

The most difficult and dangerous journey
the human mind has ever undertaken is the
journey into the world of ideas. It is a
journey that requires courage and faith,
and a willingness to question the status
quo. It is a journey that leads to the
frontiers of knowledge and discovery,
and to the heights of human achievement.
It is a journey that is essential to the
progress of our species, and to the
well-being of our planet.

OUR TASK

Presented by

Meredith J. Sprunger

to the

First URANTIA[®] Society
of Oklahoma

*Registered Mark of URANTIA[®] Foundation — used pursuant to
license from URANTIA[®] Foundation

OURS IS ONE of the most fascinating and yet one of the most difficult tasks on our planet. For we are the custodians of the greatest message ever given to man, but must acquire the forbearance to refrain from using broadcast, impetuous, or short-sighted methods of presenting this message which would thrust the URANTIA Revelation upon our present day society before modern man is adequately prepared to receive it.

Our task as URANTIA Societies and Study Groups is to become a living community of the higher way of truth, beauty, and goodness which the searchers of humanity may discover. In the present phase of activity as guardians of the URANTIA Revelation serving mainly in the capacity of study groups and engaging in discriminating personal evangelism, we should endeavor to become the leaven which will eventually transform the religious institutions of the world.

Our present goal is not to start a new religion or to organize another religious body designed to replace our present religious organizations. Our mission, as Societies and as individuals, is to be the channel through which people and religious groups can discover the URANTIA Revelation under the most favorable conditions. If we do our job well, it may never be necessary for the URANTIA Brotherhood to concern itself — as a major function — with the mechanics of organization building. URANTIA Societies both within and independent of the religious institutions of the world could serve as continuing study groups which would be the perpetual leaven of the evolution of these institutions.

This patient and seemingly unimportant role is exceedingly difficult. We have been conditioned to crash methods and programs in science and industry, and to movements in religion designed "to save the world for Christ in this generation." But we must remember that the major mistakes on our planet have been caused by impatience and the use of short-cut methods, by ignoring the fundamental law of readiness which is the key to

all solid growth in the evolutionary universes. Any attempt to hasten or retard this evolutionary process is doomed to defeat. Man cannot "force the hand of God"; he can only realize individual, planetary, or universe growth by co-operating with Him.

Correlated with the law of readiness is the law of self-determination. Man enters the Kingdom of God and grows therein only when and as he hungers and strives for truth, beauty, and goodness — God. Discovery, growth, wisdom — these achievements in the spiritual realm are not conferred on individuals; they are the result of intense desire, diligent searching, and rigorous effort. All of these facts warn against the danger of using either the pressure of present-day promotion techniques or the subtle motivational coercion of modern advertising. The only "hidden persuader" we dare rely on is the indwelling Adjuster who never violates the self-determining freedom of the human will. Realizing these potential dangers, the Brotherhood Domestic Extension Committee had recently issued a statement concerning URANTIA evangelism which reflects much wisdom:

"The Brotherhood . . . believes its purpose may best be achieved by attraction rather than promotion. If each member will faithfully strive to actively practice, in all his human affairs, the teachings of Jesus, then such living demonstration will truly promote the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, and the URANTIA Brotherhood will surely enjoy a steady and healthy expansion.

"It would be desirable that the nucleus, the first one or two hundred members of societies, be composed of stable and firm believers, forming a solid foundation to withstand any and all contingencies that might arise in the future. **Quality** of membership, rather than **quantity** of membership, would seem to be the wise objective." As we strive to carry out this high purpose, we should be aware of at least four potentially dangerous roles which may lure persons who become followers of the URANTIA Revelation.

1. **The Enthusiast.** When the first impact of the tremendous message of The URANTIA Book hits a person, he is on fire to share this message with others. This healthy impulse sometimes causes people to lose their normal sense of discretion, propriety, and wisdom. Over-enthusiasm triggers them to act out the ancient observation: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." These well-meaning people need the understanding, counsel, and stability of more experienced members of the Brotherhood to help them over this period of impetuosity. Most of them will gradually settle down and acquire more stable and wise methods of witnessing to their faith.
2. **The Jilted Suitor.** Many people using the best judgment available to them, will introduce The URANTIA Book prematurely to a religious group or institution. As a result they will experience various degrees of rejection by this group. All too often such an individual will react in kind; he rejects the group and joins or organizes another which he promotes with great zeal to prove to the first group how wrong, stupid, or unloving they were. This, naturally, only causes greater animosity and erects more impregnable barriers to the recognition of the truth and potential of the URANTIA Revelation. If you should misjudge the readiness of a group for introduction to The URANTIA Book, do not be surprised or visibly disturbed by this rejection. In humility and love try to understand such people and continue your fellowship with them on the level of their religious comprehension. When you find it necessary to sever relations with such a group, do it gradually, quietly, and unobtrusively — and continue to love these people as individuals.
3. **The Messianic Aspirant.** Occasionally we are going to attract people with a messianic complex. They genuinely feel that God has laid upon them the burden of the salvation of mankind. Such confused and garbled communication with their Thought Adjusters causes such people to become some of

the most difficult and dangerous personalities in any religious movement. To the degree that such individuals are in touch with reality — the true way in which God works among men — they must be impressed again and again with the fact that salvation is always the result of a many-fold **divine ministry** within and among people. The salvation of man is not dependent on specific human ministry nor too significantly influenced by the individual personalities of this human ministry. There are no indispensable human ministers and any one who has too great a sense of importance loses his usefulness to do important things in the Kingdom. Indeed, the excessive prominence of personalities in any religious group is unhealthy and a potential source of evil. Genuine humility and spontaneous self-forgetfulness coupled with a deep desire to serve our fellowman are central qualities required of all who would be used most fully and constructively in the Kingdom of God.

4. **The Frustrated Server.** How many of us periodically or continually stand here! We have a deep longing to serve our fellowman, but the mundane channels through which we serve leave us longing to be used more effectively or completely. Such service-hungry souls, as they learn of the URANTIA Revelation and see its tremendous possibilities for good, can hardly resist pushing it upon their friends and promoting it prematurely in society.

The greatest deterrent to such unwise action is found in establishing a channel of service where we can pour out our energy in creative activity. Everyone can find such a vocational or avocation expression. We should search our deep self to discover the type of activity which is satisfying and fulfilling in itself. In such service we can lose ourselves and escape the compulsive temptation to promote The URANTIA Book beyond the bounds of seasoned wisdom.

Our basic problem is to condition our emo-

tions so that we identify ourselves with the evolutionary process of the universe. This is true reality — centeredness — the will of God. When our identification is complete, we will feel a revulsion toward all activity which violates or ignores the fundamental laws of readiness and self-determination.

While our present task is one of study, training, and watchful waiting, we should not be discouraged. Even now, in the absence of all promotional activity, remarkable things are happening. There is a continuous stream of letters and inquiries coming into the Chicago office. People in all walks of life are discovering The URANTIA Book and study groups are forming throughout the country. These and many other planetary events give ample evidence that significant developments in the discovery and acceptance of The URANTIA Book will take place in our generation.

There is a great spiritual hunger and expectancy throughout the world. It is generally recognized that the old religious forms and concepts are inadequate for our age. Creative thinking has almost died out in the theological world; forms, techniques, and institutional developments are stressed in an attempt to fill the aching void. There is a pathetic sense of spiritual inadequacy and numbness among the sincere and concerned religionists of the world. The more prophetic voices are predicting the coming of a new and enlarged religious breakthrough — some even anticipate a fresh revelatory encounter.

The fields are indeed growing white for the harvest and we must prepare ourselves to be ready for the time when the storms of dogmatism and sectarianism have abated and the fresh winds of searching minds drive away the clouds of spiritual blindness enabling the sun of an enlarged and profound revelation to bring new light, warmth, and hope to mankind. Then our full ministry will begin.

Printed and distributed by

URANTIA® Brotherhood

533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Illinois 60614

(July 1974)