

Chapter 11. KEEPING CHRIST'S COMMANDMENTS.

"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." – John 13:17

The blessedness and the blessing of God's Word is only to be known **by doing it**.

The subject is so important for the Christian life, and therefor in our Bible study, that I must ask you to return to it once more. And let us this time just take the one expression, keeping the Word, or keeping the commandments.

Let us first consider it in the farewell discourse. You may be familiar with the passages, but it will be of use to look at them together.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments... and the Father will give you another Helper (Comforter)" John 14:15-16

"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father" (14: 21)

"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him." (14:23)

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (15:7)

"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love." (15:10)

"You are My friends if you do whatever I command you." (15:14)

Study and compare these passages, until the words enter the heart and work the deep conviction that **keeping Christ's commandments is the indispensable condition of all true spiritual blessing**. For the coming of God, the Holy Spirit, and His actual indwelling, for the enjoyment of the Father's love, the inward manifestation of Christ and the enjoyment of His friendship; the keeping of the commandments is the one requisite. And for the power to claim and enjoy these blessings in faith day by day, the childlike consciousness that we do keep them is indispensable too. And no less indispensable is, for fruitful Bible study, the quiet assurance that dare expect God's light and strength with every word of God because He knows that we are ready to obey to the very utmost. **Through the will of God, delighted in, and done, lies our only way to the heart of the Father, and His only way to our heart. Keep the commandments:** this is the way to every blessing.

See how strikingly all this is confirmed by what we find in John's first epistle.

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him." (1 John 2:3-5). The only proof of true, living, saving knowledge of God; the only proof of not being self-deceived in our religion; of God's love not being an imagination, but a possession, is keeping His Word.

"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight... Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him." (1 John 3:21, 22, 24). Keeping the commandments is the secret confidence toward God, and true intimate fellowship with Him.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world." (1 John 5:3-4). Our profession of love is worthless, except that it is proved to be true by keeping of His commandments in the power of a life begotten of God. Knowing God, having the love of God perfected in us, having boldness with God, and abiding in Him – all, all, is depending on the one thing – **keeping the commandments**.

It is only as we realise the prominence Christ and Scripture give to this truth, that we shall learn to give it the same prominence in our life. It will become to us one of the keys to true Bible study. The person who reads his Bible with the longing and determined purpose to **search out and to obey every commandment of God and of Christ**, is on the right track to receiving all the blessing the Word was ever meant to bring. He will specially learn two things. How he needs to wait for the teaching of the Holy Spirit to lead him into all God's will. And what blessedness there is in performing daily duties, not only because they are right, or he delights in them, but because they are the will of God. He will find how all daily life is elevated, when he says as Christ did: *"This commandment I received of My Father."* The Word will become the light and the guide by which all his steps are ordered. And his life will become the training school in which the sanctifying power of the Word is proved, and the mind ever prepared anew for its teaching and encouragement. And so the keeping of the commandments will be the key to every spiritual blessing.

Make a determined effort to grasp what this life of full obedience means. Take some of Christ's clearest commandments: *"Love one another as I have loved you; you ought to wash one another's feet; you should do as I have done to you;"* and accept a Christlike love and humility as the law of the supernatural life you are to live.

So far from the sense of failure or impotence leading you to despair; or to rest contented in what you think attainable, let it only encourage you to put your hope more entirely on Him, who by His Spirit will work in you both to will and to do.

Once again, our one aim must be to perfect harmony between conscience and conduct. Every conviction must be carried out into action. Christ's commandments were meant to be obeyed. If this is not done, the accumulation of Scripture knowledge only darkens and hardens, and works that satisfaction with the pleasure which the acquisition of knowledge brings, which unfits us for the Spirit's teaching.

I beg you, do not be weary of my repeating so often the blessed, solemn message. In your inner chamber the question is to be decided whether you will, through the day, keep the commandments of Christ. And there too will be decided whether in future life you are to bear the character of a person wholly given up to knowing and doing the will of God.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, I am setting myself, determined to search out all your commandments, and with the help of your Holy Spirit, I will obey it. I desire to have friendship with You, to worship You, to become one with You. I desire to do the will of the Father. I surrender my time, my day, my life to You. Work in me all that You promised. Amen.