

## LOYALTY PROVED BY PROMPT OBEDIENCE

"He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself unto him."  
– John 14:21.

THE WORDS of our text are a part of our Lord's last discourse to The Twelve before His crucifixion. The words, "He that hath My commandments," signify, He that hath received My commandments, and is willing to become My disciple. The mere hearing of the command, or the mere understanding of the command, is not the receiving it. People misunderstand this point. Many hear the command, and yield a partial obedience to it, but they do not receive it in the true sense of the word. This matter of a definite contract with the Lord is a very important one. Those who do not make it are not truly His disciples, have not really put themselves into His hands, and are in danger of shipwreck.

We may *know about* a certain blessing, but in dealing with the Lord we need to *finish* our contract. One who merely says, "I will try not to do anything *contrary* to the Lord's will; I will do whatever He forces upon me," is not in the right attitude to enter the School of Christ. There are certain steps by which we become Christ's disciples. A person may be a visitor at a school, but he has not become a member of the school unless he has met the terms – has accepted the rules and regulations under which the school is operated.

## OUR LORD'S LAW OF LOVE

The Apostle Paul says, "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace," and yet the Lord speaks of our keeping [R5520 : page 249] His commandments. How shall we harmonize these two thoughts? We are to recognize a distinction between the Law, the

commands which Christ gives, and the Law Covenant, to which the Apostle refers. We are not under the Law Covenant, which required that those who would have its blessings must keep its every requirement perfectly or suffer the curse, death. The arrangement under our Lord Jesus is that if His disciples, those already under His Robe of righteousness, seek to do His commandments, strive with their whole heart to do His will, they shall have eternal life through Him. The mediator of the Law Covenant was not competent to make any allowance for imperfections.

Our Lord here speaks of "commandments" – plural. We should, therefore, not understand these words to mean the same as when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you"; neither should we understand Him to mean the epitomized statement of the Law of the Ten Commandments – "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." We understand our Lord to mean, Whoever receives My teachings, whoever will follow Me, will thus be demonstrating that he has love for Me; and such I will love. These "commandments" would seem to be the general teachings of the Lord as they bear on all the affairs of life. We do not understand them to be some set, particular statements, as in the 5th chapter of Matthew. He there designates a number of qualities that are necessary – meekness, righteousness, etc.; these are not *commanded*.

## **LOVE DELIGHTS TO SERVE**

Our Lord's commands are not put in the form of compulsion, but whoever *loves* Him will *serve* Him. Speaking through the Apostolic Epistles, and in the Book of Revelation, Jesus has given us various expressions of what righteousness is, what love is. Whoever, therefore, desires to be with Him, to reign with Him, should wish to obey every hint coming from Him. There is nothing

put in the nature of an arbitrary command – merely the statement of principles. But these become to us *commands*. To *know His will* is a *law* to such as love Him – they *wish* to serve Him. This seems to be the Divine arrangement for this Age – that we should be left without a "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," so as to prove the degree of our interest and loyalty.

Some of our friends say to us sometimes, Do you think the Lord will reject me if I do not leave the nominal church, or if I do not perform the symbol of water baptism? And we have to tell them they have misunderstood the whole matter. The Lord is merely showing us the line of duty and of privilege, and whoever does not take *delight* in doing the Lord's will would better not do it at all. The Lord seeks such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth. In the Millennial Age He will deal with the world through stripes and blessings; and obedience will be compelled. But now He says, Here is My will; you can read between the lines, if you desire. I do not put you under a Law Covenant, but I place before you a great opportunity. If you appreciate the privilege, become My disciple. You will not need to make any boast, but *show* your obedience, your appreciation – take a prompt and positive stand. I will not *insist* on anything, then, but will give you the *opportunity*.

The Lord will take note of those who appreciate His great offer, and when He comes to claim His Bride these are the ones who shall reign with Him.

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