**VOLUME 5; CHAPTER 14 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP: CO-OPERATION IN THE BUILDING by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.*

*Hebrews 13:13*

THIS IS THE FINAL INJUNCTION OF THE LETTER TO THE Hebrews, and the final application of our study during these four Sunday evenings.

In our previous studies, we have seen that the ultimate passion burning in the heart of the men and women of faith, inspiring their pilgrimage, creating their battle, enabling their building, was not a passion for their own personal salvation, but for the ultimate victory of God in the world, that which is figuratively described as the building of the city of God. All these men of vision, revealed to us in the Divine library, were men who looked through the mists and fogs to the dawn of a glorious day, to the establishment of the order of Heaven on earth, to the completion of the city of God, to the restoration of the sin-blighted world to the Kingdom of God.

Because we also are pilgrims, warriors, builders of faith, we have no abiding city here, for the city has never yet been built in which the principles of the Divine government obtain full and perfect mastery. Nevertheless, we, pilgrims, warriors, builders of faith, do not spend our time in useless lament - we seek after the city which is to come. By the clear vision of it, by acceptation of all the principles of the government of God and obedience to them within our own lives, and then by definite endeavor we prepare for the coming of the Kingdom - we become workers together with God both in His battle against evil and in His building of His city. "Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

The word is as startling and as revolutionary today as it was when the Lord first uttered the principle in the ears of Peter and the disciples at Caesarea Philippi. "From that time Jesus began to shew unto His disciples how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up."

Let us first reverently attempt to look upon the position of our Lord as indicated in these words, "without the camp." Quite simply they mean that our Lord was crucified outside the city of Jerusalem; that is the thought embodied in the hymn of our childhood, sacred to us all - "There is a green hill far away Without a city wall."

Now it is quite evident that He set His face from the beginning of His ministry toward death as the culmination of His mission. In His own heart, and according to His own conception, the ultimate warrant for all His teaching and all His doing was the Cross. When they challenged Him as to the right by which He cleansed the temple in Jerusalem, He answered them in figures of speech, which they could not then understand, but which were explained afterward by John: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"; thus claiming that His right to cleanse the temple of God was the right of His Cross and coming resurrection. Passing over all the intermediate spaces in His ministry, we come to the final movements, and we see how with calm, definite deliberation, born of a clearly defined purpose, He set His face toward Jerusalem. The Cross lay before Him as part of the process leading on to resurrection, which was the culmination of His mission. Neither the ideals of His teaching, nor the splendor of His example, completed the meaning of His work; but always, in His thinking and deliberate intention, the Cross and resurrection. Apart from these, to use His own language, He was straitened, limited, and prevented from fulfilling His high and holy purpose. Therefore, as we see Him going out through the gate of the city, away from the center of the life of the people, outside the city over which He had wept, we are to remember He is going, out of His own deliberate choice and will, to the Cross arranged for and accomplished by the Lord Himself. That is the historic background of our text.

He thus left the city because of the sin within the city; because of its godlessness, its selfishness; because these things were not only manifest, but held mastery over every department of the city's life; the priests, the princes, the people, and the publicans, were against Him at the last. Against Him, not for personal reasons, but upon the ground of His presentation of the Kingdom of God, and His call to men to repent. Against Him, because His ideals were wholly spiritual. He touched life always at the spiritual center and from there moved out to all the suburbs of the mental and the physical. For that reason the city of Jerusalem, through its priests, its princes, its publicans, its people, was entirely opposed to Him. It was impossible for Him, in the city as she then was, to fulfil the Divine ideals. The whole movement of life was against Him. He gave Jerusalem His high ethic, and all His peerless example; but not by these things could He build the city of God or ransom the lost. It was necessary to move outside the gate, and beyond the camp, for the accomplishment of the work.

He went outside the gate, as the writer here says, "that He might sanctify the people." This was separation from the city in order to create an evangel for the city. It was the excommunication of a nation, in order to the making of a nation; the dooming of a city, in order to complete the building of a city; the passing out of chaos, in order to set at liberty forces which would restore the cosmos.

Then mark the nature of His activity; "He suffered without the gate." Look back upon the scene. If we could only see it in all simplicity as it actually happened; He was crucified as a malefactor between two thieves. To the ideal presented, to the ethic enunciated, that is man's answer; the answer not of those whom in our foolish pride we describe as the lower orders; but the answer of light and learning and intelligence; of the highest intellectual capacities in Jerusalem. "Outside the gate … without the camp."

There through suffering He created a new center. The old was to be destroyed because of its departure from the Divine. He returned to the Divine, and made possible the new. In Exodus we have the same principle illustrated. When the people had sinned, Moses came into the midst of the camp, and carried the tabernacle outside the camp and pitched it there. He said in effect: "By your sin you have exiled God, and by this act you are all excommunicated; there is but one way back, it is that you find your way to the new center created; for God Whom you have exiled can only return to you as you return to Him in obedience and repentance."

At the moment when our Lord turned his back upon Jerusalem and passing through its gate, suffered without the camp; He excommunicated the nation, put an end to the temple, abandoned the economy; but He did it in order that He might make a new tent of meeting, a new tent of testimony, a new point at which God and man should come together, a new center where God and man could be restored to fellowship with each other.

In the mystery of that hour, outside the city, outside the temple, in His suffering and His dying, He was standing, in the eternal economy of God, inside the veil as the great High Priest, accomplishing for humanity that infinite mystery of sacrifice whereby it should be possible for man to return to God, and God to return to man.

It may be that in the mind of someone listening to me the question may be arising, What have these things to do with our Christian citizenship in London? Everything. In the first sermon of the series, we saw that the city cannot be our abiding place because it is contrary to godliness; in the next we considered our responsibility of seeking the city of God, in preparation for the coming of the King; in the third we saw that God Himself amid all the chaos is working toward the cosmos and building His city. The present study shows that we can only be workers with God, and builders with Him, as we pass by the way of separation and sacrifice to the place outside the city gate; the place without the camp, where is to be the new center of the new city; because there new forces are operative by which individual men, and so the city, the nation, the race, can be made fit in the economy of heaven.

If we are to help God in the building of His city, we must be men and women outside the city, discontented with the city as it is; so living that the city becomes discontented with us.

Has the offence of the Cross ceased? It has not ceased. If we know nothing of the offence of the Cross, it is because we have not yet followed Him without the camp bearing His reproach. With absolute sincerity it may be, but with appalling ignorance let me also hasten to add, we may hope to reconstruct the cities of men apart from the Cross of our Lord. We shall never do it. The only way is that of resurrection and ascension; and that is the way of true fellowship with Him in separation to the offence of the Cross. The offence of the Cross abides. The Cross of Christ is as offensive today as it ever was. It is foolishness still to the Greek, a stumbling-block to the Jew. I spoke last Sunday evening of the great world powers represented by Pilate's superscription. What does the Cross mean to them? What was the Cross to the Roman? A gibbet, a gallows, a thing utterly offensive. What was it to the Greek? Foolishness. What was the Cross to the Hebrew? A stumbling-block, something devoid of power, over which men stumbled, and which they were determined to be rid of as offensive to fine religious instincts. The Cross has been the power of God unto salvation for nineteen centuries, and there is no other power of God unto salvation. Men today are as surely offended by the Cross as ever they were; offended by the idea that man can only be redeemed through suffering which has its symbol in blood; and offended by this deepest fact of Christianity, because acceptation of redemption that way, and fellowship in redeeming others that way, involve personal communion with and in the Cross. Yet this is the appeal of the text, "Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp," Let us become disinherited men and women, suffering the loss of all things, content even to suffer the loss of rights if by loss of them we can help other men; men and women abandoned of all the powers of the world. The power of the world said to our Lord, just ere He passed through the gate away to suffering, through the Roman Procurator, "Art Thou then a King?" "What is truth?" The culture of the world looked at the Cross and said it was foolishness. The religion of the world looked at the Cross and said the Cross was a stumbling-block. The reproach of the Cross, the offence of the Cross. Only as we get into fellowship with that reproach, that offence, only as we are willing to be at the end of that pride which affirms the possibility of reconstruction apart from that Cross, shall we ever be workers together with God for reconstruction.

Of course, I am dealing with reconstruction; with the necessity for it in human nature as I find it. If you have a nature that needs no redemption, if you were born of such as need no redemption, then do not be angry with the preacher, but listen; Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If it may be granted that there are men and women who need no repentance, righteous men and women, then let them remember that they must not take the Christian name, for Christ said He did not come after them. His business in the world is with sinning men. With ruined men; with chaos, in order that He may restore it to cosmos; in order that He may save - gracious word, never to be dropped out of our vocabulary - that He may save the sinner; that He may remake the flotsam and jetsam, until it is beautiful for the palace and home of God; that He may build the city that never has been built by reason of human sin; and build it by so dealing with sin at its devilish heart as to cancel it and break its power forever. That is the mission of Christ.

The appeal of this series of sermons, and of this evening's sermon, is to souls that desire to be with Him in that work, the work that is necessary wherever you look. My comrades, you cannot get very near to this world's heart without getting very near to its agony; and you cannot get near to the world's agony without getting near to its sin; sin underneath all the veneer of the West as well as patent in the vice of the East.

Sin; how will you deal with sin? With the liar who tells you he is a liar, and hating it cannot end it; with the polluted man dripping with filth, who hates his filth but cannot break away from it? How are you going to deal with these men and women, for Christ's mission is with such; "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance"?

When I look at the city of God - at the vision of which we glanced last Sunday evening in the Book of Revelation - there are two things that fill my soul with wonder. On the gates are the names of the twelve tribes of the Children of Israel, and on the foundations the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. We have missed the significance of the symbolism of that great vision if we have thought that these are the names of men of naturally fine and noble character upon the foundations. Nothing of the sort. Let the man whom some of us most admire tell us - for I verily believe that Paul's name is among the apostles of the Lamb, - he says of himself that he was "chief of sinners." On the gates of the city are the names of a failing, disobedient crowd of men who handed on the forces of failure to their sons. The names on the foundations are those of men who were sinning men, and who chant the anthem of redemption as they say, "Who loveth us, and loosed us from our sin by His blood; and He made us to be a Kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father." The city of God is a city of ransomed, redeemed, regenerated humanity, the work of One Who came into human history and laid hands upon the chaos in order that He might restore cosmos. If we are going to help to build that city, we must go with Him by the way of His Cross.

To speak only of the Cross is not to deliver the whole of the Christian message. Said Paul, "It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead." It is that "was raised" which is the final word of the Christian evangel. If I leave the city and find my way to Him without the camp, I am coming to a new center of humanity. He looked on to the Cross, and in the midst of a great multitude of men, in answer to the inquiry of the intellectual Greeks as represented to Him by two of His own disciples, He said, "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." What did He mean by "now"? To what was he referring? Read the context and it will be seen that He spoke in anticipation of His Cross. By the way of the Cross is the judgment of the world, is the casting out of the prince of the world, is the drawing of humanity back to Himself, and the consequent building of the city of God. If we go forth bearing His reproach, we come to this new center of discrimination, of judgment; this new center of repelling power over the forces of evil; the prince of this world cast out; this new center of attraction and healing. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself."

Mark the sacred, holy paradox. To come with Him without the camp is to come with Him within the veil, to the very heart of the sanctuary, into true fellowship with God. To come with Him through the gate, to the camp, to the place of reproach; is to find our way into the place of peace, of communion; is to find our way to the dynamic center from which the forces flow, for the doing of that which cannot be done in other ways.

That is one reason why I read not merely that one passage in the thirteenth chapter but that which is a part of it in the twelfth chapter, "Ye are come," not merely you will come, not merely the ultimate and final victory, but "Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

To follow Him outside the gate, without the camp, to the place of reproach is to come to the center of actual present accomplishment of the purposes of God; and to assurance of their ultimate accomplishment, to the widest bound and reach of the universe of God. We come to a new center. We pass within the veil. We come to a place where the old ideals are reborn and the old forces are renewed and remade. We come to the place which in the history of the world will finally result in the acceptation by men of the truth that government cannot be by might, but that it must be by right; we come to the place where the culture of the world will be reborn; science, art, music, literature were through that Cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ born anew. Whatever there had been of these before the age in which He came was decadent and ruined. The great philosophy of Socrates had withered, and men were disobedient. The idea of Epicurus that men should get back to the simple life; or that of the Stoics, who aimed at high ideals of virtue; these things were perished, and even while the words of the ancient philosophies were upon the lips of the Greek teachers, the vital forces were at an end. But they were reborn in the Cross. With all its rugged severity it demanded forever more simplicity of life and strenuousness of life in order to bring about the fulfilment of being and to co-operation with the purposes of God. At that center, outside the city beyond the gate, spiritual religion was reborn, and by way of that Cross men have come to know that neither in Jerusalem or in any mountain set apart do men find God; but wherever they turn to Him and meet Him at the trysting-place of His love as revealed in His Cross, there do they find Him.

The urgency of the appeal is this, there can be no sanctification of the people or of the city save by co-operation with Christ in this method of self-sacrifice; this consent to fellowship with Him in His Cross. Here only is the place untouched of storms, for here was the center of the whirlwind. Here only is the place of action with God, in the building of the city. I

f we are truly pilgrims of faith, warriors of faith, builders of faith, then let us remember we cannot dwell in Jerusalem sharing its life, and by talking of the Cross, redeem it. We cannot dwell in London and be of London, of its desire and of its amusement and of its philosophies, and save it. There must be utter separation, with a clear line of demarcation between those who have seen the vision and are walking the way of God toward the victory, and those who are content with godlessness. That is the first requirement for being able to help the city, or to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom or to co-operate in the building of the city of God.

Our only business as Christian men and women in London is that of missionaries, "What," someone says, "are you saying that all we have to do is to preach this gospel at the street corners, and preach this gospel by the distribution of literature?" No, nothing of the kind. Every relationship is our opportunity for proclaiming this evangel and bringing men into fellowship with this Christ of the Cross; our business by our strict integrity therein, and even by denying self therein for the sake of the man who is struggling by our side is our opportunity for building. That is Christianity. In social life and in municipal life, by standing for the crown rights of the Lord Christ, we build the City of God. We are to be separated to these things on six days of the week as well as on the seventh; by definite, honest, sacrificial toil, declaring the evangel; and by getting hold one by one of broken, bruised, battered men and women, and leading them to this Christ.

It is very little in the great whole that I can do, or that you can do, my brother. Thank God for the great whole; but do not let us forget that there is no great whole of God if we neglect our little. He has chosen, in an infinite mystery, which is also infinite wisdom, to limit Himself in His work for the restoration and salvation of men and of the race, to those who name His name and wear His sign, and share His life. Thus, the final appeal is the word of the text: "Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."