

**WHAT DID JESUS TEACH? AN  
EXAMINATION OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL  
AND METHOD OF THE MASTER**

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What did Jesus teach? an examination of the educational material and method of the master by  
Frank Pierrepont Graves

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WHAT DID JESUS TEACH ?

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# WHAT DID JESUS TEACH?

AN EXAMINATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL  
MATERIAL AND METHOD OF THE MASTER

BY

FRANK PIERREPONT GRAVES

(PH.D., COLUMBIA)

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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TO

EDGAR FAHS SMITH, Ph.D., LL.D.  
Provost of the University of Pennsylvania  
WHOSE ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN MARKED  
BY A DEEP INTEREST IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

C.C. TRANSFER MAR 19 1945

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## PREFACE

During the recent turmoil and strife existing throughout the civilized world, it was often asked whether Christianity has not failed. To answer this question, we must first understand what constitutes Christianity. The present would, therefore, seem a favorable time to study anew the teachings of the Founder of that religion, stripped of the accretions that subsequent time has gathered around them. Acting upon this belief, the Christian Association of the University of Pennsylvania recently started a campaign to induce at least two thousand students to read during the Lenten period the life and sayings of Jesus as presented in their simplest form by the book of Mark. The first announcement of the course read:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{"Christianity} &= x + y \\ y &= \text{'isms'} \end{aligned}$$

This is an equation, not an identity."

After this statement of the equation had been posted long enough to arouse some curiosity in the student body, the second announcement, which was explanatory of the first, was made. It read as follows:

"Has Christianity failed?  
Or only its 'isms'?  
What did Jesus teach?"

Those who pledged themselves to undertake this course were organized into seventy-two discussion groups. These groups arranged to meet once a week under the direction of a leader at fraternity houses, dormitories, classrooms, and the committee rooms of the Houston (Student's) Club. The leaders were enlisted from the faculty men, Christian Association secretaries, older students, and extramural friends of the University, and the conduct of a normal class for training the leaders was assigned to me as the representative of our School of Education.

The study groups were composed of Jews, Catholics, Protestants of numerous shades of belief, and not a few who liked to call themselves agnostics. It was well, therefore, that it had been planned to limit the discussion to the essential teachings of Jesus, and to exclude as far as possible all extraneous and sectarian matter. Taken as a whole, the campaign seems to have been a conspicuous success. Even in the normal-training class it was felt by several that a new point of view concerning the subject had been developed, and that this ought to be published. It was believed that the material in printed form might be of service in similar campaigns, state reading-circle courses, Chautauquas, round tables, Sunday-school classes, and even the programs of schools, colleges, and universities.

Such as they are, the studies have been here presented in about the form that they were originally given, although occasionally additions and modifications have been introduced. The title of the course, which was originally suggested by Professor James T. Young, and most of the topics for discussion have been preserved in