

PRIORITIES of the URANTIA MOVEMENT

On Priorities... I

by Julia Fenderson

"What do you consider to be the major priorities of the URANTIA Movement at the present time?" This question was asked of me by the Editor of The Planetary Prints in an attempt to find out what an "old-timer" (a reader of 45 years) would think and if her perceptions and opinions had changed through the years.

In answering this question I would name four top priorities: (1) Books in libraries, worldwide; (2) Translations; (3) The fostering of study groups; (4) The importance of planning and preparing for marriage and family life.

After The URANTIA Book was published it seemed more important each year to get it in libraries and book stores to enable hungry searchers to find this great guide. I try to imagine what the authors of the book and the Revelatory Commission, as well as all of our unseen friends, must think and wish as they observe us handling this superb gift to mankind. I would conjecture that they would wonder why we don't place this transcendent book in every library of the world. The Angels of Progress must wring their hands in sorrow and angelic frustration because we do not make this superior guide at least available so that guardian angels can help lead their subjects to them and so that evolving mortals can find this spiritual oasis. The logical place to find such an oasis, in book form, would be in libraries and bookstores.

When Jesus lived his perfect life on earth devoted to showing us "the way" or the "will of God" it was stated that the divine "Word was made flesh" (P. 227). Now that we have been given this great guide we can say: "The Word is made book." It is our responsibility to see that the "Word" thus given to us is made available to the lowly beings of animal origin, our brothers and sisters on the planet. Where does one usually find books? In libraries and bookstores. And it is our task to get the greatest of all books placed in all book repositories for the

seekers of truth to find. We must also diligently and prudently explore ways of cross-referencing our book so that scholars of varied disciplines may find it a ready source, and its students a refreshing resource.

The second priority is tightly connected with the first, and that is translations. By placing books in the bilingual sections of libraries in other countries (as the Brotherhood's International Fellowship Committee and many other individuals are now faithfully doing) we make the book available to scholars who will catch fire with enthusiasm for the truth and introduce it to their fellow bilingual countryman, as did Rødan, our favorite Greek philosopher of Jesus's time. Then groups of these enthusiastic countymen will demand a translation, and help implement this translation into their native tongue. Thus the request will come from them, not forced on us, and their requests and demands will help set the priority of the next translation. The Finnish and Spanish translations are examples of this, as the people themselves read and started the translations and later begged for our help.

To further amplify my point, in my communications by mail, phone and in person, I have found that an increasing number of people find the book in libraries.

Third on my list of priorities would be the natural formation of study groups. The heart of this URANTIA Movement seems to me to be the study groups, or "book clubs" as they are called in some locales. They are usually held in homes and often involve the family situation, and so have a double value. The value of working together and expanding our thinking by communication with others is pointed out again and again throughout our guide.

On page 1776:2 under "Union of Souls - The Mobilization of Wisdom", we read: "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 the same way, man is enabled to avoid the every-present tendency to fall victim to distortion of vision, prejudice of viewpoint, and

narrowness of judgment. Fear, envy, and conceit can be prevented only by intimate contact with other minds." In study groups we avoid the tunnel vision of reading alone. Instead we acquire the stereoscopic vision gained by exchanging ideas with others. The keynote theme of fellowship and service with love runs like a symphonic motif throughout this book.

My fourth priority would be to form and maintain special groups or classes on marriage and family life, the basis of all civilization. On page 913:1 we learn: "Marriage has given mankind the home, and the home is the crowning glory of the whole long and arduous evolutionary struggle. While religious, social and educational institutions are all essential to the survival of cultural civilization the family is the master civilizer."

That we need more training and help in preparation for home building is born out by current statistics on divorce rates and by many quotations in The URANTIA Book. On page 909:7 we read: "And modern civilization is at a standstill in spiritual development and the safeguarding of the home institution." It appears imperative that we give special attention to the training for home and family that is provided in our great guide.

On page 1581:1 we note that "The family occupied the very center of Jesus' philosophy of life - here and hereafter." Further, Jesus said on page 1839:5, "It is the divine will that men and women should find their highest service and consequent joy in the establishment of homes for the reception and training of children, in the creation of

whom these parents become copartners with the Makers of heaven and earth."

Underlying and part of all of these priorities would be the personal contact with one's fellows, whereby we evidence the truths and lessons of the book in our individual lives, serving our fellow man "as we pass by". Your very successful and rewarding experiences in Boulder with showing The URANTIA Book at booths falls into this last category of continuous ministry "as they pass by" and "as they pass by us."

Finally, in replying to the original question of what are the major priorities for action in the URANTIA movement, I have given four personal priorities. But I would point out strongly that above and beyond these goals is the shining light of our major purpose which is finding the Universal Father. This lighthouse goal is underlying, overriding and yet permeating every priority. This great purpose guides our every action and is shown in our love and service for our fellowmen, all of whom are indwelt by the Father through their Thought Adjusters. We ever strive to become closer and closer to our own superb indwelling Adjuster.

All work concerning the great URANTIA Book is secondary to this primary goal of knowing the Universal Father. They are all a means to that great end which can be done with or without the book. The greatest truth man can ever hear is that "God loves each creature as a child and that love overshadows each creature throughout all time and eternity" (P. 1304:7). Also, "The Father's love can become real to man only by passing through that man's personality as he in turn bestows this love upon his fellows" (P. 1208:4). •