

The following is a 1983 publication from headquarters, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, restating advice and counsel from diverse sources that explain the rationale for a long-standing policy regarding *The Urantia Book*. Any historical document may require some degree of revision to express its contemporary relevance; as a minimum, note that the fraternal organization organized in support of the purposes of Urantia Foundation is no longer Urantia Brotherhood, but the International Urantia Association; and its member groups are no longer called “Societies” but “Associations.”

THE DISSEMINATION OF THE URANTIA BOOK AND STATEMENT ON PUBLICITY

INTRODUCTION

The Timing of The URANTIA Book. As The URANTIA Book was being readied for publication in 1955, certain members of the General Council of URANTIA Brotherhood collaborated to prepare a memorandum concerning the timing of The URANTIA Book and their perceptions of the readiness of the world to receive the fifth epochal revelation. This memorandum was dated April 4, 1955, and was placed in the files of the Executive Committee. Here is a portion of their memorandum:

“We regard The URANTIA Book as a feature of the progressive evolution of human society. It is not germane to the spectacular episodes of epochal revolutions, even though it may apparently be timed to appear in the wake of one such revolution in human society. The book belongs to the era immediately to follow the conclusion of the present ideological struggle. That will be the day when men will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. When the chaos of the present confusion has passed, it will be more readily possible to formulate the cosmos of a new and improved era of human relationships. And it is for this better order of affairs on earth that the book has been made ready.

“But the publication of the book has not been postponed to that (possibly) somewhat remote date. An early publication of the book has been provided so that it may be in hand for the training of leaders and teachers. Its presence is also required to engage the attention of persons of means who may be thus led to provide funds for translations into other languages.

“We must learn to possess our souls in patience. We are in association with a revelation of truth which is a part of the natural evolution of religion on this world. Over-rapid growth would be suicidal. The book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission. Thousands of study groups must be brought into existence and the book must be translated into many tongues. Thus will the book be in readiness to comfort and enlighten the peoples of many languages when the battle for man’s liberty is finally won and the world is once more made safe for the religion of Jesus and the freedom of mankind.”

The Plan for Our Early Stage. To those in whom circumstances placed the custodianship of the fifth epochal revelation, and to us who have followed, it was apparent that we were to engage in three primary programs:

1. to train leaders and teachers,
2. to bring into existence thousands of study groups, and
3. to acquire funds to provide for translations of The URANTIA Book into other languages.

It was agreed that it was vital that these activities be carried on quietly, without the glare of public attention. Hence, the decision was made that the revelation would be spread to new readers primarily by personal and individual means. The early planners believed that a broad and sturdy foundation should be built of people who were well-grounded in the spiritual and intellectual teachings of the book. So that students could nurture their faith and belief and refine their knowledge of the teachings, there must be provided an atmosphere free of controversy. Notoriety would distract readers from their study and preparation, and therefore, publicity should be avoided.

This has been the ongoing plan of URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation since 1955, because those who have followed the early planners in a leadership capacity are in complete agreement with the earlier assessment.

In 1958, the Domestic Extension and International Fellowship (formerly Foreign Extension) Committees received a memorandum from URANTIA Foundation:

“Advertising. For the foreseeable future the Trustees deem it unwise to engage in formal advertising.

“Personal Propaganda. The Trustees as a body have watched with great interest the dissemination of The URANTIA Book during the last 2 ½ years. With certain notable exceptions, the book appears to have fared best in new hands when the recipient had a reasonably close relationship to the donor. We accordingly recommend continuing emphasis on this method of dissemination.”

Evolutionary vs. Revolutionary Growth. URANTIA Brotherhood was organized with the prime purpose of disseminating the teachings of The URANTIA Book; however, one former president of the Brotherhood advised:

“This URANTIA Movement is not a temporary, spectacular flash that appears quickly in the panorama of history, and then subsides and is extinguished. Rather, it is a long-range project that is designed to become part of the religious epoch that is characteristic of the post bestowal Son age.”

Another former Brotherhood president, once reminded her audience:

“We must not be in a hurry. We must not be stampeded into unwise actions to promote the revelation. Those who witnessed the formulation of the URANTIA Papers and the subsequent publication of The URANTIA Book, zealously guarded and controlled the manner in which it was presented to the world, letting the example of the unseen friends, who waited hundreds of years to make this revelation, curb their impatience and govern their enthusiasm.”

The State of the World. The URANTIA Book itself comments upon the intellectual and spiritual status of the world's people in our present-day generations:

“At the time of this revelation, the prevailing intellectual and philosophical climate of both European and American life is decidedly secular—humanistic.” (2081)* “One half of the world is grasping eagerly for the light of truth and the facts of scientific discovery, while the other half languishes in the arms of ancient superstition and but thinly disguised magic.” (973)* “The concept of good and evil as cosmic co-ordinates is, even in the twentieth century, very much alive in human philosophy...” (962)* “Thousands of supposedly intelligent people still believe that one may be born under the domination of a lucky or unlucky star;...” (988)* “The world is filled with lost souls, not lost in the theological sense but lost in the directional meaning, wandering about in confusion among the isms and cults of a frustrated philosophic era.” (1098)*

Readiness for the Revelation. Yet another former Brotherhood president has written:

“We have been conditioned to crash methods and programs in science and industry, and to movements in religion designed to ‘save the world...in this generation.’ But we must remember that the major mistakes on our planet have been caused 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.”

An astute member of the Brotherhood has pointed out:

“When N.A.S.A. charts the re-entry of a space vehicle into the atmosphere it must be gradual enough, and slow enough, and at the proper angle, so that it does not become a fiery meteor. Similarly, we must, with the utmost care and forethought, calculate the path of trajectory—the approach—of these advanced teachings into the evolutionary and cultural atmosphere of this planet.”

Stated otherwise: revelation needs to find ways to cushion the shock, to gradualize the impact, to synchronize with the pre-existing trends of evolution.

Another former president of the Brotherhood, agreeing with earlier Councilor assessments concerning the readiness of our world for the revelation, has written:

“It is not difficult for us to understand why so few people are ready to accept the fact that a major revelation of truth has occurred. Our age is characterized by chaos and confusion and wide-spread indifference to spiritual realities. And these things must pass before men and women in large numbers...will be willing to seek truth and righteousness. This will be the signal that the era of The URANTIA Book has arrived.”

Our Primary Loyalty. Let the words of the first president of the Brotherhood ever remind us:

“We must be careful not to confuse primary and secondary loyalties. Our primary spiritual loyalty is to the Universal Father and to him alone. When we encounter some spiritually hungry brother, our first objective is to bring him closer to his heavenly Father. This we may do with or without the book. All things are secondary and

subordinate to the acquisition of this one prize: the realization of sonship with God. The book itself is not an end; it is a most important means to an end. If The URANTIA Book becomes mandatory in our ministry, then we have truly subordinated to it our first and primary objective and purpose which is: the service of God.”

SPREADING THE GOSPEL AND THE FATHER’S WILL

The Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven. Readers of The URANTIA Book insist that it is the Father’s will that they spread the gospel far and wide without restraint. And they are right. Discussion ensues when trying to determine what is meant by the “gospel,” and what the Father’s will is with respect to spreading the gospel. One definition of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven is this, among others:

“The gospel of the kingdom is: the fact of the fatherhood of God, coupled with the resultant truth of the sonship-brotherhood of men.” (2059)* Jesus said: “Our teaching provides a religion wherein the believer is a son of God. That is the good news of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven.” (1598)*

Is The URANTIA Book the “Gospel”? Readers often express the belief that it is really The URANTIA Book which is the gospel. The book contains many exquisite presentations of the gospel, but it also contains ideas on cosmology, politics, genetics, economics, and sociology. The gospel message is living truth that is fluid, free, and dynamic. The book includes many facts of history and the universe which are not fluid and free; they are fixed and definite. If The URANTIA Book were truly the gospel, then someone who has not accepted the book, because of the facts contained therein, might be said to have rejected the gospel. Many other books deal with the relationship between God and man. Are these books also the gospel? Concerning the gospel, Jesus simply stated it as:

“God is your Father, and religion—my gospel—is nothing more nor less than the believing recognition of the truth that you are his son.” (1590)*

At various times, the apostles, disciples, the women’s corps, and believers were commanded to spread the gospel:

“...you are...to be valiant in defense of righteousness, mighty in the promulgation of truth, and aggressive in the preaching of this gospel of the kingdom, even to the ends of the earth.” (1931)* “As the Father sent me into this world, even so now send I you. You are all called to carry the good news to those who sit in darkness. This gospel of the kingdom belongs to all who believe it; ...Go you, therefore, into all the world preaching this gospel, ...” (2044)* “I admonish you ever to remember that your mission among men is to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom—the reality of the fatherhood of God and the truth of the sonship of man.” (2052)* “The Master sought to impress upon all teachers of the gospel of the kingdom that their only business was to reveal God to the individual man as his Father—to lead this individual man to become son-conscious; ...” (1593)*

Expanded Revelation. While the gospel was the basic message Jesus and the apostles preached to the multitudes, there were many private teachings he imparted to one or two hearers because these individuals were better prepared to receive advanced truth. When Jesus enlightened Nathaniel about the Scriptures, he exacted a promise:

“I will talk to you about this matter on condition that you do not relate these things to your brethren, who are not all prepared to receive this teaching.” (1767)*

Jesus’ teaching about the Trinity was apparently confined to the twelve. (See 1144) Melchizedek tailored his teaching to the capacities and readiness of his students:

“To the rank and file of his followers he made no effort to present teaching beyond the fact of the rulership of the Most Highs of Edentia....But to some, Melchizedek taught advanced truth, embracing the conduct and organization of the local universe, while to his brilliant disciple Nordan the Kenite and his band of earnest students he taught the truths of the superuniverse and even of Havona.” (1016)*

It might be concluded, therefore, that one or two individuals at a time would be better prepared to receive the expanded truths of The URANTIA Book, than would our present-day “multitudes.”

The Father’s Will. Readers ask, “Is it not the Father’s will that the book be spread to the world?” We, of course, have no right to presume to speak with authority, or to determine what the Father’s will is, with respect to this action, or that program. Jesus seems to be directing us to think of God’s will more in terms of what one is, or is becoming, rather than what one, or a group, is doing:

“In substance Jesus said: The will of God is the way of God, partnership with the choice of God in the face of any potential alternative. To do the will of God, therefore, is the progressive experience of becoming more and more like God, and God is the source and destiny of all that is good and beautiful and true.” (1431)*

“The doing of the will of God is nothing more or less than an exhibition of creative willingness to share the inner life with God—with the very God who has made such a creative life of inner meaning-value possible. Sharing is God-like—divine.” (1221)*

Prayer is the most important way to discover the will of God. However, a beautiful thought that arises to consciousness may or may not be Adjuster-sponsored. We must critically examine every thought that surfaces in time of prayer. We may trust that valid inner guidance will not contradict epochal revelation; therefore, it is important to carefully study The URANTIA Book.

Even the best of mortals will go astray unless they seek wisdom from a variety of sources. No one can safely function alone, hence the value of gaining the wisdom of the group.

Is the Book Indispensable to Salvation? It has been proposed that every man and woman be given the opportunity to know about the book and make the decision whether to believe it. It is implied that failure to accept the book might lessen chances for survival. No evidence from the book has been presented to support the claim that the book is vital to salvation. Even Jesus could not have imparted the gospel to everyone on earth in his day. He was, as we are, limited to his proclamation by opportunity, timeliness, and the readiness of the people.

Some contend that by introducing the book only to selected individuals, we are not giving the revelators the chance to be heard. In theory, the revelation could have occurred at any time in the past few hundred years, yet, it was not until the 20th century that, presumably, the world was approaching readiness for epochal revelation. Could the revelators also be charged with

“depriving” earlier generations of the fuller presentation of truth from which many could have benefited?

PROVIDING MINISTRY AND PERSONAL SERVICE

The Ministry of Faith. Many new readers are fired with the intense desire to share their new-found treasure with others immediately. Frequently they are not well acquainted with the book and make the mistake of over-emphasizing the phenomena of the revelation, or they stress the scientific aspects and neglect the spiritual truths. These phenomena do not save souls; faith saves souls. If one were to analyze his own changed outlook after reading the book, he would realize that it was due to an infusion of faith rather than the acquirement of facts. In sharing faith, one should convey the truth of the fatherhood of God; the acceptance of sonship with God; and the assurance of survival as a consequence of faith in the Father. One does not need to be an expert in the teachings of The URANTIA Book to spread this gospel of salvation.

After you have led your friend into these new insights, you may or may not also introduce him to The URANTIA Book, depending upon his willingness to listen and sample the book. Whether he accepts the book or not matters less. Acceptance of faith in the Father is of greater importance.

As for friends whom you believe are not ready for The URANTIA Book itself—those who are satisfied with their current religious interests, or who might be prejudiced against a “new religion,” or who just do not like to read—oftentimes simply sharing the ideas and truths from the book without mentioning their source, will enhance their spiritual viewpoint. Your primary goal is to foster the spiritual faith of your fellow humans, not necessarily to fill a quota of books to be sold.

Jesus prioritized proclaiming the gospel and performing service:

“Let all mankind benefit from the overflow of your loving spiritual ministry, enlightening intellectual communion, and uplifting social service; but none of these humanitarian labors, nor all of them, should be permitted to take the place of proclaiming the gospel.” (1931)*

“He did not teach that the essence of his religion consisted in social service, but rather that social service was one of the certain effects of the possession of the spirit of true religion.” (1769)*

The Ministry of Personal Service. One of our early leaders offered this description of perfect ministry:

“Jesus went about this world kindling faith, calming life, eliminating fear, quieting fevers, both in minds and bodies, bringing peace and order into disordered lives, heavy-laden souls, and troubled hearts. He possessed the master secret of serenity. How we need this calming hand in the midst of our rush and hurry, our problems, and our worries.”

Just as the apostles learned that the sick benefited from having the good news preached to them (See 1595), so might you volunteer to read to the sick or the blind and offer spiritual reassurance when the need is apparent. Several readers have learned wise ways of offering solace to the

dying and to the bereaved, and through our conference programs, we invite them to share their experiences in this delicate personal ministry.

The fields of marriage and family counseling, and alcohol and drug rehabilitation offer possibilities for professional service. Our readers who practice professionally in these fields could provide parameters of activity for the non-professional, so as not to exacerbate already tragic situations by well-meaning novices.

Jesus commended to his hearers the underlying motive for personal service when he said:

“When you give a banquet, sometimes bid the poor, the maimed, and the blind. In this way you shall be blessed in your heart, for you well know that (they) cannot repay you for your loving ministry.” (1834)*

Group Service. URANTIA Brotherhood has never prescribed specific areas of service and ministry for its members and believers to perform, either individually or collectively. There are two reasons for this:

1. What would be high service for one person might be utter drudgery to another. What might seem a worthy charity to one person would be a useless cause to another. Our groups are organized for study of The URANTIA Book and for dissemination of the teachings. Members must not fall away because of disagreements over methods of service ministry to fellow humans. The name “URANTIA” must not be linked to specific causes.
2. The service motivation arises at different points in every life. As each person feels the transforming power of faith, let him join himself to one of many outside service agencies organized to address the manifold ills of the world.

Living Testimony. The time is ripe for those called to personal service. There are plenty of “experts” who tell others how to live. The need is for those who will show others how to live. The book challenges readers to demonstrate the truth of its teachings by daily living them. Readers are to become living testimony of the power and beauty of the teachings. We can all whet the appetite of others by the way we live.

INTRODUCING THE URANTIA BOOK

The Person-to-Person Introduction. The preferred means of spreading The URANTIA Book is by word of mouth. We warmly urge a renewed dedication by readers to this proven method of bringing the book to the attention of friends and acquaintances who are believed to be ready to receive it.

The person-to-person approach is superior to a program of advertising because of the human touch. The disciples accepted the gospel because Jesus personified the twin truths of the gospel—the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men.

Recent Shift From Personal Introductions Noted. There seems to have been a diminution of personal efforts to spread the book; a shift away from the person-to-person introduction, and a move toward reliance upon brochures, tracts, slide shows, and other second-hand impersonal techniques. Each has its place when used in combination with personal introduction, but when

dependence is placed upon it exclusively, it loses its value and impact. The spirit of the teachings rarely comes through in a brochure; multimedia presentations often are too intellectual or too emotional in tone, not effective unless presented with discussion led by a well-prepared facilitator.

The tendency to rely upon secondary materials may represent a more expedient approach to introducing the book and may display an impatience with the seemingly slow rate of growth of new readers. The willingness to depend upon introductory brochures may also indicate a desire to find an alternative to experiencing rejection of the book first-hand. Another reason that many readers are neglecting to personally introduce the book to others is that they are too busy. They are wrapped up in the plans, projects, and activities that a burgeoning movement seems to demand. Introducing the book or sharing the truths of the book, is one of the highest forms of outreach and ought to take precedence over organizational distractions.

Study the Book to Introduce it Effectively. It is difficult to introduce such a complex book as The URANTIA Book without first having a good acquaintanceship with it. No single method of introduction is effective for everyone, hence the importance of knowing the book and understanding the needs of your friend to decide which approach will best answer his longings. You must become skilled in creating a quest for truth as Jesus did. A long-time reader has expressed it this way: “One ‘friend’ is introduced more graciously and warmly to another friend by a friend who knows the qualities of both well.”

Develop Sensitivity and Courage. You must be prepared for indifference—even hostility—when introducing the book. After each experience of rejection resolve to become more sensitive to the spiritual needs and intellectual questions of others. Become spiritually fragrant so as to better attract people to you and to these superb teachings. When you have exhausted your “supply” of friends to whom you have already introduced the book or the teachings, expand your circle of friends and never become discouraged. We are all aware of the courage called for when approaching someone about The URANTIA Book.

Several readers are recognized as having a special talent for finding potential believers or as able to stimulate truth-hunger in others. They could be invited to share experiences and suggestions at Brotherhood conferences.

DISSEMINATING THE URANTIA BOOK

Thousands are Ready. While the world as a whole has been adjudged not ready for The URANTIA Book—for the complete system of thought that is the fifth epochal revelation—there are undoubtedly thousands of people (among more than four and a half billion inhabitants of our planet) who would gladly receive the book today. In view of the decision that the book will not be publicized, for the reasons presented in this statement, the problem arises of how to reach those whose minds and souls hunger for truth and spiritual enlightenment.

Finding Those Who Are Ready. Although it may be unwise at this time to cast a net into the sea, we can certainly continue our more selective program of setting out lures. Our task is to design better lures. As part of our plan to lure rather than promote more readers, we have several programs:

1. Library book placement. Books may be placed in college and university libraries; public, prison, ship, hospital, hospice, corporate, and church libraries. The only libraries to avoid

would be those controlled by governments or religions which would take exception to a book such as The URANTIA Book.

2. Book discounts. Our book distribution system has recently been overhauled to facilitate the ease with which legitimate book stores can order, stock, and pay for books. It is hoped that more book stores will place the book on their shelves in the religion or philosophy sections to enable browsers to find it readily.
3. Public display opportunities. Increasingly, groups will be experimenting with other forms of passive public display of the book. Ideally, these experiments will also involve personal consultation about the nature of the book on display.

Gift or lending copies. URANTIA Societies and individuals are able to take advantage of discount prices for multiple copies of the book for their service projects. We encourage individuals and societies to present books to certain types of people as, for example:

1. Study group leaders in less wealthy countries.
2. Economically disadvantaged persons who either have no resources or who may be unable to pay full price.
3. Carefully selected individuals who are believed to be intellectually and spiritually ready to accept it. This program would be judiciously initiated by experienced workers who “speak the same language” professionally.

Speakers’ Bureau Program. A URANTIA Society might begin devising and rehearsing various techniques of presenting The URANTIA Book and its concepts to small groups in their local areas. The Speakers’ Bureau Outline was prepared by the Fraternal Relations Committee and was intended as guidance for URANTIA Societies, but its principles could be adapted by a local study group that wished to prepare itself, as well.

SUGGESTIONS TO LOCAL SOCIETIES WHO WISH TO ORGANIZE SPEAKERS’ BUREAUS**

1. Each speaker should receive training in the fundamentals of public speaking.
2. The speaker should have a thorough knowledge of The URANTIA Book.
3. Any speaker going out from a URANTIA Society is in reality a representative of URANTIA Brotherhood. When speaking as an authority about the organizations, he should first determine what the policies of URANTIA Brotherhood and URANTIA Foundation are and, to the best of his ability, state them in a positive and favorable light.
4. Speakers should be sent out in two’s whenever possible.
5. No fees should be charged by speakers. Methods of clearing expenses should be formulated by the local Societies in advance.
6. It is recommended that any activity by a Speakers’ Bureau be at the invitation of the other group, rather than as a result of solicitation on the part of the URANTIA Society.

7. Any speaker who takes such an assignment should make a study of the group he will be addressing. Better understanding will result if there is sympathetic tolerance for others' beliefs.
8. A skillful and wise speaker will emphasize the soul-saving message of The URANTIA Book and avoid over-long discussion about the book, about the origin, or about the organizations.
9. Concerning the origin, none of us has any first hand knowledge as to how the URANTIA Papers were transmitted. There are many rumors about the method, most of which are contradictory, and there is no means to validate any of the rumors. In the absence of an official version, the only reliable information is in the book itself.
10. The first speakers have a solemn responsibility, and they would, of course, be representative of the dignity and character of The URANTIA Book revelation.

**(Approved, Executive Committee, 1977)

PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE REVELATION

Positive Outreach. For a long time readers believed that there were so many things they weren't supposed to do, they have become confused as to how to spread the teachings. In fact, there is only one "don't" and that is not to publicize The URANTIA Book. They can do practically everything else of an "outreach" nature.

The URANTIA Book has a primary spiritual mission, but it is also designed to encourage material and social progress. It seems to be the opinion of the majority of leaders as well as of many readers that, for the foreseeable future, the influence that the book will have upon the institutions of society must be indirect, at most. The URANTIA Book is a unified whole and should not be delivered piecemeal to those who are ready only for certain portions. An alternative program (to introducing the book directly to large groups or segments of society) is for students of the teachings to introduce concepts—unattributed to the book by name—into the main currents of contemporary life.

Public Ministry. One of the most effective programs of outreach ministry has been the dissemination of the teachings of the revelation through radio broadcasts and by other means of communication. These public efforts are characterized by the fact that the communicators do not mention The URANTIA Book and do not quote from its pages. Another important feature is that the Brotherhood does not sponsor or direct their activities.

The leaders of one such group sought counsel as they prepared to launch their public mission. They were advised by counselors to maintain their program entirely separate from the Brotherhood and not to link their public message directly with The URANTIA Book. It was foreseen that their group could even grow faster than the Brotherhood and become larger for a while. Yet it was understood that their group's activities would not compete with the Brotherhood's programs; neither would it act as an intermediary between URANTIA Book readers and URANTIA Brotherhood.

The Fraternal Relations Committee of the Brotherhood has recognized the value of this type of public outreach and is interested in coordinating the flow of information about this kind of public outreach. While the committee would not be sponsoring or directing these independent activities, it would be happy to share insights.

Ideas for Spreading Concepts of the Revelation. Among possible pursuits are these:

1. Newsletters. There has been an explosion of newsletters emanating from all segments of the readership. One suggestion has been made that newsletters might expand by directing their mission outward, beyond those who read the book, instead of inward, toward those who already believe the teachings.

This type of publication would be aimed at the public and could include literary writing, poetry, commentary, and art with an intellectual and spiritual overtone. A “news”letter of this kind would wed the self-expression motive of editors and contributing writers to the desire to spread truth and faith to the spiritually needy of the neighborhood and planet.

The backbone of this idea—in keeping with the plan of not publicizing the book—would be to have no identification with The URANTIA Book and URANTIA organizations. The publication would not quote, paraphrase, or mention the book. Mailing lists would be developed outside the readership instead of within, and funding would gradually come from subscribers instead of donations from readers.

One technique frequently used by speakers and broadcasters who read the book, which could be applied to the literary “news”letter, is to highlight a concept known to be in The URANTIA Book, but identify it instead with a personality—famous or obscure—who might have originated it in the past.

2. Fiction, Non-fiction, and Poetry Writing. The introduction of revelational, philosophical and spiritual ideals into the flow of contemporary literature could uplift the minds and souls of countless men and women in decades to come.

The work of talented writers and poets has appeared in our journals and local newsletters. Many of these same writers could consider marketing their talents to magazines and book publishers. A well-written, thought-provoking, non-controversial but penetrating article would have appeal to the editor of leading literary magazines. A non-fiction article could concern itself with a concept which has been known for some time and around which theory and discussion has been rampant. Again, as outlined in the discussion on newsletters, for the foreseeable future, it would be wise to omit mention of The URANTIA Book by name and not include quotations or paraphrasings from the book, nor use names and terms unique to the book. An invitation to the reader to get in touch with the author could be appended to the article.

3. Radio, Television, and Motion Pictures. In the past few years there has been an enhanced consciousness among some television and movie professionals of the need for higher ideals in our society. People working in the communications media who read The URANTIA Book hope to find the opportunity to proclaim the teachings in a secondary manner. They are gradually using their project assignments to elevate the quality of their productions by incorporating truth concepts into scripts. Their dream is to break the silence about God that exists on the major networks and in present-day entertainment. They envision the far distant day when they or their successors will be able to safely

portray spiritual truth and intellectual facts in an uncompromised fashion. Until that day comes, there is a vital need to upgrade the spiritual and philosophic levels of those who work in the communications industry. This work approaches near-apostolic levels of dedication and service.

4. Cable Television. This medium promises to be the one with the most voracious appetite for talent and new ideas. Cable could become one of the vehicles by which the world can be prepared to receive the revelation. It is more personal and local than commercial television. Thus far, cable has yet to fulfill its promise of offering independent thinking. While there are many channels devoted to religious programming, they are largely directed by conservative and traditional religious groups that are by no means ecumenical. It is much too early to publicize the book on cable television or any other medium, but it is not too soon to begin presenting a diluted version of some of the ideas from the revelation.
5. Talk Show Interviews. The readership of the book includes persons who have authored books, who are business and professional leaders, or who are performing artists. They occasionally appear as guests on radio and television talk shows, and they sometimes utilize these opportunities to impart spiritual and philosophical concepts. They are becoming adept in the presentation of higher truth without ever publicly mentioning The URANTIA Book or their association with a revelation. They are willing to share their techniques with anyone planning to embark on similar public ventures.

A key feature that all of these public outreach programs should include is some system of personal response for anyone to inquire further about the source of inspiration. Thus, The URANTIA Book could be personally introduced when the opportunity presented itself.

The URANTIA Book is not the only religious work that can be “bootlegged.” Jesus selected the passages from the Scriptures that best fitted the idea he wished to convey. Your own choice of passages from the Bible or another work could get across a great truth to an audience just as well.

These are a few of the more public ways the teachings can be spread. They are not the only means. One can incorporate concepts into speeches; teachers have included ideas gleaned from the book, as well as ethical and moral guidance in the classroom; Sunday school teachers intermix material from the book into their lessons; and The URANTIA Book provides a personal reference for student and professional work in philosophy, archeology, and anthropology.

One reader has devised a list of over 100 ways to spread the book or its teachings abroad in the land. Songwriters—famous and little known—are building their lyrics around a spiritual concept or ideal that was derived from The URANTIA Book.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Preparing the Way. Jesus’ method of teaching in Rome was not to present the epochal fact, but to expand upon the truths they already recognized. He prepared “...the way for the better and more certain reception of (the apostles’) message.” (1455)*

Presenting the Religion of the Living Jesus:

“What an awakening the world would experience if it could only see Jesus as he really lived on earth and know, first-hand, his life-giving teachings!” (2083)*

“The time is ripe to witness the figurative resurrection of the human Jesus...What a transcendent service if, through this revelation the Son of Man should be recovered from the tomb of traditional theology and presented as the living Jesus to the church that bears his name, and to all other religions!” (2090)*

We must ask why the author of the latter passage did not write, “What a transcendent service if this revelation could be presented to the church...” In time, the book will be so presented. But the living Jesus does need to be immediately presented. This passage is completely compatible with the thesis that the book is given now in order to train teachers and leaders who can present the basic spiritual truths of the living Jesus. The time of the widespread use of the book itself will follow a general spiritual awakening on the planet.

Training of Teachers.

“The URANTIA Brotherhood Constitution charges the Education Committee to find, prepare, and qualify teachers for the purpose of disseminating the teachings of the book in order that each mortal may be aided in achieving his or her personal spiritual goals... (I)t is the committee’s task to encourage intensive study of the papers together with (the) study of evolutionary knowledge, secular and religious.” (From the Statement on Current Thinking, Education Committee, 1983)

Seminars were developed as a step toward providing a framework for study of The URANTIA Book in order to improve the breadth and depth of knowledge of these teachings. Participants in seminar programs try various techniques in the teaching and learning process. A climate is provided in which personalities may cooperatively interact in their study.

Visiting Teachers. An adjunct to the seminars will be the Visiting Teachers Program, in which teachers recommended by URANTIA Societies could be invited by other Societies or study groups to present programs that might consist of lectures, workshops, papers, or topics.

Study The URANTIA Book. To become a “teacher” of the revelation, one must first be a student. One never finishes discovering the riches in the teachings of The URANTIA Book. Thorough personal scholarship is the basic ingredient of preparation for teaching. Study groups offer the opportunity for the student who has had no professional teaching experience to develop confidence by asking questions and making comments about the subject under study. An aspiring teacher might also research external sources to enhance the study of a section of the paper the group is studying. Certain types of outside employment or volunteer activities could train one to be more sensitive to others’ needs.

The encouraging and nurturing of new readers is a most important service. Many a new reader would welcome a “study partner”—a one-on-one tutor, a more experienced student—who could lead him to cross-references and bolster his flagging spirits. Established study groups are sometimes imposing to a new reader, and individualized attention would be most beneficial to both novice and tutor.

A true teacher is not necessarily one who has passed through a prescribed course of study. He or she is one who is recognized by students and fellow teachers as being able and qualified, an individual who can attract, lead, inspire, enlighten, and stimulate others.

Study Groups. The study group is proving to be the ideal social format for the enhancement of knowledge of the book, and it provides opportunity for readers to profit from the insight of fellow readers. It offers a chance to practice, to rehearse, and to share experiences—just such a program as Jesus’ apostles and disciples had before they launched their mission to the world.

Study groups take many forms; they range through:

1. groups that read straight through the book without discussion,
2. groups that read and discuss,
3. intensive study groups,
4. topical studies groups,
5. collateral-materials research groups,
6. shared reading groups
7. groups where sections are pre-assigned,
8. groups where the leader conducts the entire study, and
9. groups that operate with a question and answer format.

Traditionally, the only recommendation the Brotherhood has regarding study groups is that the group concentrate primarily on the study of The URANTIA Book.

Study group organization and maintenance is a complex human relations responsibility. It requires dependability and dedication. The Apostle Paul was a great teacher, but he also had a special talent for organizing. The Brotherhood offers opportunities through its seminars, through the Study Group Fellowship of the Domestic Extension Committee, and the general conferences, as well as in regional conferences, for individuals to share study group experiences with each other.

Success in study group endeavors will reap untold benefits in the furtherance of the revelation. Before the time of public spread and acceptance of The URANTIA Book, we will be quietly facilitating the formation of thousands of study groups.

Derivative Materials. One of the projects being considered by several Brotherhood committees is the compilation and distribution of a list of available study aids. However, in studying The URANTIA Book it has generally been the belief that the most valuable aids are those which one provides oneself and those which accompany personal interchange.

Funding Translations. One of the leading priorities of the on-coming decades will be the preparation of translations of The URANTIA Book. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the fifth epochal revelation must be made available to our brothers and sisters around the planet. Although English is spreading rapidly, countless millions will never learn English. While it is URANTIA Foundation that will oversee the intricate process of developing translations, nevertheless, it will be we, the readers, who will fund them. Reader-volunteers may, with the approval of the Foundation, be used, variously, in the translating, the polishing, the checking, or the revision processes. However, at some stage—or at all stages—paid professional translators will need to be employed. The efforts of volunteers do not obviate the need to have in hand a large amount of money for the translating and printing of each translation.

Financial Priorities Evaluation. Many worthwhile projects are proposed every year. As each arises, the group must assess its value and estimate whether the long-term interests of the greatest

number of people will be served. Even if vast amounts of money become available to the Brotherhood and Foundation, a group “wisdom forecast” should be made concerning the relative merits of every suggestion. As Jesus’ youthful yardstick measured the institutions of his day, so also may the programs of our readership be gauged:

“What does it do for the human soul? does it bring God to man? does it bring man to God?” (1388)*

THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING A CONSISTENT POLICY

Avoiding Confusion. Leaders in the field have been aware of the policy of encouraging dissemination of The URANTIA Book by means of personal introduction, and the majority who have expressed themselves indicate strong approval of it as being in consonance with the best examples and admonitions on the book.

If URANTIA Brotherhood began a program of advertising the book, of approving the advertising of others, or of ignoring such promotion, great confusion among readers would occur. Advertising could indicate to our friends that we believed that our person-to-person program had failed and that any individual who might even remotely be ready for the book could only be found by advertising. Many people are highly offended by advertising, and its employment by us or others could have a polarizing effect among the readership. Many truth-seekers have grown weary, even distrustful, of the spiritual validity of any religious group which engages in publicity methods. In their minds it is associated with manipulation, promotion, and psychological persuasion—the antithesis of The URANTIA Book teachings.

Our work must be done with a global perspective. The Brotherhood we are forming is a world Brotherhood. Some publicity techniques which might seem acceptable to many people in the United States would be found questionable or even shocking to many Europeans and Asians and might unwittingly jeopardize acceptance of these teachings in other cultures.

“Limited” Advertising Encourages Spin-off. There are indeed many readers who do not understand the reasons behind the policy of not publicizing the book, but to their credit, they have respected it. To approve or encourage advertising programs would be an indication to many potential publicists that the policy was being relaxed—that the time had arrived to publicize the book. Although one or two unauthorized advertising programs have been tried, results are believed to be modest. Sooner or later, an individual, seeing such minimal efforts, if encouraged by our apparent indifference, would be moved to mount a well-funded, highly visible campaign on television, in magazines, and in newspapers—one designed to bring in new people by the thousands. This would, of course, short-circuit our plan of fostering gradual, but enduring growth.

Stay With Eternity-Proven Methods. The URANTIA Book and its associated programs call for the wisest thinking and eternity-proven methods to promulgate truth on our planet. We must seek methods and techniques that fit the spirit of the teachings and always try to avoid projects that cheapen the revelation.

THE VALUE OF A UNIFIED PROGRAM OF DISSEMINATION

Crucial Early Stages. In the early stages of development of a new organization or movement, unified, coordinated efforts are crucial to survival. There must not be multiple or conflicting policies and practices concerning the dissemination of the book, as this would tend to undermine the Brotherhood's ability to coordinate internal programs and could ultimately confuse the public and other religious groups, as well as readers of The URANTIA Book.

To encourage officially any group to duplicate our work or to work at cross-purposes would erode any hope of achieving a unified program that would benefit all readers. The would-be advertiser who complains that the current policy interferes with his or her freedom conversely can be faulted with trying to reverse policies which the group has worked hard to formulate and preserve.

Programs Must Synchronize. An individual or group who acts unilaterally in a mass-promotional effort would be assuming an enormous responsibility with respect to the rate and quality of the spread of the revelation. The consequences upon all facets of the movement must not be overlooked or minimized. A program that is out of synchronization with the wisdom and plans of the majority could disrupt the evolutionary process.

Problems With Unilateral Activities. The techniques that would be employed in unauthorized promotional programs presumably would be for an individual or group (not URANTIA Brotherhood) to inform the public through mass-promotional means of the existence and nature of The URANTIA Book. All inquiries would then be channeled back to the group that initiated the publicity. In our opinion this system has several drawbacks:

1. The URANTIA Book is a powerful beacon of light and truth. Regardless of quality, any introductory medium would be as feeble and ineffective as would be a candle lighted while in the presence of a lighthouse.
2. The majority of people who encountered any form of advertising of the book or introductory material, no matter how well conceived and presented, would of necessity be forced to decide the merits of the fifth epochal revelation based upon their reactions to these miniscule bits of information.
3. A personal introduction to the book could be a loving and individualized ministry tailored to the spiritual needs and intellectual questions of the truth-seeker. The impersonal, group, or organizational approach has little if any of these qualities.
4. This process encourages one to hide behind an organizational façade and resort to easy and impersonal means while avoiding the more courageous task of personally spreading the book and the teachings.
5. This process misleads the public into thinking that the group engaging in publicizing the book is the official spokesperson for The URANTIA Book. URANTIA Brotherhood was established to occupy the field, to be the primary source of information about the book and fellowship activities. Any other group would be interposing itself between the new reader and the Brotherhood, thus being in a position, occasionally, to answer questions about the origin of the book, to provide interpretations of the book; to comment on policies of the Brotherhood and Foundation; to discuss the price of the book; and to work on preparation of study aids, publications, or any other items they might wish to sell. The role of such groups and individuals—surely unintentional—when they function as

advertisers and information clearing houses, could be characterized as bypassing the Brotherhood; to be, in effect, shadow Brotherhoods.

GROWTH WITH SUBSTANCE

We are Growing at Reasonable Rate. We are currently growing at a rate we can handle. The movement has not failed. The book is doing its own work. Society evolves or a movement develops best when it is not subjected to intense pressure to grow or spread quickly. Under the strain of too rapid expansion, growth would be unpredictable and faulty. At present, a strong core of deeply committed individuals is emerging and will continue to emerge if the evolutionary process is not disrupted. Material yardsticks can never be used to measure spiritual progress. We are engaged in the dissemination of advanced religious truth; book sales will be a natural consequence.

An inquiry was made recently of the marketing director at a major publishing company concerning the number of books published annually that could be expected to exceed 100,000 in total sales. Only about 1% ever attain that level of distribution. The URANTIA Book has moved better than 99% of all other books published. A total distribution of over 126,000 URANTIA Books is viewed as extraordinary, considering the fact that the book has not been publicized.

Temporary Faddish Growth. The physical distribution of the book probably could be accomplished world-wide within a very few years. But this kind of artificially induced growth could collapse as quickly as it flourished. Such an officious spreading of The URANTIA Book—not built upon a stable foundation of believers—would result in a most terrible failure.

Deflation Among Jesus' Followers. At the time of the feeding of the five thousand, which had had a wide-reaching public relations impact on his popularity, Jesus' following had reached its highest number. However, there was a sudden and complete desertion of adherents after his sermon in the synagogue, wherein he reiterated the spiritual realities of the kingdom and deliberately turned back the tide of popular enthusiasm.

Numbers vs. Growth. The first president of URANTIA Brotherhood warned:

“It is entirely possible that we could become victims of a dangerously subtle confusion—the confusing of growth with swelling. The mere swelling of numbers is in no sense synonymous with true growth.

Experience has taught that exposing a person to The URANTIA Book is not the equivalent of exposing him to its teachings, and we must never confuse reading the book with accepting its teachings. Even intellectual mastery of the contents of the book would not guarantee salvation. One can know all about God without actually knowing God. The book's teachings must be spread in such a manner that they open human hearts to a meaningful relationship with God.

Thousands vs. Billions. By not advertising, we might lose the chance to gain thousands of believers in our generation. However, by giving in to impatience or by engaging in unwise methods of dissemination—by publicizing the book prematurely—in the long run, the revelation might fail, and the loss through time could number billions of people.

GROWTH FREE OF CONTROVERSY

Value of Publicity Negligible. While advertising may seem positive because it will cause increased recognition of the name “URANTIA,” it would cause many people to ask “experts,” e.g., their ministers, priests, or professors to advise them about the book. They might receive an erroneous or superficial assessment. In turn these individuals would multiply the spread of negative information. This process is already in motion, but it would become wide-spread if the book were advertised.

Spiritualistic, Occult, and U.F.O. Groups. The book is well known within the spiritualistic, occult, and U.F.O. networks. To date, a few authors have evaluated The URANTIA Book in their books. So far, the writers who assess the book consistently distort the concepts. They target in on the legends that surround the Forum and transmittal of the papers. We could not expect better commentary about the book by these authors if the book achieved greater recognition.

Authority of Revelation Not Persuasive. Today, several major world religions are based upon the teachings of books considered to be divine revelation. No religion has been able to command a world-wide following based solely upon claims concerning the origin and authority of its Holy Book. To confront traditional religions by publicly challenging the accuracy of their sources and the validity of their beliefs, by advertising that ours is a more truthful book, would be to invite confrontation.

Advertising Invites Notoriety. The book is known to fundamentalist groups, several of which have published papers denouncing concepts in The URANTIA Book. A public relations campaign for the book would call us to the attention of the very groups that regard us as heretical and believe we pose a threat to their security. It would be seen as increased proselytizing. They in turn would intensify their efforts to discredit the book and discourage their members from reading it.

Differences Magnified. The differences between the teachings of The URANTIA Book and those of evolutionary religions are often magnified out of proportion by both friends and opponents. Misguided friends use the differences to challenge the truth of others’ religions. Other religionists use the differences to challenge the authenticity of the book. The book reveals the true values of existing religions and teaches that we should upgrade religions by focusing on their truths rather than trying to discredit their errors.

Courage and wisdom are distinct, equally important virtues in disseminating this revelation. Jesus taught his disciples how to transform the world:

“You are not to attack the old ways; you are skillfully to put the leaven of new truth in the midst of the old beliefs. Let the Spirit of Truth do his own work. Let controversy come only when they who despise the truth force it upon you.” (1932)*

A confrontation between The URANTIA Book and traditional religions would not be a good way to gain believers, as some contend. Spectators to the battle between religionists would not be drawn to the book by their acceptance of truth, as much as by a desire for excitement.

Publicity could attract some honest truth-seekers, it is true. But to the majority, it is probable that the book would be regarded as just another new peculiar tome claiming to be a revelation, of which there are literally hundreds in circulation today. We would seldom hear from these people, but their attitude could be unfavorably influenced against The URANTIA Book for years.

Negative publicity—ridicule or simply a put-down by a respected public figure—would cause numerous half-hearted beginning readers to desert in embarrassment. Many potentially fine believers could be lost before they had a chance to learn the truths the book contains.

International Responsibility. The chances of barbaric reactions are remote in most western nations, but this is not so in other parts of the world. It would be an act of planetary citizenship to spread the book so wisely that it will develop quietly in countries where adverse publicity would precipitate inevitable persecution.

UNDERSTANDING THE MEDIA

Nature of the Media. URANTIA Brotherhood has consistently advised readers to avoid bringing the name of The URANTIA Book into any activity that could become a media event. The media is fast, powerful, effective, and always hungry for news. It is symptomatic of our immature state that neither the print nor broadcast media are dedicated to emphasizing what is good in society. Good news is usually not as appealing a controversy.

What is Newsworthy? Readers who have had experience with the media tell us that even a short article in a small town newspaper is sometimes copied by several other small newspapers, and if newsworthy, is picked up by the wire services. Three elements could focus interest on the book or organizations by the news media:

1. A comment during an interview by a “celebrity” who reads the book.
2. A story that portrays the URANTIA movement as a cult. This could happen, for example, if a parent thinks a son or daughter has been “brainwashed” into believing the teachings of the book.
3. Various concepts presented in The URANTIA Book could be taken out of context and misinterpreted by social scientists and religionists. The press and media thrive upon the emotional reactions of differing groups.

Secondary Publications. Among the sources the press and media may examine prior to contacting the official spokespersons could be our secondary publications—the newsletters that originate from head-quarters and the field; open letters and policy statements that may have had wide distribution; artistic, literary, multi-media, and study aid materials. As the Publications Committee Chairman often reminds: “If we exercise wisdom in what we include in our publications, we will have less concern about how the public will view us.”

When is Response Obligatory? Officers and members of URANTIA Brotherhood and local URANTIA Societies are private citizens. No one is under obligation to tell reporters anything about groups of which one is a member. We must not be intimidated into giving a thirty-second analysis of the fifth epochal revelation to just anyone who carries a press card.

Eventually, it will be advisable and necessary to speak out, but that day can be forestalled by decades if we adopt a policy of not randomly giving interviews and news stories. We must, of course, not refuse if it appears that reporters will go to a less reliable source than a designated spokesperson.

Reportorial Methods. It is important to learn and understand how reporters get their stories. First, they do their homework by getting all the technical and statistical facts available. Secondly, large news organizations have a “literature file”—a collection of everything ever published about their subject. Next, reporters contact outside people—“experts” likely to express an opinion about the book or movement. Lastly, they will call us.

The person being interviewed must be conscious of any attempt by a reporter to lead the subject into making derogatory remarks about religions, political systems, or personalities. Reporters print or broadcast what is actually said, and the interviewee frequently says far too much.

Rehearsal for Public Relations. Realizing that reporters arm themselves with facts before approaching their subjects, it would serve us well to begin the rehearsal of various ways of responding wisely to their inquiries.

Spokespersons who can safely and effectively deal with the media must be trained. Unskilled but well-intentioned believers, discussing sensitive areas of the book with skilled reporters, would find themselves hopelessly embroiled, explaining subjects even angels could not explain to unbelievers. At present, very few readers exist who have sufficient knowledge of both the book and the Christian Bible to respond with sensitivity and accuracy. Few challenges could be met with response at all, others answered poorly, leaving the impression that the criticisms were valid.

The question of the origin of the book will undoubtedly be raised by reporters, just as it intrigues many readers. The book addresses certain aspects of the transmittal of the revelation, but it probably will not satisfy the queries of investigative writers. The legends that are currently proliferating among the readers about the origin and early days of the Forum are contradictory and unreliable. It should be borne in mind that repeating stories about those events, which can no longer be verified or corrected by anyone who experienced them first-hand, is perhaps not serving the best interests of the spiritual mission of the revelators.

If, after all possible efforts to avoid controversy fail and we are portrayed with ridicule or bias in the press, we would be well-advised to measure carefully the consequences of any response we might make.

Our Greatest Accomplishment? A former URANTIA Brotherhood president, during an address to the Triennial Delegate Assembly, made an appraisal of the situation nine years after publication. It is still germane:

“Perhaps what we have prevented from happening is the foremost of our accomplishments, for in spite of placing The URANTIA Book into the hands of influential persons, it has received no adverse or undesirable publicity. Therefore, it has not been cheapened by sensationalism. It is almost unbelievable that up to now no fanatics or those with sinister motives have arisen to upset or undermine the great message we have to bring. We need to maintain vigilance against fanatical individuals or groups who might bring us unwanted publicity or attempt to short-circuit the evolution of our long-range plans.”

CONCLUSION

When Will it be Time to Publicize the Book? The purpose of delaying publicity is not merely to avoid controversy—that would require us to wait forever. Some day in the future the time will

come to publicly proclaim the revelation. Let us ask: Under what conditions will it be wise to publicize the book and to risk controversy? It has been suggested that it will be time.....

1. when there are a great number of excellent students who can explain and defend the revelation.
2. when thousands of stable and mature study groups have been established.
3. when thousands of teachers and leaders are trained who can accommodate an increased influx of inquiring readers.
4. when no single local confrontation can threaten the mission of the revelation.
5. when translations have been prepared for all the major language groups.
6. when believers have better prepared the soil of secular institutions and of society in general for the reception of the fuller revelation.
7. when there will be overwhelming agreement, through the consensus of group wisdom, that the time for publicity has arrived.

Evolutionary Progress. Here are a few final words of wisdom from The URANTIA Book:

“But Jesus’ reply to Peter ever was: ‘Be patient, Simon. Make progress. We will be none too ready when the Father calls.’” (1534)* “Peter and James came to Jesus, saying, ‘We are ready—let us now go forth to take the kingdom.’ To which Jesus replied, ‘May your wisdom equal your zeal and your courage atone for your ignorance.’” (1579)*

“... (M)y kingdom is not to come with noise and glamour, but rather must it come through the great change which my Father will have wrought in your hearts and in the hearts of those who shall be called to join you in the councils of the kingdom.” (1533)*

“By... gradually changing man’s will and thus affecting human decisions, Michael and his associates are likewise gradually but certainly changing the entire course of human evolution, social and otherwise.” (1863)*

“It is always difficult to induce evolutionary minds suddenly to accept advanced revealed truth. Man is an evolutionary creature and in the main must get his religion by evolutionary techniques.” (1011)*

“Never, in all your ascent to Paradise, will you gain anything by impatiently attempting to circumvent the established and divine plan by short cuts, personal inventions, or other devices for improving on the way of perfection, to perfection, and for eternal perfection.” (846)*

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