



# **The Humor of Christ: a Significant But Often Unrecognized Aspect of Christ Teaching**

*Elton Trueblood*

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"To many readers," says Dr. Trueblood, "the idea of Christ as humorous is surprising or even mildly shocking." In this book, written with characteristic insight and clarity, Dr. Trueblood shows that there are many of Christ's teachings that are either incomprehensible or indefensible if they are taken seriously, but are brilliantly clear if they are understood humorously. Failure to note this distinction has often caused reputable scholars to make strained interpretations that can hardly be convincing to themselves, let alone to others. In *THE HUMOR OF CHRIST* Dr. Trueblood boldly challenges the traditional stereotype of a somber, gloomy Christ—a Christ who never laughed or even smiled. It proceeds with scholarly precision, using apt passages from Christ's teachings, to project for the reader a startlingly unfamiliar image of a Christ who often laughed and often turned the provocative thrust of a rapier wit toward the proud, the pompous, the over-righteous. In the final chapters he examines in detail the humor that illuminates the famous parables, the brief sayings of Christ, and the records of events of that time. Dr. Trueblood further asserts that:

"Any alleged Christianity which fails to express itself in gaiety, at some point, is clearly spurious. The Christian is gay, not because he is blind to injustice and suffering, but because he is convinced that these, in the light of the divine sovereignty, are never ultimate."

"This is an illuminating and challenging book. Dr. Trueblood has emphasized a dimension in the character and teachings of Jesus which has been almost universally neglected and obscured—his sense of humor. In thirty passages of Jesus' teachings he finds the recognition of humor necessary to an adequate understanding of Jesus' meaning and method. I venture to think that in the interpretation of certain especially difficult passages this book will turn out to be epoch-making."—HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

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