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Christian Fellowship activities have been in progress for about four years. Our purpose has been to establish communication and dialogue with the Christian Church and culture. The first phase of our program is drawing to a close. We wanted first to contact a reasonable sample of mainline ministers. Historically religious professionals have been among the last to respond to new revelation or major reform movements.

Our experience confirms this same cautious and conservative stance among clergymen today. While our relationships have been friendly and positive and many ministers have expressed interest and appreciation, their reactions have been basically superficial and transitory. We have contacted around 750 ministers, loaned some 35 books, found some who were interested, but only a few who are serious students. Although one always goes forth with hope, these results are not surprising. It was important for us to get this experience and empirical data before making generalizations about outreach ministry.

For many reasons centering around personal security, institutional preservation, and professional training, ministers and priests are among the last to recognize new revelation or accept new parameters in religion. The few prophets among these professional religionists, of course, are not afflicted by these myopic limitations. Clergymen, generally, will not examine The URANTIA Book seriously until enough laymen in their churches or religious institutions are reading the book.

Recognizing these historic and consistent dynamics of religious leaders and religious institutions is part of the wisdom basic to attempting to stimulate religious growth in society. Although it is important for ethical reasons to introduce religious leaders to The URANTIA Book early in our outreach ministry in a community, we should realize that, with few exceptions, ministers will only take the time to critically examine the book when sufficient numbers of laymen in their community are reading it.

The founders of virtually all of the major world religions and the majority of the great religious advances in spiritual growth on our planet have been spearheaded by laymen. This will also be true of the fifth epochal revelation. Such conditions are basically good for a number of reasons. If ministers discovered The URANTIA Book before their members were acquainted with it, they can safely only bootleg the teachings and this is frustrating. When laymen take the initiative in introducing the book, the minister is more likely to take the time to really read it and at the same time has some protection from conservative parishioners or denominational executives who might criticize them for "deviations" in theology.

It is also important to remember that it is wise to introduce The URANTIA Book primarily to those religionists who are living at the Fourth Level (Contemporary Creativity) of spiritual comprehension. This generally means that religious fundamentalists or evangelicals and theological conservatives (existing in all

religions and religious groups) are not evolutionally ready for Fifth Level (URANTIA Book) ministry. We are now beginning the second phase of our outreach ministry in Fort Wayne. This stage will involve the contact of educated laymen, including professional people and business executives.

Many laymen throughout the country who are students of The URANTIA Book are becoming active in their local churches with fascinating results. Sunday School classes in Indiana, Georgia, and Texas have asked for an introduction to the book and the minister of a California church has asked laymen who are URANTIA Book students to lead a forum in their church on The URANTIA Book. This quality of work by laymen in churches will eventually result in the organization of thousands of study groups. If we can be of help, please contact us.

Literature Available

"The URANTIA Book and Our Christian Heritage"

"The Church and The URANTIA Book"

"The Origin of The URANTIA Book"

"How to Start Reading The URANTIA Book"

"Principles of Ministry"

"Outreach Ministry"

"The URANTIA Book and Christian Fundamentalism"