

There are three reasons for ministers and Christian leaders to take the time and effort to read *The Urantia Book*:

1. The book is being discovered by thousands of people at an increasing rate. You may find it helpful to have a working knowledge of its message.

2. In the judgment of many ministers and Christian leaders, the book contains the greatest stimulus to spiritual growth in contemporary literature. You may wish to examine the basis for this opinion.

3. You may be a searcher for philosophical and religious truth. If so, you are aware of the limitations of our historic philosophic-religious resources. You will find *The Urantia Book* one of the most enlightening sources of spiritual truth you have read.

Hopefully, these reasons should impel you to read this book. Through its pages you will discover new aspects of reality and deeper insights. Living its spiritual truth will enhance your work and daily living. *The Urantia Book* has a wealth of resource information and insight to help solve problems in our complex society. It presents the highest principles of judicious thinking and healthful living. Its message emphasizes balance and maturity while teaching respect for established traditions, laws, and usages. The spiritual universe is realistically and authentically portrayed. *The Urantia Book* can be used in elevating your life to a new level of spiritual effectiveness.



The Urantia Book is available in libraries and book stores. Information about study groups near your home can be obtained from:

URANTIA® Brotherhood
533 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, IL 60614

For literature related to *The Urantia Book*, or for additional copies of this brochure, please contact:

The Jesusonian® Foundation
1790 30th Street
Boulder, CO 80301
Phone (303) 447-2418

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About Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger

Dr. Meredith J. Sprunger, a retired minister in the United Church of Christ, served congregations in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Dr. Sprunger was President of Indiana Institute of Technology. During his tenure, he served as a professor, head of the Department of Psychology and chairman of the Division of Liberal Arts. He also taught at Elmhurst College where he headed the Psychology Department.

Dr. Sprunger has been President of URANTIA® Brotherhood, chairman of the Education and Fraternal Relations Committee and a Field Representative. Today, Meredith is the Executive Director of Ministry of the Jesusonian Foundation while serving on the Board of Directors. He also founded and directed The Christian Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book*.



The Urantia Book and Our Christian Heritage

by
Meredith J. Sprunger, Ph.D.



Rarely does one find a book on theology or religion which has the potential of changing the conceptual patterns of our culture. Over twenty years ago a small group of United Church of Christ ministers discovered a stimulating volume entitled *The Urantia Book*. URANTIA® Foundation published this book in 1955.

Since that time other clergymen and tens of thousands of laypersons have become interested in this unusual book. The overwhelming consensus is that it will receive universal recognition. This challenging book is a fascinating document for personal spiritual growth and intellectual development. It may become the most important source of information revitalizing the church and restructuring theology since the Reformation.

The growing number of ministers and religious leaders discovering the book are surprised that a publication of this spiritual quality and potential has remained virtually unknown for over twenty-five years. A partial answer is because the publishers have not promoted it. They believe that personal introductions are the wisest method of acquainting people with the book. In addition, there are three major factors which have discouraged clergymen and other Christian leaders from a serious reading of it:

1. It comes from a source which is not known and trusted by religious and theological groups.
2. It is a large book (2,097 pages) and some sections can be difficult to read.
3. It claims to be new revelation and understandably causes suspicion, if not fear or hostility.

We have left those days of cultural naivete when claim or authority have sole-validity as a criterion of truth. Revelatory authenticity is a secondary consideration. The primary challenge posed by *The Urantia Book* is pragmatic. Does it have something creative and constructive to contribute to our modern philosophic-religious outlook? Evaluated on spiritual insight, philosophical coherence, and reality-centeredness, it presents, in the judgment of thousands of people who have critically examined it, the finest world view of religion available to contemporary man.

The Urantia Book like any other book on religion, should be read critically but with an open, spirit-guided mind. It is not, and should not be seen as, a challenge to the Canonical literature of the church. Canonical literature, including the Bible, results from divine initiative and guidance, tested by centuries of witness and wisdom in the church. *The Urantia Book*, like other contemporary literature, can only serve as an adjunct to the scriptural sources of faith in the church. You will find

it supports an enlightened Biblical approach to religion. Most people have a greater appreciation of the Bible as a result of reading *The Urantia Book*. Although individuals may determine the personal value of the book in a relatively short time, its worth and place in the church can only be determined by generations, if not centuries.

We Live In An Integrated Universe

The Urantia Book presents an integrated view of the universe. It combines the best traditional concepts of God with the most meaningful present day concepts (Tillich, Teilhard de Chardin, Whitehead) into a uniquely coherent system.

A hierarchical structured universe, teeming with millions of inhabited planets, is paralleled by a similar spiritual cosmology. The book presents a superior understanding of our planetary history, dynamics, and destiny. Evolution functions as the physical and spiritual modus operandi of the universe. The mechanisms of the physical universe integrate with the purposes of mind and spirit. *The Urantia Book* presents insightful, excellent, and concise summaries of the development of religion and the growth of civilization. The authors penetrating analysis of religion, culture, and the family is of exceptional quality.

The Urantia Book, A Resource Not An Imperative

Although the message of *The Urantia Book* is solidly rooted in the perennial philosophy and religious experience of the past, it does present an enlarged view of the universe and God. Religious institutions usually find expanded knowledge and insight difficult to assimilate. Light can blind as well as guide. Truth, presented prematurely, brings frustration and rejection. *The Urantia Book*, therefore, may be disturbing to some people even though it is supportive and positive toward all people and all human efforts in the search for truth and spiritual understanding.

The last section of *The Urantia Book* contains an extended version of the life and teachings of Jesus. This inspiring presentation of the mission of Jesus brings new life and authenticity to the New Testament story. Its teachings are basically acceptable to all religions. They emphasize the religion *of* Jesus which unifies rather than the religion *about* Jesus which tends to be divisive. The central challenge of modern man is to make a balanced effort to achieve God-consciousness. Growth toward perfection (God) is seen as the fundamental motivation of life. This growth is evolutionary, culminating, and virtually endless.

The Urantia Book ranks as a significant source of spiritual guidance to contemporary humanity. But it is not an end in itself nor a necessary means to spiritual enlightenment. Its potentials for stimulating individual and social growth are great. It should be highly recommended to those interested in the creative possibilities of a spiritual renaissance. Its message is balanced and profound. Its approach is open and benign. There are no threats or coercions to "believe." It seeks to work in and through the evolutionary advancement of mankind. It says that the kingdom of God functions as an invisible spiritual family destined to become a living organism transcending social institutions. Contemporary religious institutions can and will serve as an adequate source of religious ministration for our society. *The Urantia Book* supports, encourages, and strengthens religious institutions in fulfilling their unique ministry to the spiritual needs of humanity.

The Christian Fellowship of Students of *The Urantia Book* was organized to promote the study of *The Urantia Book* among Christian leaders and laypersons. The expansion of living faith in the church will stimulate a spiritual renaissance in our society. Therefore, we recommend a critical study of *The Urantia Book*. Our purpose is to assist you in discovering this enlarged spiritual message which has significant potential for the future of religion.

How Can *The Urantia Book* Contribute to Our Christian Heritage?