**VOLUME 10; CHAPTER 05 - THE PREACHING OF G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

**HOW GOD HAS MADE POSSIBLE WHAT HE REQUIRES by G. CAMPBELL MORGAN**

*As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk In Him.*

*Colossians 2:6*

IN READING THESE WORDS WE FIND OURSELVES IN THE SAME realm of ideas as that in which our thought has moved in the preceding meditation. The figure of walking is employed in dealing with the subject of living. The idea of a destination and progress toward that destination is at once the simplest and fullest suggestion. Life is considered as an effort toward a consummation. It is a walk along a highway that leads to a destiny.

In this text, however, we find ourselves in a new atmosphere. We have traveled far from the Old Testament, and are breathing the very spirit of the New. There we found the Divine requirement, and considered the agreement necessary to its fulfilment. Here we are in the presence of the Divine provision, and in its light are enabled to consider our responsibilities. There we had ever to end by saying that we had found the Gospel, but only the need for it. Here we are beyond the Gospel, knowing its terms, realizing its benefits, and facing the obligations arising therefrom, "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

The Gospel is implicated in the apostle's reference to receiving Christ Jesus the Lord; while the responsibilities and privileges of obedience are summed up in the command, "Walk in Him."

The line I propose to follow is to consider, first, the Person referred to, "Christ Jesus the Lord"; second, the relation referred to, "Ye received Christ Jesus the Lord"; third, the command, "So walk in Him."

In the first of these considerations we shall find the Gospel itself, inclusively and exhaustively implicated in the titles and name, "Christ Jesus the Lord." In the second we shall discover the way by which that Gospel becomes of real value to us, "As ye received Christ Jesus the Lord." In the third, we shall face the new responsibility of agreement with God it creates, and consequently of walking humbly with Him, loving mercy, and doing justly.

Let us endeavor, then, first to fasten our thought on the Person Who is here presented to us, and the way in which He is here presented, "Christ Jesus the Lord." Within these words as applied to the One Who bears the title and name the whole Gospel is implicated. In the first title and name, "Christ Jesus," Saviourhood in all its fulness is intended and affirmed. In the final title, "the Lord," sovereignty is declared. The Saviourhood leads to the Sovereignty, from which, indeed, it has proceeded. The whole description of the Person constitutes the fullest and most glorious designation of the Son of God. In the New Testament writings this name and these titles constantly recur; sometimes each of them alone, Christ Jesus, Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus, Jesus the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, or, as in our text, Christ Jesus the Lord. I believe that the grouping is never haphazard. There was always some reason in the mind of the writer for the particular form in which the name or title occurred, and that particular reason invariably appears in the context if we take time to consider that context carefully. I believe that in this particular grouping of the familiar titles and name of our Master there is a revelation of supreme importance if we are to apprehend the Gospel.

The familiar title, "Christ," is supremely the title of His Saviourhood. This word "Christ" is but the Greek form of the old Hebrew word "Messiah," and its central thought is of anointing. The Hebrew thought of Messiah, as the Anointed One always had in it two elements, Kingship and Priesthood. The Messiah to the Hebrew was the King-Priest, both the One Who reigns and the One Who mediates. These two elements are perpetually united in suggestion when we use the word "Christ." The title "Christ" suggests government and grace, requirement and reconciliation, law and love, light and life. Consequently, in their very merging, in the fact that these two master ideas are both perpetually suggested by the word "Christ," that word becomes the supreme title of the Saviourhood of the Person referred to. He is surely King, governing, requiring, giving law, shedding light; but, with equal assurance, He is Priest, administering grace, bringing about reconciliation, expressing love, and communicating life to the souls on whom the light has fallen. The King is also the Priest. The King Who has supreme authority, and Whose law has been broken, is the Priest mediating between Himself and the sinner who has broken His law. The lawgiver - never for one moment lowering the standard of requirement, never consenting to condone sin or pass it over as though it did not matter - is yet the Lover of my soul Who comes to me in that state of bondage and pollution which results from my breaking of His law, and so deals with me that the chains are broken and the pollution is cleansed, and I can find my way back into the place of loyalty to His supreme Kingship. Consequently, the Cross is the trysting place where God and the soul meet, keep appointment, pass into agreement, for the Cross is the throne of the King and the altar of the Priest.

With equal separateness from every other part of the designation, let us fasten our attention on the next word, "Jesus." This word is supremely the name of human relationship. It is His name as Man. It is His name as friend of sinners. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name "Joshua." The name "Joshua" was a name especially created for a man. The man who was to succeed Moses in the leadership of the Hebrew people was named Hoshea, meaning salvation; but when he was to become the leader his name was mingled with the name Yahweh, or Jehovah, so that Joshua means the salvation of the Lord. In Old Testament history it was borne by two persons: the great leader who brought the people into the land, and the priest seen in the vision of Zechariah standing by the altar. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem long ago there were probably hundreds of Joshuas in Nazareth, Capernaum, Jerusalem. So when it was announced, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins," the significance of the declaration was that in Him the intention of the name was to find fulfilment. Then bear in mind Paul's declaration concerning the name: "God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth." The name given to Him in babyhood, and carried by Him in boyhood and through manhood, was the sign of an intention. He received it anew when He ascended to the right hand of the Father as the sign of the fact that He had accomplished the intention. The name became the name above every name; but it is not a Divine name, it is a human name; it is the name that brings Him near to me in my humanity; it is the name borne by One Who looked out on life with eyes like mine, felt its emotions with a heart like mine, walked its way with feet like mine, did its work with hands like mine; it is so truly the name of a man of my humanity, that I feel that I may, without irreverence, lay my hand on His and call Him Brother-Man. That is the supreme significance of the name Jesus, and thus it expresses the truth the title Christ affirms, "for it is He that shall save His people from their sins." In its relation to the Person who bears it the name reminds us that He brings infinite things to our level in order that we may understand them. Jesus of Nazareth was the central, final, ultimate anthropomorphism. Because men could encompass a conception of God only by projecting their own personalities into immensity, God out of immensity contracted His personality to that of a human being, that men might see Him and know Him, grasp the infinite, fathom the unfathomable, and come through flesh into communion with the eternal spirit. In His manhood Jesus was the sacramental revelation of the things that are infinite in their splendor, their glory, and their magnificence. The name "Jesus" reminds me of the Man, and yet reminds me of the Man through Whom I am enabled to find my way into fellowship with infinite things.

It is the name, moreover, of One Who in that very nearness to me in His manhood inspires the love which inspires loyalty. How often young people have said to me, and with absolute reason, How can I love God? I can love father, mother, wife, child, brother, sister; but how can I love God? I can reverence Him, adore Him; but how can I love Him? To such inquiries I reply, familiarize yourself with Jesus; walk with Him, talk with Him as He is seen in the Gospel stories, and you will love Him, and that is to love God, I am not now speaking of walking and talking with Him in those profounder exercises of the soul to which the saints come after long processes of discipline. I am speaking of the very first and simplest things. Take up your New Testament, read it, and think in the presence of the One of Whom you are reading; and I defy you to do that, without coming presently to love Jesus. The infinite tenderness of that great heart, the abounding strength of that great soul, the splendid courage of the Man Who dared confront all the vested interests and call them what they were, hypocrites, vipers; the exquisite tenderness of the voice which, tremulous with emotion, could say to weary souls, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest " - these are the things that compel love. Idealize the reality revealed in the Gospel, get to know Him, and you will come to love Him, and love Him in spite of yourself, and in spite of your sin; even though you go on sinning, you must love Him if you see Him and know Him. But ever remember that loving Him will not bring you salvation. There are thousands of people who love Jesus but have no faith in Him, who never repose confidence in Him, never crown Him, never bend the neck to Him, never cast themselves in hopelessness and helplessness on His mercy.

We come, then, to the last title of the text, at which also we will endeavor to look in separateness from the rest. Yet not wholly can this be done, as we shall see. "The Lord." This is supremely the word of His Godhead, the word that reminds us that He is the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Accomplisher of human redemption. When we read this title it reacts on all that we have been thinking in the presence of the former title, and the simple name as it suggests the infinite value and nature of the things we have been referring to. "Christ" is the name of the Saviour, merging in the word thoughts of Kingship and Priesthood. He is the Lord, which is to say, His Kingship is ultimate, final sovereignty. Mark what this apostle says about Him. The apostle calls Him the Son of God's love. He describes Him as the "Image of the invisible God." He declares that He is the fount and origin, the strength and goal, of all creation. The sovereignty of this King, then, is ultimate sovereignty, beyond which there can be no appeal. Consequently, His Priesthood is ultimate priesthood. He came to reconcile *all things* to Himself. This was done by the blood of *His* Cross. When we read that declaration the emphasis should be where I have placed it. Think not of the sacramental blood as being merely the blood of a man. It was the unveiling before finite, human eyes, of sacrifice in the heart of God Himself, ultimate in its values, universal in its reach.

This final title, moreover, illuminates the central name "Jesus," the symbol of manhood. This Jesus is the Lord, and so we learn the eternal glory of humanity: that humanity was in the purpose of God in His eternal thought, and that man was created to share the eternal life of God, that Man is to last while God Himself shall last, and so He has exalted Man to His own right hand, and given to Him the name that is above every name, the name of glorified humanity, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

So I say again in these hurried sentences that in the significance of the titles and the name the whole Gospel is implicated. What a Gospel it is! How mighty, how vast, how satisfying! If some soul, sin-burdened and undone, may be asking, How can it be that by the life and death of One two millenniums ago I should hope to escape the penalty and the power of sin? let that soul remember Who the One is, Who long ago appeared in this world of ours and wrought out into visibility the things of the eternities. He is Christ Jesus the Lord!

Now let me reverse the order, and employ that which we find in the earlier part of this epistle. He is the Lord, ultimate Sovereign, and ultimate Saviour; He is Christ, on Whom the holy chrism rests, the anointed King to reign, and Priest to redeem. And for me, that I may not be intellectually bewildered by the vastness of the provision, He is Jesus of Nazareth, man of my manhood, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, spirit of my spirit; man of trust, of temptation, and of toil. I come to Him as Jesus, and I find the Christ, and through Him I find God, and, behold, His Cross is the trysting place where He and I meet and agree in order that we may walk together.

So let us pass to the second part of our consideration, the relation between the human soul and this Person referred to in the text, as it is revealed in the words, "Ye received." In all evangelistic work the term "to receive Christ" is very familiar, and it is a perfectly accurate and strictly Biblical word. It is well, however, to consider what the New Testament writers meant when they spoke of receiving Christ. In a memorable passage John used the word and interpreted it, "As many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name." By that added sentence of interpretation we have John's conception of what it is to receive Christ: it is to believe on His name. While that is fundamental, there are other things implicated. All are found in our context. Writing to these saints in Colossae, Paul said that he had heard of their faith in Christ Jesus, and of their love toward the saints, and of their hope. In that passage we have three very familiar words - faith, love, hope. Moreover, they occur in an order and sequence, suggestive and closely related to the grouping of the title and names in the text. Whether this was incidental or intentional on the part of Paul matters nothing; that there is spiritual value here I affirm, and of that we shall attempt to make use.

Faith is the word which supremely indicates relationship to Christ, that is, to the Saviour. Love is the word which supremely indicates relationship to Jesus, that is, to the Man Who is the friend of sinners. Hope is the word which supremely indicates the relationship to the Lord, that is, to the Creator and Sustainer. So that in the soul's relation to the Person presented, which is described inclusively as receiving that One, these great activities of the soul are found - faith, love, hope. To have faith in Him, to love Him, to hope in Him, is to receive Him. I should be very sorry to convey to the mind of any person the idea that this is a sequence in the sense that we mechanically start with faith, then, as a second blessing, have love, and, as a third blessing, hope. These things grow out of each other as the fruit grows out of the flower, and the flower from the root. There is one supreme and fundamental attitude of the soul toward this Christ which means reception of Him; it is the attitude of faith, and wherever that faith is exercised, it follows that love springs up in the heart; and wherever love growing out of faith in a human soul springs up in the heart, there begins the song which is the song of hope. Faith fastening on Christ as Saviour expresses itself in love to Jesus as Friend, and finds its hope and confidence in Him as Lord. So He is received.

Faith is supremely the word indicating relation to Christ as Saviour. Faith marks the soul's relation to the two elements that merge in the Saviour's work. He is King, He is Priest. Faith is submission to His Kingship, and confidence in His Priesthood. Faith is repentance, which is submission of the soul to Kingship. Faith is confidence in His Saviourhood, which is the determined risking of everything on His great words and abandoning forevermore the cares and anxieties about the past, with which we never can deal, but with which we may trust Him to deal. The answer of the soul in faith is response to the two elements that merge in His Saviourhood, submission to His Kingship, confidence in His Priesthood. This is to receive by faith.

Taking the other title I declare that Christ may be thus received by faith, because this anointed King and Priest is the everlasting Lord. I declare that He can be trusted, because this everlasting Lord, Who is also the anointed King and Priest, is Jesus stooping to my level, enabling me to put confidence in Him because He is Man of my manhood. When, through the infinite simplicity of His true manhood, my soul enters into submission and confidence, lo, I find I have kissed the scepter of the eternal God, and I have trusted in the heart and passion of that self-same eternal One.

He is also received by love. Love is the word indicating the relation to Jesus the Man, the Friend of sinners. It marks the soul's response to Himself. Thus He is received by love. To know the man Jesus is to love Him, though you may not be able to accept the doctrine of His Deity. To know the Man Jesus is to love Him, even though you are puzzled by the mystery of His atoning work. As man, He is to be loved. The soul which thus goes out to Him in love does by that love receive Him. You will not become a Christian soul because you understand the doctrines of the Christian faith. It is possible to understand them in large measure, and yet never to be a Christian. Intellectual orthodoxy concerning the Person of Jesus Christ will not make you a Christian. That which does so is relation to Him, submission of the soul to Him, the going out of the soul in love to Him, if that love become the inspiration of submission and surrender. Love becomes faith when it is submissive to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, finally, we come to the reception of this Person in hope which is supremely the word indicating relationship to the Lord, the eternal One, the Creator, the Sustainer. It marks the soul's confidence in God. John said in one of his epistles, "Every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Am I not right when I say that there is no hope in this world worth having that is not set on God? It is the only hope that maketh not ashamed, because it is hope which is laid up in the heavens. Are we not learning this today through suffering and tears, through slaughter and through blood? (During World War 1 - in the spring of 1915). We centered our hopes on armament or disarmament, and both have failed us. There is no hope that maketh not ashamed but the hope set on God. But when this Christ is received, when the heart goes out to Him as Christ in faith and as Jesus in love, we find beneath and beyond the veil of His flesh Deity, Godhead. Then there begins - on the darkest day, and in spite of the most abject failure of the past, under the blight and mildew and blasting that have cursed the being - a song of hope, not hope trusting to my endeavor, but hope centered and founded on God.

I can hope in Him, the infinite One, because though I cannot encompass Him in my thinking, I find Him in Jesus. I must hope in this infinite One because, although I cannot understand how such a vastness of might and majesty can stoop to my level, yet in the Christ I have beheld the vision, and dare not despair.

This, then, is the relation and order of receiving Christ: faith, submitting to Kingship, confiding in Saviourhood; love, fastening on that central Person represented by the name of ineffable sweetness, Jesus; and hope springing in the heart to sing its song and light the darkest day, because in Him the soul has reached God!

So we come to the last of our divisions, the walk enjoined. For the present we shall deal with this in broad outline only, "As ye therefore received Him" - in your faith, in your love, in your hope - "so walk in Him." The walk here enjoined is continuity of faith. Continuity of faith means persistent loyalty to Christ as King, and unswerving confidence in Him as Saviour. Mark the two elements: first, unswerving loyalty to His Kingship. I admit the necessity for that. I see it; I strive after it: but Oh, my God, I do not do it. I stumble and fall. Then let me never forget the second, unswerving confidence in His Saviourhood. The subtlest temptation that ever assaults the heart of man, of the struggling saint, is the temptation to doubt God's willingness to forgive. Unswerving confidence in His Saviourhood means that I make confession of my sin to God, and rest in the knowledge that He will forgive and put away and blot out. He does none of those things easily, for behind them lies forevermore the infinite, unfathomable passion and sorrow of His heart. To walk in Him is to walk in continuity of faith.

Walking in Him as we received Him is to walk forevermore guarding love. How are we to guard love? By yielding to the fear which results from the casting out of fear. When we know His perfect love it casteth out fear, but it inspires a new fear. No longer do we fear the consequences of our sin as it affects us, but we fear the consequences of sin as it affects Him. No longer do I fear that He will blast and damn me; but I fear lest I crucify my Lord anew, and put Him to an open shame. Strange, beauteous, paradox of the life of love; His love has banished all my fear for myself; but, oh, I am afraid lest I wound Him, grieve Him, cause sorrow to Him. To walk in Him is to abide in love by faith, in keeping the commandments. The experience must be cultivated in the secret place; and the expression will be manifested in public places, in my perpetual love of His name, and the kindling of my eye when He is referred to, and my readiness to speak of Him, and in my love to all the saints, and for all for whom Christ died, and who are near and dear to Him.

Finally, the walk is maintenance of hope. As in receiving Christ hope was born in the soul, so in walking with Him that hope is to be maintained. We shall maintain hope as we dwell in the light which keeps our vision of His ultimate purpose clear. Our hope will be maintained as we resolutely refuse to doubt Him on the darkest day. Paul talks about the things by which the saints would be surrounded and might be disturbed: vain deceits, rudiments of the world, traditions of men not after Christ. If we listen to the vain deceits of men if we allow ourselves to be bound by the traditions of men, if we measure our outlook and inspire our thinking by the rudiments of the world, hope will surely die out. In proportion as we are walking in Him, though it be amid the furnace, we shall sing, we shall rejoice in hope of the glory of God. So that to walk in Him is to walk in faith, that is, humbly with God; in love, that is, loving mercy; in hope, that is, doing justly. All this is made possible to us by the Gospel.

This is the Gospel. This is good news, Here I find not merely that which God requires of me, not only that in order to fulfil His requirement I must be in agreement with Him; but that He has come to my level that we may agree together, and that in Christ He descends and walks with me in order that I may walk with Him.

This is based on God's faith in Himself and therefore in man, on God's love, which needs no argument, love so amazing, so Divine; on God's hope in Himself and so for man.

The question of the moment, the last, the final question is, "Shall we receive this Christ?"

Let us begin where God intended man to begin, at the center, in Jesus. Let us remember that receiving Him does not mean, first of all, perfect understanding of all the mystery of His Person, or the doctrines of His grace. It means surrender of the soul to Jesus. That is the first thing. If we begin thus, where God intends us to begin, let us do so, including all that God intends us to include. This Jesus is the Christ, anointed King and Saviour. This Jesus is the Lord, the eternal, the immortal.

Is not that Gospel enough for you? Can you not trust yourself to the vastness of this strength? Sin not against the light by postponing thy reception of this Christ, but ere this day closes receive Him, and thus begin to walk in Him.