**VOLUME 4; CHAPTER 10 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**HORIZONED BY RESURRECTION by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

*Romans 1:4*

THESE WORDS CONSTITUTE THE SECOND PART OF A DOUBLE statement concerning one Person. That Person is indicated by a reference preceding the statement and by an explanation following it. The reference you will discover in the beginning of verse three: - "concerning His Son," The explanation is contained in the closing part of verse four: - "even Jesus Christ our Lord." Between this reference and this explanation we find the twofold statement concerning the Person thus referred to.

Born of the seed of David according to the flesh.

Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

If for purposes of illumination, I may take from each of the two parts of the words necessary to discover the simple contrast, we have this result. Paul says concerning this Person Whom he first designates "Son of God" and finally refers to as "Jesus Christ our Lord," two things. First, according to the flesh He was "born of the seed of David." Secondly, according to the spirit He was "declared to be the Son of God with power … by the resurrection from the dead."

The first part of the apostolic declaration is simple and needs neither argument nor explanation, "of the seed of David, according to the flesh." The second part of the declaration was sublime and it was impossible - if I may thus interpret the method of the apostle - for him to write the second part without some qualification. "Of the seed of David according to the flesh," is a perfectly simple and natural declaration; but when he turns to the other side, "according to the spirit," he has to qualify, "according to the spirit of holiness"; or even more accurately as I think, "according to a holy spirit." "According to the flesh" He was of the seed of David, and Paul knew that no argument of that fact was needed. But, "according to the spirit," the essential matter in that human life, there was a difference. The spirit of this Person was holy. All the values of this differentiation are discovered when we reach the eighth chapter of the epistle. Therein the apostle is careful to distinguish between flesh and spirit in every life. In flesh, and in spirit, are the two sides of every human life. They were both present in the life of Jesus. His flesh was "born of the seed of David." His spirit must be described. It stands alone. There never was such another. It was a holy spirit, the spirit of holiness. In flesh He was absolutely of our humanity. In spirit also, and yet different. Numbered with transgressors, separated from sinners. In flesh, of our humanity. In spirit essentially the same, but in character different - holy.

The evidence of His being of the seed of David was abundant and convincing. The evidences of His being the Son of God were abundant but not convincing. The evidence did not convince because those who observed were incapable of judging, for they were spiritually blind. The men who looked at Jesus in the days of His flesh were quite capable of judging material things, fleshly things; they could trace genealogies, and discover racial traits; "according to the flesh, born of the seed of David."

According to the spirit - they said He was a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, the friend of publicans and sinners. They did not know Him. They could not be sure of Him. The evidences of Divine Son-ship were those of holiness. His thoughts, His words, His deeds, all of them were the vehicles through which the essential and awful purity of God sounded and shone upon the ways of men. "When we shall see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him." Not that He was devoid of beauty, but that men were so blind they could not see it. The evidences of fleshly relationship were abundant and convincing. The evidences of Divine relationship were abundant, but not convincing, because men had lost their spiritual vision and were incapable of judgment. If you object to that interpretation, how do you find it in the world today? Is the man of the world of today capable of judging of the beauty of holiness? Is not the sanctified life still the sport of the worldly man? If you dare to season your daily speech with the salt that tells that you have traffic with eternity, the worldly man sees nothing beautiful in it. He shrugs his shoulders. That is the new method of persecution, seeing that the rack has gone out of fashion. He smiles, and perhaps holds you in contempt. Some of you hold the saints in contempt because you are blind and cannot discover the beauty of holiness.

How shall this Man be proven the Son of God as well Son of man, seeing that the holiness of His spirit does not appeal to men? "Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." It is that declaration of the text which we are now to consider. In order to do so, confining ourselves entirely to this half of the great statement concerning the Person, we must carefully understand what this thing is that the apostle wrote. May I change the phrasing, not that I can improve upon it, but that sometimes by a change of words we are introduced to the meaning which we miss by very familiarity with the older formula. So I read the text thus, "Who was distinguished," and that word must not be taken in the general sense in which we speak of a man as being distinguished.

"Who was marked out as the Son of God with power through the means of the resurrection of dead ones?"

May I further change the text, this time not by translation in other words, but by paraphrase.

"The resurrection of dead ones set Him with powerful effect upon the horizon as the Son of God."

I do not suggest that that is translation, so those of you who are reading from the Greek New Testament need not be anxious. I do not intend it as interpretation. Those of you who are familiar with the passage in the Greek will discover that I have dared to take a Greek word and Anglicize it. What is this word "declared," "distinguished," "marked out?" It is the word from which we have derived our word horizon. What is the horizon? The boundary. What is a boundary? The end? By no means. It is the beginning. If only I could transport you to the sea, you would understand my text. Standing on the land's last limit there stretches the sea with its movement and its rhythm, its music and its laughter. What beyond? The horizon, the boundary. Is that the end? That is the beginning. Everything between me and the horizon I can comprehend. The mystery begins where the horizon bounds my vision. It is limitation. The limitation is only the limitation of my vision, not of the essential fact. According to flesh, everyone can read the story, "born of the seed of David." According to the spirit, "horizoned as the Son of God by the resurrection of dead ones," Resurrection demonstrated the essential truth concerning Him. Apart from the resurrection, He is "born of the seed of David"; a great and gracious fact, and no one imagines I am undervaluing it. My heart exults with the Apostle John who handled Him. I am glad that men of my kith and kin nineteen hundred years ago did actually lay hands upon the warm flesh of the Man of Nazareth. That, however, is not all. That is not the final fact. If you make that the final fact, your Christianity will be a diminishing quantity, losing all its essential virtue and all its power of victory; until presently you will put Him by the side of Confucius, Buddha, and the rest; a sorry spectacle over which angels might weep. There is something else. He is the Son of God according to the spirit of holiness; and He is demonstrated as such, horizoned as such, flaming out as the sun upon the horizon, and rising to meridian glory, by way of the resurrection. That is the supreme value of the resurrection. The resurrection is the unanswerable demonstration of the profoundest fact concerning the Christ, that, namely, of His Divine Son-ship.

In order to gain appreciation of this, let me take you very quickly along three lines of consideration. First, the truth that Jesus was the Son of God, as apprehended before the resurrection. Second, the truth that Jesus was the Son of God, as apprehended after the resurrection. Third, the resurrection as the means of demonstration.

First, the truth as apprehended before the resurrection. That is to say, I suggest that we shall, for a few minutes only, put ourselves back among the disciples before that event happened which we celebrate today.

I take up my New Testament and go through the gospel stories and find three titles of Jesus constantly recurring, "Son of Man"; "Son of God"; and "The Son," without qualification. I have nothing to do with the title "Son of Man." That put Him into immediate relationship with humanity. I take the title "Son of God." Please forgive the statistical way of stating this, I only desire to leave an impression upon your mind. It occurs in Matthew nine times, in Mark four times, in Luke six times, in John eleven times. Of course some of those occasions overlap, it does not at all matter for my present purpose. I find in Matthew that He is called the Son of God six times by men, three times by devils. Mark records two occasions when men so designated Him, and two occasions when devils called Him "the Son of God." Luke gives one occasion when a man called Him that, and four when devils so named Him, and one when an angel declared Him to be the Son of God. I come to John and I find six occasions when man referred to Him as the Son of God, and five when He so named Himself.

Take the other title "The Son," more splendid perhaps than the other because of its independence of qualification. Adjectives are often the means of weakening the glory of substantives. The proportion in which we can use substantives alone, apart from adjectives, is the proportion of dignity of statement and suggestion. Matthew has the description "The Son" four times, Mark once, Luke three times, John fifteen times. That phrase, according to the records, never fell from the lips of devil, or man, or angel. It is the peculiar phrase of Jesus.

With these figures in your mind, let me take another survey of these gospels. Christ did claim for Himself, by direct use of the title and by constant assumptions of commonplace speech, that He was the veritable Son of God. That fact was attested in a supernatural way on two occasions, when heaven's silence was broken and the Divine voice was heard. "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased" so at baptism; "This is my beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him"; so on the holy mount. The fact was witnessed by devils, as when one said to Him, "I know Thee Who Thou art, the Holy One of God," and another "Thou the Son of God," and yet another "What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure I Thee by God, torment me not." That fact was once confessed by a man amid the rocky fastnesses of Caesarea Philippi when answering the challenge of Christ Himself he said "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

If you will go over these occasions, I can but suggest the line, you will find that every confession of Son-ship was closely associated with the thought of holiness. "My Son, in Whom I am well pleased," that is the declaration of His holiness. "I and the Father are one. I do nothing of Myself, as the Father taught Me, I speak these things. ... I do always the things that are pleasing to Him," all that is the claim of holiness. "Thou art the Holy One of God," "Thou the Son of God"; so evil recognized His holiness. And surely you will agree that Peter meant that when He said "Thou art," not the prophet foretelling, but the Messiah fulfilling.

That is a rapid survey of those days prior to the resurrection. What shall we say of it? The fact of His Divine Son-ship was breaking on the consciousness of men. It was only the flush of dawn upon the dark sky. Men did not know Him as the Son of God. Peter confessed Him as the Son of God, immediately afterwards rebuked Him, and by his rebuke demonstrated the fact that he had no full conception of the thing he had said. There He lived amongst men, holy, undefiled, spotless, pure, the Son of God; and they were puzzled, they wondered, but they did not fully comprehend.

Turn over the New Testament to the remaining part of it. How far was the truth of the Divine Son-ship apprehended after the resurrection? To an audience such as I am addressing this morning, the inquiry carries its own answer. We know full well that all the thought of the other writings of the New Testament is saturated with the conception of the Divine Son-ship of Jesus. It was the central conviction concerning Him. It was the constant reason of loyalty to Him. It was the persistent burden of testimony concerning Him. I will not weary you with saying things about that conviction. Let me rather end this section of our study with two quotations:

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist."

That is the vision of Jesus Christ which flamed upon the consciousness of believing men after the resurrection.

Or, take another quotation which you may consider anonymous or which you may attribute to the same pen, I care not:

"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds; Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

I go back to these men before the resurrection and see that gleams were upon the sky, To repeat my own figure of speech, the flush of the dawn was upon the sky, but it was twilight. They were not sure.

On the other side of the resurrection, the sun is in the heavens shining in full glory. Christ is horizoned as the Son of God with power by the resurrection of dead ones, not by His own resurrection only, but by the resurrection of dead ones.

Let us go back again to the period before His cross. I have three stories of His raising the dead. First, the widow's son. What effect did that miracle produce? The people glorified God; they said, God has visited His people. They had not come to final doctrinal understanding of the Person of the Man Who had wrought the work, but when He raised the dead they said, God has visited us.

The resurrection of the son of the widow of Nain was evidence to them of the Divine presence, the Divine visitation, and therefore of holiness. When He raised the widow's son, a great man was in prison; "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." He had changed all the inspiration of a great public ministry which made kings tremble - for Herod heard him gladly at one time - for the dungeon and loneliness and questioning. J cannot help feeling that he had come to wonder whether, after all that, Jesus of Nazareth Whom he had named, was the actual One; but when he heard this, that one was raised from the dead, he sent his disciples to ask, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?" It was this supreme miracle of resurrection which renewed questioning, wonder, hope, in his mind. Then presently He raised the daughter of Jairus in that inimitable word spoken, thrilling with the power of Deity: "Little darling, arise?" The parents were amazed. That is all, but that is much. Amazed, they had touched the consciousness of power beyond the reach of humanity. Once again, Lazarus is dead, and they bring Him the news. What is His own account of the fact that He did not hurry, that He permitted Lazarus to die? This is it. "That the Son of God might be glorified thereby." "Declared to be the Son of God, with power ... by the resurrection of dead ones." That is the supreme revelation. That is the supreme miracle.

But what next? The cross. What did that mean? All the fitful gleams of light which had been shining through Judaea, Peraea and Galilee, all the flush of dawning upon the eastern sky which the eager watchers had seen, went out, and never a ray of light remained. The sun was eclipsed in blood. According to the flesh, oh yes, we knew Him well, "Born of the seed of David," the genealogy is complete. We hoped, when He raised the daughter of Jairus, and the widow's son, and Lazarus, that He was more, but He is dead. You know the rest. We celebrate it this morning. He arose from among the dead. Many infallible proofs for forty days. He is horizoned. Horizoned as the Son of God.

Lo, our sun's eclipse is o'er.

Hallelujah!

Lo, He sets in blood no more!

Hallelujah!

The resurrection was the vindication of every claim He made; the demonstration of His Sonship; the revelation of His holiness.

According to flesh, "born of the seed of David." We can be accurate. According to the spirit of holiness, Who is He? There is only one way in which it can be proven, and that is by the resurrection of the dead ones. The son of the widow of Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus. Yes, but He died. But He is alive forevermore. Take that away from me, my masters, and I renounce your bastard Christianity. I have no hope if that be not so. "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain … ye are yet in your sins." Blessed be God, why such supposition? He arose, and is alive!

The final demonstration is not yet. I am not coming to the supreme value of the plural in my text. "Horizoned as the Son of God, marked out as the Son of God, with power … by the resurrection of dead ones." The final demonstration will never be until the Advent, when not only the first fruits, but all the company are with Him, "The resurrection of dead ones."

Ten thousand times ten thousand,

In sparkling raiment bright,

The armies of the ransomed saints

Throng up the steeps of light;

'Tis finished - all is finished

Their fight with death and sin!

Fling open wide the golden gates,

And let the victors in.

What rush of Hallelujahs

Fills all the earth and sky!

What ringing of a thousand harps

Bespeaks the triumphs nigh!

Oh, day, for which creation

And all its tribes were made!

Oh, joy, for all its former woes

A thousandfold repaid!

The final demonstration will be in the resurrection of the saints. So that the resurrection of the saints is not the last thing, it is the beginning. Do not limit God and humanity by the end of this age, or by the millennium. Everything so far has been preparatory. Stretching away beyond me, I dream dreams of unborn ages and new creations, and marvellous processions out of the being of God, but through them all, the risen Christ and the risen saints will be the central revelations of holiness and of life.

That is the glory of the final resurrection. As so often, we leave the subject, not that it is exhausted. Suffer me this final word. The fact of His Divine Son-ship demonstrated by the resurrection is the rock of our assurance. Said a man imperfectly knowing what he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Answered Christ, "Upon this rock I will build My Church." The rock foundation of the Christian Church is this fact of His Divine Son-ship, and so essential Deity lies beneath the Church, an impregnable rock. Thank God if we are built thereupon by sharing the very nature of this risen One.

Let us go away this morning rejoicing in the resurrection because it is the message of a great confidence. He is King, Priest, Warrior, and Builder, and all the great relationships are linked to His resurrection because He is demonstrated thereby as the Son of God.

His Kingship is an absolute monarchy. I have no anxiety about His reign. I believe in an absolute monarchy when we can find the right King. We have found Him.

As to His Prophetic mission, it is one of absolute authority. What He said is true. It cannot be gainsaid. All the words gathered from His tender lips, and printed here and preserved for us, are words which abide. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not pass away." I have no intellectual quarrel with anything He says.

As to His Priesthood, the resurrection demonstrates its absolute sufficiency. Do you really believe that? Then why do you grieve God by this perpetual grieving over sin, and the declaration that you cannot believe He can forgive you?

Grace there is my every debt to pay,

Blood to wash my every sin away.

I know it because the Priest rose and entered in.

As to His triumph, He hath broken in pieces the gates of brass. He hath cut the bars of iron asunder. He hath triumphed gloriously, and He will win His battle and build His city. Then so help me God, as He will permit me, I fain would share the travail that makes His Kingdom come, entering the fellowship of His sufferings, for all the while the light of His resurrection is upon the pathway, and I know that at the last the things which He has made me suffer will be the things of the unending triumph.

I greet you this morning in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit! Seek not the living among the dead. He is risen, and because He is risen, we shall rise, and His victory and ours will be won.