**VOLUME 5; CHAPTER 02 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**THINGS NEW AND OLD by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea. And He said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*

*Matthew 13:51,52*

JESUS HAD BEEN INSTRUCTING HIS DISCIPLES IN THE MYSTERIES of the Kingdom of heaven; and at the close of His parabolic teaching He declared to them the purpose thereof. He had not been instructing them merely for the satisfaction of their own spiritually intellectual curiosity. There was a practical bearing and value in all that He had been doing. He asked them, "Have ye understood all these things? Do you understand the meaning of the present hour? Have you caught any vision through the pictures which I have presented to your view, of the purpose of God, of His plan?" I am always astonished when I read their answer. "They say unto Him, Yea." I am the more astonished, that He did not rebuke them. He is wonderfully patient with us when we think we understand the things He says. He knew, however, that they had at least seen the broad outline; and He knew that presently, when the Spirit, the Comforter should come He would bring to their remembrance all the things of which He had spoken, and would explain in greater detail and with infinite patience the meaning thereof. Therefore, even though as yet they certainly did not perfectly understand, as their subsequent action demonstrates, He told them the reason of His teaching. "Every scribe," and one is halted by the word, for it is an interesting thing that Jesus uses that word here of His disciples, "Every scribe." What was a scribe? A scribe in the days of our Lord was a moral interpreter. The office of the scribe was created by Ezra, and had continued from his time. The scribes in the days of Jesus were in opposition to Him, but their office was that of moral interpretation, that of exposition of the law, and application of it to the conditions in the midst of which they found themselves. Christ used the word and appropriated the office on behalf of His disciples for all the coming ages. "Every scribe."

Mark the preliminary necessity, "Every scribe who hath been instructed to the Kingdom of the heavens." There can be no doing of His work, no fulfilling of His purpose, no co-operation in His travail, until a man is himself a disciple to the Kingdom of the heavens, and is instructed in the principles of that great and gracious Kingdom.

Let all this be taken for granted, what then? What is the responsibility that rests upon the scribe, the instructed one? "He bringeth forth things new and old."

In these two verses we have one of the smallest, as to number of words, of the parables of Jesus, the parable of the householder; a final picture to teach these men the value of the pictures already given them. The picture is that of a wealthy householder meeting the necessity of all those who are in his household, by scattering to them his treasures.

That is the perpetual responsibility of the Christian Church. Jesus said to the Hebrew people as His ministry was approaching its close, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth fruits thereof." In that great and remarkable sentence, He transferred the responsibility for certain teaching and certain work, from the Hebrew people who rejected God's King, to a new nation which Peter described in his letter as a holy nation, an elect race. This is the responsibility that is referred to here, as bringing forth things new and old.

"The Kingdom of heaven" is the supreme phrase in this parable. It is not local in its application. We must not narrow that application to Judea. Neither must we narrow it exclusively to the millennium that has not yet arrived. It is not necessary to discuss now the differences between such phrases "'the Kingdom of God," "the Kingdom of heaven," and "the Kingdom." The thing that matters is that we should find the quantity or quality which is common to the whole of them. It is that of the rule of heaven, the mastery of heaven, the establishment of the heavenly order. In preceding parables, Jesus had told the story of the vicissitudes of the Kingdom principle in the present age, showing how sometimes there is victory and sometimes defeat. Through all the parables the phrase, "the Kingdom of heaven," recurs. The word, "Kingdom," does more than mark a realm; it emphasizes a rule. We sometimes speak of the Kingdom of God as though it referred to a place, a time, a covenant, a method. It refers to all of these, but the fact of that Kingdom is greater than all. "The Kingdom of God," suggests the throne of God, the government of God, the reign of God, the sovereignty of God. "The Kingdom of heaven" suggests the supremacy of heaven over the things of the earth. That Kingdom of heaven abides. Take heart, my brethren, do not be constrained to believe that God's throne has trembled, or that the supremacy of heaven has ceased. Every man is in the grip of the Divine government and cannot escape it. The devil does not reign even in hell. God reigns there also. Because the Kingdom of the heavens abides, it has a message to every century, to all conditions of human life, and the responsibility of the disciples of the Kingdom is that of delivering that message.

I think sometimes our phrases mislead us all unconsciously. For what are we labouring? The establishment of the Kingdom? The Kingdom is established. What then is our business? To reveal its bearings upon human life, to dictate its terms to the sons of men; out of the treasure house of the established supremacy of God and of the heavens to cast things new and old upon the earth, and in that sense to establish that which is established, to bring to the consciousness of men the facts from which they can never escape; so to love and help men and the age; that their relation to the Kingdom shall be one that results in blessing upon themselves and upon humanity, rather than in blasting and in cursing.

"Things new and old." What are these? If we can understand this phrase, we are getting to the very heart of the teaching of Jesus here concerning our responsibility. These are one in essence. We are not to understand that Jesus said "things new," and "things old," as though He were speaking of two sets of ideas. There is only one set of ideas suggested; the things are new and old. The new here does not mean fresh in the sense of just about to begin. The old does not mean ancient in the sense of about to pass away. Everything is new and everything is old. The principle is old, the application is new. The root is old, the blossom and the fruit are new. The two are necessary to growth. Destroy the old and you will have no new. Invent a new by the destruction of the old, and that new withers while you look at it. It is equally true that the absence of the new destroys the life of the old. Preserve your old and do not allow it to express itself in the new, and it withers. Some of you have planted bulbs in your gardens, all russet robed and devoid of beauty. Why did you put them in your garden? Why not lay them away on a shelf? Why not preserve them because they are the bulbs out of which flowers sprang two years ago? To preserve them is to destroy them. If you do not allow them to repeat themselves in new blossom and new fruit, they will die. Take the inter-relation of the thoughts of this phrase in another way. New things which contradict old things are not from old things, and therefore they are false; and the old thing which has no new in it is dead and valueless. Was it not this that Russell Lowell meant when he sang:

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of truth;

Lo, before us gleam her campfires! We ourselves must pilgrims be,

Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,

Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

But, when you recite that, do not forget that if you attempt the future's portal with any other key than that which hangs upon the girdle of the Son of Man you will never unlock it. It must not be a rusty key, but it must be the same true key of David. The Kingdom of the heavens is old, and the application of its principles to our own age is new. Methods, manners, men may change, but this fact of the Kingdom of heaven abideth, rooted in the being of God, and blossoms afresh in every generation among the sons of men.

Let us turn from these generalities. Let me speak of some things new and old, for the bringing forth of which the Church of God is responsible at the present hour.

First the old things, The Church of God exists to affirm unceasingly and without apology the fact of the Divine Kingship; to declare that the throne is occupied and that government is exercised. The oldest of all the old is the fact of God; a fact which we are all so appallingly apt to forget, when we become practical. We remember God when we are poetical; we forget Him as the busy days run on. The Church stands in the midst of the nations, in the midst of the world, wherever her sons and daughters are found, for the old truth. I will use a phrase we are almost afraid of - our fathers loved it, preached it, lived it - the sovereignty of God.

The necessity for righteousness is also old. The fact that apart from righteousness there can be no permanence, no individual life, or social life, or national life. The fact that the wages of sin is death. You may change your terminology and speak of sin by other words, but the old fact remains.

Or again, the fact that man is a sinner. I am quite willing to postpone discussion for a considerable period as to how he became a sinner. I am interested in the fact. Man today has the same passions, the same heartache, as had his father, and his father's father. We change a man's raiment, but the man abides, the slave of forces that mar, and master, and destroy.

The fact that plenteous redemption is provided is also old. Plenteous redemption for every man, and if not, for no man. Plenteous redemption to satisfy the human conscience; a word of pardon spoken out of the mystery of the blood-shedding of the Cross; and virtue communicated whereby men, gripped, enslaved by the forces that spoil, stand erect.

What of the new things? There is nothing new, save a new statement of the old things. There may be a new interpretation of those things, but in the new interpretation let us be very careful lest we devitalize the old. There is a new interpretation of Kingship in the terms of Fatherhood. Do not be afraid of the thought. Do not imagine that Fatherhood merely means tenderness and love. That is weak and false fatherhood. Of all the books written on the atonement through recent years, in this particular respect the one that I think most illuminative is Dr. Scott Lidgett's, in which he shows that in Fatherhood there lie all the facts of God; Kingship is there, Judgeship is there. The King is Father, His law is love. That is not to make law less severe, but more severe. There are no eyes so keen in watching as lovelit eyes. The throne abides, but we have found that the King is Father. The reason of His law is His love. So that today we say to our children not merely, You must because you must, but you must because it is best.

Righteousness abides the old truth; but today we are coming to a new understanding of its reasonableness.

Sin abides, but we are gaining a new understanding of the truth that the essential sin is unbelief. Read the letter to the Hebrews. The master sin with which the writer of that letter deals is the sin of unbelief. What is unbelief? The refusal to obey intellectual conviction. That is the sin of all sins. That is the easily besetting sin. Drink is never an easily besetting sin; men acquire the habit. Lust is not an easily besetting sin. The easily besetting sin, the sin in good standing around, is unbelief, the dishonesty of the man who will not obey the call of truth. There is the new emphasis of sin. That is what we need to say to men today.

What of redemption? The old provision abides. The new emphasis needed is that redemption is necessary, that no man can live the life of his own ideal, the ideal born in the moment of vision, apart from a force that is beyond himself, and outside himself. Harold Begbie, an honest disciple of Professor James, the great psychologist at whose feet we are all glad to sit today, has given the Professor a few additional problems in his book, "Broken Earthenware." What are you going to do with O.B.D.? What are you going to do with the Puncher? Now if Harold Begbie will write another book, and I hope he will, let him not confine himself to slum districts, but let him cross to the West End here, and he will find the same problem. I know the thing of which I speak. I know it better tonight than I did five years ago when I began my ministry here. I know that beneath the veneer, the culture, the refinement, there is the agony of broken hearts, and of conflict with sin. Thank God, I know also that the redemption provided is as powerful in the West End as in the East End. I know that this plenteous redemption is redemption for man as man. What we need is to emphasize its necessity and proclaim its absolute sufficiency.

A new statement of the old things, yes, but more, a new application of the old things is what this age peculiarly needs. It needs a social application based upon a specialized individual application. Here is the trouble with our age. The gleams of light are everywhere, men are seeing visions of an established order, in which man shall be brother to man; yet, the prophets of that new order are principally men who care nothing for their fellow men, but everything for themselves. That is the peculiar trouble of the hour; gleams of light everywhere, and visions of a great brotherhood of man; but how are you going to produce it? It is old, and trite, and commonplace; but it is true that we shall never have a brotherhood apart from a Fatherhood. To attempt the establishment of a social order without the foundation of God is the most fatuous folly. We must begin aright.

The Church of God needs the social application within her own borders. Here is the place where we ought to be in humiliation before God; that we fail within the Church itself; that we have men and women within the Catholic Church of God suffering alone and unhelped; that it is possible to cross the threshold of the Church of God and carry over with us the wretched, miserable caste conditions which exist outside. That is the paralysis, the devil, that is spoiling our testimony. We need the new application of the old principle of the government of God, in a new social life in the fellowship of the Christian Church. But we must begin aright. The commonwealth is created by the wealth of all. Socialism demands individualism. Individualism creates socialism. Do not be afraid of the word. I said socialism twice and some of you went pale. I decline to hand over any great word to abuse, misrepresentation, and misunderstanding. I make my solemn protest here again that the man is woefully mistaken who says we can have a perfect social order - for the moment whether it be competitive or co-operative is not within my outlook - wherein human wrongs shall be righted, without God. But grant a community of individuals remade by the grace of God, and you have your society. But, ah me, how is it the Church has failed in social realization? Because the children of the Church have held back part of the price. There have been successors to Ananias and Sapphira as well as to the apostles. Because we have not been true to the whole claim of the Divine Kingship in individual lives. Thus we not been able to realize the meaning of the Divine Kingship in the corporate life of the Church, and reveal it to our own age.

One other word for the purpose of practical and immediate application. The scribes of the Kingdom of heaven are to be the moral interpreters of the law of the Kingdom to their own age. That is our business. In order to do it, we must see and understand our age. How are we to do it? The question is one perhaps more easily asked than answered. We cannot do it by reading newspapers. The whole of our press, with rare exceptions, is touched at the present moment with that sensationalism which destroys truth. The man who is going to see his age will not see it in a newspaper. Sometimes you must read books that do not sell, to see the age. What are the facts of our own age? I can summarize them in three words, Atheism, Animalism, Abjectness. I will grant that there are other things to be said. There is a wistful, longing and looking toward the East for signs of morning. There is an awful hunger after spiritual things which is manifesting itself in trafficking with the occult. There is a new desire everywhere for the heroic.

The secularist halls are closed, you tell me. It is a bad sign. It shows that atheism is more dangerous than it used to be. Atheism is without-Godism. That is very awkward, but it helps me. Without-Godism. One of the supreme evidences is the frivolity of our age. Men have no personal commerce with God, and therefore it is an age of pleasure, of light literature, of frothiness. It is an age of indifference. There is no sense of God, and therefore there are no infidel lecturers. There is no worship, for atheism is the mastery of material ideals.

Animalism is always the sequence of atheism. Men say of the prophet of God, "As for this Moses ... we know not what is become of him," and the next thing is the making of the golden calf and the worship of it. Although the golden calf is intended to be the representation of Deity, it is in very deed also a representation of animalism. The story of the golden calf is a tragic story. They made a golden calf, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Then Aaron built an altar and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to Jehovah," mark that I pray you, "a feast to Jehovah." Then they worshipped Jehovah before the golden calf. What is the next thing we read? "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." Now you have the whole tragedy of the situation. That is animalism. "What shall we eat, what shall we drink?" Oh for the return of prophet or apostle who dared to say true things to men even though their sensibilities were hurt. Oh for a Paul to say once more to this age, "whose God is their belly, who mind earthly things"; eating, and drinking and playing.

The consequence is abjectness, submission to forces that are destroying national life, and that without protest. Abjectness is trying to persuade itself that it is of the essence of courage to prepare for war. Abjectness has nightmare if an aeroplane crosses the eastern sky.

What is our duty in the presence of these things? To apply the fact of the Kingdom of God. In face of all the forces of the Kingdom of darkness, what are we to do? Bring forth things new and old, the new application of old principles. New phrasing of old truth, new channels for old streams. Taking the old for granted make appeal for the new.

First, there must be separation of the subjects of the Kingdom of the heavens from all complicity with the kingdom of Satan. That is where we must begin. The Church will have to say, "There is no room within our borders for any man who in his business is identified with the forces that are damning humanity." We must begin there. The Church must be true to the Kingdom of heaven within her own borders. Judgment must begin at the house of the Lord. Let the priests themselves believe and put on salvation. That is the first word.

Then, out of that life of true separation of the members of the Kingdom, the Church may go forth in a new witness to Godliness as against atheism, and spirituality as against animalism, to courage as against abjectness. There must be a new crusade against every form of evil; the Church forevermore manifesting herself as opposed to the things that destroy; the Church against war, and against lust, and against gambling, and against the drink traffic, against all the things that spoil humanity.

I plead today for a new enterprise in the interests of the old and abiding things, to reach the unreached masses of our cities. I am longing for the striking of the hour when it shall be possible for me to stand side by side with Canon Hensley Henson, or Mr. Stuart Holden, or the Bishop of London, somewhere off these ecclesiastical grounds, and preach the gospel to the unreached masses of the city. That hour ought to come. Surely we have some common belief on which we can stand together. My brethren, the concern of the Church ought not to be that of the defence of her own views, but attack upon the strongholds of evil and the proclamation of the evangel to the man who stands outside and with a fair show of reason says, "When you have done your quarrelling inside I will be prepared to listen to you when you talk to me."

I plead for a new enterprise in which we close our ranks, and carry the principles of the Kingdom of heaven to the age in which we live.

In order to close our ranks I think we may do these things. I would first of all, postpone all theological controversy to the calm of eternity. I think we shall be far more likely to come to a correct apprehension of the mystery of the Kenosis in heaven than we ever shall on earth.

I propose that we learn to sympathize with ecclesiastical convictions which we do not share, that we begin to believe that the man in the opposite camp is in heart sincere; that there are things about which we ought to agree to differ, and to cease our controversy in the presence of a common foe and a common God.

I propose that we abandon once and forever all petty jealousy, and rise into a great and grand conception of the Kingdom of the heavens, that we may speak with no uncertain sound to our own age.

In the name of God and of humanity let us act as though we believed the things we profess to believe.

Rouse then, soldiers! rally round the banner!

Ready, steady, pass the word along;

Onward! Forward! shout aloud Hosanna!

Christ is Captain of the mighty throng!