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URANTIA

Fenderson

ON PRIORITIES

"What do you consider to be the major priorities for action in the URANTIA movement at the present time?" This question was asked of me by Don Guimond of Boulder, Colorado, in an attempt to find out what an "old-timer" (a reader for 45 years) would think and if her perceptions and opinions had changed through the years.

In answer to Don's question I would name four top priorities: (1) Books in libraries, worldwide; (2) Translations; (3) The fostering of study groups; and (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 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 is 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 entrusted to us is made available to our brothers and sisters on this planet. It is our task to get the greatest of all books placed in book repositories around the world 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 students a refreshing resource.

The second priority is closely 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 someday catch fire with enthusiasm for the truth and introduce it to their fellow bilingual countrymen, as did Rodan, our favorite Greek philosopher of Jesus' time. Then groups of these enthusiastic countrymen will demand a translation, and help implement this translation into their native tongue. Thus the request will come from them, not forced by 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 came to us for help.

To further amplify my point, in my many 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 a 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 ever-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 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."

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).

Thus it follows that love and service guide our every activity which lead men to God.

Julia K. Fenderson

John, Here is a copy of ^{Adm} my talk at Monterey as part of my F. R. report. I made it clear that these were personal ideas and did not represent any group. I enjoyed the conference and seeing old and new friends. The group had organized well and worked hard to produce a successful conference. Julia

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10-17-85

Dear, dear Patricia:

What a marvelous and monumental task you have just completed to help so many. My copy just arrived and I am overwhelmed with your work knowing full well from long experience just how much loving work you have all dedicated to this big effort. Of course you know from my letter how touched and honored I am that it is dedicated to me and this makes me very humble and responsible.

I am especially impressed with the value of the great references and bibliography you have added. This will be a continuing service to all of us. Then I was delighted with the beauty and grace of the format - your handwritten notes at times, and then your charts and compilations in an artistic form. This comes just after scanning at once and I know with an exhaustive study I will write more to you.

Please accept my thanks and my check for more copies when you have time? to get to them. Again I appreciate the vast amount of work for service.

One note which I called Chrissy about using the first phone number listed.... She said she would be reaching you in person at once so I didn't need to call you. On page iii of my article On Priorities at the bottom of the page 4 lines from the bottom the word "Swedish" appears in place of the word "Spanish" which is in my original article. (I just checked my copy) If this were not a very touchy subject I would not even mention it to you, but in your own interests as well as mine and for accuracy it should somehow be corrected even with a little insert or however. The Spanish translation has been ready due to the work of the study group in Bogota for sometime to go to the publishers in New York. There it will be gone over again and again before the new Spanish books will go out. Even the majority of the money has been collected- huge efforts for several years now. It should read:

"The Finnish and Spanish translations are examples of this, as the people themselves read and started the translations and later came to us (headquarters) for help."

The (headquarters) I just inserted but it means they were in other countries and then came to U.S. I personally think this is a good way for translations to start as it comes from books in libraries to bilingual people there and thus from them back to need for translations.

Much love and deep appreciation

Julia

one word correction is all that is necessary.

Spanish in place of Swedish