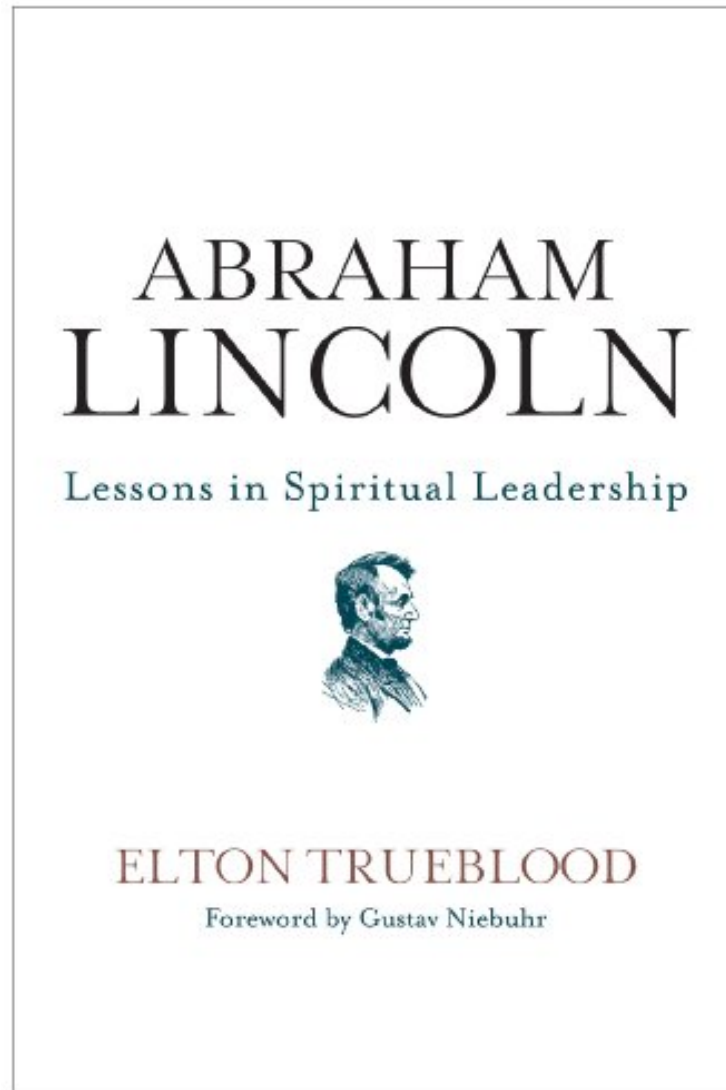


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Abraham Lincoln: Lessons in Spiritual Leadership

Elton Trueblood

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Elton Trueblood : Abraham Lincoln: Lessons in Spiritual Leadership before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Abraham Lincoln: Lessons in Spiritual Leadership:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Profound Examination of Lincoln's Spiritual Life By Derek Atkins This book, written by Elton Trueblood, is a penetrating, well-researched look at Abraham Lincoln's theological convictions. Instead of asking what Lincoln's religion was, Trueblood focused on Lincoln's thinking about religion - in his opinion, a far more interesting question. I agree with Trueblood's approach, and this eminent scholar does a fantastic job of exploring Lincoln's theology. Trueblood argues that Lincoln experienced profound spiritual growth primarily through experiencing great suffering, especially with the intense personal, political, and national suffering he

encountered as President of the United States. Trueblood also dismantles some of the common arguments that Lincoln was not a believer, noting for example the mountains of evidence - including Lincoln's own words - that Lincoln in fact had a profound belief in Christianity (even if there are some indications that he wasn't completely orthodox), in contrast to the lone claim of one-time colleague William H. Herndon that Lincoln was an unbeliever. He also takes careful note of other facts, such as the fact that in Lincoln's day, only 23% of Americans actually became church members, as opposed to 60% of Americans being church members in Trueblood's own time, a contrast that helps explain why Lincoln's lack of church membership should in no way be construed as evidence that Lincoln didn't believe in Christianity. But beyond these interesting facts, Trueblood's chief accomplishment is to paint a vivid portrait of Lincoln's understanding of the theological importance of the American Civil War, highlighting Lincoln's paradoxical thinking that shaped his most famous speeches, including the Gettysburg Address and his Second Inaugural Speech. This book helped me to gain a deeper understanding not only of Lincoln's own personal theology, but also enabled me to deepen my own understanding of America's role in history, including America's role in our world today. I highly recommend this book to anyone who wishes to have a deeper understanding of those influences that most profoundly shaped Lincoln's understanding of his times, and of his role in meeting the great crisis that took hold of his beloved nation while he was President.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Spiritual Giant
By Harold J. Redd
I REVIEWED THIS BOOK IN OUR BOOK CLUB. My approach was to follow Lincoln's spiritual growth from boyhood to death. I devoted only a brief time to his home life, early school experience and the books that he had access to in his earliest years to set the background for his voracious reading habits. I took the various periods in his life and picked out those instances that illustrated how he was growing spiritually and how that affected decisions he made. Of course, we were all acquainted with his marriage, his years as lawyer, his government service, his presidential years and the Civil War years, but many in book club were surprised to learn that he had been developing spiritually to such a great extent during his lifetime. It seems that the many books we had read individually over the years either did not explore this side of him or treated it lightly while Mr. Trueblood went to great lengths to document this man's spiritual growth. This book was good reading and we were able to understand his decisions as President at this interesting period and his dreams for the future of America in the context of his spiritual growth. I gifted each woman I a copy of this book and hope that they will pass it along. Patricia M. Redd
6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Good review of Lincoln's spiritual growth and maturity
By Curtis B.
This book gave me an even greater appreciation for the gifts of Abraham Lincoln. I like Elton Trueblood's simple and concise style and his examination of the man that Lincoln became through his presidency. Our 16th president was a very deep and spiritual man and I wish that more people realized this. He did not fit into a neat box of Christianity but his spirituality, his dependence upon God for divine guidance and his maturity provide an example for all of us to follow.

Many writers have explored Lincoln's leadership; others have debated Lincoln's ambiguous religious identity. But in this classic work, Christian philosopher and statesman Elton Trueblood reveals how Lincoln's leadership skills flowed directly from his religious convictions; which explains how the president was able to combine what few leaders can hold together: moral resoluteness with a shrewd ability to compromise; confidence in his cause while refusing to succumb to the traps of self-righteousness or triumphalism; and a commitment to victory while never losing sight of his responsibility for the humanity of his enemy. These rich meditations offer deep wisdom and insight on one of the most effective leaders of all time.

“One of the most fascinating and revealing pictures of Lincoln ever published.” (Floyd S. Barringer, M.D., president of the Abraham Lincoln Association)
“Trueblood serves as a worthy guide in returning us to the unparalleled drama of Lincoln within our nation's most important struggle.” (From the foreword by Gustav Niebuhr, Syracuse University, author of *Beyond Tolerance*)
“Arguably the greatest American President, Abraham Lincoln emerged as the great spiritual leader to carry our nation through her greatest spiritual anguish. Elton Trueblood vividly traces the tangled human pilgrimage which led to such astonishing spiritual leadership and shows us what we can learn.” (Richard J. Foster, author of *Celebration of Discipline*)
“As a spiritual counselor to American presidents, from Hoover to Reagan, this is Elton Trueblood at his finest.” (Paul N. Anderson, professor of biblical and Quaker studies, George Fox University)
“A singularly persuasive and moving elucidation of Lincoln's spiritual pilgrimage.” (Charles L. Wallis, editor of *Our American Heritage*)
About the Author
Elton Trueblood (1900-1994) wrote several bestselling religious titles and taught philosophy at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana.