

## QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

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**On December 31, 2014, we received the following detailed comment and question which we are happy to respond to. We present the entire email:**

“I'm a reader of your website since end of 2012. I followed with great interest many of your articles and I check almost daily if something is new. I was a witness [for 28 years]. I pioneered and served in various positions. We were close to attending Gilead, but decided to have children instead. In 1980, I was disfellowshipped due to not accepting the [Faithful and Discreet Slave] anymore.

“In the years after 1980 I became a very active ex-witness, trying to help our former brothers to recognize the errors I found, but my own family became even more convinced as a result. I joined an evangelical group for about 10 years, became more critical, lost my faith in the Bible as God's word and finally my faith in the God the Bible represents.

“In the 2nd part of 2012, I had the desire to see what's going on with [Jehovah's Witnesses] because [my family] are still in the organization. For many years I had no interest in religion – became an agnostic – but through your articles my hope was nourished that something is going on which finally could change the organization and I could be reunited, at least with my family. I agree with a lot of your articles, which show that Jesus needs to be the center of our faith. I never commented any of your articles, but I'm thankful for the work you have done during this period. Particularly I'm thankful, that I found on your pages for the first time a reference to the Urantia Book. I have read it meanwhile from beginning to the end and I'm reading it again. It simply overwhelmed me and since reading it, I can believe again in God. There is so much to detect and as my memory fails now often (I'm 72), I will have to read it often. I'm reading daily in it and marvel about the information presented there and I tend to believe it.

“On the other side there is something which fuels my scepticism. In your **Kingdom Update December 2014** you speak of the tremendous increase from April 2014 to now (from 8.7 to 27 million) which simply ignites my doubts, because that sound unbelievable. I remember that you once answered a similar question [**Question and Response 2/12/14**] but the answer for me was not satisfying. On what do you base such information? It would take even for an organization like the [Watchtower Bible & Tract Society] a department of people to add up all the figures which would come in from various sources and different parts of the world. I would appreciate if you could provide a satisfying and understandable answer - no details are required for it.

“Does the figure include the figures from another group or religious organization and how then do you decide which ones should or can be included? How do you get the information? I don't expect any details, but a general, open and understandable answer. Or is it that you personally have - or believe to have - contact with some of the celestial beings? Sometimes your wording rings like that.

“Personally I think that your statement of these figures rather discourages as it will fuel doubts, especially if you don't explain how you can say that. So, I should appreciate very much a

satisfying clarification, as I'm considering helping you to translate your articles into German. I'm looking forward to your answer and wish you further success in your wonderful work. With kind regards.”

To the author, we want to thank you for your email. We suspect there are many others who have followed, and are following your faith journey, and many others who share your concern about the numbers reported in the **Kingdom Update – December 2014**, and on other articles on this website. We are awed at the numbers as well, but we assure you they are accurate as we will explain below.

First, we want to acknowledge that many, many of our brothers who were mistreated and misled by various religious groups and who have consequently turned away from God have found their way back to faith and back to the Father and Christ Jesus by means of *The Urantia Book*. What happens is that the hard to understand Bible stories, and the way many of its teachers and adherents behave make it hard for intelligent, reasonable and thoughtful people in these modern times to believe there is a wise, loving, and caring God. But, in our experience, *The Urantia Book*, which we call “The Teacher’s Guide to the Bible,” explains many of those hard to believe stories by adding context and background which appeals to reason, logic, intelligence, and known scientific facts. And in so doing, it makes the Bible understandable and acceptable to the modern mind, and thereby builds and rebuilds faith. But we know that the vast majority of Christians and Jehovah’s Witnesses would stumble at the book. That is why we limit what we publish on this website to what was **actually** presented in, and supported by, the Bible. More advanced concepts and the examination of extra-Biblical writings such as *The Urantia Book* are reserved for our sister site [www.TheChristExperiment.org](http://www.TheChristExperiment.org). We hope you continue visiting that website and sharing your thoughts. Now to your question.

You are right that it would take a very large army of men to count each person who claims to be a son of God, and there would always a question of whether the person is truly a son of God or just an imposter or a ‘wanna-be.’ While we do have a means of tracking visitors to our site, those reports do not identify who is a looky-loo and who is an actual son. So there must be more to it.

Jesus once said: “When the son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?” (*Luke 18:8*) But faith in what? Faith in the Father; faith in Jesus; faith in the Spirit of Truth; faith in Holy Spirit; faith in the angelic army whose purpose is to serve man; faith in one another; faith in personality survival after death of the mortal body; and things like these. Like those in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, a large portion of our society is ‘a faithless generation.’ In an effort to change that, we published articles such as “**Faith in Unseen Realities**” and “**Walking By Faith.**” We show that angels are active today and very much concerned about continuing and completing the ministry Jesus began in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. As they did back then, angels continue to guide and direct his ministry. And yes, dear brother, they can count. (*Matthew 10:30*) Does this stumble you? “What, therefore, if you should see the Son of man ascending to where he was before?” (*John 6:32*)

We hesitate to speak too much on this matter because we want people to focus on the message, not the messengers. Numbers signifying growth in the sons of God are encouraging, especially among a people who are convinced that the world is increasingly Godless and going ‘straight to Armageddon.’ But it is the plain and open teachings of Jesus that build faith and lead to peace to salvation.

The bottom line is that you can doubt the numbers if you choose to – they are only good for counting. But do not lose sight of the more important things. As some would say ‘Do not throw out the baby with the bath water.’ If what you find on this website is encouraging and if you are moved to assist us in continuing Jesus’ authentic ministry, we welcome you and any others who want to help us spread his ‘plain and open teachings.’ We especially need translators.

So reflect on what we have written and let us know if you still wish to help us.

*“Elaia Luchnia”*

**The Inquirer’s Reply: 1/1/15** - Dear brothers, Thank your very much for your really fast and kind answer, which I appreciate and accept - it didn't stumble me, somehow I even expected it - but certain doubts will remain for the time being. You are right, there are more important things than numbers. Your message and the articles on your site bears the spirit of truth, which I can't deny, so I'm still willing to help you in translating your articles.

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