**VOLUME 5; CHAPTER 20 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**THE KINGDOM: "THY KINGDOM" by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*Thy Kingdom ...*

*Matthew 6:10*

OUR THEME THIS EVENING IS THAT OF THE KINGDOM OVER which the King reigns. The phrase I have read as text is taken, apparently, almost ruthlessly from its setting. These words are selected from the Lord's prayer. My theme this evening is not the prayer, but rather the Kingdom for the coming of which our Lord taught us to pray. In speaking of it let us remember that He Who taught the prayer was Himself the King; that the prayer itself is formulated with wonderful care, and is part of the King's Manifesto.

At the fifth chapter in the Gospel according to Matthew, we have the account of Jesus looking upon the multitude, and as a result going to the mountain, taking with Him His own disciples, and there upon the mountain height, enunciating in their hearing the ethic of His great Kingdom. At the heart of the ethic is this prayer, and at the center of the first part of the prayer is this phrase, "Thy Kingdom come." Of that Kingdom Jesus is King by way of manifestation and for the purpose of demonstration. The one sovereign Lord is God. In order that men may know the King, He came into human form; and so coming, not nearer to man, but nearer to his consciousness by the way of incarnation. Therefore in Jesus of Nazareth, Man of our manhood, Bone of our bone, Flesh of our flesh, Life of our life, there has appeared in human history all that it is necessary for us to know concerning the Kingship of God, for in the King, the Kingdom is revealed.

With that thought in mind, we turn to the consideration of the Kingdom for which He taught us to pray that it may come, not that it may be created, not that it may be established, but that it may come, that it may be realized, that it may appear, that it may reach its ultimate fulfilment. In human history kings have often been great only by reason of the greatness of the empire over which they have reigned. But the greatest kings, even in human history, are the kings who have created a great kingdom. The greatness of our King is created by the greatness of the Kingdom over which He reigns, and the greatness of the Kingdom over which He reigns is created by the greatness of the King. Yet, it seems to me sometimes that we can only come to any recognition of the greatness of the King as we attempt to see the Kingdom over which He reigns. We spoke of the abstract things of Christ's greatness in our previous study; of His character, of His qualifications, of His authority. Now let us try to see the Kingdom over which He reigns.

I shall ask you to follow me as I attempt to speak; first of the actual fact and extent of the Kingdom; and secondly of the present expression of the Kingdom in human history.

First, then, as to the fact and extent of the Kingdom. We are in danger of limiting our outlook when we speak of the Kingdom. I am not going to enter into any discussion of the interesting problem of the difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever difference there may be of application, there is no difference in the central thought. All the realms of which we are conscious are in the Kingdom of God. "King of kings" was the word of our last meditation. As we remember it we think of rulers and principalities; of dominions and powers; of kings over certain restricted areas. Over all these Christ is claimed by Scripture to be King. All realms are in His Kingdom. The material universe is in the Kingdom of God. The mental realm is under the government of Christ. Over the moral realm He is the one supreme ruler. So climbing up the ascending scale from the material through the mental and moral, we reach ultimately and finally to this: that the whole spiritual universe is within the Kingdom of God and is under the dominion of Christ.

Let us begin with the first of these thoughts; the material realm. To declare that this is in the Kingdom of God is to utter something old and commonplace, and therefore difficult of belief; that is of the belief which touches the heart and moves the emotion and fires the imagination. Yet, I believe that we are losing greatly in our Christian thinking and teaching by forgetfulness of this fact. No words of mine can set forth that truth with such lucidity, with such force, as the words which I read to you at the commencement of our service, selections from the writings of John and Paul. I halt you one moment to ask you to think of the difference between these two men, because as we recognize that difference we shall see how remarkable it is that they both came to identical conclusions concerning the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. John was the mystic, the dreamer; a man of intuition and insight. If I were asked to designate John, I should never speak of him as Saint John the Divine, but as John the Interpreter. I never read "Pilgrim's Progress" and the account of the visit to the house of the Interpreter without thinking of John, the man who saw things never seen, and was conscious of things that other men did not dream existed. The dreamer, the mystic, the poet, the visionary, the seer. Paul was a man of sincerity and honesty; a man of logical acumen; a man who would bring to bear upon the most trivial matters the profoundest powers of the mind; the man who wrote the great treatise on salvation which plumbs the depths, and scales the heights, and shows accurately the movements of God toward the accomplishment of His purpose. I am not saying there was nothing of the mystic in Paul, no vision of the gleam, no consciousness of the glory. In this very treatise he adds to all his statement and his logic, the wings of song, and having begun with the degradation of the Roman Empire, describing it until we shudder at this description, he at last says, "Let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God." He was pre-eminently a man of logic, a man of argument, a man of debate, a man of strange and strenuous reasoning power, a man who saw his way through all the processes. These two men, brought in different ways into comradeship with Christ, came to the same conclusion. The mystic words of John concerning the Christ are, "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made." "In Him was life," and there is dramatic magnificence and inclusiveness in that use of the word "life." There follows a fine differentiation between the lower forms of life and the highest, as John continued "the life was the light of men." Such is the language of the mystic. I turn to Paul and I read in his Colossian letter, "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." Such is the language of the logician. The conclusion in each case is the same. Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, the Man known of the Galilean fisherman as an intimate human friend; the Man arresting Saul of Tarsus, learned in the law of his people and enthusiastic in his opposition to Christianity; impressed Himself upon the mind of the mystic, and upon the mind of the thinker, and the result was the same. They both saw Him as the Creator and Sustainer of the material universe. That is the Kingdom of Christ. In imagination I stand upon the mountain side, and I see the touch of His beauty in everything. I watch the procession of the seasons as they come and go, and mark their wonderful regularity, notwithstanding the impatient blasphemy of people who are afraid that a week's rain will spoil their harvest, and I know that "In Whom all things consist." There is no flower outside His Kingdom. There is no ploughed field sweeping up the hillside in folds of russet velvet which is not His handiwork. He holds the world in His hand, and is Master and Lord of the material universe. The first fact then for us ever to remember, is that the Christ Whom we crown as King, is King in the material universe; present at creation, He is the Word of creation; He upholds it by the word of His power; and all things made through Him, move toward Him, and will find their final glory when they have attained that form which harmonizes with the infinite perfections, which had their unveiling for the eye of mortal men in the strange and wonderful Person of Jesus of Nazareth.

He is also King in the mental realm. All the powers of thought are under His control, and under His government. There is rebellion in the world, in the universe; but ultimately all is under His control, for no thinking being in the universe can finally escape the strength of the mind of God, He is absolute Sovereign. All beautiful thought owes its origin to this one King; and every expression of beauty is the outcome of His reign and His Kingship. Of music, art, poetry and philosophy, He is the Lord and Master. Test your music by the harmonies of His perfections, and it sings its last un-utterable note when it celebrates the Messiah. Art comes finally to Him, and that in art which is untrue and unclean is that in art which is unlike Christ and against the purposes of His Kingship. Poetry sings itself out in highest strains when it celebrates the name of this one great King. Philosophy is final when it is true to His wisdom. Thus through all the mental realm He is King.

The fact of His Kingship in the moral realm is beyond dispute. His law is the standard of morality. Gradually the word in its progressive civilization is coming to understand His ethic and obey it. Men outside the Church at this hour, sincere men, are telling us that we need to set up a new social order, and the proportion in which these men are uttering the truth about society, the relation of man to man in brother-hood, is the proportion in which they have heard the ethic of Jesus. In civic life, national life, here or anywhere else; the proportion of its purity is the proportion of its approximation to the ideals of Christ. In our moral ideals for the individual, the community, the nation, the world; the final standard is the ethic of Jesus. Thousands of men who have refused personally and individually to crown our Lord and Master, are crowning Him indirectly when they accept His ethic and bow before His standard of morality. From His Sermon on the Mount, light has flashed upon every age, rebuking it, shaming it, and gradually men are coming to honor the great ideal. I will put the whole case in other words. No ethic has ever yet been enunciated so severe, so searching, so high, so perfect as the ethic of Jesus. Twenty years ago a man who was filled with doubt and questioning concerning the Christian religion, said to me quite frankly, "My only complaint against the ideal of Jesus is that it is impracticable; no man can fulfil it." I only quote that, I need not argue it. I agree with it, No man can fulfil the ethic of Jesus save as He receives from Him the necessary dynamic force. I quote it in order to say that it was a recognition that Christ is King in the moral realm. To obey Him absolutely, completely, finally, is to come to the ultimate in morality.

Christ is King finally over the whole spiritual realm. The highest side of life develops under His rule. He has so spoken to men who have questioned and doubted and groped in the darkness after God, that they have found Him and come to know Him. By His interpretation of truth concerning God, men have come to such conception of God as has enabled them to worship and to serve. The whole spiritual world has been opened to the consciousness of man by the ministry of Jesus. He has given us back into a present fellowship, the faces "loved long since and lost awhile." "We sorrow not as those that have no hope." The simple phrases of our holy faith link us in that communion of saints which laughs at the terror of the tomb. They are not dead, but gone before. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." We know that when Christ shall appear, they shall appear with Him in glory. He has not killed the capacity for sorrow; but He has gilded the teardrop with His smile and made the desert garden bloom awhile, by opening before us the gates, and giving us to see the infinite distances, and to enter even here amid the dust and turmoil of this present life into the communion with the saints who have gone before. If we follow Jesus we have no need to mutter in the dark in order to talk with spirits that have gone. We are their fellow citizens. If for a little while we wait amid the conflict, in this waiting we are not divided, but one with those who have gone. And presently, when the end comes, the followers of this Christ, this King, will look into the face of the rider upon the pale horse, and hail him as friend rather than foe, recognizing, as Bishop Taylor once so exquisitely put it, that Christ has taken from him his sting, and made him forevermore a porter at the gate of life. The consciousness of the spiritual world is born of the touch and presence and victory of this Christ King. He reigns over all things material, over all things mental, over all things moral, over all things spiritual.

Let us consider secondly, the present expression of the Kingdom.

I am speaking out of the midst of a world, and out of the midst of a condition of affairs, which made it necessary for the King to teach men to pray "Thy Kingdom come." The Kingdom is not apparent, it is not perfectly patent, it is not seen of ordinary men save in partial degree. It is an actual essential fact. It is seen of such as have seen the face of Christ. We remember the word of the writer of the letter to the Hebrews, that old and familiar world, let us recite it now with this particular meaning in it: "We see not yet all things subjected to Him. But we behold Him Who has been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus." The writer of those words recognizes the fact that within the Kingdom there is rebellion; but he affirmed that at last the victory would be won, and all things would be subjected unto the King. His words suggest the unfinished work of Jesus, "Not yet all things subjected unto Him"; and the assurance that it will be finished, "We see ... Jesus."

Yet, while we recognize His actual sovereignty in all these realms, let us also remember that it is not only actual, it is active. Think of the rule of Christ today. We must remind our hearts of it or we shall lose courage in many a day of battle and darkness. He holds the reins of government over all the forces in the midst of which we live. Think of the crowned heads of the world, kings as we name them; think of the merchant princes of today; think of the rulers of the scientific world; or yet again, think of the great spiritual leaders of this and every age. Think of all these, and then hear again this word, He is "King of kings," Begin on that first and simplest level where it sometimes seems impossible to believe it; He is King of all the crowned heads. It is not manifest; but it is an actual and active fact. Go back to the Old Testament and catch one gleam of light. Speaking to Cyrus, Jehovah said, "I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me." There was a man of faith in the olden days who was agnostic in the presence of what he saw about him, and Habakkuk said in his honest agnosticism, "Why is God doing nothing?" The divine reply was, "I work a work in your days, which ye will not believe though it be told you." Then said Habakkuk, "If that be true, I will up to the watchtower and watch and see." Then God told Him what He was doing. "I am taking people outside the covenant, cruel, brutal people, and making them the ministers of My sovereignty, for the chastisement of My people, that they may be ultimately saved." The man who began his prophecy by saying that God was doing nothing, ended by singing:

Though the fig tree shall not blossom,

Neither shall fruit be in the vines;

The labour of the olive shall fail,

And the fields shall yield no meat;

The flock shall be cut off from the fold,

And there shall be no herd in the stalls:

Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,

I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Do not forget the significance of these old-world pictures. Things are different today you say. Only with a superficial difference. At this moment God girds Cyrus though Cyrus does not know Him. The whole philosophy of the government of Jesus over crowned heads, and parliaments of the world, is contained in this Old Testament declaration, "Surely the wrath of men shall praise Thee: The residue of wrath shalt Thou gird upon Thee."

If you take all that away from me, then I am a lost man indeed, without any hope. My hope is not in Parliaments. My hope is in the fact that God reigns, and that His King holds the reins of government. I do not always understand the process; I get so weary of waiting. Oh, feverish heart of mine, be still! One day with Jehovah is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as a day. Mount up to the mountains, and see the going of God; live in the spaciousness of eternity, and know this, that all hell, and all the devilishness of men, cannot finally defeat the enthroned King. He holds in His own right hand the government of the world. Though the process may seem long, and the conflict may be severe, Christ is reigning and ruling, this anointed and appointed King.

He is King also of merchant princes. Have you ever heard a business man talk about creating wealth? You cannot create wealth; you can amass it. God must ever create wealth. What is the ultimate, final wealth? Money? Surely not! The thing that He creates is wealth. Only that which comes out of life is wealth. A man may reap his fields of golden grain, and garner all the wheat, but he has not made wealth; he has reaped in order to make himself rich, which is quite another matter. It is the King Who creates wealth. If Christ hold in check the resources of His universe for one year and there is no harvest, then what is the use of money? He is King over all merchant princes, and can beggar them if He will.

Christ is King of science. Let every young Christian hear that word. Never be persuaded for one single moment either by the man who attacks Christianity, or by the man who defends it, into believing that science and religion are out of harmony with each other. Of course we need to be very careful to draw a distinction between scientific facts and scientific hypotheses; and to draw a distinction between Biblical declaration and human interpretation of its meaning. I stand for no man's interpretation of the Bible, not even my own, but I stand for the Bible. I am interested in every hypothesis of science, but I hold in reserve my judgment, and ask for the ascertained fact; and when I find the ascertained fact, and the simple statement of Scripture, I find that they are one. In all the scientific world Christ is King. All scientific discoveries and investigations in modern years have been made possible by the coming of Christ and the preaching of the gospel. Every discovery is a revelation. You speak to me of the discovery of some force. It was there before you discovered it. Why did we not discover it before? Because the hour had not arrived, and we were not ready for it. Take electricity for example; when the hour arrived the King discovered the secret to man, who forevermore says he discovered it. It was revealed to him rather than discovered by him, in answer to his endeavor. Ask, seek, knock, that is not merely for the Christian man when he is praying in his own inner chamber; it is the law of life. When a man asks, there is the answer; when he seeks, he finds; when he knocks at the door of entrance to hidden secrets, the King discovers them. In all the scientific realm it is by the coming of the Christ that men have been set free for investigation and equipped for investigation. Christ is King in that realm.

Once again, and I need not stay to enlarge upon this: He is today King over all spiritual leaders. Men who lead in spiritual matters, men who help other men to vision, are all men who have kissed the sceptre of Christ, and bent themselves before His Cross.

What is the present expression of this great fact of Christ's Kingship? We thank God for the measure in which His Kingship is acknowledged directly or indirectly in this and every land. We cannot, however, say that the Kingdom has come in England. Where then is its expression to be found? It ought to be found in His Church, for there He is crowned King, there His laws govern, there His commands are obeyed, there His interests form the supreme interest. No man can say that without shame. There is a measure in which it is all true; and the measure in which it is true is the measure in which the world knows something of the Kingship of Christ; but in how much greater degree it ought to be true than it is. I find it almost impossible to rejoice in the expression of the Kingdom when I think of the corporate Church of Christ, for very shame of our failure. Therein is the secret of the unrest and indifference and rebellion of the outside world. The rebellion is against the Church that fails to manifest the Kingship of Jesus. There is no rebellion against the Kingship of Jesus when truly manifest in the Church. We have not realized His Kingship in our corporate capacity. The armies of the Captain of Salvation are engaged in internecine warfare when they ought to be confronting the foe. Yes, we must recognize that the measure in which the world knows anything of the glory of the Kingdom is the measure in which the Church has revealed it.

Whereas criticism of the Church's failure is of very little use save as it may inspire us to face individual realization; I turn to that matter in conclusion. The reign of Jesus can be expressed in individual life. If life is in His Kingdom, then it expresses His Kingliness. He desires that His Kingdom shall be manifest through His Church and through His people; and He has indicated the line of present expression and the value thereof. Salt is pungent, aseptic; potent for the prevention of the spread of corruption; and it gives goodness its opportunity, wherever it exists. Not only salt, but light; "Ye are the light of the world," said the King to His own disciples in His manifesto; and He explained His own figure. "A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house." The lamp is individual, local, personal; the illumination of private places by His own children; the city is the Church in its corporate capacity, flashing its light upon the darkness, illuminating the far distant places. These are the ideals of Jesus. The world can only know the King as it sees the Kingdom; and it can only see the Kingdom through those who are in the Kingdom.

I discard all larger applications, and close upon this note.

How far are we exhibiting to the world the meaning of the Kingship of Christ, and so revealing the King Himself? When we pray for the Kingdom, do we mean it? When we say, "Thy Kingdom come," if we simply utter words, allow them to pass our lips, we take the name of God in vain; and our blasphemy is more terrible than the blasphemy of the man in the slum. We can only pray that prayer out of our inner life when the Kingdom has come there. If we say, "Thy Kingdom come," while still the idol holds sway in our lives, and unholy, filthy things, which are an abomination to the King, are retained in our lives, then are we taking His name in vain. God have mercy upon us and deliver us from such blasphemy. Let every man, and woman, at this hour, by solemn affirmation and solemn oath, surrender to the King, saying: "Here, O King, is my life, rule over it, be Master in it, realize Thy purpose therein; take the territory and subdue it to Thy perfect will; and through it show, my children, the servant maids in my house, the men to whom I pay wages, all the people I meet, what is the meaning of Thy great Kingdom." We can be microcosms of the Kingdom, in which its laws, its purposes, and its beauties are seen. God help us so to be.