

# HIS ENEMIES UNDERSTOOD

by

Carlyle Marney, Th.D.



Published January, 1951  
by

*FRIENDS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH*  
in  
Austin, Texas

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR



IN WITNESS WHEREOF  
I have hereunto set my hand  
and the seal of the said  
Government at the City of  
Washington this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_\_

## HIS ENEMIES UNDERSTOOD

Among His disciples who has ever understood Him? The most bewildered and confused men on earth must have been His disciples.

When a highly to be desired young Prince came to join Him

*He sent him away* sorrowing,

When the crowds at last began to follow Him—

*He turned away* grieving.

*(Isn't this what you wanted Master? Now, O, why do you grieve that they follow?)*

In violation of all social and religious codes He sat at a well to talk to a *Woman*—

and a *Samaritan* woman at that!

To the accompaniment of wild Hosannas—

He insisted on riding a *donkey*.

Social opportunities that would have given prestige He twisted into nothing—

as when at a rich man's house He spent His time talking to a sinner-woman who wandered in

They could not understand Him!

He went to share the grief of Mary and Martha, even wept at their weeping—

then stood before their dead man's tomb and called  
the dead man out!

They could not grasp Him—they could not understand  
this remarkably remarkable Person. “How strange,” they  
say among themselves.

He speaks of going away, having told us we must follow  
Him always—

then says we cannot follow Him now!

He speaks of a Father of Abraham as if He had seen  
Him—

when everyone knows that Terah died  
sidetracked in Haran centuries ago.

He talks of a Kingdom—

but will ride only a donkey  
and rejects a crown.

He speaks of His death—

yet acts as if He would be  
with us always.

“We cannot follow it! He is beyond our understanding!”  
And so Judas fell before it,

Peter collapsed and denied,

Thomas was twisted by his love and his wonder.

YET, HIS ENEMIES UNDERSTOOD! They had little difficulty grasping Him. They knew as little of Him as did His disciples, but they knew He was dangerous!

Did I say "enemies"? How incongruous that He should have enemies.

This gentle, forgiving, mercifully mild Teacher. No *Teacher* is dangerous! How utterly harmless He is.

He talks so easily and so quietly  
of turning other cheeks,  
of giving away coats,  
of sparrows, and lilies, and  
grass, and vines, and branches,  
of bread and water, and  
peace inside you,  
of two miles for one,  
of loving enemies, and of  
meekness, and  
mercy, and  
purity, and  
light, and  
salt.

Now whoever heard of talk about purity being dangerous!  
How utterly harmless to talk about purity—no one could object to that — But one day

*Annas*, high-priest, heard Him say,

*"I and my Father are One"*

Somewhere in the back of that priestly head a little bell rang—

Such a man is dangerous! That would wipe out the priesthood! Who would need us if men could *feel* God and *see* Him? The priesthood would come down like a collapsed tent.

And Annas was high-priest and wouldn't like that!

*Scribes* heard Him when He said,  
"Man is not made for the Sabbath;  
the Sabbath is made for Man.

They were not fools:

They knew what He meant.

Personality is Paramount!

In any conflict of Personality (free-born)  
and Law it is Person that Matters!

They knew full well what this would do to  
professional writers of religious law,  
and no Scribe could like that.

*Pharisees* were there and heard Him say,

*"Broad is the way to destruction: Unless your righteousness go beyond that of scribes and pharisees. . . . unless it be of different stuff. . . . you are unfit!"*

They—Pharisees!—Must submit to this?

They—the best men Judaism could make—

Must hear sinners put above themselves?

Publicans set ahead of the pious?

The unclean above the clean?

Those outside the law above those within the  
law?

The last above the first? The perishing over  
the saved?

The wicked above the good?

Of course they were driven frantic by this new system of value that denied their pious patterns.

Talk about lilies—dangerous? Yes, lilies, and flowers, and drying hay in the meadows, and dangerous!

And *Pilate?*

Pilate heard Him plainly when He said,  
"My kingdom is not of this world," and felt a great relief.

But Pilate also heard Him say,

*"Thou, Pilate, hast no power at all,  
except it be given from above."*

And Pilate then knew there was no god for him but Caesar.  
All Caesars know that, and all of Caesars' governors know  
it—

This Man, then, must die!

Even the *Evil Spirits*

knew Him for what He was and cried from their  
home in an insane man,

*"Let us alone, thou Son of God,  
what have we to do with Thee?"*

And *Satan?*

When Satan heard Him say,  
*Man shall not live by bread alone. . . .  
Thou shalt not try to test God.  
Get thee behind!*

He knew, then, Satan knew, what He meant to do to Human  
Personality:

that He meant to make Man free;  
free to meet his Redeemer by a free choice,  
a free responsible choice; choice of  
a spiritual condition that makes  
a Kingdom of Heaven possible.

Satan knew—they all knew very well. Satan and His Evil Spirits and Pilate understood it. They *had* to reject Him.

Their Dominions would be swallowed up by freed men.

The dominion of demons would die.

The Empire of the Romans would become a  
vassal state to a Judaeen King of Kings.

They *had* to reject!

Caiphas! *Hurry!* You are a year too late already!

And so with Scribes and Pharisees and Priests, the best of Hebrew culture — their dominions would be swallowed too. Priests, law, patterns of their piety, dogma of their orthodoxy, all would go by the board—jettisoned, for who would worship through a dependent priest in a man-made temple when he had the Lord himself? Who would live by law when He lifts one above law? Who would confine himself to a pattern when he has the original?

They knew Him well—

better than did His disciples.

*They had to reject Him, for*

Jewish Culture would have *died*.

“Let Him be crossed!” they shouted.

And it was for them the only way.

BUT WHAT HIS ENEMIES DID NOT KNOW was that everything really Jewish, all that is eternal of Jewry, was wrapped up in what happened to this Teacher. They never in their wildest dreamed that He could escape and outlive Jewish Culture and become universal. They never dreamed that twenty centuries later a Dutchman, descendant of a tribe of then wild German barbarians, would petition the Supreme Court of a new and entirely changed culture called Israel to open the old case of Jesus of Nazareth!

They did not know:

that He could not remain on their Cross,  
that Rome's cross could not keep Him,  
that no one can cross Messiah,  
not so He stays crucified.

Messiahs do not wilt under death—

They climb aboard him and make of him a chariot.

They turn the spilled blood of Medusa into Pegasus  
and put a bridle on him.

They did not know about Messiahs and death, and war-horses with wings made out of death. But the centurion who *crossed* Him,

and watched Him die,  
knew, and,

“As the air grew conscious of a God  
and raptures unenjoyed and pleasures dead,  
and all the pain of things unsatisfied,  
came 'round his dying head . . . ”  
the Centurion knew, and said,

*“It is so, this was Son of God.”*

*“You can't crucify Messiah. Not so He stays that way.”*

*But we have expected His cross to hold Him, too,*  
and are thunderstruck when, for a little, he is inadvertently  
freed.

In our misunderstanding we have tried our best to keep  
Him there.

We make Him a *White* man,  
member of the *tribe*,  
national,  
citizen,  
partisan,  
bigot moralist, or  
ascetic monk, or  
legalist reactionary,  
a Baptist, *and*  
a *Texan*, if you please. May God forgive us.

Our neighbor, six years of age with all that means, was  
looking through an old color-book smeared by our "littlest."  
In her ignorance the three-year-old had made the flag of  
the United States and its forty-eight stars to be orange and  
green, and yellow. Our neighbor almost gave me a sermon  
when she cried, "Oh, no, it's all wrong, that's the Texas  
flag, and everyone knows it's red, white, and blue!"

"That's the Texas Christ," we cry, or the Baptist, or the  
American, or the white, and you must hold Him as we do!  
In our concentration on explaining *and* defending His cross  
we have expected the cross to go on holding Him. We see  
only by the hardest that He is infinitely greater *after* simply  
because men could not comprehend that there could be any  
afterward for a man on a cross.

His "afterward" is greater than His approach to the  
cross. But the cross was finished, and even as He cried  
"*Tetelestai*" the "Author of all things" to use a sentence  
of Paul Scherer's, "drew a line through all the contradictions  
and wrote across the original text with His own hand—*stet!*  
let it stand! Let it all stand forever."

Yet we have expected His cross to hold Him. If he is not free to roam the hidden roads of our hearts it is easier to escape.

Once a man frees Him from that cross  
*He becomes embarrassingly divisive,*  
and sets a child against the father.

Released from His stanchion,  
*He becomes uncomfortably selfish*  
for no man can serve Him and another.

It is this fear of His release in our lives that makes us party to His death—It is *our* guillotine. . . .

our doing, for we hear that

off His cross,

He is *unaccountably jealous,*

“except ye believe that I am He;”

He is *compellingly single-minded,*

“I and My Father are One;”

He is *disturbingly disruptive,* and will

“send not peace but a sword.”

Freed from that Cross,

He is Eternally Personal.

Kept to that beam,

He is Personally Tragic.

(How strange, says Berdyaev, that the religion of the cross should deny tragedy!)

So, seeking escape from His possessiveness and His personal-ness, we have caged Him. He is less disruptive left on His cross.

How we have caged Him!

Not knowing that He is

*Beyond Good and Evil*

because above Law to Grace;

*Beyond Father and Mother*

because above Dependence to Trust;

*Beyond the limits of Race*

because above Kinship or Kind to Unity;

*Beyond National Barriers*

because above Caesar to Jehovah;

*Beyond Religious Prejudice*

because above Schism to Freedom;

*Beyond mere Orthodoxy*

because above Doctrine to Communion;

*Beyond the Institutional*

because above Pattern to Original.

How pathetically funny that in caging Him *we have confined ourselves*. In our fear of His release to do His transforming work in our lives we have built for ourselves a mare's nest of a cage into which He could not come if He would. Hiding from Him, behind programs and plans, standards and organizations, bars of ritual and petty dogma and all the externals of institutionalism, so that His Brotherhood-of-believing-hearts has become largely in our day,  
a fat old lady,  
sitting in a rock-ribbed castle,  
counting war-bonds.

The church has disguised herself from Him, and in order to keep Him away hires *Pastors*, of whom she frequently makes

*Beggars*, to finance our own little kingdom,

or

*Gigolos*, to charm our society friends in voice  
and manner when they come around to see  
God occasionally or even

*Slave-drivers*, if, by chance, we are  
big enough and the people are  
little enough,

or

*Share-cropper* tenants, here for a little while  
to tend crops not our own  
until the will of the owner  
sends us to other  
fields not our own,  
or, more frequently, they would make us

*Plumbers*, suction pump in hand, unclogging stopped  
channels of grace all the ministry long, so  
elated when, after months of effort,  
some "believer" begins to act  
like what he said he was years before,

or glorified

*Glass-blowers*, busy with bellows, and fire and glass, and  
breath, blowing our collapsed religion back into  
color and shape again,

or better, in dodging Him  
we have made our  
Spiritual Leaders to be

*Bell-wethers*, by which I mean that as Pastor I am quite  
frequently expected to be a  
sexless sort of old goat,

who by ringing bells and bleating,  
leads the sheep into the right pen  
for the slaughter

"in nomine Domini Jesu Christi"  
and in the name of *religion*.

How we have tamed Him (and ourselves, and our Pas-  
tors, in the process)!

*We have kept Him safely shut up in church* (Jesus is never  
very dangerous in church, you know);

When He was always free in the streets.

*We have kept Him enclosed, shielded from commerce;*  
but He was ever in the markets with men.

*We have sought to keep Him wrapped in a napkin with  
the host or in wine;*

When all He ever wanted was to get into a man's  
blood-stream.

*We have limited Him to dealing with Sin only;*

When He preferred to start with darkness, or lameness,  
or demons, or need, and let Sin die as He passed it.

*We have protected Him against being taken seriously with  
armored dogma,*

While He never guarded his words against misunderstanding.

*We have provided Him with a round of philosophies,  
but all He ever wanted was someone to trust Him.*

*We have ensconced Him safely in niches where He is wor-  
shipped,*

but He preferred boats and houses and street corners  
and Solomon's pool.

How we have caged Him!

Behind bars of dogma,  
when He rejects confinement.

Behind the walls of institutionalism,  
while He cries for the brotherhood  
of believing ones.

How we have forced Him to peer through slatted apertures  
into tiny apartments made up for company—

when He would roam the whole dwelling!

Who has learned it? He divides. He monopolizes, He  
compels, He disrupts. Free Him from the cross where you  
have wanted to keep Him.

Strike the shackles,

Bend the bars,

Destroy the confinement of your Church —  
Prison-House  
and let Him wander in you  
redeeming in the streets,  
as of old.

Let Him divide you, monopolize you, use you.

When will ever we learn it, Jesus is the Life —  
and Life is Truth and Way—and Truth can free us  
from our incompetence, and our shoddy work,

and,

our own insipidity that

often,

“creates a boredom like to that of hell!”

We are still a proud and foolish, blind people.

He wants us a freely working power along the Avenue,  
not clustered for refuge like quail on a cold day.

He wants us grown beyond good and evil,  
not seeking decay in our neighbors like green flies on  
a carcass.

He wants us unbound,  
stricken of fetters,  
a redeeming people because  
we are beyond slavery to ideas and dead dogma,  
ourselves redemptive,  
as He was redemptive.

He wants us redeemers in Austin as in Asia, in Texas as in  
Tunisia.

So many there are among us who know all about the  
insufficiencies of earth, but to save their souls, cannot find  
Heaven. They will never find Him until we free Him from  
His cross and let Him go to them in us.

Perhaps, even now, you are saying, "I shall do it!" And in a moment, when you go out the door, down the steps, and away from the power of this particular moment, you will begin to say, "I made my decision, but where shall I begin?"

Immediately there will come to your mind's-eye the picture of untouched thousands in our city, then the cities beyond that — and beyond that — and that — and the enormity of the thing will cover you up and you will cry.

"How can I begin anywhere?"

*God requires only that we start where we are. Free Him!*

Whatever He says to thine heart, do it!

Free Him to walk on the streets as He wants to walk.

Free Him to move in a man's blood-stream as he wants to move.

Free Him to possess the heart of a child as He wants to possess it.

Come down, Son of Man!

Come down from Thy Cross

And walk amongst us,

for,

We would understand Thee!

# THE HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY



The History of Great Britain, from the first settlement of the British in the island, to the present time. In ten volumes. The first volume contains the history from the first settlement of the British in the island, to the death of King Henry II. The second volume contains the history from the death of King Henry II, to the death of King Richard I. The third volume contains the history from the death of King Richard I, to the death of King John. The fourth volume contains the history from the death of King John, to the death of King Henry III. The fifth volume contains the history from the death of King Henry III, to the death of King Edward I. The sixth volume contains the history from the death of King Edward I, to the death of King Edward II. The seventh volume contains the history from the death of King Edward II, to the death of King Richard II. The eighth volume contains the history from the death of King Richard II, to the death of King Henry IV. The ninth volume contains the history from the death of King Henry IV, to the death of King Henry V. The tenth volume contains the history from the death of King Henry V, to the present time.

