**VOLUME 7; CHAPTER 18 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**BURDENS: FALSE AND TRUE by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.*

*Matthew 11:27-30*

IN ALL PROBABILITY NO WORDS THAT EVER FELL FROM THE lips of our blessed Lord have more remarkably and profoundly taken hold on the heart of man than those of the last three verses of this paragraph.

There is something here that charms the heart of man, not in one age, but in every successive age, and not among one class of people, but among all classes of people. It is a remarkable and arresting fact that it is impossible by translation to rob these words of music, or to weaken their appeal. In every zone, frigid, temperate, and torrid, they have the same effect.

We are driven to ask, Why is it that this passage has so remarkably taken hold of the heart of the human race that wherever the Bible comes, and the words are given to the people, they are almost invariably taken out and committed to memory, and passed from mouth to mouth until men everywhere who know anything about the Bible know these words? Why have the words so profound an effect?

It may be said that their attraction is due to their simplicity; but that does not touch the deepest reason, for the simplicity of superficiality may charm for the moment, but it does not live. The general answer I make to this inquiry is: The words have had a profound effect because they are profound words. This is not merely the language of a tender and beautiful sentiment. Sentiment is an excellent thing; God have mercy on the man that affects to disapprove sentiment. But sentiment does not live century after century. You must create new sentiments if you would move men by sentiment. Something infinitely more than a soft lullaby that appeals to the tired side of humanity is needed to grip humanity's heart and hold it; something infinitely more than what I have already described as a wooing winsomeness is needed to take hold of the heart of a man as he fights his battles and bears his burdens and feels the strenuousness of life. And the infinitely more is here in this call, or it would long ago have been forgotten.

That which has made these words live is revealed in the verse that comes before them. The profundity of the invitation is not understood if you begin with the words of invitation. Immediately before this, Jesus uttered stern words; He upbraided the cities in which most of His mighty works were done. Suddenly He ceased, and, standing still in the midst of the crowd, He lifted eyes and heart to God, and spoke no longer to men, but to God. "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes; yea, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Thy sight."

Having thus spoken to His Father, He turned back to the crowds, and said, "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me … and I will give you rest."

Most reverently and carefully may I put this into another form? Jesus upbraided the cities that had not known Him, the cities that had been blind to His presence, deaf to the music of His voice, unconscious of their day. Then, suddenly turning to God, He said, "I thank Thee, O Father," that these things are revealed to the children, and the simple-hearted and the men that lack understanding. Turning back to the people, He declared: God has put everything in My hands. He has committed all things to Me, and yet men do not know Me, no one understands Me; My Father understands Me. But it is also true that no man understands the Father but the Son, and the man to whom the Son will reveal Him. And to whom will He reveal the Father? "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What rest? The rest of the revelation of the Father, the one and only rest that man needs, the rest that comes to the soul when God comes to the soul and the soul comes to God.

Jesus Christ thus virtually said to men: All your restlessness is Godlessness. All life's fitful fever is the result of the exiling of God; all the tempest-tossed experiences of men are due to the fact that they do not know the Father. Jesus, looking at the multitudes, sorrowing and suffering, tempest-tossed and driven, restless and tired, weary and heavy-laden, said to them, in effect, If you could know God all your restlessness would cease; but you cannot know Him except through Me. But if only you will come to Me I will reveal Him to you, and you will find your rest.

That is the reason why the verses live and the music wins its way through all the centuries. Jesus is not saying to men: Never mind, do not trouble, it will soon be over; He never deals with sorrow and trouble that way. He is saying to men: Get right at the foundation of your life and the surface will be right. He does not come to men and say to them: Cheer up, It is all right; I sympathize with you, I pity you. That is not the way Christ deals with the restlessness of human life. It is not pity He offers men, it is power. His gift is not an opiate that puts them to sleep and makes them forget; it is life that wakes them, and makes them triumph. Get right with God, and the only way in which you will get right with God, says Christ, is by coming to Me.

Having seen the setting of the words, let us examine them in that setting and in that relationship.

Confining ourselves from this moment to the actual words beginning, "Come unto Me," I shall ask you to notice three things. First, that Jesus here makes His appeal to something that is a necessary part of all human life. Second, that in the words of His great appeal Jesus separates humanity into two camps. And, finally, that the call of Jesus is a call in which He appeals to this underlying fact of life, and invites men from a false position into the true.

I do not care for the moment whether you are a Christian man or no, whether your life is godly or godless, pure or impure, restful or restless; there is an essential fact in human nature, and it is to that fact that Jesus makes His appeal.

In order to find it, I am going to take you to my second division first. I shall return to it for consideration in detail at a later stage. Jesus divides humanity into two camps. Notice carefully these words, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden"; that is a description of one class of people. Pass to the end of the verses, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." That is the condition of the other class. Mark the contrast: People that labour and are heavy laden; a Man Who says, "My yoke is easy. My burden is light." Remember that when Jesus said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light," He did not mean the yoke He was going to give us and the burden He was going to impose upon us. He did mean that also, but fundamentally and primarily He was speaking out of His own experience. The yoke I wear is easy, the burden I bear is light. "Labour." "My yoke is easy." "Heavy laden." "My burden is light." The contrast is self-evident and arresting.

Now we will find our way into the discovery of that which is common in human life by looking at those contrasts. What is common to both conditions? There are people who labor and are heavy laden. Here is a Man with an easy yoke and a light burden. It is a great contrast, but the common quantity is a burden. These people are carrying a burden. This Man is carrying a burden.

When that is seen, there is discovered the underlying fact in human life to which Jesus appeals. No human being lives without carrying a burden. I am not now speaking of the burden of sorrow, of the burden of care, of the burden of grief, of the burden of trial. When Paul was writing to the Galatians, toward the close of the letter; in very close proximity, he said two things: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," and then, "Each man shall bear his own burden." That is not a contradiction. Whereas the word "burden" in neither case is incorrect, as a matter of fact, the apostle did not use the same word; the words that lie behind are different words. Those who are familiar with the Greek Testament will remember the fact, but to those who are not, if I simply utter the words that lie behind, you will see the difference in the sound - Baros and Phortion. The first word means a burden of sorrow, of pain, of difficulty, of trial. We are to bear one another's burdens of that sort; but the second burden is the burden of responsibility. Every man must bear his own burden of responsibility; no man can carry his brother's responsibility. No man can live and work under the impulse that drives his brother man.

What, then, is this burden of responsibility? It is the master passion of life, whatever that may be. It is the conception of life that dominates it, drives it, sends it through the days. It is the aim that a man has in life, the thing that has taken hold upon him, and is molding him; it is the conception that lies at the back of his will, creates the reason for its decisions, and, therefore, is the motive power in his life.

There is no man who has not such a reason, has not such a master passion; it is present in every life.

A great many men have never named it, have never taken time to ask what is the all-inclusive conception of life that drives them through the days; but if it has never been written down or found, it is there. In these days of psychological investigation we hear men correctly talking of a subconsciousness; and the burden may lie in a man's subconsciousness, but it exists.

I do not want to lead you into any metaphysical disquisition, but in the name of God I want you to find out the deepest thing in your life. I want to deliver you from surface living, and therefore I beseech you to recognize this deepest, simplest, profoundest thing. Back of your life there is a reason, a motive, an aim, an impulse, a master passion: the conception of life that is mastering you and driving you, making you rise in the morning, toil through the day, rest at night. Back of all the externalities is some dynamic, and this is so in every life.

A friend of mine once said to me, when I had said something like this in preaching, I do not think you are quite right about that. I think there are men who have no aim in life, no motive power, no master passion. And I said, Well, tell me of one. And he named someone whom we had known for long years. Look at so-and-so. You know as well as I do that he has just drifted through the years, and done nothing in the world, simply because he has no aim in life. And I said to my friend, The man you quote is a forcible argument in favor of my position. And he said, But surely his trouble has been that he has had no aim in life. I replied, His aim in life is to do nothing. And it is a most remarkable thing how hard some men will work to do nothing. This man had one conception - to shift responsibility and shirk work. Mean and contemptible, but there it was, the master passion that made him shiftless and lazy.

We all have a master passion, and that is the matter with which Jesus is dealing in these old sweet words. He is getting underneath the external action, and underneath the surface thinking. He is getting down to the deep subconsciousness of life, putting His hand on the thing that molds and makes all the externalities, and He is saying to men, in effect, If you will get the right master passion you will have rest. If only you will find the right motive, the right aim, the right reason, then the friction will go out of your life, peace will take its place, and you will find yourself at the secret source of all strength.

Now let us pass again to the second point for more careful examination. Jesus divides men into two camps. On the one side are people trying to carry a burden too heavy for them, and the yoke in which they are attempting to carry this burden galls and frets them. All life is a weariness because they are attempting to carry a burden that they were never meant to carry. Jesus looks on them in pity and declares, "My yoke is easy. My burden is light."

Let us endeavor to discover these different burdens. What is this burden that Jesus described as light? What was the master passion in His life? What was His aim, His motive, His impulse, the reason for everything He did, every journey He took, every word He uttered, all the output of life, in thought, and speech, and deed? There was one unswerving principle at the back of the life of Jesus, one master passion that always drove Him. I take you back for a concrete and wonderful answer to an Old Testament prophecy concerning Him, and then ask you to hear how through His life the music was always true to the chord of the dominant.

In the roll of the book it is written of me;

I delight to do Thy will, O my God.

That was His master passion. Take His life for a moment, a fascinating and delightful study, which we can only glance at, but of which we may see enough as we go to learn the truth. The first recorded words of Jesus are, "Wist ye not that I must?" Now listen. That is what I want to find out. When a man says, I must, I am getting at the deepest thing in his life. It is not when a man says, I ought, or I would like; that does not matter, but I must. "I must be about my Father's business." There the master passion flamed out. His Father's business for Him at that moment was that He should go home and be subject to His parents, that He should learn the trade of His reputed father, Joseph; and then that He should remain for eighteen long years in the seclusion of the carpenter's shop, doing what men call "the daily round, the common task."

Then He passed into public life, and again we listen to some of the things He said: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." "I can of Myself do nothing." "The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father doing." "I do always the things that are pleasing to Him." "I have accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. It is finished." "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit."

Oh, ye masters of the modes of music, tell me, is not that harmony? The will of God, the master passion operating through all Jesus' days and doings. Back of Calvary, and back of the carpenter's shop, back of the infinite teaching, back of the sweet human life, back of the majestic marvelous unveiling of God, and back of the tender patient unveiling of man, the will of God was His master passion.

Now listen and be astonished. He says, "My burden is light." Some of the simplest things Jesus said are the most startling if only we take time to listen to them. My brother, you have been saying in your heart, I would like to be a Christian, but I cannot be one because it is such hard work; it is very hard work to please God always. Jesus says it is not. He says it is easy; and let me say it very kindly, I would rather believe Him than you. I would rather believe Him, because He always did it, and you and I have not always done it.

This is one of the superlative notes of the Gospel which needs to be delivered today. Jesus says that the light burden is the will of God, says, in effect, that it is easier to please God than not to please Him. My testimony by the side of His is very imperfect, but I have discovered that it is far easier to please God than any man.

I would rather please God because the law of God conditions human life according to its first intention and its true possibility. Oh, but a man says, if I am going to be a Christian everything will go against the grain. Nothing of the sort. Everything will go with the grain. You have been going against the grain all your life. Our Lord will take hold of the inherent and created capacity, and put it into its right relationship with God. When a man is born again all the essential facts of his first birth are found and realized and crowned. The second birth of a man is finding the first birth, and putting it into true relation with God.

And now let us look at the other camp. Jesus said, "Ye that labour and are heavy laden." What are the burdens they are carrying? Let us try to find out. We need not go back to Palestine. Some of you have been honestly exercising your heart and mind in the last few minutes. You have been saying, Well, what is my burden? The preacher says that perhaps we have never found it out. What is it? Some man is getting down to the undercurrent of his life, and is trying to find out. What is it, my brother? Well, says one, if I am honest, the master passion of my life is money; I am living for money; I am living for wealth. I am thinking and planning and working and toiling for money; that is my master passion. Some other says, I care nothing about money; but, if I am to confess the truth, the thing that is driving me is the passion for fame; I want to be known, I must make a name among my fellow men; that is the goal toward which I am running. Yet another says, No, I care nothing for money simply for the sake of money, and fame never attracts me; but if I had to confess, the master passion of my life is pleasure. I want pleasure, enjoyment, a thrill, and a sensation; I must have it; that is what I am working for; if I work hard it is that I may earn the wherewithal to secure pleasure. Oh, what thousands are living for that today! They work hard, and the goal is always the pleasure that is to come presently. Still another says, I care nothing for money, nothing for fame, nothing particularly for pleasure; all I want is ease and quietness and to be let alone. If you will just let me alone, that is all I ask; I want to go through life peaceably and quietly, not to be perplexed or bothered.

Now let us be very careful. As a matter of fact, none of these constitutes the burden of any human life. Money, pleasure, fame, ease - not one of them is a burden. You have not thought deeply enough; you are confounding the yoke with the burden. These are the yokes in which men are trying to carry burdens, but the burdens lie deeper.

Will you let me cross-examine you for a moment? What do you want money for? Why do you want money? For whom do you want it? Want it for? Of course, I want it for myself. Exactly; now you have named your burden. For myself. Of course, there may be a man who says he wants it for someone else. Well, he is so rare a specimen that I will not discuss the question with you. I am dealing with the average man, the man who wants money for himself. Or this man who says, I want fame, I am not seeking fame for anyone else. It is my name I want to be carved into the granite. Or this man who is seeking for pleasure; he seeks it for himself. And the man seeking ease, the answer is always the same: self.

There are only two burdens that men can carry. One is the will of God, and the other is self. The life of every man, woman and child having come to years of discretion and understanding is centered around God, or around self. Self is very subtle, very insidious, hides itself in all sorts of masks, dresses itself in all garments; but if God is not at the center of your life, man, you have put yourself on the throne. There are only two burdens but thousands of yokes.

Now listen again to Jesus. He says you are heavy laden if you are living for self. What does He mean? He means that it is very difficult for any man to please himself, very difficult for any man to satisfy himself. Difficult? I dare venture to go further, and say my blessed Lord meant that no man can satisfy himself. A boy at school dreams of the day when he will be able to please himself. I know that I did; I know I thought when I was once out of school, and away from discipline, I could please myself. And I have found out that I pleased myself more in those days than I ever have done since.

Can you find me a self-satisfied man anywhere? You say, Yes, quite a number of them. Self-satisfied men? Yes, have you never heard of one? I have heard of many, and never seen one. Oh, but if you only knew this man whom I know, he is just that; he is self-satisfied! Get in to his inner life, and you will find that the man most self-satisfied in outward manifestation is always uneasy lest some other man should not think of him as he thinks of himself. He is never at rest.

Oh, men, oh, women, hear me; I would not trifle with this tremendous and awful truth. If you want to know what hell is enthrone yourself, try to please yourself, live for yourself long enough. The lady in the West End, she lives for self, talks about ennui. And what is ennui? Hell! The poor soul in the East End, when that soul lives for self, speaks only of despair. And what is despair? Exactly the same thing as the other, only at one end of London they give it a French name; but it is the same thing. It is the worm that dieth not, gnawing at the vitals of the life. It is the fire that is never quenched, burning at the center of the soul. Live for self, and you are trying to carry a burden that crushes you as you carry it. Jesus says, Mine is a burden that is light; take Mine, it is the will of God.

You will not find any woman of culture and refinement who is devoting her life to God who talks about ennui. My dear sisters, if you are suffering from ennui give your heart to Christ, and come and give your life to service, and I will cure you of ennui. I will cure it by putting your life in contact with the suffering of some poor fallen sister, and as you begin to take that poor fallen life, and care for it and love it, the peace of God will flow through your life. My dear brother, troubled with restlessness, anxious when there is a fall in the market where you wanted a rise, or a rise where you wanted a fall, give your heart to Christ, and bring your business acumen and your splendid possibilities and say to Him, Lead me into the will of God, lead me where God wants me, and you will find that the peace of God, as a river, will come surging through your life, and the song of the everlasting rest will be the anthem of all your days. Live for yourself, and you are heavy laden. Live for God, and life is a rapture, and the burden is light.

Finally, Jesus called men from the false into the true. He said, "No man knoweth the Father, save the Son." "My burden islight." I know my Father, and because I know my Father I delight to do His will, and that makes life restful. And to the heavy-laden people He declared, You are trying to please yourselves because you do not know My Father.

"No one knoweth … the Father, save the Son." You will never try to please God until you know Him.

Oh, God, of good the unfathomed sea,

Who would not give his heart to Thee?

That is the language of a man who had come to know God. And when a man comes to know God, he yields Him everything. And how did I get to know Him?

I heard the voice of Jesus say,

"Come unto Me and rest."

I came to Him, and He revealed the Father to me, and when I saw God in Jesus there was nothing left that I did not yield to Him.

Let the last word be of the simplest. What is this that Jesus said? He said, "Come unto Me." Oh, thank God for those little words. There is no room for pope, or priest, or pastor, or preacher, or penitent form. There is room for nothing but Christ and the soul. Get to Him, man, get to Him. Get to Him now, come to Him Whom you know so well theoretically, and say:

Just as I am, Thy love unknown

Has broken every barrier down;

Now to be Thing yea, Thine alone,

O Lamb of God, I come.

And to whoever will do that, He will reveal the Father, and you will find God through the Son, and your whole life yielded and trusted and reposed in Him, you will accept His will as your master passion.

What then? Rest, sweet rest, deep rest; rest in the midst of the battle, rest while the testing and the trial and the triumph press, rest all the way until the final rest be won.