

Grace Evangelical And Reformed Church

307 North Plymouth Street

Culver, Indiana

MEREDITH J. SPRUNGER, Ph.D., Minister

Jan. 4, 1956

Dr. William S. Sadler
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago 14, Ill.

Dear Dr. Sadler:

We should like to thank you for the wonderful time which we enjoyed at your home Wednesday. You have such a fine family and we appreciated getting acquainted with you folks so much. We hope you will be able to visit us sometime.

We received much also in our understanding of the background of the Urantia Book. As the result of our conversations, I typed up a new edition of the Introduction and ran off a few copies for a select group of Academy instructors I am meeting with Monday evening.

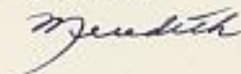
I was never satisfied with the other attempts; they lacked the "we" atmosphere. And few people feel competent enough or courageous enough to tackle something like the Urantia Book in isolation. When they feel that many competent people have taken something of this nature seriously, they are much more likely to follow suit, as you well know.

Would you or one of your family go over it and make suggestions concerning changes which might improve it in accuracy or effectiveness. Probably one of your family could give me a better biographical sketch of yourself.

Just received a note today from D. W. Weaver of this community enclosing a letter from Edmond F. J. Kulieke in which he suggests that Mr. Weaver contact me for an introduction "to a most wonderful book...which we have been studying for over twenty years." I shall be glad to meet with Mr. Weaver.

We are making copies of the various diagrams which Bill's wife gave us. Shall start going over the funeral service material soon.

Cordially yours,



Meredith J. Sprunger

MAY I INTRODUCE YOU TO A MOST UNUSUAL BOOK:

Every advance in knowledge is a disturbing and painful experience for man. This is true of both quantitative knowledge (science) and qualitative knowledge (religion). Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake for contending the earth was not in the center of the universe. Louis Pasteur was denounced by the learned men of his day when he contended that diseases were caused by germs. When William Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, most of the physicians of his day who were over thirty-five continued the rest of their lives to believe there was no such thing. Shortly before Wilbur and Orville Wright flew their first plane at Kitty Hawk, N. C., a distinguished scientist wrote a convincing article proving that it was scientifically impossible to fly a vehicle heavier than air. The list could go on and on.

Scientists, however, are not the only people afflicted with this type of myopic vision. Growth in religious insight has been plagued with even greater resistance and suffering. The prophets have been stoned; the saviours are crucified - by religious men and women who believe they are doing the will of God.

The basic error responsible for our historic resistance to truth, both scientific and religious, is mankind's tendency to accept second-hand, once removed sources of reality - usually authoritarianism and tradition. The Bible does not contain the word of God because our theological professors, our pastors or our parents say it does. It is not Eternal Truth because the prophets have seen visions or worked miracles. The ultimate authority of truth is its intrinsic, self-validating nature. There is in every man a spark of the Divine which bears witness to the truth. The only way one can know the Bible contains the word of God is through this inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. "When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...and will declare to you the things that are to come." John 16:13.

With this background I should like to introduce you to a book which, at first impulse, you will no doubt reject. After this first impulse passes, I urge you - with all the sincerity and urgency at my command - to read and study this book carefully and critically. Remember that you never need fear truth and falsehood cannot stand careful scrutiny.

This book is entitled The Urantia Book. It was published by the Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago 14, Illinois, in 1955 and contains 2097 pages (\$10). Examining its contents you will discover that it claims to be written by numerous celestial beings as a special revelation to man living on this world, Urantia. It asserts that it contains the first major Divine Revelation since the coming of Christ to our planet. "These papers differ from all previous revelations, for they are not the work of a single universe personality (such as Melchizedek of Salem or Jesus of Nazareth), but a composite presentation of many beings. But no revelation short of the attainment of the Universal Father can ever be complete. All other celestial ministrations are no more than partial, transient, and practically adopted to local conditions of time and space. While such admissions as this may possibly detract from the immediate force and authority of all revelations, the time has arrived on Urantia when it is advisable to make such frank statements, even at the risk of weakening the future influence and authority of this, the most recent of the revelations of truth to the mortal races of Urantia." Page 1008.

These revelations were completed around 1934 and were placed in the custody of a select group of people known as the Urantia Forum. You will find these people of highest caliber and unquestioned integrity. This first group was composed of seventy people under the leadership of Dr. William S. Sadler and his wife, Dr. Lena Kellogg Sadler. They were a nationally prominent medical team until Dr. Lean's death in 1939. As you may know, Dr. Sadler was a pioneer in the development of American Psychiatry. He has written over twenty-five books some of which have been standard text books in medical schools for many years. He was professor in the Post-Graduate Medical School of Chicago University and a lecturer in psychiatry at McCormick Theological Seminary for almost thirty years.

Other men of international reputation who studied the Urantia Papers before publication and fully accepted them were the famous magician, Howard Thurston and the noted explorer, Sir Herbert Wilkins. Thurston, who took delight in exposing all sorts of fraud, became so absorbed with the Urantia Papers that he dropped his work for a whole year to make an intensive study of the Urantia Papers. Wilkins likewise took three months out of his busy career to study the Papers.

Finally permission was given to publish the Urantia Papers and The Urantia Book was released to the public in October, 1955. At this time the Urantia Forum was organized into the Urantia Brotherhood with a constitution and by-laws. This was done largely as a defensive measure against fanatics who might get hold of the Book and attempt to start a new cult.

William S. Sadler, Jr. is the current president of the Urantia Brotherhood. Mr. Sadler is an outstanding business man heading an agency which evaluates business executives and general plant efficiency of industrial institutions throughout North America.

I was personally introduced to the Urantia Book by Louis M. Hammerschmidt, a prominent lawyer, churchman and public minded citizen of South Bend; and W. F. Harrah, president emeritus of the National-Standard Co. (a large industrial firm of the United States, Canada and England), a man of exceptional ability, character and integrity. All of these men and many others have approached the Urantia Papers with considerable skepticism but after careful study have become thoroughly convinced of their authenticity.

One would expect that any authentic revelation would be continuous with and not contrary to previous authentic revelations. Although the New Testament presents a loftier view than the Old Testament, it is continuous with it. You will discover this same parallel between the New Testament and the Urantia Book. Many of the things Bible students have wondered about and yearned to know are clarified in the Urantia Book.

The easiest approach to the Urantia Book, but not the wisest, is to start with Part IV - The Life and Teachings of Jesus. A complete reading of Part IV is necessary for a minimal evaluation of the Urantia Book. But a better approach to the Book is suggested below.

As you read the Urantia Book try to do so with an open mind and listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It stands or falls on its own inner validity or lack of it. If you only browse through the Book, you will in all probability reject it. If you will read the entire Book, you will almost certainly understand its immense significance. You will discover that it does not advocate a new religion. It cautions repeatedly concerning the dangers of fanaticism. If your religious convictions are mature and if you have grown in reasonable spiritual insight, inspired by the teachings of Christ, you will find that reading and accepting the teachings of the Urantia Book will not change any of your fundamental religious convictions - and it will confirm many things which, through the guidance of the Spirit, you have surmised to be true. You will at last have a religious outlook that is worthy of the superlative teachings of Jesus concerning a loving Universal Father. Although the Urantia Book may not change your fundamental convictions, it will add tremendously to your knowledge of God.

A word of caution - many people are not ready for the Urantia Book. Recommend it to others only when you can do so from personal conviction growing out of a careful study of the Book. And then only to those who are ready for it - people with open, progressive, courageous minds and high moral integrity. Premature publicity and over rapid growth would be most unfortunate. ~~"The Book is being given to those who are ready for it long before the day of its world-wide mission."~~ This is the time to develop small study groups and quietly pass it on to those who are ready to receive it.

Suggestions For Reading the Urantia Book

1. For persons with a Christian background who are interested in the field of Liberal Arts.
Papers 100-103 (pp. 1094-1142)
Pages 1007-1010 (Sections 4 & 5)
Pages 2075-2086
Page 215 (2nd paragraph to end of section)

Then start at the beginning (Paper 1) and read the Book through. Only then will you be in a position to evaluate its tremendous significance. Some sections will no doubt "go over your head" but later you will find that you received more than you realized. Remember that some of the advanced science courses you may have taken seemed incomprehensible at first. Recall that in your elementary mathematics courses you had to accept certain propositions and theorems in order to understand the course. Only much later in your training were you able to prove the validity of the original theorems. You will find this same parallel in studying the Urantia Book. The Book can be adequately understood only in its totality.

2. For those whose dominant interest is in the Physical Sciences.
Papers 41-42 (pp. 455-484)
Paper 57 (pp. 651-663)
Pages 1007-1010 (Sections 4 & 5)
Page 215 (2nd paragraph to end of section)
Then start at the beginning and read the Book through.

3. For those whose dominant interest is in the Biological Sciences.
Papers 58-62 (pp. 664-710)
Pages 1007-1010 (Sections 4 & 5)
Page 215 (2nd paragraph to end of section)
Then start at the beginning and read the Book through.

Don't let the size of the Urantia Book discourage you. If you will average reading it an hour a day, you will finish it in six months. But if it should take you six years, you will no doubt find it the most rewarding study you have ever made. You will probably find that during the reading of the first section of the Book you will have the urge to throw it aside as impossible and preposterous. But if you will read on, one day you will realize what an amazingly consistent, homogeneous and reasonable Book it is.

January 7, 1957

Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger
Grace Evangelical and Reformed Church
307 N. Plymouth St.
Culver, Indiana

Dear Dr. Sprunger:

A number of us have gone over your three statements about introducing the Urantia Book. We have put them together as we think would be most effective and appropriate. We hope our efforts will meet with your approval. If they do, we will reproduce this new arrangement to meet some requests that have been made for your statement. We feel that the mention of individual names would not be best for general distribution. We think that it would be perfectly proper in personal letters to use these statements but we doubt the wisdom of using them in a statement to be mimeographed for wider distribution.

We certainly enjoyed our visit with you and Mrs. Sprunger and look forward to seeing you again soon.

Sincerely,

William S. Sadler

WSS/ar