

From a reader in Los Angeles, California USA
Received 7/9/15

Dear Christ Experiment:

I thoroughly read your essay "Fortifying the Foundation, Part II" and you have written a very persuasive statement for formulating a universal statement of beliefs. I'm just not persuaded that the Foundation, the Fellowship, or any other "official" organization should adopt such a formal systematic expression, even though it appears to be very progressive.

Creeds or statements of belief are of themselves limiting documents. They are bound by the time in which they were written and limited by the culture from which they sprung. What I have come to realize is that the The Urantia Book in its entirety is a credal faith statement. This Book - the fifth epochal revelation - is very small part of something immensely more complicated and which will be revealed slowly to us over the passage of many billions of years. What is astonishing to me is the simplicity of the knowledge given and its uncomplicated format. Yet it contains a knowledgable philosophy that humans have much difficulty in developing a working relationship with. It seems the revelators couldn't produce anything more simple, elementary, or fundamental and still have it remain a meaningful document.

It is sad to record our comprehension level is so primitive and we are so stubborn - so quick to dismiss new concepts. We have seen in the past attempts by some to alleviate this difficulty by short circuiting this evolutionary learning process by reducing its content by some method, or even splitting it up into sections so it would make an easier appeal to specific target groups. (I guess in time we will discover if these efforts were beneficial or ill-advised.)

Your ten statements of beliefs seem to work very well for me as I come from a Christian background. And this is where I find immediate value in your Statement of Beliefs - on the personal level. I also find value in the Foundation and Fellowship maintaining a more neutral educational posture as I understand it is their mission is to serve a diverse worldwide population which is beset by many thousands of differing interests and competing belief systems. From my perspective the Fellowship and Foundation exist to serve a diverse human audience of Hindu, Muslim, Hebrew, Buddhist, etc., and all their subset denominations, as well as Christianity which is burdened with its own multiple "faith" branches.

I doubt that the formal adoption of even a progressive credal statement would prevent people from abusing and misrepresenting The Urantia Book. (As we are probably very well aware of humans have the capacity for error and even willingly commit evil acts. These avenues of personal behavior are innately part of our immature mortal nature.) If we might feel disappointed by the incomplete development of existing "official" organizations then it behooves us to develop those organizations that suit our specific interests. This is where The Christ Experiment has its greatest value - it's creative independence and its exceptional knowledge of the Hebrew Torah and the Christian Testament, and it's ability to skillfully blend that knowledge with The Urantia Book.

One day perhaps there might even develop an organized beneficial relationship between Islam, or Judaism, and The Urantia Book. 'Belief' and 'faith' evolve in proportion to the living experience of the individual personality. Thus individual and group experiential wisdom grows and ripens over time. Personalities of similar persuasions are naturally attracted to each other. A statement of fundamental beliefs are valuable for the individual, or even a dedicated community, just so long as all parties understand the concepts of "living truth" and "progressive evolution."

Your creed is very well suited for me personally and I imagine progressive Christian's as a whole would naturally be attracted to it but it is also limited. As you so well stated not every religious belief system can afford to recognize Jesus as a divine personality who is their personal savior, or even accept the most basic elemental concept of the Paradise Trinity. Not every every one on this planet has the intellectual ability to recognize the fourth epochal revelation of Jesus with its serious scientific, religious, and philosophical ramifications.

Faced with such a complicated situation it would perhaps be wise to fall back to the elementary message of Machiventa Melchizedek. This would be a much simpler message for the wider worldwide audience to digest; but even this message would require dedicated "second-milers" to extrude courageous action to undertake. I look forward to reading more of your thoughts as they are published, especially even a "Fortifying the Foundation, Part III" maybe? I would hope The Christ Experiment can grow into that space which is presently vacant - a space that was vacated by the Salem missionaries so long ago.

There are multiple rooms in this house for us all to comfortably minister from. The Spirit of Truth are the doors between those rooms, and that is what makes this movement so exciting. We live in a universe where we are confronted by confounding paradoxes. One such paradox being 'diversity' and 'unity' seamlessly working together in a symphonic harmony.

Your observation of the skittishness of some Urantia Book readers concerning association with the Christian religion is well founded. Many of us come from differing Christian denominations and we are recovering from common past experiences of psychological and physical abuse. Christianity certainly carries with it two thousand years of unnecessary negative baggage. Even the apostle Paul, who is Christianity's chief spokesperson, is not seen as a positive messenger in many modern quarters. It's going to take a tremendous amount of enlightened education to minister to our own reader membership base so we can heal those hurt feelings caused by poorly prepared religionists and our wrong modern ideas about Paul of Tarsus.

To close I would like to close with something Ms. Christensen said: "My dear friends, please bear in mind that good humor and the smile of happiness are among the most powerful and influential of the human assets of religious propagation." Peace be with you all,

Not So Anonymous in Los Angeles