

First - Bethany Church

United Church of Christ

REV. E. J. A. KOCH, Ph.D.
Detroit 14, Michigan
2243 Seminole Ave.
Church and Res.: WA 1-5529

REV. A. R. LAMBARTH
St. Clair Shores, Michigan
22707 Harmon Street
Ch.: PR 9-2101; Res. PR 8-8972

March 20, 1958

Rev. Meredith J. Sprunger, Ph.D.,
215 North State Street
Culver, Indiana

Thank you for sending the URANTIA BOOK. I have been reading it topically as certain chapters attract me, but I am really starting from the beginning. Found the chapters on the Sevenfold Bestowal most interesting. Likewise the essays on the 12 Apostles. When I had the book in my hand soon after it was published, it was on a loan basis for only a few days and in a busy season such as the present one, and so could really not do justice to it. Believe I bogged down in the introductory material which I have now read with considerable profit. I find the book not only interesting and exciting, but at times edifying and always stimulating.

I notice that the book cost \$12.00. This is the kind of book one must really own to "read, mark and inwardly digest." I would be enclosing my check for that amount, but I am not sure if there is any other cost, such as the mimeographed materials, postage, etc. Please advise. Will send my check as soon as I hear from you.


My organist in Elmhurst had access to the book through people who were evidently close to Dr. Sadler, and I believe were close to, if not members of, the URANTIA SOCIETY in Chicago.

I believe a book like this must be studied carefully by persons competent to read it, who also have an open mind, and are psychologically ready for its offerings, before it is recommended too widely, even among the clergy. Readers should also have the mental capacity and critical faculty to examine it with real scrutiny. While some of the younger theologians should be encouraged to give us their opinions, I also feel that some theological professors are most unqualified as professional theologians of the Church to evaluate it for their fellow pastors. I think you know what I mean. I am not at all inclined to let professors or any other particular professional or ecclesiastical personnel ~~to~~ decide not only if it should be read, but even to pass authoritatively on its inherent claims. I am not sure who can make such a decision, unless it is the individual who reads it, doing so with a devout mind and heart, amenable to the Holy Spirit, who in the last analysis is the one who confirms God's word in the heart. I know this runs all the risks of subjectivism, but it is less hazardous than theological or ecclesiastical authoritarianism.

I do think the Church can hold all of us accountable for what use we make of this material, and here we must all be most conscientious and cautious. Most of us who will stick with a book like this, have probably had occasion to explore and evaluate other esoteric materials, without in the least doing any violence to the Confession of the Church and our message.

I am pleased to have this opportunity again to examine this book. Best wishes for the holy days and season ahead.

Sincerely yours,


E. J. A. Koch

EJAK/mb