

MODERN CARICATURES

TEXT: 2 CORINTHIANS 4:10

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Intro: A caricature is a picture or description in which the person or thing described appears ridiculous. It is a ludicrous distortion. There are so many modern caricatures in the world of spiritual picturization.

I. THE FIRST MODERN CHARICATURE IS A PICTURE OF OUR WORD TODAY.

So many do not realize a true picture of the desperate plight of our world. We think the world is all right when all wrong. .

We need to be concerned about conditions national and international today. All the evils that destroyed other nations are in our land. Dr. Robert G. Lee with great eloquence has said: "All the evils that caused ancient Babylon with its glory and wealth to become a vermin-infested, animal prowling jungle are with us. All the evils that caused Rome, the military capital of the world to be hushed to sleep by the terrible music of the tyrant's voice are with us. All the evils that made ancient Greece become a molded crust in history's garbage can are with us. All the evils that made Egypt become a shabby sexton of splendid tombs are with us." -

Think about science. For many people science is their God. Thousands of young people now interpret everything in terms of natural phenomena. The- supernatural has become synonymous with superstition. General Omar Bradley has well said: "We are living in, a time when our achievement, our knowledge of science has gone far beyond our power to control it. We have too many men of science, too few men of God. We have brought about brilliance without wisdom, and power without conscience. We' are living in a time of nuclear giants and spiritual pigmies." This whole world is a keg of powder suspended over an inferno of fire. One military leader was asked if he had a message for Christian young people. "Tell them for me that we have bomb, which, if it were dropped in the heart of London would melt London like a piece of butter on a red hot stove."

I am convinced that many of our troubles are caused by our disregard for what God has said about strong drink. Habakkuk 2:15 says: *Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth the bottle to him and maketh him drunk*". The greatest abomination in America is the abomination of alcoholism. If a man has one brain cell working, he knows that alcohol never touched an individual that it didn't leave a stain, never a home it didn't plant seeds of misery, never touched a community it didn't lower the moral tone.

A pastor was disturbed when he found that one of his laymen was going into the liquor business. "You ought to get out of this business," said the pastor. The man quickly replied: "If all the church people would quit buying liquor I would have to get out.

We live in a world where there is the spirit of Moloch, the spirit of unjust power, the Spirit of Belial, unholy pledge, and spirit, of mammon, unjust gain. Yet we try to paint a picture of world with nothing wrong with it. We hate to face our shortcomings. The reason why we are not better preachers: better singers, better teachers better workers, is that we hate to face our shortcomings.

A great statesman said: We face ruin and yet our citizens are as blind to that truth as Sampson, with his eyes punched out, grinding in Gaza.

We need to face the real picture of trouble with world: Sin. We caricature sin as a nightmare caused by too much appetite or too little digestion. We see it as a temporary upward stumble in man's progress. Let's face the real sin picture: that which reversed man's nature and robbed him of the nobility God gave him, and introduced a curse on all of creation.

Down in Texas, a little Mexican boy was chopping weeds when he felt something hit above his ankle. He saw a rattlesnake gliding off. Scared, and knowing his life was in danger; he grabbed an orange from the tree and rubbed orange juice on the puncture. After a short time, he fainted. Fortunately he was found and rushed to hospital, where he stayed 15 days. It was only a miracle that he lived. The orange juice didn't do any good. Had he not been found within a short time, he would have died.

A snake has bitten the world: the snake of sin. So-called leaders try rubbing, orange juice on the wound hoping that some social program, some international aid, or some military action will remove the poison. The end result is no better than the little boy hoping for a self-prescribed cure.

II. SECOND CARICATURE IS: THE PICTURE OF CHRIST

Too many times we show only one side of him. We show him only as love. We picture him as little, sweet, tender, like someone carrying a sign that reads: "Please Kick Me." That is not Jesus! I see him in the Temple, compassionate as a teacher but also hurling condemnation on the moneychangers.

We sing "Sweet little Jesus boy" but we should also sing about the times when he didn't sound so sweet. He said over and over again as recorded in Matthew 23: 13 through 29 "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees -hypocrites. He described them as *"whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*

Then we have the caricature that shows Jesus as good man but not the Son of God. All around us are smiling diplomats called preachers who deny the virgin birth, the miracles, the atonement, and the coming again. We live in a day when Tom Paine, a critic of religion and author of *The Age of Reason and The Rights*, could occupy some pulpits and be called "Rev. Tom Paine, Dr. of Divinity. Such a man is a skunk who attacks word of God. Any man who undermines the faith of young people is a thief. I have more respect for burglar who cracks a widow to steal my wife's wedding ring, than for man who breaks into house of our young people's faith.

III. THIRD CHARICATURE IS: THE PICTURE OF A CHRISTIAN

Many Christians are only caricatures of real the thing. I see a caricature of a Christian whenever I see a Christian who is mediocre when he should be magnificent. Dr. Conrad gave an indictment of Christianity: "The eagle that used to soar in the heavens has become the tame little sparrow eager to get a crumb. So many Christians have exchanged the power of Niagara for a sluggish stream. They are so satisfied with candlelight, they don't think of sunlight.

What kind of a Christian are you? Rev. Peter Marshall a former chaplain to the U.S. Senate has said: "So many Christians are like people with diving suits capable of going great depths, and all they do is pull, out the plug. Vance Havner says: "For many Christians they think of salvation as a nightcap instead of a helmet. Old Dr. Houghton says: "We sing Onward Christian soldiers, marching. Many would have to substitute limping." How sad when angels must look down and see those who were once warriors now tourists, once crusaders now country gentlemen. Christians who when you have a piano to move always grab the bench. I speak to my own heart. Help me not to be mediocre when I can be magnificent. Not bitsy when I can be big. .

May I never forget what Dr. Robert E. Speer said: "After 30 years of missionary effort, I have come to conclusion, that our biggest obstacle is the poor living of those call themselves Christians. Another great missionary said: the biggest obstacle to spreading Christianity in foreign lands is not Hinduism, not Buddhism, not even pagans but the rotten behavior of people call themselves Christians.

May we show true likeness to Christ.