

## Section 1

### Identity Crisis

#### The Ragtag and Bobtail

In the early days of Christianity the pagan critic Celsus jeered at Jesus. Scornfully he called Him the strangest of teachers. Why? Because “while all the others cry, ‘Come to me, you who are clean and worthy,’ this singular Master calls, ‘Come to me, you who are down and beaten by life;’ and so, being taken at his word by these impossible people, he is followed about by the ragtag and bobtail of humanity trailing behind him.”

To this the Christian scholar Origen gave a devastating reply. “Yes,” he said, “but he does not leave them the ragtag and bobtail of humanity; but out of material you would have thrown away as useless, he fashions men, giving them back their self-respect, enabling them to stand up on their feet and look God in the eyes. They were cowed, cringing, broken things. But the Son has made them free.”

Have you ever noticed - and of course you have - that sometimes the people hardest to have around are those who have never sinned? At least they have never acknowledged any imperfection. The Bible says that “all have sinned” (Romans 3:23). But there are those who consider themselves exceptions to the rule.

People are supposed to be good. Right? Then how is it that some saints are so hard to live with? How is it that so many obviously good people seem to have been washed - but certainly not ironed? Have you ever been guilty of thinking you would rather have some terrorist as a neighbor in heaven than your Aunt Kate?

How is it that Jesus - though He was perfect, though He was divine - was so comfortable to be around, so easy to live with? How is it that the worst of sinners found in Him an

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

understanding Friend? Yet the religious leaders of His day, with their rigid and picky man-made requirements, with their frowns of disapproval, made the people tense and fearful.

The answer is that Jesus loved sinners, even those whom others considered the ragtag and bobtail - the riffraff, the rabble. He ate with them, comforted them, healed them, lifted them up. The one class that He could not tolerate were those who considered themselves to be without sin. They were the ones He could never reach. He loved them, but they did not want to be loved. He wanted to save them. But they were offended by any suggestion that they needed saving.

Jesus had “not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Matthew 9:13, KJV. He had come “into the world to save sinners.” 1 Timothy 1:15, KJV. And only sinners need apply!

Does all this mean that Jesus was slightly soft on sin? No. Never. It means, rather, that He had the remarkable and priceless ability to hate sin and love the sinner - at the same time. He managed to be on the side of the sinner without ever once condoning his sin.

A woman was dragged unceremoniously into His presence one day as He was teaching. She had been caught in the act of adultery, her accusers said. Should she be stoned as specified in the law of Moses? They pretended to want His counsel. But under the pretense was a carefully laid plot. If He said she should not be stoned, they would accuse Him of forsaking the law of Moses. And if He said she should be stoned, they would report Him to the Roman authorities. For the Romans, you see, didn't want the Jews playing around with capital punishment.

Jesus saw through the trap they had set. He appeared to ignore their question. He stooped down and began to write with His finger in the dust at His feet - as if He had not heard them. And this angered them. They didn't like to be ignored.

They moved closer, pressing Him for an answer. And then, looking down, they read what He was writing. And they were stunned. Could it be? Could it be that there, traced before them in the dust, were the guilty secrets of their own lives?

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

“All right,” He challenged, “hurl the stones. But only he who has never sinned should throw the first stone!” And He went on writing.

Did Jesus know that her accusers were the very ones who had led her into sin? I believe He did. No wonder they disappeared. Fearful that the curious crowd would look over their shoulders and read what was written in the dust, they just slipped silently away, leaving the woman alone with Jesus.

Paralyzed with shame and fear, expecting that first stone to strike at any moment, she had been afraid to look up. But now she heard the gentle voice of Jesus. “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”

“No, sir,” she replied.

And then came the most beautiful words she had ever heard. “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”

Jesus had the perfect opportunity to indulge in a cross examination and lecture that she would never forget. But He didn’t. Rather, He sought to cover her embarrassment and her shame. He said only, “Go and sin no more.” And that was enough. She knew He wasn’t soft on sin. But she knew, too, that she had found an understanding Friend. Is it any wonder that she would love Him forever?

Yes, it was the hypocritical accusers, not the victim, that went away from that encounter embarrassed and licking their wounds.

Jesus had come “to heal the brokenhearted” (Luke 4:18, KJV), not to create new hurts. He was always sensitive to the feelings of others. He never needlessly embarrassed anyone or exposed a guilty one publicly. Not even Judas. Again and again He could have exposed the evil intentions of the one who would betray Him. Instead He tried to love him away from his terrible deed.

Barbara Walters was interviewing Patty Hearst for television. Patty Hearst. Kidnapped at the age of nineteen. A girl who “had never had anything bad happen” to her. Locked in a closet, blindfolded, for fifty-seven days. Tortured, interrogated, raped. Repeatedly threatened with death. Forced

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

to rob a bank. Now a criminal wanted by the FBI. Convinced that her parents had abandoned her, that they would never have anything to do with her, that she could never go home again. Convinced that this was the end, that she was finished, that she might as well give up and join her captors. Convinced that the FBI would shoot her on sight - or if they didn't her SLA companions would. So convinced, so desperately convinced, that when she had opportunity after opportunity to escape, the thought never entered her mind to try!

Barbara Walters, excellent reporter that she is, pressed the questions closer and closer - at times almost mercilessly, it seemed. "Why didn't you give up?" "Why didn't you say, 'I don't want to make that tape?'" "Why did you behave that way?" "You had many opportunities to escape... . Why didn't you?" "You were alone for several days... . You could have picked up the phone and called your folks. Why didn't you do that?"

"It never crossed my mind."

And we can't understand. We can't understand why someone does not do what we think we would have done. We are so sure that in similar circumstances we would have grabbed a phone in seconds, or let out a bloodcurdling scream that could be heard for blocks, or raced to the nearest police officer. And we are certain that once we were free, in the friendly hands of police, we wouldn't have clenched our fists in a gesture of loyalty to the revolution and given our occupation as "urban guerrilla." It wouldn't have taken us a week to realize that we "didn't have to say those things anymore" in order to survive. We are so good at asking questions - and measuring the answers by our own "unkidnapped" thinking.

But Jesus understands. He understands the kidnap victim. He understands the sinner. He understands you and me.

Think for a moment of the embarrassing questions that A Jew? Asking a Samaritan for a drink? She was shocked that a Jew would even speak to her!

But Jesus knew that she was far thirstier than He. He knew that she had been drinking from polluted wells, disappointing

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

wells. And He said to her, in a voice filled with a sympathy and tenderness she had never known, “If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” John 4:10, NIV.

She wanted that living water. And Jesus told her to go and call her husband and come back.

“I have no husband,” she replied. And Jesus told her that she had had five husbands, and that the man with whom she was now living was not her husband.

Startled, she tried to change the subject. And who wouldn’t? For she realized that she was in the presence of One who knew everything about her. Yet He still wanted to give her living water. Could He possibly be the promised Messiah? And Jesus told her, “I who speak to you am he.” Verse 26, NIV.

She was so excited that she forgot her waterpot, forgot to give Jesus a drink, and rushed back to the city, telling everyone she met, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?” Verse 29, NIV.

Jesus had told her to call her husband, but she called everybody she knew. The Saviour looked out across the fields and there they came! The plumber. The ditchdigger. The banker. The landlord. The tenant. The doctor. The neighbor. The friend. The uncle. The brother-in-law. The fields were white with the robes of Samaritans coming to see a Man. And Jesus was glad. Because He knew how much they needed living water!

What a lecture Jesus could have given to a woman with a past like hers! What scathing denunciations could have fallen from His lips! He could have pressed the embarrassing questions mercilessly. But no one would have come back across the fields to see the Man!

Friend, I want to echo the words of that Samaritan woman, “Come, see a Man! Leave your disappointing wells that never satisfy. Stop trying to dig your own wells. Digging is thirsty work. Come and meet Jesus. Come and drink. And you need never thirst again!”

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

San Francisco and the East Bay were in the grip of a heat wave. And it was camp meeting time. In those days everyone lived and cooked and slept in tents at camp meeting. And tents were stifling in the heat. Even so, the campers had crowded into the big pavilion to hear one of their favorite speakers - Pastor Luther Warren. Among them was a mother with two small children. And of course they were restless.

Finally the charming little two-year-old fell asleep in her mother's arms. The older child was blue-eyed with slightly curling blond hair. The mother was eager to hear the message and tried patiently to help the child at her side sit quietly. But it was so hot, and the folding chair was so hard. Soon came the inevitable request - a drink of water.

The mother waited, reluctant to disturb the sleeping child. Then suddenly the little girl pointed vaguely in some direction. "There's a man over there who has a drink of water!"

In those days it was not dangerous for a child to ask a stranger for a drink - especially at camp meeting. The mother gave her permission, telling the little girl to be sure to come back right away. Then she settled back and relaxed. Maybe now she could listen to the message.

Suddenly, with unbelieving eyes, she saw her small daughter walk right up on the platform and ask the speaker for a drink! She sat transfixed as she saw Pastor Warren stop and pour a glass of cold water from the pitcher that had been placed on the desk. And the child expressed her thanks by lifting her blue eyes to gaze into his.

If you ever knew Luther Warren, you would know that he didn't mind the interruption a bit. Instead, it gave him the perfect opportunity to talk about cool, invigorating, living water - on a hot, thirsty day.

Look, friend! There's a Man over there on that cross who has a drink of water! Living water! And you can walk right up to Him and ask Him for a drink. He won't mind being interrupted!

Jesus was dying that Friday afternoon. The guilt of the world's sin was crushing out His life. In all history there had

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

never been a more important moment. And the thief on the cross beside Him interrupted His dying with a request.

What happened? The whole plan of salvation stopped and waited while Jesus answered the prayer of the repentant thief!

He will stop to answer you - any time! You can walk right up and ask Him for a drink - and never thirst again! You can ask Him now!

### The Foolishness of Golgotha

God has some strange ways of doing things. His ways of fighting wars, of resolving conflicts, seem peculiar, even bizarre. There isn't an army general alive who would approve His strategy.

Imagine, if you can, that you are a watchman atop the wall of the ancient city of Jericho. And one day an army of 600,000 ex-slaves approaches. You smile at the idea of Jericho ever falling into their hands. This is going to be interesting!

So what happens? A strange procession begins to circle the city. First a company of selected warriors. Then seven priests with trumpets. Next priests in their sacred dress, bearing on their shoulders a golden chest. Then the entire army of Israel. See Joshua 6.

There is no sound except the mighty tread of marching feet - and the solemn peal of the trumpets, echoing among the hills and sounding through the streets of Jericho. Once around the city, and the army returns silently to their tents. What is going on?

The same thing happens the next day, and the next. There is something mysterious about this, something even terrifying. What can it mean? You remember that the Red Sea parted before these people and that a passage has just been made for them through the Jordan River at flood stage. And the Jordan is too close for comfort. What might the God of the Hebrews do next?

For six days a single circuit of the city is made once each day. Nothing more. On the morning of the seventh day of the

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

siege something happens that is strange and foreboding. The army does not withdraw after a single circuit of the city. It continues a second time around, and a third, and a fourth. Six times around. What will happen now? What mighty event is impending?

You have not long to wait. As the seventh circuit of the city is completed, the army pauses. The trumpets have been silent for a time, but now they break forth in a blast that shakes the very earth. The walls, with their massive towers, teeter and heave, and crash to the earth. And you can be glad that you were atop that wall only in imagination!

What a way to take a city! What a seemingly ridiculous way! Just march around it and blow trumpets! But it worked!

In the days of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, something equally strange happened. His country was invaded by an army that would make anyone tremble. But the king, with God's encouragement, put a band of singers at the head of his army, and sent them out praising God for victory!

Who ever heard of sending a choir out at the head of the army? Isn't that a little too much? But again, it worked! When the invaders heard the singers claiming victory, they were so frightened and confused that they simply turned on each other, destroying themselves!

Then there was Gideon. He had an army of 32,000 men. God told him that was too many. So Gideon kept sending men home till he had only 300 left. These 300, at God's direction, were divided into three companies. Each man was given a trumpet and also a torch which was concealed in an earthen pitcher. The three companies approached the enemy camp from different directions. In the dead of night, on signal from Gideon's war horn, every trumpet was sounded. And then, breaking their pitchers so that the blazing torches were displayed, they rushed upon the enemy with the cry, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon!"

Suddenly roused from sleep, the enemy soldiers saw flaming torches on every side. From every direction came the sound of the trumpets and the cry of Gideon's men. Thinking

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

they were being attacked by an overwhelming force, the Midianites became panic-stricken. Fleeing for their lives, they mistook their own countrymen for enemies and destroyed one another!

What strange ways of fighting! Blowing trumpets! Breaking pitchers! Shouting!

Why such unconventional methods? We find the answer in the directions God gave to Gideon. Listen: "And the Lord said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, "My own power has delivered me." ' ' Judges 7:2, NASB.

Do you see? God works in ways so simple, so seemingly ridiculous, so lacking in potential, so unlikely to produce results - He does this so that we can never say, We did it ourselves!

Yes, again and again it has happened. Time after time, by doing that which appeared not very smart, God has made it plain that there is no way man could have done it. He Himself has been at work!

So when God, back in eternity, was confronted with the greatest crisis of all - the entrance of sin into His perfect universe - it is no wonder that He did not meet it in the way we might expect.

Here was a conflict involving not a single world, but the entire universe. God's character had been called in question. God Himself was on trial. His government had been challenged. The fate of all God's creation was at stake!

How would God respond? With massive force? With His superior power? Would He extinguish rebellion with one great mushroom cloud? No. God made His decision. He would fight rebellion with a cross!

A strange plan? Yes. And some have called it foolish!

This Jesus, from the day He arrived on this planet, seemed to violate all the rules of getting ahead. Born in a manger. Brought up in poverty. He never wrote a book. He never led an army or a protest march or a revolt or a revolution. He never enrolled in the schools considered best. He was forever at odds

with the doctors of religion. He bypassed the students of Plato and Aristotle and selected uneducated fishermen as His helpers, choosing “the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and ... the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.” 1 Corinthians 1:27, KJV.

Jesus could have led a revolt against Rome. Such a move would have meant instant popularity with those who instead became His enemies. With His power to work miracles Rome wouldn't have had a chance. And think of the advantage to an army led by One who could feed all His soldiers with a little boy's lunch!

He could easily have taken the throne of David - if He had played it right. But He seemed to miss all the cues. He appeared to have no sense of timing. When the tide of public opinion had turned His way and the people were ready to make Him king, He sent the crowd home and went off into the mountain to pray. Judas was not the only one who thought He would have to get His cues better than that!

The hopes of His followers reached a peak once more on the Sunday He rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, accompanied by the waving of palm branches and the shouting of His praise. Surely He was about to assume power!

But only days later He let His enemies lead Him out of the city to a place called Golgotha. He let them put Him on a rough, splintery cross without a word of protest - and prayed for those who drove the spikes into His hands.

Not one in that crowd knew what was happening that day. Not His enemies. Not His friends - especially His friends. They knew He could deliver Himself from His enemies. They had seen Him do it before. They knew He could come down from the cross at any moment, if He chose. Why didn't He? Why was He letting Himself die? They couldn't understand.

Little did they know that what was happening was not accident. Little did they know that Jesus, according to plan, was dying in man's place. He was dying the death that sinners who reject His sacrifice must finally die. And that is not the ordinary death we all must die. It is not the death of one surrounded by

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

friends and loved ones in his final hours. It is not the death of one attended by nurses who hold a glass of cold water to his parched lips. It is not the death of a martyr who looks into heaven as Stephen did and sees the Saviour standing over him in sympathy and love. It is not the death of the Christian who is sustained by the hope of the resurrection. In the death we are talking about there is total, complete, and final separation from God!

Jesus, there on the cross, His agony mercifully veiled by darkness, was dying the death that sinners must die. He was experiencing a rendezvous with the terrors of hell itself!

What do I mean? Simply this. Hell, when it happens, will be very, very real. The flames will be hot. But the flames will not be the worst of it. Hell's worst terror will be in the hours that precede the fire. It is knowing that the decisions of this life have been final, that it is too late to reverse them. It is seeing the glory of the City of God - and being forever shut out. It is the awful realization of what might have been, but now can never be. It is the terror of separation from God, separation from the Source of life. It is a death that will have no morning. The flames will be a quick and merciful end to the terrors of hell.

But did Jesus experience all this? Didn't He know all the time that He would be resurrected?

No. Not all the time. It is true that on several occasions He had said He would rise again. He knew it then. But that was while He was sustained by His Father's presence. As He hung there in the darkness that Friday, His Father's presence had been completely withdrawn. Not because the Father didn't care. The Father, unseen, was suffering along with His Son. But Jesus was bearing the crushing, stifling guilt of all the world. He who had no sin of His own had identified Himself with our sins, with everybody's sins, as if they were His. And there must be a gulf between God and sin. The sinner, dying his final death, will not be sustained by the Father's presence. Nor could Jesus, dying in our place. He must die alone.

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

The sinner must die without hope of living again. So must Jesus. He must experience that too. And He did. For as His Father's presence was completely withdrawn, He was seized by the fear that sin, the sin He was bearing for others, might be so offensive to His Father that the separation would be eternal. In those awful moments He could see no light beyond the tomb!

All the while Satan was whispering his vicious temptations with hypocritical sympathy. "You'll never see Your Father again! No one will be saved. You've wasted all these years. Even Your friends have forsaken You. Why don't You let men pay for their own sins?"

Every labored breath was drawing the Saviour nearer to what He thought might be eternal death. But He never wavered in His decision. He was willing to stay in the tomb forever - if only one, if only you, could be saved. That's how much He cared!

So fierce was the battle that Jesus was hardly aware of what was going on below the cross. His tormentors were looking on in compassionless scorn, and saying, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Matthew 27:42. And Roman soldiers were playing their games of dice, unaware that the contest of the ages was going on above them.

That contest was decided not in the light of His Father's presence and approval, but in the long shadow of death - a shadow His eye could not penetrate, until the very last. It was only in His final moments that His faith broke through the darkness and He knew that He had won. Studdert-Kennedy said it so well!

And sitting down they watched Him there,  
The soldiers did.  
There, while they played with dice,  
He made His sacrifice,  
And died upon the cross to rid  
God's world of sin.

He was a gambler, too, my Christ.  
He took His life and threw

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

It for a world redeemed.  
And ere His agony was done,  
Before the westering sun went down,  
Crowning that day with crimson crown,  
He knew that He had won!

Yes, what happened that day at Golgotha looked like foolishness to ambitious men. The apostle Paul would say, “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness.” 1 Corinthians 1:23.

The foolishness of Golgotha. Sheer nonsense to those who do not understand. But God knew what He was doing. What appeared to be a terrible mistake was the most brilliant move Love could make. And what looked like ignominious defeat turned out to be Love’s finest hour!

### Identity Crisis

The story is told of an airline pilot assigned to international flights. Since he had several days off between work assignments, he had time for other interests and purchased a small service station.

One day, in need of some small item, he dropped in at the hardware store up the street. His purchase made, he stopped to chat about something of interest on his last flight overseas.

When he had gone, another customer asked, “Who is that man?”

And the owner replied, “Oh, he has a service station down the street here.” And then with a smile, “He thinks he’s an airline pilot!”

Most of us have only indulgent smiles and little compassion for the man who is confused about his own identity. We put him in what we consider to be an appropriate pigeonhole, along with the man who thinks he’s Napoleon, and go on our way. But sometimes we are the ones confused, and we make some embarrassing mistakes.

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

It was no different in the days of Jesus. Some thought He was confused. Others wrote Him off as an impostor, even a blasphemer - for Jesus did claim to be God. But the matter of His true identity refused to be put to rest. For what if He was telling the truth? What if He really was God? Even His enemies could not quiet the conviction that it was they who were wrong. And it haunted them.

They asked Him right out one day, “Who are you, anyway?”

And Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know who I am.” John 8:28, NIV.

“When you have lifted Me up. When you have crucified Me. When you have scorned Me and mocked Me and laughed at Me. When you have driven spikes into My hands. When you have hung Me between heaven and earth on a despised Roman cross and dared Me to come down if I could. When you have left Me to die without even a drink of cold water. Then you will know who I am!”

There He was - alone - dying. Once - yes, twice - a Voice from heaven had acknowledged Him as His Son. But now there was no voice. All was silent - except for the taunts of the mob and the angry sounds of an offended creation. Who was this Man, this compassionate Healer, this beloved Teacher? What had He done that Heaven now refused to defend Him? What crime was His that even nature was punishing Him with its fiery darts? Who was He, anyway?

Was this a man - -just a good man - the best man who ever lived - dying as a passive victim in the hands of wicked men? Or was it incarnate God paying the price for a lost race in the balance?

Never forget it! If He was only a man, we are describing murder. If He was God, we are describing an offering. If He was only a man, we are witnessing a martyr. If He was God, we are witnessing a Sacrifice!

The thief on the cross beside Him knew who He was. He knew that his own moments of grace were fast slipping away.

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

And he broke the awesome silence with the prayer, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom!"

Jesus was busy dying. Would He have any word for a thief who was dying too? Time seemed to stand still as heaven and earth waited for the Saviour's reply. "I say unto you today - today when all have forsaken Me, today when it looks as if I shall never have a kingdom - I say unto you today, You will be with Me in paradise."

The Roman centurion knew who He was. He sensed that this was no ordinary crucifixion. And when Jesus had breathed His last tortured breath, he said with conviction, caring not for the scoffing crowd, "Surely this was the Son of God!"

The enemies of Jesus knew more than they wished they knew. They had prodded Him to tell them who He was - not because they wanted to know, but because they wanted to trap Him. They desired only to be rid of Him. They couldn't bear the presence of One so pure, so untainted that their own hypocritical characters looked blacker than black. Jesus must go!

But when they had killed Him, when they had accomplished their foul deed, satisfaction escaped them. Their crime brought no sweetness at the end of the day. They feared the dead Christ more than the living Christ!

The haughty Caiaphas knew who He was. He had demanded of Jesus, "Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." And Jesus had told him plainly, "Yes, it is as you say." No wonder the wily ruler would turn pale as death when he learned from the Roman guard that Jesus had walked out of the tomb!

And Pilate knew. He found no fault in Jesus. He longed to save Him from His conspiring enemies. He tried to wash the guilt from his hands. But he couldn't. To the day of his death he would live in fear of the One he ordered scourged and sent off to be crucified. Even in the supposed security of the palace, how could he be sure that the risen Jesus would not suddenly confront him and demand a reckoning?

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

Yes, they had prodded Him - "Who are You, anyway?" And Jesus had told them, "When you have lifted Me up, then you will know who I am."

Among those who watched Him die that dark Friday were some who never slept till they had determined from the Scriptures who He was. And many a conscience was tortured with guilt - the guilt of having joined the cruel cry of the crowd, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Picture it if you can - a man caught up in the crowd, a man who has watched about the cross, a man who has seen and heard strange things that day - frightening things.

The crowd has dispersed now, and he makes his way home alone. His accusing conscience is haunting him. Why has he done what he did? Why did he allow himself to join the crazed mob in calling for the death of a Man who has done him no wrong - a Man whom Pilate declared to be innocent? He hopes to find peace, relief from his guilt, within the walls of home. But what happens when he steps across his own threshold? The poet tells it:

His son - the idol of his heart - lies ill.  
They weep beside his bed.  
One hope is left - the Man of Nazareth will heal.  
They know not He is dead!

His son's parched lips - he sees them moving now,  
"Please take me right away."  
How can he tell him - cold and guilty words -  
"I crucified Him, son, today!"

Fifty long days passed. Truth and rumor, side by side, passed through the land - adding to, or detracting from the turmoil in the hearts of men. One question, above every other, demanded to be settled - the identity of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus the Crucified.

Then came Pentecost. And Peter stood up to speak. Peter, the disciple who had run away. Peter who swore he didn't

know Jesus. Peter who cursed rather than be identified with Him.

But something has happened to Peter. Boldly, without fear, and with the enemies of Jesus listening, He says, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36, NIV.

Think of it! What fearlessness! "This Jesus, whom you crucified! The One you crucified is the Son of God!"

And what happened? How did the crowd respond? Did they turn upon Peter? No. "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' "

Three thousand were converted that day. Three thousand fell at the feet of the Crucified One and found healing for their guilt!

"This Jesus, whom you crucified." This was the message of the early church. This was its power!

We say, We didn't do it. We didn't crucify Him. It was Pilate who did it. It was Judas. It was the Roman soldiers. We weren't there. We are not to blame!

But Jesus didn't die from nail wounds. It wasn't the pain of the spikes that killed Him. He died of a broken heart - from the weight of the sins that He carried with Him to the cross.

And listen! If our sins - yours and mine - weren't included, if it was not our sins, too, that crushed out His life, then how can we say that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins? And if they were included, then you and I are guilty, too, of crucifying Jesus. Our fingerprints are on the nails!

Cyril J. Davey tells the story of Sundar Singh, a boy of India. He was almost fourteen when his mother died and his world collapsed. He was desolate. No one could comfort him. He knew he could not live without God. But it seemed to him that God had taken away the only person who could ever make Him real.

Sundar attended a Christian mission school - because the government school was too far away. He had always been a quiet and courteous student. But now everything changed.

Now, in his grief, he became a violent young ruffian. The kindness of the teachers only infuriated him. He hated them. He hated their school. He hated their Book. And he hated their Jesus!

One day he approached one of his teachers and politely asked to buy a New Testament. Little did anyone suspect why he wanted it.

Soon he was saying to his young friends, "Come with me. You are surprised that I should buy this Book. But come home and see what I do with it! How long I shall live I cannot tell you. Not long, certainly. But before I die I will show you what I think of Jesus and His Book!"

He led the way to the courtyard of his home, brought a bundle of sticks and a tin of kerosene, and set the wood burning. Then, slowly and methodically, he tore the pages from the Book one at a time and threw them on the fire. He wanted it to be his last gesture of contempt for the Christians' Book!

Suddenly his father walked out of the house and thundered, "Are you mad, child? Are you beside yourself to burn the Christians' Book? It is a good Book - your mother has said so. And I will not have this evildoing in my house. Stop it! Do you hear? Stop it!"

Sundar bent down, stamped the rest of the New Testament into the flames with his foot, and went to his room without a word. He stayed there for three days and nights.

Then came the night that was to decide it all. He knew what he would do. Not far away he heard the sound of a train as it rushed toward Lahore and was gone. The next express would be at five o'clock in the morning. And if God had not spoken to him before then, he would go out and lay his head on the rails and wait for the train from Ludhiana to Lahore to end his miserable existence.

His mind must be clear this night. He went to the bathhouse and bathed in cold water for an hour before returning to his room. It was seven hours till the express would come through.

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

He prayed, "Oh God - if there be a God - reveal Thyself to me before I die!"

The hours passed.

At fifteen minutes to five he rushed into his father's room and grabbed the sleeping man by the" shoulder. He burst out, "I have seen Jesus!"

"You're dreaming, child," his father said. "Go back to bed."

But Sundar was not dreaming. He told how he had planned to end his life - and rushed on with his story.

"A few minutes ago," he said, "Jesus came into my room... . And He spoke to me... . He said, 'How long will you persecute Me? I have come to save you. You are praying to know the right way. Why do you not take it? I am the Way.' "

Sundar went on. "He spoke in Hindustani, and He spoke to me. I fell at His feet. How long I knelt I cannot say. But when I rose the vision faded. It was a vision. It was no thought of mine that called Him there... . Had it been Krishna, or one of my own gods, I might have expected it. But not Jesus!"

He paused a moment, and spoke again. "I am a Christian. I can serve no one else but Jesus!"

His father spoke sharply, "You must be mad. You come in the middle of the night and say you are a Christian. And yet it is not three days past that you burned the Christians' Book!"

Sundar stood rigid, looking at his hands. And then he said with deep feeling, "These hands did it. I can never cleanse them of that sin until the day I die!"

No wonder he loved Jesus! No wonder he preached Jesus till the day of his death! No wonder he made his way, almost every summer, into the forbidden land of Tibet, enduring the cruelest persecution. But the more he was persecuted, the happier he was that he could suffer for his Lord. From his last trip into Tibet, he never returned!

Friend, look at your hands, as I look at mine. These are the hands that crucified Jesus! And nothing but the red, red blood of Calvary can ever make them clean!

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

Here is an identity crisis that must be settled by every one of us. We need to stay with it until we know who we are - and who we are not. Are we innocent bystanders, safely separated from Calvary's guilt by two thousand years? Or are we, too, the ones who crucified our Lord? When we have looked long and honestly at the cross, we will know!

But there is hope! For when Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them," I know He meant me! I know He meant you!

### What Really Happened at Calvary?

We are a generation obsessed with investigations. An airliner crashes. And even before the survivors are rescued or the fatalities counted, we launch an investigation of all available facts concerning the accident. Before a highrise fire is out, we are searching for the cause.

When a public figure is assassinated or dies under mysterious circumstances, our probing of the facts is long and thorough. Many years later some are still investigating the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Millions are not satisfied yet that we know the truth. Questions are still raised about the death of Robert Kennedy in a Los Angeles hotel just at the height of his popularity. And the full extent of responsibility for the slaying of Martin Luther King is, in many minds, a matter not completely settled.

And it is good to have an inquiring mind. It is not always wise to accept the first answer that surfaces. But have you ever really investigated the death of Jesus of Nazareth? Without question it was the most mysterious death of all time. Yet it remains a mystery only casually probed. Why? Would you like to know the inside story?

Millions of pages have been written about the death of Jesus of Nazareth, and uncounted assumptions have been made. But many of us haven't the foggiest notion of what really happened that Friday in A.D. 31 on a hill outside Jerusalem. Why has not some credible investigation ever been launched -

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

and the facts made known? Why has so much been assumed - and so little known for sure?

Was the death of Jesus an accident? Or was it planned? And if so, by whom? Why did He die? Was His death the greatest tragedy ever to involve this planet? Or was it a victory so tremendous, so complete, that it set angels singing - and spelled doom for death itself?

Could it be that the death of Jesus has startling implications for you - implications of which you have never dreamed?

Calvary was like a giant billboard proclaiming to all who passed by that Jesus had failed. Whatever His mission - whatever He had hoped to accomplish - it had misfired. Jesus lay dead in Joseph's new tomb. And His enemies, visible and invisible, were determined to keep Him there forever!

The disciples of Jesus, till the last, had not believed He would die. He was the Messiah. And the Messiah would not die, could not die. They had expected Him to work some miracle to save Himself from His enemies. But there had been no miracle. Jesus was dead. And as they carried His lifeless body into Joseph's tomb and left it there, their spirits plummeted into deep depression.

Hear them reasoning, "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Luke 24:21, KJV. But now it seemed they had made a terrible mistake. Jesus must not be the long-awaited Saviour after all. Life seemed empty and pointless. And as the sun dipped low in the western sky, reminding them that the Sabbath was about to begin, they went into hiding, fearing that they themselves might now be on the hit list of the enemies of Jesus.

Twenty-four hours later, as the sun again dropped low in the west, signaling now the end of the Sabbath, Joseph's tomb was secured by the Roman seal, with a guard of one hundred soldiers stationed close by. Jesus was locked in His rock prison as securely as if He were to remain there till the end of time.

The long night passed slowly as the soldiers kept their careful watch. A great company of angels, unseen, waited to welcome Jesus. Satan was there, for his only hope was to keep

Jesus forever in the tomb. And the host of his evil angels was there too, instructed not to give ground whatever might happen.

Suddenly the angel Gabriel, the powerful angel who evidently took Lucifer's place, flew swiftly toward the earth. The planet trembled at his approach, and the evil angels scattered in terror. The Roman soldiers, petrified with fear, saw Gabriel remove the huge stone at the door of the tomb as if it were a pebble. They heard him cry, "Son of God, come forth! Your Father calls You!"

They saw Jesus walk out of the broken tomb and proclaim over it, "I am the resurrection and the life!" And they saw the angels bow low in adoration, welcoming their loved Commander with songs of praise. The soldiers heard and saw it all. And no bribe could keep them from telling it! Not now!

Yes, the cross of Calvary, that dark Friday, had stood like a giant billboard of defeat. But now Jesus of Nazareth had walked out of the tomb with the tread of a Conqueror. He had conquered death!

Jesus had not failed at all! He had accomplished His mission in every detail. But not even His own disciples understood what His mission was. He had not come to challenge Rome. He had not come to take the throne of David. He was a Man born to be crucified. He was the Lamb of God who had come to take away the sin of the world. He had come to take our sins upon Himself and die in our place, so that we could be forgiven, so that we could live. His death was not a defeat. The moment of His death marked a victory so great that it must have set the angels of heaven singing. Jesus had won!

You see, Calvary was a battlefield. It was the scene of the most crucial, the most critical, the most decisive showdown in the controversy between Christ and Satan - a controversy that began in heaven and today is moving toward its final windup. It is only in the setting of that controversy that we can begin to comprehend what really happened at Calvary. In fact, to understand that controversy is to understand the Bible. For the

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

Bible is the story of that ongoing conflict - the story of God's plan to save men, and Satan's attempt to thwart it.

We stand in wonder at the incredible love displayed on that old rugged cross. The God-Man dying in our place. How could we live without forgiveness? We thank God that we have a risen Saviour. We rejoice that He has conquered death, that we can look forward to a resurrection morning when loved ones will be reunited, never to part again.

All this we see in that memorable weekend. But there is more. So much more!

What did Jesus mean when, in the last moment before He bowed His head and died - what did He mean when He cried out, "It is finished!"? Here was not the feeble groan of a sufferer. It was the cry of a Conqueror. The words were spoken in clear, trumpetlike tones that seemed to resound through creation. What did He mean? What was finished? Why had Jesus come to this planet? What was involved in His mission? Why did He have to die to save men? Was there no other way? Did His mission, and His death, involve only fallen men? Or other worlds too?

Jesus had come to earth, and He had died, to silence the charges of Satan concerning the character of God. The rebel chief had charged that God was a harsh, tyrannical Ruler who had no real love for His subjects. He claimed that he, Satan, was the only one who cared!

But you have only to look at Calvary to see who it is that cared! That cross is the ultimate demonstration of caring. And it is a demonstration that has not been lost on the watching worlds!

Jesus had come to unmask Satan before all the universe, to let the angels and the unfallen worlds see how deadly, how lethal, how ruthless sin is - to let them see how far sin would go. When the rebellion began, it had seemed incredible that something called sin could be as dangerous as God said it was.

But as they watched through the centuries, as they saw the fallen angel spreading war and destruction everywhere, leaving a trail of heartache and pain and death, they began to

understand. And when they saw Satan placing his own Creator on that despised cross, there was not a trace of sympathy left for him anywhere in the universe - except on this planet.

Jesus had come to honor His Father's law, even at the cost of His own lifeblood. From the very beginning of the controversy between Christ and Satan, God's law had been the key issue. It was the issue that divided heaven. It was the issue in Eden. His first encounter on this planet was a shameless, brazen invitation to disobey God.

In the final crisis, just ahead of us, the issue will still be the law of God and its authority. For in the book of Revelation we see Satan, in these last days, angry, making war with those who keep the commands of God. "Then the dragon was enraged at the woman [the church] and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring - those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus." Revelation 12:17, NIV.

Why did Jesus have to die to save men? Was there no other way? No. God's law had been broken, and the penalty was death. Someone must die.

My friend Lew Walton, a practicing attorney, has said it so well:

"The Creator was between the horns of a terrible dilemma, between His love for man and His love for truth.

"The entire universe depended upon a law He Himself had written, by which everything from worlds to atoms moved in order - a perfect law - and how does one change perfection? If He bent the divine law to accommodate even one small human challenge, He would be saying that perfection can be altered - and He would be following Lucifer straight into the valley of doom where there are no absolutes except one's own shifting wants."

Well said, wouldn't you say?

Could not the law be set aside, disregarded - just once? No. The law is the foundation of God's government. To play games with divine law is to invite chaos. Without law, the universe itself would fall.

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

Could not the law be altered just a little - to save Jesus? No. The law is a perfect transcript of the perfect character of God. He could not change His law without changing His character. He is a God of love. His law is a law of love. It defines how love will act.

The fact that Jesus did die on Golgotha's cross, in spite of its terrible cost, in spite of the incredible horror of the ordeal through which He personally must pass - here is mighty evidence, unanswerable evidence, that the law could not be changed - even to spare God's own Son. If the law could have been changed or altered or disregarded or set aside or ignored or bypassed, then the death of Jesus was unnecessary - and Calvary was only a meaningless drama!

Jesus came to demonstrate that it was possible for men to keep God's law. Satan had charged otherwise. Wasn't Adam's fall the proof? But Jesus took humanity, not in the strength of Adam, not in the perfect environment of Eden - He took humanity after it had been weakened by thousands of years of rebellion. For thirty-three years He lived just as we have to live, using no power that is not available to us - and never once sinned. And this in spite of every hellish scheme Satan could think of to trip Him up!

Jesus died to make the universe, all of it, forever secure. Rebellion must not happen again. And the prophet says it will not. "Affliction shall not rise up the second time." Nahum 1:9, KJV.

Thank God, the dreadful demonstration of sin's lethal nature will never need to be repeated! Why? Will God take away our power to choose and make us robots after all, so that we cannot sin? No. We will have seen enough of sin - at Calvary. And we shall never want to touch it again!

Jesus died to make the whole universe safe. Calvary is for other worlds too - not just for us. The unfallen worlds will be safe from rebellion through unending ages. And heaven will be safe. Not because of law. Not because of fear. But because what happened that day on a cross outside Jerusalem, as they watched in breathless horror, has made them safe!

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

A little boy - just a toddler - was restless one evening. He wanted to play. He wandered into his parents' bedroom and pulled open the drawer in the nightstand. He found there a shiny black pistol. It looked just like his own - the one he played with.

He carried it out to the living room, pointed it at his father, and said, "Bang, bang, Daddy! You're dead!" And his father fell to the floor. Then he pointed it at his mother and said, "Bang, bang, Mommie! You're dead." And she fell to the floor. Just the way they had always played.

But they didn't get up, and he didn't know what to make of it. Something must be wrong. He threw the pistol away - as far as he could throw it - and knelt beside his father. "Get up, Daddy! Get up! I don't want to play anymore!"

Oh friend! Do you see what sin has done to the Saviour? Do you see what it has done to this once-beautiful world? Do you see what it has done to those you love? Do you see what it has done to you?

What else can you do but throw sin as far as you can throw it and kneel at the Saviour's feet? What can you do but let the tears roll down your cheeks unchecked and tell Him you don't want to play with sin anymore?

That's what He's been waiting for - all these years! And that's what you've been waiting for! Isn't it?

### The Repainting of Golgotha

The Battle of Kadesh was reported by Ramses II, of Egypt, as only a skirmish in which he, of course, was victorious. But Ramses was a vain fellow. The Battle of Kadesh turned out to be not a skirmish at all, but one of the significant battles of history. And Ramses, rather than being the victor, barely escaped with his life.

On the massive pillars and palace walls of mighty Karnak, Ramses described again and again his conflicts with the king of Hatti. The Assyrians also frequently mentioned the land of Hatti. But historians did not guess the truth. It was assumed

that the Hatti were only some unimportant tribe. No one thought to ask how an unimportant tribe could skirmish with two great powers - and for so long a time. The Hatti turned out to be not a tribe at all, but a third giant empire of that day - the Hittites, with their borders stretching from the Black Sea to Damascus.

But no matter, Ramses felt quite capable of handling the Hittites. At least he must be given credit for putting on a bold front.

One of the Egyptian inscriptions concerning the Battle of Kadesh described Ramses as the “fearless one” who “put an end to the boastfulness of the land of Hatti.” He was “the son of Re who trampled the land of Hatti underfoot.... He was like a bull with sharp horns ... the mighty lion ... the jackal who in a moment traverses the circuit of the earth ... the divine, splendid falcon.” There was also a long poem describing the tremendous victory of Ramses.

Today it is known that these claims were shameless propaganda. Yet it was believed for more than three thousand years!

The truth is that Ramses allowed himself to be taken in by the story of two Bedouin spies sent into his camp by the Hittite king. These men, claiming to be deserters from the Hittite army, told Ramses that the Hittite king had already retreated from him in fear. And susceptible as he was to flattery, he allowed his army to fall into the trap, escaping only with his life.

A neat trick, isn't it? Lose the battle, but convince the world you won it. And succeed for three thousand years. I'm not sure who thought of such a strategy first. But there's a parallel here that I can't escape. The Battle of Kadesh was fought about 1300 B.C. but about A.D. 31 the chief of the fallen angels - we call him Satan - set out to try the same strategy. He had lost a battle infinitely more important than Kadesh. And it could be said of him, too, that he barely escaped with his life. But his record of horrible success is today approaching the 2000-year mark, and comparatively few suspect the truth!

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

The story began at Golgotha, known as the place of the skull - probably because a rock formation in the hillside resembled a human skull. Most often we call it Calvary, which is an English word derived from the same meaning - skull.

Jesus of Nazareth, crucified there, had just died. And I picture Satan, the rebel chief, sitting in the shadows not far away - absolutely dejected. He had lost the battle. He knew it. He knew that his doom was sealed!

You would expect him to be happy, wouldn't you? After all, it was he who was the chief instigator of the crucifixion.

Yes, he wanted Him crucified, but I'm not sure he wanted Him to die. He probably wanted to push Jesus to the limit, short of death, hoping that He would call it quits - not worth it - and return to heaven.

You see, Satan's purpose was to defeat the plan for man's salvation. All the way from Bethlehem to Golgotha the evil angel had hounded the steps of Jesus, trying to discourage Him, trying to trip Him up, trying to get Him to sin if only by a word, trying to get Him to quit.

In the first place, he had thought that God would certainly never bother with the fallen race. The cry of a lost and lonely planet would stir no lasting sympathy in the heart of the Almighty. It was incomprehensible to the rebel's selfish mind that the Son of God would be concerned enough to come down here and die in man's place so that he could live. Selfishness has trouble understanding love. And Satan seemed to think that if he just made things miserable enough, Jesus would surely turn back and abandon His plan to save men. The human race would then be left to certain destruction. And nothing delights the rebel chief more than mass destruction.

Satan knew that Jesus could easily work a miracle to deliver Himself from His enemies. He knew that Jesus, if He chose, could easily come down from the cross and let ten thousand angels sweep Him heavenward in the sight of His tormentors.

But Jesus didn't quit. He didn't come down from the cross. He stayed there to the last and let the world's sins crush out His life. And Satan wasn't stupid. He knew that his mask had

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

been torn away. In the eyes of the universe he had now been exposed as a murderer - the murderer of his own Creator. He could expect no sympathy now, ever again, from the unfallen worlds.

Satan hated the cross. He hated it with an intensity that cannot be described. But there, in the shadow of the instrument of death that had sealed his doom, he hit upon the same idea that Ramses had used to feed his pride. He had lost the battle. But he would make it appear he had won. He would concoct his own story of what happened at Golgotha. He would repaint the cross. He would misinterpret it, distort its meaning, and promote worldwide misunderstanding by means of massive propaganda. He would make the cross he hated a weapon against God!

You see, Satan's rebellion from the beginning has been an attack upon God's authority, His government, and His law. In his encounter with our first parents, in Eden, it was a direct command of God that was so brazenly questioned. And in these last days, according to the book of Revelation, it will still be the authority of God that is at issue. It will still be the people who accept God's authority and keep His commands - it is these who will be the target of the rebel angel's greatest wrath. See Revelation 12:17.

Lucifer, when first he rebelled, campaigned for the repeal of God's law. But how could God repeal a law that is a transcript of His own character, a law that is the foundation of His government? How could God alter in any way a law so important, so perfect, so unchangeable, so sacred that its violation could not be overlooked even to save His own Son from Calvary?

Tell me. Isn't it strange to contend that the cross cancels out the law or in any way weakens it? Can you believe that God would let His own Son die because the law could not be changed - and then turn around and change it as soon as His Son was dead? Hardly!

Ask the apostle Paul, and he will tell you that God's law is "holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Romans 7:12, KJV. Ask David, and he will tell you that “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Psalm 19:7, KJV. Another psalm will tell you that all of God’s commandments “stand fast for ever and ever.” Psalm 111:8, KJV. And God Himself says, “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.” Psalm 89:34, KJV. He tells us this about Himself: “I am the Lord, I change not.” Malachi 3:6, KJV.

There is no way to separate the integrity of God’s law from the integrity of God Himself. They stand or fall together!

Satan well knew that God’s law would not, and could not, be set aside. He had just witnessed, in the death of Jesus, the mightiest argument of all for the unchangeable nature of the divine law. For if the law could have been set aside, Jesus need not have died!

In the light of all this knowledge, and much more, the once-brilliant angel conceived his bold and reprehensible scheme there at Golgotha. He would tell the world that the cross he hated, the cross that had sealed his doom, the cross that had upheld the law at the cost of the Creator’s lifeblood, had in reality given him everything he wanted. He would tell the world that the purpose of Calvary had been to remove God’s law, that God had decided, after all, to free men from its restrictions and give them liberty to do as they pleased!

Satan knew that the cross he hated would be honored by all Christians, that the story of God’s dying in man’s place would be told and retold through every generation, that men through all time would preach and pray and sing about it. But the rebel chief cared not. He would gladly join in their praise of Calvary’s sacrifice - so long as it was misunderstood, so long as its meaning was distorted, so long as it could be turned to the advantage of his rebellion.

Satan would picture Sinai, with its thunder and smoke, as the work of a harsh and tyrannical God, and Calvary as the work of a loving Saviour. He would pit one against the other - as if Sinai were a mistake that had to be corrected at Calvary. He would contend that Sinai was law and Calvary was grace.

And he would be delighted as he saw men making of grace an excuse to sin. He would remind men repeatedly of what the apostle Paul said about Christians being “not under the law, but under grace,” hoping they would never notice Paul’s very next words: “What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” Romans 6:14, 15, KJV.

Yes, Satan would actually pirate the grace of God that enables us to keep the law, and market it as a license to sin!

The rebel chief would stop at nothing. He would foist upon the world the notion that God has actually abolished His constitution, thrown away His moral standard, and left men to follow their own inclinations.

But it is precisely that notion - that we are subject only to our own inclinations, our own feelings - it is that notion, eagerly accepted and passed on from one generation to another, that has made our streets unsafe and our homes armed fortresses. And in our rush to permissiveness we have rejected the only answer to the epidemic of crime that surrounds us!

But obedience is not popular today. It is not sophisticated enough for this permissive society. We prefer to talk about love. We have not escaped the infection of easy religion that makes of us no demands. The shocking thing is that the cross of Calvary has been so manipulated as to help create this situation!

Isn’t it a tragedy that the cross which cost the lifeblood of Jesus that stands as the ultimate in obedience to the Father’s will, should be so misunderstood? Isn’t it frightening that the very sacrifice which has forever established the authority and unchanging character of God’s law should be represented as destroying it? How is it that millions can be so blinded? But here will come the last great deception. Here will be the issue in the last great conflict that will separate the loyal from the disloyal.

Yes, Satan will fight the cross while pretending to love it. He will gladly join in praise of what happened that dark day on Golgotha’s hill. But all the while he is going for the jugular -

## TRUTH OR PROPAGANDA

using the cross that sealed his doom as an unsuspected weapon in his desperate and insane attempt to dethrone God!

From old England comes an account of a young boy named Bron who went to church for the first time with his governess.

The minister climbed high into the pulpit and then told a piece of terrible news. He told how an innocent Man had been nailed to a cross and left to die.

How terrible, the lad thought! How wrong! Surely the people would do something about it. But he looked about him and no one seemed concerned. They must be waiting for church to be over, he decided. Then surely they would do something to right this horrible deed.

He walked out of church trembling with emotion, waiting to see what the crowd would do. And his governess said, "Bron, don't take it to heart. Someone will think you are strange!"

Strange - to be upset, disturbed by injustice? Strange - to be stirred by so tragic a recital? Strange - to care, and want desperately to do something about it?

Shame on us for our casual, superficial commitments - left at the door of the church and forgotten! There is something to be done about what happened at Calvary. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments!" John 14:15, KJV.

Love is more than what you say. Love is something you do!

And now in our search to distinguish truth from propaganda we turn to the record of our origins. These next few chapters will be a necessary revelation if we are to fully understand the deep significance of the final chapters of this book.