding of God’s Will within the organization. A leader should encourage sharing and open discussion of our collective understanding of God’s Will. It is through this sharing process that we can begin to understand the Father’s Plan for the movement as a whole. But it is also through this sharing process that we can begin to eliminate the possibility of human error in our understanding of the Divine Plan.

The mortal mind has the potential for error and, because of this, our understanding of the Father’s Will is prone to error. But the potential for this error can begin to be eliminated when we share our understanding with our fellows. One man may be wrong in his understanding, but the possibility diminishes when two people share their understanding of God’s will. This possibility of error continues to diminish as we continue to share our understanding in greater numbers. Let minds dedicated to God work together to understand the plans and purposes for our individual lives and our collective purpose. As Urantia Book readers we acknowledge this fact intellectually but have we succeeded in implementing such a program experientially?

Unity of Purpose

It is by just such a process of sharing that we can have strong assurances that we as an organization are heading on the right path. But it is also by such sharing that we

can begin to achieve a unity of purpose that has never existed before on this planet. If there is to be a real unity of purpose, then that unity must be based on the mutual willingness of all to seek and do the Father's Will. Jesus spoke of this spiritual unity in a response to a question from James Zebedee on page 1591:

"In this way you may experience a perfected unity of spirit purpose and spirit understanding growing out of the mutual consciousness of the identity of each of your indwelling Paradise spirits; and you may enjoy all of this profound spiritual unity in the very face of the utmost diversity of your individual attitudes of intellectual thinking, temperamental feeling, and social conduct. Your personalities may be refreshingly diverse and markedly different, while your spiritual natures and spirit fruits of divine worship and brotherly love may be so unified that all who behold your lives will of a surety take cognizance of this spirit identity and soul unity; they will recognize that you have been with me and have thereby learned, and acceptably, how to do the will of the Father in heaven. You can achieve the unity of the service of God even while you render such service in accordance with the technique of your own original endowments of mind, body, and soul.

"Your spirit unity implies two things, which always will be found to harmonize in the lives of individual believers: First, you are possessed with a common motive for life service; you all desire above everything to do the will of the Father in heaven. Second, you all have a common goal of existence; you all purpose to find the Father in heaven, thereby proving to the universe that you have become like him." [1591:7—1592:01]

If we can achieve this unity of purpose, if we can collectively seek and share our understanding of the Father's Will, then we will begin to achieve great things in this organization. If God becomes truly at the center of this organization, there are no limits to our effectiveness, and it is this unity of purpose that will be an engine of growth within our organization. I cannot help but notice that so many of us are motivated by our own faith that we desperately want to do something, but have we discovered collectively what that something is? **Our organization of believers has many who have their hearts dedicated to God, but we need more than this. We also need their minds dedicated to God, for organizations do not prosper on good intentions alone but also on the foundations of well laid plans developed by minds that are keen to thoughts of God.** In this joint dedication of hearts and minds we will find individually and collectively not just something to do, but the *right thing to do*—that is the will of our Father in Heaven.

The great challenge to our readership is to reveal to ourselves and to this planet a new form of organization and a new way of organizing. But this new type of organization requires involvement at all levels, and such involvement requires the energy and enthusiasm of spirit-led mortals. Let those who would be leaders lead other to this new reality. Let those who would lead be

the champion of God's vision for this planet and for this organization. Let those who would lead be not the ones who would supplant the programs of their own making upon this movement but rather seek to collectively understand that plan for this organization that has been approved by our Paradise Father.

These ideas, to some, may be idealistic, but there is a vein of practicality that runs through all of these plans. In the formation of the Brotherhood the revelators instructed Forum members not to over-organize such a group. I believe they instructed us not to do this because they foresaw the problems created by forming an institutional hierarchy. Such institutions rapidly become behemoths dependent on large finances, bureaucratic leadership and a membership that is increasingly isolated from that leadership and the associated opportunities for service. Ultimately I believe they desired the broad-based support of readers in this organization. Just as they objected to one large donor financing the initial publication of the book, so too must they oppose any organizational structure that does not depend on the individual and his relationship with the Father to facilitate change and create momentum.

The true test of leadership is determined by how well a leader can solicit the active involvement of his or her fellows and by encouraging them to seek and grow in our collective understanding of the Father's Will. A true leader is a visionary, but not in the old way. This visionary seeks to cultivate our understanding of the Father's vision for this movement by seeking insights of that vision from the organization's members and then culminating that vision into a group vision.

Teach and Be Taught. Lead and Be Led.

If I could leave you with some final thoughts on teachers and leaders I cannot emphasize enough that the opportunities to teach or lead are not opportunities reserved for special people. Instead, they are opportunities that are available to all. To thus serve our fellows is a privilege and a right of all who are willing. But the privilege to teach and lead offers great rewards. For those who are so willing to teach will be taught, and for those who so desire to lead will be led. Such attitudes of service provide the rewards of spiritual growth, intellectual achievement, adjuster identity and love's realization. And these privileges should be available to all who are willing to work for them. To be sure, some will be greater teachers than others, and for some, they will become leaders of many. We are all endowed with different talents, and some are more able than others. But to all there is the opportunity to teach and lead in some capacity, large or small.

And so I leave you with these two thoughts: Teach and be taught. Lead and be led. ■

If I could leave you with some final thoughts on teachers and leaders I cannot emphasize enough that the opportunities to teach or lead are not opportunities reserved for special people. Instead, they are opportunities that are available to all.

Paul and Abner

BY OLGA LÓPEZ
Urantia Association of Spain



"Two Apostles" Francesco di Giorgio Martini, 1490

HAVE ALWAYS HAD A WEAKNESS for “secondary” people in stories and after reading the fourth part of *The Urantia Book*, it seemed to me that Abner of Philadelphia was a very interesting secondary personage, in many respects. Not only for the role he played throughout the public life of Jesus, of which I was completely unaware because he is not mentioned in the gospels. But also because he adopted an attitude toward the Gospel of Jesus that, although being much more faithful to the original message than that adopted by Paul of Tarsus, rapidly fell into oblivion. In the clash between Paul and Abner, the option of Paul was the one which finally triumphed. The Christianity we know today is, in a large part, the work of this great religious master.

I would like to make a reflection in that respect, attempting to compare both attitudes toward the message of Jesus, that of Abner and that of Paul. I believe this reflection will be useful for us, given that the mission of Jesus comprises the fourth epochal revelation, and we, the readers of *The Urantia Book*, have the obligation of preventing the fifth epochal revelation from becoming impaired or distorted with the passage of time. We have

Abner did not agree to Paul's intention of remaking the teachings of Jesus to better adapt to Hellenic philosophy ...

before us nearly a thousand years in which there will not be a similar revelation, and we must ensure that the flame stays alive during all that time. We must not fall into the error that Christianity fell into in its beginnings, which is letting the religion about Jesus eclipse the religion of Jesus. We must not succumb to the temptation of “sanctifying” the book itself, letting the teachings it contains fall to the second level, following the trajectory of Paul. But it is also clear that we have to be flexible and not isolate ourselves in a “pedantic” defense of the “purity” of the teachings that *The Urantia Book* contains, as did Abner with the teachings of Jesus. As Aristotle propounded, the best conclusion is a happy medium. We will attempt to determine where this point is throughout these reflections.

What does *The Urantia Book* say about Abner?

Abner was a personage who had a distinctive role in the public life of Jesus. He was not one of the twelve Apostles,

but he was always there, lending support and preaching. Although it is in Paper 134 that we find the first mention of Abner, his story really begins to interlace with that of Jesus in Paper 135, where it talks about John the Baptist. The latter, although he never ended up being in high favor among the Nazarenes at En-Gedi, did fraternize a lot with Abner, his chief and leader (1497:6). After John the Baptist began his public life, he named twelve apostles from among his chief disciples, at the behest of Abner, who was his main supporter (1624:12). During the time John the Baptist was in prison, a large conference lasting three weeks took place in which the disciples of Jesus (led by Andrew) and the disciples of John (led by Abner) attempted to harmonize the functioning of both groups. After those meetings Abner was converted, becoming a fervent believer in Jesus. Later he was named director of a group of 70 teachers charged with preaching the gospel (1626:5).

From that time Andrew and Abner acted as associates, and each of Jesus' apostles had as an associate one of John's apostles (1642:5). But they never completely fused: they were associated but independent groups. In fact, we are told that, on the second Passover that Jesus celebrated with his apostles, John's apostles celebrated the feast with Abner (1648:5).

At the end of that Passover, both groups temporarily separated. John's apostles remained in Jerusalem under the direction of Abner, where they began working discreetly to expand the kingdom, while Jesus and his disciples returned to Galilee. They did not reunite until shortly before the 70 evangelists received their mission. But they did cooperate with each other and there was a good rapport between them in spite of the differences of opinion they held.

In general, the work of Abner was to remain in the rear guard, reinforcing the evangelizing mission of Jesus and his apostles, promoting the revelation. In the year 29, Abner and his associates established their general headquarters in Hebron and went periodically to Bethsaida, where Jesus and his apostles had established themselves, in order to meet with them (1678:1).

Precisely because Abner had a group of disciples independent of that of Jesus (although collaborating), allowed that, at those times when the doors of the

synagogues were closed to Jesus and his apostles, some of those synagogues remained open to Abner and his associates, with the excuse that they were followers of John, not Jesus (1741:7).

From Hebron Abner moved his center of operations to Bethlehem, where he could stay informed of the activities of Jesus' group (1771:5). There he also had the opportunity to be with Jesus for a while (1788:4). During all that time, the work carried out by his group in Judea helped to consolidate a favorable feeling toward the gospel of the kingdom, and didn't let the enemies of Jesus to openly manifest their opposition. (1789:5).

From the general headquarters in Bethlehem, Abner had sent many disciples to Judea, Samaria, and even Alexandria (1798:3). At that time Jesus divided his time between Bethany (where his apostles were camped) and Bethlehem (where Abner and other apostles of John were). This contact with John's apostles was very fruitful since it made them feel understood and valued, and they wholeheartedly accepted the kingdom and all that it implied. Shortly thereafter, Abner and his eleven companions threw their lot in with Jesus and his apostles. Only then did they work as a united group until the day of the crucifixion.

Abner was placed at the head of the group of 70 teachers and preachers of the gospel (1800:3), which he sent out in pairs to all the cities of Galilee, Samaria and Judea (1801:3) on a six-week preaching tour. Abner also directed the women's corps (1808:5).

In the year 30, he reunited his associates and gave them final instructions before sending them to the cities and towns of Perea (1817:1), on a mission which lasted nearly three months and entailed the last ministry of the Master. The Master himself pointed out to his disciples the great work that Abner and his associates were doing in Perea, where they were obtaining very good results without the necessity of resorting to miracles and wonders (1825:1).

It was precisely in Philadelphia, a city in Perea, where there were a large number of followers of the teachings of the Master. Undoubtedly, that influenced the synagogue, never under the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem, to always remain open to the teachings of Jesus. In fact, at that time, Abner taught three times a day in the synagogue at Philadelphia (1831:4). It was also to Philadelphia that Lazarus fled from the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, and where he lived out the rest of his life, in close collaboration with Abner (1849:6). Philadelphia was also where David Zebedee went in association with Abner and Lazarus (1869:1).

Abner saw Jesus for the last time shortly before the last Passover. Jesus advised him to continue the work without paying attention to what was going to happen in Jerusalem. This was his farewell advice: "*My son I know you will be true to the kingdom, and I pray the Father to grant you wisdom that you may love and understand your brethren.*" [1870:5]. Some very revealing words, if we attend to the events that followed after, which we will deal with later.

Abner followed the advice of not going to Jerusalem and remained in Philadelphia, dedicated to his mission. Abner was one of the witnesses of the tenth morontial

appearance of Jesus where he showed himself also to Lazarus and 150 other companions. This took place at a meeting convened by Abner in the synagogue, to deal with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus (2041:4).

What happened after the death of Jesus? What was the evolution of the relationships between Abner and the other leaders of the original Christian communities?

The problem of Abner was precisely that of exercising a certain intransigence with his companions, which led to a looming estrangement with the leaders of Christianity.

The first synagogue, then church, of Philadelphia had a promising outlook. As mentioned previously, the doors in that city had always remained open to the preaching of the gospel. There was a numerous group of followers of the gospel among Jews, gentiles, and people of every social and intellectual condition. The church at Philadelphia was the general headquarters for the missionaries who were charged with disseminating the gospel throughout the regions of the East (1831:5). It was the stronghold of the teachings of the Master, the center of Christian knowledge in the region for centuries.

Nonetheless, very soon problems arose between the different Christian communities. If the Jews of Jerusalem had always had problems with the Jews of Philadelphia, these problems also transferred to the Christian communities. Abner clashed with James, the brother of Jesus, and head of the Jerusalem church, and this caused the churches at Jerusalem and Philadelphia to be at loggerheads as well. The revelators attribute to this estrangement the fact that Abner is not mentioned in the New Testament. It is well known that history always silences the loser.

The estrangement between James and Abner obtained throughout the rest of his life, and continued even after the destruction of Jerusalem, when Antioch became the seat of Christianity according to Paul and Philadelphia the seat *of the kingdom of heaven according to Abner* [1869:2].

But James was not the only one to clash with Abner. He also fell out with the apostle Peter and with Paul, although for different reasons. With Paul the separation was due to philosophical and theological divergence. Abner did not agree with Paul's intention of remaking the teachings of Jesus to better adapt to Hellenic philosophy and cause fewer problems of adaptation among the Jews. Abner was, in a word, more "purist" than Paul.

Jesus was perfectly conscious of the fact that Abner would have problems with his companions in the future Christian community. Otherwise, he would not have given the advice he did the last time they saw each other while Jesus was alive. And as mentioned earlier, the unfolding of events gave a special significance to Jesus' words.

Abner's "purism," while commendable, is what led to his isolation. The church at Philadelphia maintained the religion of Jesus, just as Abner had taught it, but this did not last much beyond his long life (he died at the age of 89), and what is worse, they were alone, since they

Thus, we find the paradoxical situation that the group most faithful in practicing the religion of Jesus ended up by vanishing.

could no longer count on the support of the influential Jerusalem church. The missionaries sent out by Abner took their version of the gospel to Mesopotamia and Arabia, but their message never progressed like the Pauline version and became diluted and even silenced by the unstoppable ascent of Islam (2072:4).

Here it would be advisable to allude to a fact mentioned in Paper 134, about the future of the school of religion in the Persian city of Urmia, promoted by a rich businessman named Cymboyton. During his voyage with Ganid and Gonod, Jesus visited that city where, as in so many other places, he was preparing the ground for the speedy propagation of his gospel in the years following his death. Nevertheless, different from other places where Paul and other missionaries of the kingdom arrived, Urmia was visited by teachers sent out by Abner, who turned out to be so unyielding and uncompromising that they accomplished aught except to rarify the atmosphere and augment confusion. The school eventually closed and in the end was destroyed during an orgiastic celebration dedicated to Mithras (1491:10—1492:0).

We should note here that Abner found an ally in Nathaniel, who also agreed to preach the original gospel and not a gospel about Jesus (2058:3). Nathaniel was with Abner for a year in Philadelphia and then went beyond Mesopotamia to preach the gospel as he understood it. But he too was alone in this venture. With the perspective of centuries having transpired, we can ascertain what were the fruits of his labor.

Thus, we find the paradoxical situation that the group most faithful in practicing the religion of Jesus ended up by vanishing. Others were the winners in this history, those who managed to perpetuate their vision of the gospel about Jesus down to our times.

Now it behooves us to speak about Paul.

What does *The Urantia Book* say about Paul?

Paul of Tarsus is a person who never met Jesus in the flesh nor participated in his public life. Nonetheless, there are many references to this person in *The Urantia Book*, given that the success of Christianity is due in large part to him. These references are more numerous in the first documents of Part IV, in which the religious panorama of Jesus' times is described, and we are told why Christianity spread so successfully throughout the Occident.

Paul was a Hebrew and at the same time a Roman citizen, and proclaimed the gospel in Greek, the "lingua franca" for citizens of the empire (the equivalent of English, today). The greater part of his converts to Christianity came from among the gentile believers (1333:7). He took part of his content from the doctrine of the Stoics, and the method of sermons from the Cynics (1336:1; 1336:2). In spite of the competition from Mithraism, and the fact that Paul didn't preach exactly the gospel of Jesus and made numerous adaptations in order to make the teachings more acceptable to potential converts, his message was

superior, and this was soon reflected in the growth of Christianity and the decadence of Mithraism. Paul used as the binding glue, a mix of Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology structured by Philo of Alexandria to construct his Christian cult (1338:6), eliminating many of his (Philo's) contradictions. Even though with all this he greatly improved the doctrinal body of Christianity, in a way he was unable to surpass Philo: the doctrines of atonement and original sin, which were Paul's creation (1339:1, were clearly inferior to Philo's philosophy. We may consider the gospel of Luke itself to be directly inspired by Paul (1342:4).

We know that the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr provoked in Paul such feelings that they led him to embrace Stephen's cause and led him to be the founder of the Christian religion (1411:6).

By chance (or not), Jesus was preparing the soil for Paul many years before the latter traversed the Roman Empire preaching the gospel, indeed years before Jesus began his public life. Paul never knew that the one his interlocutors referred to, the one who so deeply impressed them as to remember after so many years (the scribe of Damascus, the tentmaker of Antioch, the Jewish tutor of the son of an Indian merchant), was the same Jesus of whom he spoke to them and whom he never knew personally. Many times Paul met people who knew Jesus and Ganid, and even slept in the same houses where Jesus and Ganid had lodged during their voyage. Could fate be more ironic? Would Paul's mission have had the same success if his interlocutors had not known that "Jewish tutor?" I sincerely doubt it.

Christianity was first established in Ephesus, thanks to the efforts of Paul (1478:2), but it was in Antioch where the followers of Jesus first began to call themselves "Christians." It was in Antioch, actually ("by chance") that Jesus lived for two months, working and learning; in fact it was there that he spent more time than anywhere else on his voyage (1492:3). Ten years later, Paul preached there and heard talk of the doctrines of the "scribe of Damascus" without suspecting that he had heard of the self-same Jesus.

Paul worked in close contact with Peter, chief of the apostles after the death of Jesus. In spite of their differences in character and formal training, they worked together in harmony (1551:7); just the opposite of what happened with Abner.

Paul's great skill was joining the best concepts of the other religions and doctrines and incorporating them in the Christian doctrine; this made other peoples, such as from the Middle East, and western Greeks, accept Christianity rapidly and to a large degree. Paul created the institutionalized church, which became the substitute for the kingdom of heaven, which Jesus had come to proclaim (1864:7). Although the ideal concept of Jesus failed in part, Paul created one of the most progressive human societies that has ever existed on Urantia (1865:6). While not having been faithful to the message, the concept of Jesus is still alive in the advanced societies of the world.

Although Peter was the first to commit the error of placing emphasis on the exceptional facts related to



Why didn't the message more faithful to the original last? ... Here we clearly see the downside of keeping isolated and aloof from those with whom we must walk hand in hand.

Jesus, instead of his message, Paul followed that line of preaching and reinforced it (2059:3).

Paul was aware that his religion would not prosper if it were allowed to be associated with some national culture or established practices (2064:1); for which reason he came into conflict with those who wanted to impose on the new Christians the exigencies of Judaism. Still, he did not free himself from as much as he might have of the social inertia of his times. Even though Jesus had a corps of women disciples, and during the early times of the Christian church there were deaconesses (instructors and ministers), Paul did not come to fully recognize the equality of women among the ministers of the church, a situation that, disgracefully, has obtained even down to our times.

Paper 195 speaks more extensively about the beginning of Christianity and the factors, which helped in its propagation. It is clear that the figure of Paul was decisive for Christianity: not only was he a great organizer, but also was he disposed to make compromises with sagacity and astuteness (2071:4); he was a great negotiator. Christianity, based almost exclusively on the personal religious experience of Paul, spread first among the Greeks, and through them, among the Romans.

Unfortunately, the Christianity of Paul gave very short shrift to the human Jesus, the brave and valiant Jesus, the Jesus that had faith in our poor human condition. In any case, that was the image of Jesus that ended up being imposed on our times, although without completely eclipsing the human Jesus.

What teachings can we bring away from all this?

In the same way that Jesus of Nazareth is a living example, we can extract many useful teachings from the personages who appear in His life and who determined the success of his bestowal mission.

Jesus came to this world not only to accomplish his seventh bestowal mission, but also to show us very simple truths: the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He showed us how it was to live actively following the will of the Father. During the years he was on Urantia he gave us an example with his life and even with his death. When it occurred, it fell to his disciples and followers to perpetuate the message and send it out to the entire world.

Among his followers there were some who faithfully maintained the message, and others who made compromises to make the message more easily acceptable. Those who maintained a major fidelity to the message were unable to make it last, while those who made concessions and adaptations were able to make the message last down through time, although diluted.

Why didn't the message more faithful to the original last? Because its carriers isolated themselves from the rest of the Christian community, they held steadfast to an intransigent position. Here we clearly see the downside of keeping isolated and aloof from those with whom we must walk hand in hand.

What would have been the ideal solution? It seems clear that it would have been to keep the message of Jesus, making concessions that would have allowed the greatest possible number of people to accept it without thereby distorting the message. This is the ideal solution, but (it must be recognized) difficult to put into practice. It is always easy to conjecture that if Abner had not clashed with James, Peter and Paul and had tried to enter their territory with more diplomatic methods, the route of Christianity would have been otherwise. But it is also certain that the majority of the apostles saw themselves blinded by the "miraculous" fact of Jesus' resurrection, and centered their message on his divine condition, just as Paul did. It would have been really difficult to change their path, but perhaps it would have been possible to maintain a major part of the message if there had been more tolerance and understanding exercised between Abner on the one hand, and Peter, James and Paul on the other.

In his essay "Publicity," Jeffrey Wattles alludes to the fact that the expansion of Christianity in the Occident had been Plan B of the fourth epochal revelation (that of Jesus) upon the failure of Plan A of winning the Jewish priests. Clearly, Paul would not have had such success among the citizens of the Roman Empire if he had not Hellenized the gospel of Jesus, if he had not adapted in order to make it more accessible to the Greek culture—something which Abner roundly refused to do, accusing Paul of being a "skillful corruptor."

Given the perspective of time, could anyone say that Plan B failed? I would say, not at all, in spite of everything that has passed and all the abuses committed by the church. Let us not forget that the revelators tell us that the latent message of Jesus continues in Christianity.

Now we have before us a new revelation, which has been marching along for barely fifty years. A revelation without a visible face, which contains an expanded message and is destined to enlighten humanity for a thousand years. The road, therefore, is long and many are the risks it must run—the most important being that the message may become distorted or even disappear.

What will our attitudes, as committed readers, be toward the revelation? Will we be faithful but unyielding like Abner, or possibilists and negotiators, like Paul? We know that one position has as many risks as the other: the risk of isolating and enclosing ourselves in the purity of our revelation, or the risk of opening ourselves to the rest of society and making concessions which distort the message. In both cases we can repeat past errors. But one supposes that knowing history should serve to avoid repeating it, that the last two thousand years have not passed in vain.

Maintaining a balance is difficult and complicated, but it is the only way to keep the flame of the revelation ever alive and unchangeable. We are depended upon to follow this middle path so yearned for, and to break with, once and for all, our tendency to venerate the container and forget what is contained therein. ■



What will our attitudes, as committed readers, be toward the revelation? Will we be faithful but unyielding like Abner, or possibilists and negotiators, like Paul?

DISSEMINATION

An Overview and A Plan

Part One

RICK WARREN
Dissemination Committee Chair

Urantia Foundation published a seminal article on dissemination which was re-published in the last two issues of the Journal of 2005. It was compiled over twenty years ago, yet it remains a prerequisite for any serious study of the challenge we face in disseminating a book revelation. It is titled: The Dissemination of *The Urantia Book* and Statement on Publicity. This article is a compilation of wisdom and advice from the people who inherited the revelation, and the celestials who wrote it. It is just over 20 pages long, it was assembled in 1983 and is presently available in English, Spanish, French and Finnish on the UAI website.

URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL members gather under the light of revelation for study and dissemination of the supernal teachings found in *The Urantia Book*. It is our privilege and responsibility to place this new light where other seekers may also find it.

Jesus said to his followers:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it gives light to all who are in the house” [1572:4]

Disseminating the Master’s light feeds the soul experiences needed to advance in the seven circles of human achievement. Disseminating the light of life creates a reliable source of service satisfaction; at the same time it provides a beacon for those still searching. This is service in action, service that flows in both directions.

The UAI was designed as a *service* organization for members who desire to study and spread this particular light of truth in association with other reader/believers. The UAI was purposely and meticulously planned to become a training ground for students, teachers and leaders who want to understand and disseminate the



teachings. Several forms of this service have already begun.

UAI offers members many avenues of service and manifold methods to express that inevitable desire to do something with the revelation. This craving to help always accompanies the discovery of Father’s light and his purpose. Once readers understand the significance of *The Urantia Book*, each one then begins to discover the unique role they have as a student and a disseminator. For some it is entirely natural to want to perform this dual role in concert with others. In fact, the most efficient way to disseminate the revelation to a whole planet is to work in teams.

The UAI Charter focuses member’s collective energy on service through teamwork. This focus is defined in the Charter’s initial statement:

ARTICLE 1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Mission: To foster study of *The Urantia Book* and to disseminate its teachings.

This deceptively simple twelve word, two-fold mission statement will take centuries to complete. When dawn breaks on the age of light and life, many, many generations will have passed *The Urantia Book* from older to younger hands. Today’s readers are but the second and third generations to know and spread the revelation. This does not suggest our role is insignificant. Indeed the dissemination we perform during our watch is crucial. What we do now will redound to the degree of success of the revelation.

It is the aim of the Study Group, Education and Conference Committees, as well as *The Urantia Book* Internet School, to assist members in understanding the revelation. These entities focus their service on the first

verb in the mission statement. They are coordinate with the Dissemination Committee to fulfill both purposes UAI was organized to accomplish.

It is the aim of the Dissemination Committee (DC) to begin to address the work implied in the second verb of the mission statement. To achieve such a far-reaching task, an understanding of this word from the Latin language is required. Dictionaries agree that disseminate means to spread seed widely. This meaning provides an apt analogy of the DC's work in seeding the revelation.

It is crucial to the progress of the revelation that this early opportunity to disseminate be used in an effective way, one that renders the greatest good and the least injury to Urantian society. An overview of dissemination technique is required before beginning. Knowledge of the diverse methods of dissemination is needed in order to complete our mission. A Divine Counselor offers this sage and succinct advice for a comprehensive evaluation of any situation:

The true perspective of any reality problem--human or divine, terrestrial or cosmic--can be had only by the full and unprejudiced study and correlation of three phases of universe reality: origin, history, and destiny. The proper understanding of these three experiential realities affords the basis for a wise estimate of the current status. [215:3]

Origin of Dissemination

Dissemination began when the Eternal Son became the living Word of God the Father. Father wants his universe children to know Him. *The Urantia Book* is but a stitch in an infinite tapestry of life and revelation that stretches from Paradise to the edges of time and space. The origin of dissemination of revealed truth on Urantia began five hundred thousand years ago.

History of Dissemination

There have been four previous systematic dissemination endeavors of epochal significance. The first of these was set in motion by the Planetary Prince at Dalamatia:

The Prince's corporeal staff continuously gathered about them the superior individuals of the surrounding tribes and, after training and inspiring these students, sent them back as teachers and leaders of their respective peoples. [743:9]

There are other mentions of the educated emissary method used by Caligastia and his staff:

Each of the ten planetary commissions set about slowly and naturally to advance the interests entrusted to them. Their plan consisted in attracting the best minds of the surrounding tribes and, after training them, sending them back to their people as emissaries of social uplift. [749:6]

Alas, before planetary culture had passed infancy, evil insinuated itself in the form of administrative rebellion and the prince's regime rapidly disintegrated. Urantia was spiritually dark for hundreds of thousands of years, until the coming of Adam and Eve.

Dissemination and the First Garden

Long after the Planetary Prince's attempt at revealing truth collapsed, and after the establishment of the first Eden, Adam and Eve began their dissemination work. Eden number one would eventually have to be abandoned and dissemination of the knowledge of God would suffer another harsh blow. Before the fall however, Adam and Eve were making headway:

All went fairly well for a time on Urantia, and it appeared that Adam would, eventually, be able to develop some plan for promoting the gradual extension of the Edenic civilization. Pursuant to the advice of the Melchizedeks, he began to foster the arts of manufacture with the idea of developing trade relations with the outside world. When Eden was disrupted, there were over one hundred primitive manufacturing plants in operation, and extensive trade relations with the near-by tribes had been established. [833:3]

At this point in Urantia's history two attempts at dissemination had met with well nigh complete failure. But Adam and Eve were not finished. Their mission, albeit curtailed, did eventually precipitate many benefits for man.

Dissemination in the Second Garden.

Efforts at organized dissemination temporarily stalled with the default of the first garden. Although Adam and Eve established relations with the surrounding tribes in both gardens that bore good fruit, in the second garden they also allowed Seth to create a priesthood.

Seth became absorbed in the work of improving the spiritual status of his father's people, becoming the head of the new priesthood of the second garden. His son, Enos, founded the new order of worship, and his grandson, Kenan, instituted the foreign missionary service to the surrounding tribes, near and far. [850:0]

For millennia these priests were sent as emissaries to lands far and near. The priesthood waxed and waned, but it endured the long night between Adam and Melchizedek.

For twenty thousand years the culture of the second garden persisted, but it experienced a steady decline until about 15,000 B.C., when the regeneration of the Sethite priesthood and the leadership of Amosad inaugurated a brilliant era. [872:5]

The Sethite dissemination story holds the record for longevity, unfolding even today in Brahmanic teachings, still bearing fruit after 35,000 years. And it set the stage for yet greater teachings from Melchizedek and Jesus.

... the aborted teachings of Adam were carried on by the Sethite priests, and some of these truths have never been entirely lost to the world. The entire trend of Levantine religious evolution was modified by the teachings of the Sethites. [1007:6]

The true perspective of any reality problem—human or divine, terrestrial or cosmic—can be had only by the full and unprejudiced study and correlation of three phases of universe reality: origin, history, and destiny.

The superior culture and religious leanings of the peoples of India date from the early times of Dravidian domination and are due, in part, to the fact that so many of the Sethite priesthood entered India, both in the earlier Andite and in the later Aryan invasions. The thread of monotheism running through the religious history of India thus stems from the teachings of the Adamites in the second garden. [881:3]

During the age following Adam and Eve we again see emissaries (Sethites in this case) being gathered from here and there, educated and dispatched in all directions, in all probability to the lands where they or their progenitors originated.

The sad consequences of the Planetary Prince's apostasy and the Adamic default left Urantia in a dim and quarantined corner of Nebadon. With all celestial guidance absent and with only a human priesthood to keep the light of life alive, the spiritual welfare of the planet was in decline. But Urantia was eventually rescued by another celestial visitor. About 30,000 years after Adam and Eve left, a Melchizedek came to bridge the second and fourth epochs.

The master of all disseminators created a global network out of a handful of ordinary people. For over 2000 years we have seen proof Jesus planted good seeds that endured, in spite of every imaginable adversity.

The Melchizedek Era

With Machiventa, we observe this same theme of bringing in students with potential, and then enlightening and returning them to their place of origin to disseminate the newly learned truths.

With the passing of a decade, Melchizedek organized his schools at Salem, patterning them on the olden system which had been developed by the early Sethite priests of the second Eden. [1016:3]

Melchizedek continued for some years to instruct his students and to train the Salem missionaries, who penetrated to all the surrounding tribes, especially to Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor. And as the decades passed, these teachers journeyed farther and farther from Salem, carrying with them Machiventa's gospel of belief and faith in God. [1021:5]

Melchizedek's work echoed down the centuries until Jesus arrived. Machiventa's teachings, as they were promulgated by the Salemites, established the foundation of religious forms still in use today.

2. Era of the Melchizedek missionaries. Urantia religion was in no small measure regenerated by the efforts of those teachers who were commissioned by Machiventa Melchizedek when he lived and taught at Salem almost two thousand years before Christ. These missionaries proclaimed faith as the price of favor with God, and their teachings, though unproductive of any immediately appearing religions, nevertheless formed the foundations on which later teachers of truth were to build the religions of Urantia. [1009:4]

Machiventa's method of dissemination began at Salem. He chose students with talent, had them trained and sent out to the known world. These teachers established fresh

modes of thinking as they expanded spiritual enlightenment, much as Jesus and his followers did.

Jesus and the Fourth Epoch

The master of all disseminators created a global network out of a handful of ordinary people. For over 2000 years we have seen proof that Jesus planted good seeds that endured, in spite of every imaginable adversity. Jesus still enlivens the attitude of the whole planet, and his spirit shows signs of gathering more influence every day. Now with the addition of the leaven contained in the revelation we may be assured the Master's bread will rise higher and be sufficient to feed the coming generations. To expand on this bread maker metaphor, Jesus created the dough and now comes the yeast in the form of *The Urantia Book*. It is so very potent that all we need do is activate it in our souls, then carefully place it in Urantian culture.

When Jesus lived there was no Christianity, but today two in six planetary citizens claim Jesus. The Christian religion has more followers than any other on Urantia. Even with the meager portrayal of his life in the New Testament, even after two thousand years of mutations of his teachings, they still pull souls into Father's house. It must also be noted that some religions pay Jesus great homage even though he is not central to their beliefs. His spirit feeds the soul's hunger always, in all ways. And with this replete revelation of him in circulation, every genuine religion will eventually benefit.

What is Michael's will for the dissemination of the teachings in *The Urantia Book* given modern cultural conditions? If Urantia had ten thousand Michael-minded individuals, the planet would soon be engulfed by the love of the Father, love well exemplified in the everyday lives of these enlightened sons and daughters. Before long the average quality of spirit and thinking would ascend to barely imaginable heights. Someday this will occur. We are laying the foundation stones for it now.

Regarding dissemination by Jesus' followers, the revelators remark:

Christianity was spread throughout the Levant and Occident by the followers of this Galilean, and their missionary zeal equaled that of their illustrious predecessors, the Sethites and Salemites. [1084:1]

With two billion Christians already gathered in Jesus' house, we stand in awe of his achievements in dissemination and the strength of his spirit that endured even the soul crushing "dark ages." He left not one written word, yet in the short span of two millennia his teachings have penetrated more hearts and minds than any before or since. And he did the majority of his dissemination work in an extremely short time, the last seven years of his life.

All genuine religions on Urantia will make gains as a result of the disclosures in *The Urantia Book* and its comprehensive revelation of the life of Jesus. Now all seekers of truth can know of this life as it is so brilliantly portrayed in fullness and beauty. We have it and many want it, even if they are not aware of its existence. This

is where dissemination activity is needed and where our organization is employed.

Jesus lived the spiritual aspect of earthly life perfectly, even to the satisfaction of Paradise. We imperfect ascending souls cannot duplicate his life nor would we want to because each epoch requires specially equipped and trained disseminators. Ever remember that dissemination technique, while important, is no more so than showing love and generosity of spirit. Said Jesus:

“And it will not be so much by the words you speak as by the lives you live that men will know you have been with me and have learned of the realities of the kingdom.” [1569:4]

The most effective demonstration of dissemination of all times to all Nebadon was Jesus’ 37-year interaction with humanity. There is no greater method of dissemination than spreading this “benign virus of love” which Jesus left us:

“If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man.” [1098:3]

Genuine love is inherently contagious. And though we are merely “perfecting humans” we always possess the ability to transmit this virus. At the ordination of the twelve, Jesus declared:

“And this which your eyes now behold, this small beginning of twelve commonplace men, shall multiply and grow until eventually the whole earth shall be filled with the praise of my Father.” [1569:4]

Jesus foreknew the future of Urantia. Therefore he fully recognized the power of dissemination over time when nurtured by love saturated souls. Indeed, readers may or may not use the book to disseminate after reaching love saturation in the inner circles of human attainment. But to have both the book and the virus available is a dual blessing no generation of disseminators has had before.

Jesus used the enlightened emissary method before and after his earthly demise. He trained some of his apostles to take dissemination on the road well before he died. After the resurrection he energized them with his Spirit of Truth. They spread spiritual seed from the western Mediterranean to the Far East. Their successors went on to capture the “new world.” Those who were inspired by the apostles eventually made Christian teachings the most progressive on Urantia. They still carry the momentum of Jesus’ method of dissemination, along with his spirit. And this spirit bridges to the new revelation we now hold.

Jesus was the total spiritual disseminator of light and love. The challenge he faced was entirely spiritual; he would not, could not, write down his teachings. The dissemination challenge we face is both spiritual and material; it has two main features—a beneficial virus and a book.

Dissemination’s Destiny

UAI members create dissemination’s future with today’s service. How does this generation regard its dissemination responsibilities? Will we spread the virus of love as we spread the book? Can we use this organization as a base for coordinated dissemination? Will we seed the revelation and nurture the sprouts in order to root the revelation around the planet? Will we support the creation of translations of *The Urantia Book* into the major languages during our period of stewardship? If a gardener is to have a productive garden, should not that gardener plan the plowing, seeding, fertilizing and nurturing? Much of the fruit of any garden owes its existence to preparation. UAI members of today will not be on Urantia for the harvest. We are at the beginning; we are the casters and germinators of seed.

The Urantia revelation is designed and destined to correct Urantia’s path into the age of light and life. But it is a cooperative endeavor; it requires combined celestial and human effort guided by wisdom of the highest order. We are as critical to the process of implementation of the revelation as the Revelatory Commission was. In fact, each generation to hold and advance the revelation will be required to expand on the dissemination work of its predecessors.

A fruitful destiny requires that we attend to our responsibilities of understanding and seeding *The Urantia Book* now. Once the revelator’s message is grasped, readers begin to spread the virus that infects the spirit with the love of God and his universe family, with and without the book. We have in our hands a written revelation that liberated our spirits, enlightened our minds, and gave us what we so deeply desire, assurance of a role in eternity (God willing). How well we employ the book and the virus will determine the progress and efficacy of the revelation.

The emissary method of dissemination is quite prominent in the book, but the authors admonish us to be careful how we apply this dissemination technique. In the Paper on the neighboring planet, they warn us by decrying our neighbor’s imminent error:

Just now this superior government is planning to establish ambassadorial relations with the inferior peoples, and for the first time a great religious leader has arisen who advocates the sending of missionaries to these surrounding nations. We fear they are about to make the mistake that so many others have made when they have endeavored to force a superior culture and religion upon other races. What a wonderful thing could be done on this world if this continental nation of advanced culture would only go out and bring to itself the best of the neighboring peoples and then, after educating them, send them back as emissaries of culture to their benighted brethren! [819:6] ■

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