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FIRST EMERGING UNIVERSE SOCIETY OF MELBOURNE



SOLDIERS OF THE CIRCLES

WE SALUTE

THE GOD WITHIN YOU !!

OUR TASK

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 endeavour 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.

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.

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.

The Messianic Aspirant. Occasionally we are going to attract people with a messianic complex. They genuinely feel that God has laid upon 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 fellow man are central qualities required of all who would be used most fully and constructively in the Kingdom of God.

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 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 emotions 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 America. 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.

SERVICE THROUGH STUDY GROUPS

One of the teachings of the URANTIA Book is that all service is sacred, that no effort towards the establishment of brotherhood is a menial task. Whether we are digging ditches, holding an office of public trust or spreading the good news, we are sharing the service motive.

In fact, we have been served with an injunction from the Creator Son himself to serve even as he has served. As Jesus, he even served by washing the feet of his apostles.

Have we all enlisted in the service? Are we now Soldiers of the Circles? Do we all stand out in the community as operators of service stations engaged in soul repair and universe maintenance?

With the wisdom of revelation enhancing the genetic wisdom of experience, we are sufficiently encircuited to be of use and to promote the good as we walk by. We also have the circuits of courage and understanding with the perception to KNOW when we are needed.

Religious services in the past may have appeared as often meaningless repetitions of words and dogmatic formulas, but the service of the new age is the living ministry of our daily lives as we seek new ways to serve spiritual food to our undernourished brothers and sisters.

We know three things concerning service for certain from the URANTIA Book; they are that the highest joy in service is in the establishment of homes, that service is the KEY and that it would be a transcendent service to lift up the Son of Man through the Spirit of Truth.

For us to unify these three service concepts — to promote our universal growth, to establish homes and to share the life and teachings of Jesus — we might think of having URANTIA Book study groups in our own homes.

I can conceive of no greater service today than to be the organizers of study groups in our own homes. Reading the book alone will teach us more ABOUT service, but reading and sharing the book with others IS service.

As we allow Christ to live within us more and more, as we seek to do his will, men will be drawn to him through us. To bring about the uplifting recognition of the life and teachings of Jesus does not mean to lift your URANTIA Book to the top shelf, but to open it in your own home with others for in depth scrutiny and study.

Urantians without study groups are tadpoles without fresh water. Others will be lead to the Master through our lives and through the revelation of his life. Why not unite the two today? We should never think that our Father's work is the work of others, but rather that we avail ourselves and our own homes for the Father to come and take up residence. You'll be surprised to find out how many people will seek you out when they find that God is a good friend of yours and drops in as often as they do.

A STUDY GROUP METHOD

The URANTIA Book speaks to different individuals in different ways (as well as to the same individual in different ways upon repeated reading and reflection). This realization contains a potential for breadth and depth in group study of The URANTIA Book.

This idea is for each member of the group to read a selected paper in advance of meeting and to take note of some element or aspect of the paper that holds particular personal meaning. This may be a specific statement, a theme, an idea, or any other focus-characteristic. The person then examines, from his or her own unique perspective, why and in what way this aspect has singular significance.

Upon gathering, the paper is read, with alternating readers for each paragraph; then each personality presents to the others an informal description — explanation of his or her own selection. During this time, there should be a minimum of discussion with the only interruptions being for questions or particularly pertinent observations. Then a general, hopefully enlightening, discussion occurs after all persons have shared their experience.

This approach is intended to accomplish several goals, including both active and passive participation by all. In the preliminary reading and study, each individual adds a dimension of understanding by examining some meanings and values contained in the paper on a personal level. In the group activity, each person grows through learning both the idea-experiences and the interpretation of the others.

It is our view that the extraordinary nature and content of the URANTIA Book, will motivate new imaginative and enlightened activities. **The man-made book has gone.** (Evolution tends to make God manlike — revelation tends to make man Godlike). The living truth and beautiful gospel of Jesus remains. We are sent forth to uplift evolved religions, to free spiritual captives, to bring joy to those who fear and heal the sick in accordance with the will of the personality of love on Paradise.