

THE
Westminster
Pulpit

VOLUME II

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The Preaching of
G. CAMPBELL MORGAN

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THE ORIGIN OF THE WESTMINSTER PULPIT

WHEN DR. G. CAMPBELL MORGAN COMMENCED HIS UNIQUE ministry at Westminster Chapel in 1904 there was an immediate request for the publication of his sermons in order to extend the influence of his ministry.

On most of the Sundays in the year, Dr. Campbell Morgan would preach morning and evening sermons. As only one could be published weekly, the plan adopted was that each week Dr. Morgan would select the sermon most likely to be of world-wide interest and influence, and have it available in print at the close of each service on the following Sunday and for those attending the Friday evening Bible school.

In this way, the Westminster Pulpit sermons were given a wide circulation, and, in addition, through a subscribers' list, they found their way through the mail into all parts of the world. At the close of each year a large number of bound volumes were produced and published under the title of *The Westminster Pulpit*, which had a ready sale.

The value of these volumes is best understood if it is remembered that from the day when inquiries had to be answered, "out of print," requests have come from all parts of the globe for second-hand copies. And from those fortunate enough to obtain a single volume there has invariably come

an inquiry regarding the cost of the remaining volumes of the set. The undersigned, who was largely responsible for the task of publishing *The Westminster Pulpit*, has in his library a complete series of this work, for which he has had many offers, without regard to price.

Dr. Campbell Morgan excelled in the art of expository preaching. It was his conviction that no minister would ever lack a congregation who adopted the expository rather than the topical method of preaching. In these volumes, which are being reissued after careful selection, the art of expository preaching is magnificently displayed in sermons covering a wide range of Biblical subjects.

I verily believe that those who obtain the first of the proposed ten volumes will not rest until they have secured the complete set; indeed, I strongly advise that the whole set be bespoken. I further believe that in launching and carrying out this project Fleming H. Revell Company will be making a valuable contribution to the greatest of all causes, the extension of the Kingdom of God.

ARTHUR E. MARSH

*Westminster Chapel,
London, England*

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VOLUME II

CHAPTER I

THE FIGHT OF FAITH

Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal.

I TIMOTHY 6:12.

WE ARE ACCUSTOMED TO SPEAK OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE under different figures. Sometimes it is described as a pilgrimage in which, staff in hand and equipped for long and continuous marches, the pilgrim sets his face toward the country where he fain would be. Sometimes it is described as a voyage over seas in which today the blue of the sky is mirrored, and which tomorrow are swept by storm. Sometimes it is described as a race, to run in which the competitor must strip himself, lay aside every weight and set his face toward the goal, perpetually forgetting the things behind. In all these figures of the Christian life there is the suggestion of effort and of difficulty. I know there are those who speak of this Christian life as though it were easy, soft, weak. As a matter of fact, it is indeed, as the text suggests, a fight, fierce and terrible oftentimes, a constant warfare from beginning to end. It is a fight which requires all a man's grit and force if he hopes to win. It is in that way I desire to represent it to you, my brothers, to whom principally I speak this evening.

The words of the text constitute a part of the final

advice of the aged Paul to his young friend and fellow minister, Timothy.

The text is really a part of a threefold injunction which may be expressed by the three words which indicate it, "Flee," "Follow," "Fight." The first of these three words indicates what Timothy's attitude should be toward the evils which the apostle had been rebuking. The second affirms the true ambition of his ministry; the third indicates at once the strenuousness of his life, and by its connection with the latter part of the text, "lay hold on the life eternal," indicates the strength in which he will be able to fight his fight as he follows after righteousness and flees evil things.

I take the text away from its setting, and I do it no violence thereby, for while this is the word of the apostle to one who is called into the sacred and special work of the ministry, it has to do with life, and every man who is a Christian is in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Every man who has yielded himself to the King is called upon to fight the battles of the King in his own life and wherever he may be. Turning aside, then, from all its immediate and local application, I bring the text to you tonight as indicating this fact of the strenuousness of the Christian life.

What, then, is the fight to which men are called who follow Jesus Christ? Two forces are at work in the world. The force which gathers to the center and the force which drives from the center. First of all, the gathering force brings a man within his own personality into consistent life, and then brings man to man, heals the breaches and the wounds, and makes for a society which is pure, noble, self-sacrificing. The scattering force breaks a man up within his own personality, and drives men apart, severing man from man, brother from brother, the wide world over. The force of right and the force of evil are in array against each other. If I may ex-

press the warfare in another way I would say that there is a perpetual battle in the world between faith and fear. If, for a moment, you do not follow me in the antithesis, I pray you think that at the center of all evil as its inspiration is fear, at the center of all right as its inspiration is faith. If you take the Bible and trace your way through from beginning to end you will find these two principles are forever revealed as in opposition. You find men attempting to combine on the basis of fear, fear of each other, of some ultimate evil; and also men combining on the basis of faith in the unseen and eternal. Faith and fear are in perpetual opposition. All that which drives men to evil courses, and all that which divides man from man is based upon fear. All selfishness expressing itself in harm to other men grows out of the heart's fear. All self-sacrifice expressing itself in helpfulness to other men grows out of the heart's strong, firm courage and faith. In the world these two forces stand opposed. Every man is ranged on one side or the other. Every man's life is either a part of the force which scatters, or a part of the force which gathers. Every man's effort in every day of his life is a contribution toward the victory of evil at some point, or else it is a contribution toward the victory of good. I grant you that at the back of all expenditure of human effort by which we are surrounded, and of which we ourselves contribute a part, there is an infinite hunger and craving after God. The difference between faith and fear is the difference between attempting to satisfy this deep craving and hunger in the right and true way and in the wrong way. The wrong way is the way of evil. The right way is the way of good. These two forces are opposed even in a man's own life. A young man facing life sees before him some goal to which he desires to come; some ambition inspires him, prompts him, drives him. This in itself is not wrong. It is as it should be. God has made every young man

capable of seeing lights in the eastern sky which lure him to endeavor. It is of human life, according to the plan of God, that young men should dream dreams and see visions, and build castles in the air, and aim at success. Every man who is a man has such visions and such desires. How are you going to gain your goal? By what way are you traveling toward your mountain height? How do you propose to translate your castle in the air into a solid piece of work squarely set on the earth? That is the question of importance. The suggestion that is made to the young man facing life is, on the one hand, a suggestion that he should take short cuts devoid of principle toward the goal he desires to reach. The other suggestion is that he shall find the one highway of stern duty and true principle and tramp it at all costs. The battle begins in his heart between the allurements and enticements of the short and easy method—as it appears to be—of evil; and the long, stern, and arduous method—as it appears to be—of good. In this great city at this hour the two forces are at work. The battle is set in array. Whoever may lead the hosts on the side of evil, the fact remains that through this city there are forces of evil waiting to lure men into ways of evil on the basis of fear, and other forces drawing men into the paths of righteousness on the basis of faith.

Whether it be in a profession or in business, here or there, the deepest thing in all your life story will be the contribution you make toward this great battle between evil and good, fear and faith. This battle is not one which is fought by preachers or teachers only. It is not a battle fought only by men who are openly vulgar, and are attempting definitely to demoralize human life—would God there were none such, but there are such! The battle is not one between the leaders merely. Every man in this house is in this great fight. You are fighting the battle in every hour and every moment

of your life, as your life's force is being exerted on the side of good or of evil, according to whether the underlying inspiration is that of fear, which attempts to save self, or faith, which attempts to glorify God. That is why the apostle charges Timothy to "fight the good fight of the faith."

The leader of the forces of faith is Jesus Christ Himself. In the letter to the Hebrews the writer describes the heroes and heroines of faith through the ages. At last, passing from the eleventh chapter into the twelfth, you read these words which describe the One who is "The Author"—and now allow me to offer you a more literal and immediate translation of the Greek word—"the File-leader of faith." That is to say, the writer of this letter to the Hebrews puts Jesus Christ at the very forefront of the army that fights the good fight of the faith. Although in point of time and in appearance in human life He came long after the men already mentioned, Abraham, Moses, David, and the rest, yet Jesus Christ is the File-leader, the one moving first. The whole life story of Jesus, on the human side, is the life story of One who lived by faith. He saw the ultimate victory. He believed in the triumph of righteousness. He wrought with God along the mysterious way of human life and by victory gained over all temptation, and testimony borne in His own age, and at last by the infinite revelation and mystery of His passion, fought "the good fight of the faith." He it is who leads the armies of the faithful.

If a man is to fight this fight of the faith where is he to begin? He must begin with definite and personal submission to the great Leader of the army of the faithful. Every soldier in this fight must be enlisted of his own will and must yield his will to the will of the Commander. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." The personal application of that is that if a man

would gather he must be with the Christ, and that if he is not with the Christ he is therefore scattering. You cannot "fight the good fight of the faith" until you have crowned the Christ. The first thing, then, in Christian warfare is enlistment under the leadership of the One who stands in front of us, the File-leader of faithful souls.

Then follows a statement of the all-inclusive equipment for the fight. The charge of the apostle here is not that a man shall fight to lay hold on eternal life, but that a man shall lay hold on life eternal in order to fight. I am afraid that has not always been the interpretation of this passage. We have very often read it as though the apostle meant that a man is to fight the good fight of the faith and presently to lay hold on eternal life. If that has been our interpretation it is because of a common mistake which postpones the possession of eternal life to the ages beyond. Eternal life is something for today.

What is eternal life? Some recent translators have, as I think, very beautifully expressed the thought in the words "age-abiding life," or the "life of the ages." Eternal life is not a condition to which a man comes after death. Eternal life is that mystic and wonderful life which is in all the ages, past, present, and to come. It is the infinite force at the back of everything. Now, says the apostle, in the midst of things present, in the midst of the battle against evil, in all the fierceness of the conflict, fight, laying hold on eternal life. The force in which man is to fight against fear and on the side of faith is that of the appropriation of this eternal life. Let me express this in a slightly different form. Eternal life is not merely a quantity. It is a quality. A man can live eternal life here in London just as well as in heaven. Unless he live it here how can he live it there? It is the life which defies change, the life which abides when all its varied expressions

pass away. "Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal." Take hold on this principle of life and in its power fight the fight of the faith.

How shall I find eternal life? The answers are as familiar to you as is the Book of God. You have heard them from childhood. Hear the words of Jesus, "This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." Yes, but how am I to know the only true God and Him whom He has sent? Hear another of the statements of the New Testament, "He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them which believe on his name: which were born"—there is the beginning of eternal life in the soul—"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." When a man sees Jesus Christ and obeys Him, yields to Him, in that moment he has taken hold on eternal life. He has put his own life in all its meaning into immediate connection with the life which abides, the life of the ages, and in that strength he is called on to go forth to this warfare.

What is to be the soldier's spirit? First of all, the man who fights after having crowned Christ fights in perfect confidence because he knows His leader and is convinced of the ultimate issue. In the letter to the Hebrews the writer says, "We see not yet all things subjected to him. But we behold . . . Jesus." The victory is not won. The final crowning of Christ Himself has not come. He is still waiting in the hidden mystery of the heaven until "his enemies be made the footstool of his feet"; but we have seen Him and to have seen Him is to be perfectly assured that He must win. It is impossible once to have looked into the face of the Son of God, to have seen Him in all the radiant beauty of His purity, the match-

less majesty of His victory over sin, and believe that at last He can be defeated. If I am in the fight against evil in my own life and in the fight against evil in the world as a soldier of Jesus Christ, I fight in perfect confidence.

The man who fights under the direction of Jesus Christ fights not only in confidence but in cautiousness. The great word of one of the Old Testament writers is forever true in his experience, "Happy is the man that feareth alway." There is a foolhardiness which names itself courage, but is not courage. There is a species of pious blasphemy very much abroad in the world today about the power of the grace of God. I have heard men say that if they have once given themselves to Jesus Christ the grace of God is able to keep them in all sorts of places and conditions. It is not. The grace of God is able to keep a man in any place into which God brings him, however grave and perilous; but the grace of God is not sufficient to keep a man when a man deliberately puts himself into a place of peril outside the pathway of the Divine will for him. I have heard men say with regard to strong drink that the grace of God is sufficient to keep a man. So it is, if that man will obey the law of God and abstain absolutely and utterly from the thing that has marred him. If a man plays with fire he will be burned, notwithstanding his relationship to Jesus Christ. If a man attempts to try his courage by putting himself into a place of temptation he will fall, notwithstanding the fact that he has crowned Christ in his life by some act of submission in the past. The soldier who is to fight the good fight of faith is to "flee" from all evil. I pray you remember that there are moments in this great conflict of faith as against evil when you will demonstrate your courage more surely by using your spurs than by using your sword. There are places to which no man can go who is to fight this fight. The place of peculiar peril is to be avoided. The

good soldier of Jesus Christ is the man who fears, and fears always. Not confidence merely, but caution also.

The good soldier of Jesus Christ is one, moreover, who understands that there must be conflict unto victory. That the victory is possible he believes. Then if it be possible, however stern, however strenuous, however terrible the conflict, he is to press right through until the end. You have heard the story of the Spartan son who returned home and said to his aged father, scarred by many a battle, "My sword is just a little too short for me." Said the old man, "Add a step to it." You tell me your sword is just a little too short for you to win. One step more, and one thrust harder. The last five minutes win the fight, not the hours that have preceded them. Some man here has been fighting his fight for weeks and months. You tell me you are just giving up. In God's name I charge you, fight through. It is the last five minutes that mean victory. There must be perseverance.

The soldier of Jesus Christ is not only a man having confidence and caution, and determined perseverance which issues in victory. He is a man who will endure hardness and so himself become hard, in that sense of the word hard. Hardness is a quality which comes only through enduring hardness. By hardness we mean not that hardness against which we are warned in the New Testament, the hardness of conscience and heart, but the toughness which enables a man to "stand . . . to withstand . . . and having done all, to stand." Hear one word as an aside. Some man says, "I lack that hardness. That is where I fail." I say to you, "Once more out upon the field, one more campaign, and you will be harder. Another victory and the fiber of your moral courage will be tougher." It is by fighting on until the victory is won by strong endeavor that man gains the hardness which makes him at last a valiant and victorious soldier of Jesus Christ. All

these things are necessary if we are to "fight the good fight of the faith."

Where is the fight to be fought? In the first place, in secret. You will never be able to fight the good fight of the faith in London until you have fought it, and are fighting it, in your own heart and life. There are many ways of stating that truth. It is an old, a commonplace truth, yet one which I feel needs to be restated. There are so many men who desire to have something to do in the general moral uplifting of society who have never yet enlisted to fight against evil in their own hearts and lives. The first battle is the battle within, against wrong in the heart and life. Yet remember, as I have already said, this battle also, first and fundamental, can be fought only under the leadership of Christ. My trouble in dealing with young men is that so many of them misunderstand Christianity. They imagine that all they have to do is to make some confession of loyalty to Jesus Christ and that He will nurse them over all the way. Nothing of the kind. Crown Him. Follow Him. Fight under Him. The severest battles of a man's life are fought out in secret and in his own individual soul. Temptation to evil in its varied forms comes far more subtly to a man when he is alone than when he is with others. I begin my fight inside; in the secret recesses of my inner life, in the hall of the imagination, in the chamber of the affections, there the fight must first be fought. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." I am not anxious to make any appeal to young men to fight the fight in the city. I am perfectly convinced you will be bound to do that if once you have fought in the fight in your own life. Your whole life, if that life be homed in the will of Christ winning His victory, will be part of the force by which He lifts and purifies the city. The fiercest battles of the individual life,

the longest, the most strenuous, are the battles fought in absolute loneliness. May I, with all reverence, illustrate what I am thinking from the life story of Jesus? Do not forget that in the will and economy and purpose of God He lived longer in private than in public. Think you there was no significance in that? Three years of public life, and, reckoning from twelve years of age, when He was a boy coming up to the Hebrew confirmation, eighteen years in quietness, hidden away. Where do you suppose, so far as the manhood of Jesus is concerned, the fiercest battles were fought, in the presence of the crowd or in Nazareth? I tell you, in Nazareth. There were battles to be fought in the presence of the crowd.

It is not particularly heroic to do right when you are in the midst of people who applaud you. It is easy for the men of this brotherhood to be pure on Sunday when they are in the brotherhood, and I am not at all sure that it is particularly difficult to be good in the midst of opposition. I tell you frankly, I have never quite understood the young fellow who does not love to put up a stiff fight for God when men are against him. It calls out the fiber that is in him. But, ah, me, my masters, when the comrades in the Christian war are not with me, when the soldiers who would oppose me and make me fight are away and I am alone, then the fiercest fight of my life is fought. There are curious notions abroad in the world as to ministers of the Word of God. Some people seem to imagine we are free from temptation on account of our calling. I tell you we are the special objects of the devil's attack. In the loneliness and seclusion of the study, with only books of religion about a man, oh, the temptation to sloth, to indolence, to pride, to fear, to traffic with the Word of God for some subtle motive. It is there, when I am alone, that the fight is fiercest. Unless a man wins there he will never win anywhere.

How shall I win there? By laying hold on eternal life. This Son of God who is the Leader of the hosts laid down His life in the light and the darkness of the cross—and let no man tell me there is no mystery in the cross. In that infinite hour of His agony He made it possible for me to lay hold on life, and if a man will lay hold on life by crowning Him, he can fight alone and win, he can fight with his comrades in arms and win, and he can fight against opposition and win. The first battle is ever in loneliness. That is the thought I desire more than any other to impress on you.

What is to be the final issue of this fight to which we are called? The triumph of right in our own lives and in the world. On that I am not going to dwell.

How are you fighting? Take the week that is gone. You have spent so much of thought, so much of energy. On which side has it all been exerted? Have you helped, by thinking and speaking and working, the victory of evil? Did you think and speak and work last week so that God Almighty got some help out of you toward the ultimate victory?

I call you in the name of the great Leader of faithful souls to fight the good fight of the faith, and I say to you tonight, you can fight that fight only as you lay hold on eternal life. I say to you finally, eternal life is yours here and now if you are His. It may come silently, gently, so much so that you hardly know the moment of its coming. When you take your life and hand it over to the great Captain of Salvation, you lay hold on eternal life, and in the power of that life you may begin your fight and win in secret and in public, in your own life and in every endeavor for the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER II

MARAN ATHA!

If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be Anathema Maran atha.

I CORINTHIANS 16:22.

THESE WORDS DO NOT CONSTITUTE A MALEDICTION. IF YOU ARE inclined to question the accuracy of that statement notice what the Apostle himself says about them. "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be Anathema Maran atha. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen." They are not a malediction, but part of a salutation.

Yet they are words of astounding severity and scorching heat, and are indeed words intended to make men stop and think, words gaining heat and force from the fact that they are surrounded by loving, tender, gracious words of salutation. They are a statement of a logical and inevitable sequence. If a man do not love this Lord Jesus "let him be anathema. Maran atha."

This is the close of a letter written to a Christian church, a church which had departed from the simplicity of Christ Jesus, a church which had lost its power of testimony in the midst of a great and wealthy city. This letter was written to correct the failure of such a church because its testimony was

paralyzed, and it had ceased to be influential on account of its shortcoming and failure. The city of Corinth at this time was the home of learning and of wealth. It was full of a false wisdom or culture. Factions and rivalries existed throughout the city. The school men were quarreling amongst themselves concerning emphases and diversifications of ideas on nonessential things. Intellect was more highly esteemed than morality. Consequently there was abounding looseness of moral standard. Selfishness was dominant. There were a few wealthy people, living in luxury, while beneath them was a great mass of men and women in slavery. There was a popular denial of immortality. In one word, tragic and terrible, Corinth as a city was materialized, and the Church of Jesus Christ had been contaminated by all these things. Instead of fulfilling its mission as salt, and being pungent, antiseptic, it had lost its savor. Instead of being light, shining clearly, rebuking the darkness and guiding stumbling men back into the way of perfection, the light had become darkened. To correct the carnality which lay at the root of the spiritual failure in the church, this letter had been written. In imagination I see the apostle, suffering in all probability from such nearness of sight that he could hardly see what he wrote, taking from the hand of his amanuensis the pen, and writing, "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand. If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema. Maran atha. The favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen."

So the great letter closes. That is the setting of my text. We must see it there if we would understand its meaning. The Apostle writing to a church of Jesus Christ, to men and women called saints, says in effect, "The claims of Christ are such that if they be once known and appreciated, and yet the heart does not answer in love, which is for ever more the

inspiration of loyalty, then there is nothing for such a heart save that it shall be accursed, anathema." After the statement, to emphasize it, to defend it, to vindicate it, he writes, "Maran atha."

I have already several times recited those two words. Let me now say by way of explanation, before we proceed to a closer examination of them, that the Apostle in their use here defends the thing he has already said. That is their intention. He is not declaring that if men do not love Jesus Christ, when presently the Christ comes they will be accursed. They are already accursed. They are in the place of the curse. They are in the grip of the curse. Therefore, before we can understand the first part of our text we must understand the second part of it. Before we can fully appreciate what the Apostle meant when he wrote, "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema," we must inquire what he meant when he wrote, "Maran atha."

Therefore, I ask you, first, to consider with me the great fact: "Maran atha," and, second, the sequence: "If any man love not the Lord, let him be anathema."

There is great gain in the fact that our revision has written two words and not one, "Maran atha." There are certain things concerning these two words which are indisputable. There are other things which are doubtful, about which no final, dogmatic word can yet be said. There are two interpretations of their meaning. One affirms that they mean, "The Lord cometh." The other affirms that they mean, "The Lord has come." You will see that the difficulty arises concerning the tense of the verb. There is no difficulty concerning the substantive, the subject "Maran," the Lord; but whether the word "atha" means "cometh," or "has come," cannot be dogmatically affirmed. The central principle is not interfered with whichever interpretation be correct. I am

not proposing for a single moment to argue as between the two. I will say, in passing, I am personally convinced that the words mean "The Lord has come," and that here the reference is not specifically and immediately to the second Advent but to the first, and yet to the second also. According to all the New Testament writers, the first involved the second. If you believe the words mean "The Lord cometh," then you also hold the fact of the first Advent. "The Lord cometh" for "the Lord has come." If you hold that the words mean "the Lord has come," then you also see that they mean the Lord is yet to come again, for He Who has come "shall appear a second time, apart from sin . . . unto salvation." The second Advent includes the first. The grace of the first demands the glory of the second. These words constituted a form of Christian salutation in the early days. Whether they meant "The Lord has come" or "the Lord cometh" matters nothing. The early Christians greeted each other in the market place or on the highway, saying, "Maran atha," and the reply would be "Maran atha." Whether the Advent referred to is past, or to come, the truth insisted on is that the true Lord is manifest—has been manifested or is to be manifested. The fact is not one of date, but of the manifestation in human history of the one supreme, lonely, imperial Lord of men, "Maran atha." The Lord has come, is coming: the Lord is coming, has come. The text summons us to the judgment seat of the one perfect Lord of men. When the Apostle with his own hand—stumblingly perchance, and in those large characters to which he referred in another letter—is writing his salutation, he sees his Lord. He has been following Him for years along the perilous and rough pathway. He saw Him first on the way to Damascus and he heard His voice. He has become familiar with Him. He knows Him for what He is. No other teacher divides his attention. No other

lord makes demands upon his loyalty. He is the one Lord Jesus Christ, and Paul writes to these people in Corinth, "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema," and then, as though he had said, "He is the Lord, and He is revealed as such," he writes, "Maran atha." So finally he brings the saints of Corinth, and all Corinth, to confront the one Lord, and he says in the presence of that Lord, "Hear this, ye sons of men, if ye love Him not, ye are accursed." Logically, necessarily accursed. Not to love Him is to love the base, the mean, the ignoble. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema. Maran atha." It is the great cry of a loyal soul bowing in adoration in the presence of the supernal royalty of the King.

The central fact suggested therefore is that of the Lordship of Christ.

This Lord Jesus Christ is Lord in a threefold sense. On His head are many diadems, but for us men, for the purposes of our salvation, I propose to speak of three only. He stands absolutely alone as Lord—first, as presenting a perfect pattern of human life; secondly, as paralyzing the paralysis which prevents men realizing the pattern; and, finally, as providing for men the power by which they may become what He reveals to them they ought to be. The territory covered by these three suggestions is small. I turn away from all the glorious diadems which rest upon His brow, and of which I might speak, because I want to speak of His Lordship as it presents itself to the needs of sinning men. I want us to see Him as the one Imperial and only Lord of the man who knows his sin and fain would escape it.

In the first place, I say He is royal in Lordship because He presents to men the perfect pattern of human life. I am not going to defend that statement. All I intend to do is to ask, What is this pattern He presents? What answer has Christ

given to the old question of the psalmist, "What is man?" Christ's answer to that question is a threefold one. By His teaching He first of all declares that man is the offspring of God, that man is not of dust but of Deity, that in every man there is that which cannot be slain by the physical hand of his fellow man. "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." According to His teaching, every man—the question of his bruising and battering and spoiling by sin is not now being discussed, in spite of these things—every man is a child of the eternities, offspring of the spiritual, in the deepest essence of his being related to God and eternity. That is Christ's first word about man. Then He has also revealed to us the fact that man is a being who can realize himself only within the realm of one simple and sublime law of conformity to the will of the One Who created him. By all His teaching He arrested the wandering will of man, and attempted to readjust it to the will of God. By all the deeds through which He manifested His thought and purpose for man, He sought to bring him back from the trackless desert of his own self-chosen wandering to the straight and narrow pathway of the good and perfect and acceptable will of God. So that Jesus said, and still says to men, "You can find your rest only in the will of God. You can find the answer to the deep questionings of your own life, you can find satisfaction for the perpetual sign of the deepest in you only as you find your way back again to God, and hand to Him your life, and choose His law as the law of your life.

Finally, Christ taught that man is created for service. He is an instrument for carrying the will of God beyond the circle of his own personality. That indeed is the teaching of the whole Bible. Man was not the final flower of Eden. He was its master. Man was not put into Eden for decorative

purposes at the close of the great procedure. He was put in to dress it, to keep it, to govern it in co-operation with God. We have strange notions about the Garden of Eden. There are people who imagine it was an actual garden such as we see in this country of ours, beautifully laid out with flower beds and paths. Nothing of the kind. It was a rough bit of soil full of potentiality, blossoms in it, fruit in it, magnificence in it, glories in it, but not manifest. What were they waiting for? The touch of God's partner, man. God put man into the garden to dress it and keep it. Christ emphasized that in all His teaching: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

The great ideal of Jesus concerning man is that he is spiritual in essence, perfected within the law of God, and created for co-operation with God. He Who revealed that as the pattern of human life is the Master Teacher of the ages. I defy you to find me any such conception anywhere else. Other men have not dreamed of such things as these. Other teachers have said wonderfully luminous things concerning man, but they were all things of dust compared to these. He came to men, the Man of the home-made garment and little Nazareth, and in simple sentences and childlike speech He uttered great philosophies of human life, which have taken hold of the hearts of men; and we bow before Him as we say "Maran atha," the Lord, for none other has ever spoken of the possibility of human life as He spoke of it.

Had that been all He did, it would have been a great thing, but for me it would have been an awful tragedy. In the discovery of the spirituality of my being I should have found that I was orphaned, the offspring of God, and unable to find my Father. If I had found that my life could be conditioned only by the law of God I should have found that I was absolutely ruined, for I could not discover the law of God for me.

If I had been taught that I was created only for service I should simply have stood gazing out upon a lost dignity, for I had lost the secret of co-operation and fellowship with God, and the very garden of Eden would have answered me, not with flowers, but with the thorns of the wilderness. If this Man be Lord only by revelation of the pattern, He is Lord, I bow to Him, but bowing to Him I am undone.

He therefore presents Himself in a new aspect of His Lordship as the One Who touches with a strange and mysterious power the paralysis of man which prevents him realizing the purpose and ideal, until the paralysis itself is paralyzed, and man is set free. He comes to destroy the destroyer. The conception of man as material is forever more destroyed. From the lawlessness which had become another law working in my members and making it impossible for me to obey the law of God He sets me free. The self-life which had prevented my realization of God's purpose in serving God He crucifies. The process is not easy. But this is how He arrests me. He takes hold of me and reveals to me the pattern until I am ashamed, and just as I am hopeless, He touches me with some new power, and I feel that the forces which prevented my realization are relaxing their hold upon me, and if a man is saved by hope, I begin to hope. If a man is saved by faith, upon the basis of my hope I fling my trust out toward the Lord Who has revealed the pattern and has touched me with power. If a man be saved ultimately by love, I rise from hope through faith to love, and "if any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema."

Am I a spirit? He brings my spirit back into relation with the one eternal Spirit, and I live. Is it necessary for me to find the law of God. He presents Himself to me and says, "Follow Me. I am the Word, the incarnate revelation of the will of God, the thought of God rendered visible to thine

eyes. Thou hast wandered away from the Father's home; follow Me; step by step, line upon line, precept upon precept I will lead thee in the way of His appointment." You can fling away the Ten Commandments then as an external law which you are attempting to obey: "I will write His law upon thy heart. I will come and dwell with thee. I am with thee all the days. I will lead thee step by step through all the pathway. I will be to thee the law of God which thou hast lost."

Finally, He communicates to me the energy of the Spirit, and out of the mystery of His Passion He gives me power. Out of the darkness of His death He gives me the light of life, and the life of light. So He confronts me not merely as pattern, but as power; not merely as revelation, but as energy. He brings to me in my loneliness and in my wandering all I need.

"Maran atha." The Lord, the only One Who has any right to such a title, the imperial, lonely, splendid, royal Lord, has come, is coming—which you like, both if you please. Between the "has come" and the "is coming," the Lord is here. In the words of the Apostle, in the presence of His royal Lord Jesus the Revealer of the ideal, the Destroyer of the paralysis, the One Who communicates power, in the presence of this Lord who has in His government everything that sinning man needs. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema."

I return to the statement which constitutes the first part of my text. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema." This is wholly in view of the Lordship of Jesus. I can imagine that someone here is at once startled and alarmed by the peculiar term of the Apostle, "If any man loveth not." Some soul trembling upon the very brink of yielding to the Lordship of Jesus may say, 'I do not love Him.' Why did the Apostle use that word? He did use that

word, and as a matter of fact, if you would rightly understand this passage, as Mr. Rotherham, in his *Emphasized Bible*, has beautifully and as I think accurately rendered it, you must read, "If any man *dearly* loveth not the Lord." It is the thought of supreme affection for the Lord Who lays His claim upon man and demands his allegiance. Yet I recognize the difficulty. Why does the Apostle use this word? Do not forget he is writing to saints, to such as have heard the Word and have yielded obedience thereto, and have already come into some measure of light, and he mentions the ultimate stage in relation to Jesus. What are the matters which precede love? I take you back for a moment to his letter to the Romans. In the course of that letter concerning salvation Paul wrote these words, "Belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." That is how you would state the Gospel to the man who has not yet obeyed it. Take that verse and state it in the other order. "The Word of Christ," that is, the whole Evangel. What then? Hearing it. What then? Faith in it. In the Corinthian letter, writing to saints, he takes all these things for granted, as though he had said, 'You have heard the word of Christ. You have believed the word of Christ. If any man do not love Him, then let that man be accursed.' That is to say, in the thinking of the Apostle, if the Word be presented and if the Word be heard and be obeyed—and of set purpose I substitute the thought of obedience for that of faith, for the only faith that saves is the faith of obedience—then necessarily, always, absolutely without exception, the experience of the obedient soul is the experience of love. This word of the Apostle indicates the final stage in the relation. I do not mean that it is postponed. There is some soul who has come into this house tonight. You hear the Word of Christ, the Word of His Lordship. You hear it, you believe it obediently, submit yourself to it in all honesty,

then at once you will begin to love Him. Love comes in the pathway of obedience. You do not love Him, you tell me. Then where have you failed in this order? Have you never heard the Word of Christ? That can hardly be true of anyone here. You have heard it now. The Word heard, what will you do with it? Will you believe it? I do not mean theologically. I do not mean intellectually merely. I do not mean, Do you assent to the fact of His Lordship? I mean that first, for there can be no submission on the part of any honest man to any but absolute royalty. I cannot be loyal to inferiority, so help me God. My King must be royal. He must appeal to all that lies within me and demand my loyalty by what He is in royalty. Have you seen the Royalty? Do you know that this Christ is the one Lord of men? Will you obey? If you say No, you pass away, it may be in reverent recognition of His imperial majesty but without one pulse of love. Do you say Yes? Then you will begin to love Him tonight. I do not say, "Perhaps," or "Peradventure," or "It is reasonable to suppose." I affirm it dogmatically. No man can see the light and obey it without feeling the love.

Hear me again for a moment. How will that love first manifest itself? Not in your consciousness always as love for Him, but far more commonly in your love for someone else, and your desire to bring that one to Him. The first movement of the love of God in the soul of man, woman, or little child, is a love impulse which drives that one out to bring in someone else. Do you not at once see what that proves? Father, tonight you obey, and immediately you think of your boy, and your heart says "I would fain bring him to Christ." You love your boy, and if you love him you would hardly lead him to any but the One you loved supremely. You demonstrate your love for Christ by the love which drives you to bring someone else to Him.

When obeying, you begin to be anxious about father, mother, wife, husband, child; it demonstrates the fact that although you have hardly dared say it, yet in your heart there has come love for the Christ.

Thus the Apostle is stating the logical sequence. If a man is separated from the Lordship of Christ of his own will and choice, then he has no true vision of his own highest possibilities, he has no understanding of life's truest laws. There is within that man no force making for perfection and permanence. That man is already in the grip of destructive forces. If you turn your back upon Christ when He has shown you the spirituality of your being, what have you done by that action? You have consented to the materialistic conception of your own life which proceeds to corruption. If you turn your back upon Christ when He reveals Himself to you as the revelation of the will of God, then you turn your face toward lawlessness which lies at the root of all evil and calamity; you are already in the grip of disintegration and break-up. If you turn your back upon Christ when He calls you into service and co-operation with God, then your life henceforth must circle around your own selfish desire and motive and lust. The self-centred man has created for himself the grave in which he must lay his own individuality. So that if any man love not the Lord, it needs no Apostle to curse him, but it does need that the Apostle with the pen of inspiration should write that he is already accursed. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema."

As the old year passes away from us and we come again to the turn of the highway and to another mile post, this message is alive and as real in London, in Westminster Chapel, as when the Apostle wrote it upon parchment for the Corinthian Church centuries ago. Here and now and everywhere, "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be

anathema." He is in the grip of destructive forces; and all the subtlety of his brain, the cleverness of his intellect, and ingenuity of his mind cannot deliver him from dire and irremediable ruin. "If any man loveth not the Lord, let him be anathema." Hear it, ye sons of the new age. My brothers, sisters, living in the midst of our boasted civilization and progress, "Maran atha." There is but one Lord. There is but one Master of men. There is but one Revealer of the true ideal. There is but one Redeemer of failure. He is here in spiritual power and presence, in our very midst tonight. Do you love Him? Are you loyal to Him? Have you crowned Him? If from the heart even tremblingly there comes the answer Yes, then the last part of this verse is reversed. 'If any man love the Lord, let him be blessed' and blessed is he! Already in him there burns the light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Already in him operate the forces which at last will bind the universe about the feet of God in perfect and eternal harmony. Already in him thrills the love that cometh forth from God and returneth back to Him in the cycle of the centuries. Blessed art thou, brother, sister, mine, in the midst of the burden-bearing and strife and toil, testing and tempting, if thou hast crowned this Christ, all hell cannot destroy thee. All the forces of evil in the universe cannot accomplish thy undoing.

If your answer is No, already the touch of eternal death is upon you. Already the break-up that ends in the eternal and infinite disorder is within your soul. "Maran atha." I bring you this final word. Back again to the Lord, the one and only Lord of men. "The Word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith, which we preach." You are familiar with it. Will you obey it? If never before, now answer it obediently.

Oh that all alone, forgetting your past history, and pres-