

January 15

What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6:8

THAT these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom

DO JUSTLY

R4821 "What is it to do justly? It means much more than not to overcharge our neighbor for the goods he may purchase of us. It means much more than not to defraud him in the making of change. To deal justly means justice between servant and master, mistress and maid, buyer and seller--that we should do to others as we would that they should do to us; it means the strict following of the Golden Rule enjoined by the Great Teacher.

Applying this principle of justice to our words, it means that we should not speak evil of either friend or foe; that we should not even insinuate evil. It means that we should not tell unnecessarily what we know to be the truth, if it would harm our neighbor, disparage him and discredit him in the eyes of others. It means that we should love our neighbor and his interests as we love our own, and should defend his interests and guard them as carefully as we would our own.

Justice, in order to thus operate in our words and deeds, must operate in our hearts--in our minds. "As a man thinketh, so is he." If he thinks unkindly, ungenerously, unjustly, he will find it impossible always to avoid unkind, unjust, unloving words or actions. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It follows, then, that to do justly signifies absolute righteousness in thought, in word, in conduct. Of this none of us is capable. The nearest approach to this is the perfect or just intention of the heart, covenanted by all those who become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The intentions and good endeavors of these are accepted of the Father. As for the world, it will require long years of assistance and uplifting out of weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh to bring them to where their thoughts, words and deeds will be absolutely just and in full accordance with the Golden Rule. Their attainment of this will mean their getting rid of all the imperfections of the flesh and, by full restitution, returning to the image and likeness of God lost in Adam.

TO LOVE MERCY

All recognize *mercy* as a very proper, a very desirable quality. All realize their need of Divine mercy. All should know that the Divine purpose is that only those who show mercy to others will themselves receive mercy at the Lord's hands. Many, however, while admitting all this and while seeking to practice mercy, do not *love it*. Rather, they love vengeance, and are merely constrained

He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident: and yet, all three of these qualities specified through the prophet, are comprehended in the one word Love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to

to mercy by the laws of the land, public sentiment and the Word of God. Time and again this has been shown in the case of lynchings. Mobs have gathered for the infliction of punishment, glad of an opportunity for setting aside mercy and letting loose justice, as they might express it. And in those mobs have been many guilty of perhaps as great crimes as the one who was mobbed. "O, consistency, thou art a jewel!"

WALK HUMBLY WITH

THY GOD

By a strange perversity of our fallen nature, those most able and willing to follow the first two requirements are apt to be the most delinquent in this third requirement. In a word, the just and merciful are very apt to find themselves possessed of a spirit of pride, a feeling of superiority to their fellows, a hindrance to their having a humble walk with God. Those most humble toward the Almighty are frequently those who have had great sins and great weaknesses, which have helped to humble them. Thus the great Apostle, St. Paul, was allowed to retain a measure of visual weakness as a reminder of the time when he was a persecutor of Christ--of the "Church which is his Body"--as a reminder of how the grace of God apprehended him on the way to Damascus..."

R2294 "It is difficult for some to see how the principle of justice applies in the matter of forgiveness. They reason that God did not forgive the sins of the world, gratis, that he exacted a penalty, a full *corresponding price*--the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, as a "ransom for all;" and reasoning upon this, they say, If Justice in the Lord demanded a full payment of the penalty, why should not we, in copying God, likewise demand full reparation from those who seek our forgiveness in more trivial matters? Reasoning thus, they very generally overlook several facts; (1) The penalty was exacted, not of an imperfect fallen man, as is each of us, but of a perfect man, created in the image of God (father Adam), whose sin was wilful and deliberate. (2) That, so far as sinners were concerned, God's gift was a *free gift*. He did not exact the penalty of *us*. (3) If he had exacted the penalty of us, we could never have paid it. (4) If we were perfect men ourselves and dealing with others who were likewise perfect, a law of Justice and demands of Justice would be in order; but since we are transgressors ourselves and objects of divine grace, and since our fellow-creatures are in the same pitiable plight

cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others--their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. Z.'02-172R3020:6

through the fall, there is no room for us to take our stand upon Justice. He who stands upon Justice will fall before the sword of Justice. Hence, our Lord declares, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." If you realize your own weakness and imperfection and need of help from on high, and if you exercise a similar generosity in the smaller affairs of life with your fellows in tribulation, you will be the kind for whom God designed the full measure of his grace: so long as divine favor does not thus reach your heart and mellow it toward others, you are not of the class to whom the full measure of divine favor will be extended, but will be accounted unworthy of the full ultimate blotting out of your sins."

R2587 "The exercise of mercy, benevolence, forgiveness, is a blessing, not merely because it is essential to our own forgiveness, and hence to our salvation, but also because this condition of heart which sympathizes with others in their failures and imperfections helps to rid our hearts of certain of the works of the flesh and of the devil, which incline to cling to the Lord's people long after they have been justified by faith, and even after they have made full consecration of themselves to the Lord and are seeking to "walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle includes amongst the works of the flesh which require putting away, after we are fully the Lord's, the following--anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. All of these qualities of selfishness are antagonized by mercy, and by it largely they are driven from their secret hidings and entrenched positions in our hearts. The blessed character of Mercy is closely related to Love, for it is in proportion as we obtain the Lord's spirit of love that we manifest toward others mercy, even as he has manifested his love toward us in the mercy extended to us in Christ. Love and mercy, consideration for others, has much to do with driving out envy. How can we envy those whom we love sincerely? How can we have malice toward those who are our enemies, if we love them and have mercy, compassion, upon them, and forgive them from our hearts? How can we have hatred toward them, if we have mercy upon them, and feel toward them only a forgiving spirit? And how can we be strifeful, if we have a merciful, a forgiving spirit ready to forgive trespasses against us, as we hope for forgiveness of our trespasses against the divine law?"

R5309 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

MERCY AND TRUTH COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"--Prov. 3:3; Micah 6:8.

MERCY and Truth are great principles of righteousness. Truth and righteousness are, we may say, synonymous. That which is *right* is *true*, and that which is *true*--firm, faithful, steady, genuine--is usually *right*. The record does not say that we shall bind justice

about our neck. Justice is a quality which we are not permitted to exalt too highly, except in our hearts and minds, as a principle of the Divine standard. We are to remember that there is none righteous, no, not one-- none perfect. Hence *our* course in respect to Justice

cannot be the same as that of our Heavenly Father. He recognizes no lower standard than justice, up to which everything must measure.

GIVE MERCY AND TRUTH PROMINENT PLACE

If we are acceptable to the Father, it can be only by righteousness. And if we have not righteousness, it must be obtained from Christ; for God receives nothing short of perfection. Though imperfect in ourselves, we are to come up to the standard of justice as nearly as possible in our own personal conduct, but we are not to exact full justice from mankind. Since they have no one to *make good* for them, it is our duty to be benevolent toward them, and thus emulate the character of God, who is merciful. While He keeps the two qualities, Justice and Mercy, distinctly separate in His dealings, it is not for us to do so.

For one to keep the principles of truth and of righteousness before his own mind, is to be a thoroughly upright man or woman, one in whom truth, purity, goodness, will be in control. But a person who has merely these principles in control should cultivate more and more the quality of *mercy*. We should bind these about our neck. The thought is that of a necklace, or ornamental band. As a man puts around his neck a cravat, with a jewel in it as an ornament, placed where it will be displayed, so these qualities of character are jewels. Give them a prominent place; for they will help to make you better, help to make you more acceptable to the Lord.

The preferable place for the display of a jewel is the neck. There a jewel is especially conspicuous and ornamental. So we should fasten these noble qualities of character where they will be manifest in all the affairs of life. Whether we buy or sell, or whatever we do, we should wear these ornaments. They will show what is the character of the man or woman--right on the outside, in the very front. They should be seen as we meet others. There should be nothing mean, nothing contemptible, nothing niggardly about us.

RE-WRITING MERCY AND TRUTH UPON THE HEART

More than this, we are to write mercy and truth in our hearts. We are to remember that originally God wrote the Divine Law in Adam's heart. We know that in the Divine heart, the Divine character, are the quantities of Truth and Mercy. God is merciful, kind and loving. And as God has these traits of character, so when He made man in His own image, His own likeness, man was created with these qualities in his character. Man was not created an unrighteous, an untruthful being.

But man fell from his original perfection. With the centuries of falling and imperfection of mind and body, and with every interest pressing for self-gratification at the expense of others, these principles of mercy and truth have become largely effaced from our hearts, just as the constant dropping of water, and the general wear and tear of the weather would tend to efface the original inscription on a stone. In time one could scarcely discern the characters. So we see in mankind that some have apparently lost all sense of justice, all sense of mercy, nearly all sense of patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness and love. All these qualities that belong to the heart, as originally placed there by God, have been more or less effaced--in some more than in others.

PURPOSE OF GOD'S PROVIDENCES

Under the terms of the New Covenant and through the ministrations of Christ's Kingdom, God purposes to re-write upon the heart of man the original character which was in his heart, and which has been effaced by selfishness. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah....I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." (Jer. 31:31-33.) "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."--Ezekiel 36:26.

God's Law is the Law of truth and mercy. Truth would include everything righteous, toward God and toward man. Mercy includes all the graces of character. The Millennium will be the time for the re-writing of these qualities in the character. And this work of re-writing the Divine character in the heart, which will progress in the world by and by, for a thousand years, is already begun in the Church. We write these qualities within our own hearts. The entering the School of Christ is voluntary, not compulsory. In the next Age mankind *must* write these qualities in their hearts, through the assistance of the Mediator. There will be stripes to bring mankind to righteousness. And if they are intentionally unwilling to obey the Laws of righteousness, they will be destroyed.

But now obedience is a voluntary matter. We declare that we desire to have these lessons written in our hearts; and to attain this end, we enter the School and submit ourselves to the great Teacher.

Then, by the various providences of our lives, He shows us where we have not yet engraved these qualities within our hearts. As we pray for patience, He gives us lessons of experience that will engender this quality in our hearts, and that will strengthen it more and more. As we pray for love, He gives us tests of love. As we pray that we may develop mercy, we find more opposition, which will develop mercy. Thus God gives us opportunities for the writing of truth and mercy in our hearts.

We must attain to that condition of heart where we shall *love* truth and righteousness, and where we shall *hate* iniquity and unrighteousness. As the people of God, we have the first opportunity now to develop these traits. And the Lord tells us that if we prove faithful in learning our lessons, it is His intention to use us during the Millennial Reign, His intention to make us judges of the world--its rulers, teachers.

THE JEWISH LAW HELPFUL TO CHRISTIANS

The words of our second text were addressed to the Hebrew people and not to Christians; for there were no Christians at that time, of course. The words do not seem to be prophetic, but an exhortation to the people. Apparently the Jews thought that the Lord was asking too much of them; and since this was so, they felt that they should not take the Law too seriously. The Lord seems to bring the matter down to a specific statement: What is required of thee but three things; namely, to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? This would seem to be the sum total of the Law.

The Lord was looking to see Israel live as nearly up to the requirements of the Law as possible. And He purposed to bring them, in due time, the promised New Covenant, which would take away the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, thus making them tender-hearted. But if now they would walk as nearly as possible in harmony with the requirements of this law, doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with their God, they would be blessed accordingly.

While this Law was given to the Hebrews alone, nevertheless the principles inculcated therein are applicable to the whole world. Everybody who would have any standing with the Lord, is required to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. Therefore every statement of the Law, in that it gives the Christian a conception of God's standards, is helpful to the Christian; it shows him the standards of perfection. But the standard of a Christian goes higher than that of the Law. The Law is merely an amplification of the Golden Rule--Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. Deal justly with others, if you would expect them to deal justly with you; and be merciful to others, if you would expect them to be merciful toward you.

In thinking of these qualities and considering which should be put first, we decide that in our conduct toward another, we could not think for a moment of giving anything less than *justice*. Additionally we might be as merciful as the circumstances would permit. But nothing *less* than justice should be thought of. In our requirements of others, however, we are--as before stated--not to expect full justice. Remember that the whole human family are imperfect. If by the grace of God we are able to be more just or more merciful than the average, it is through God's Spirit.

GOD'S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT

To walk humbly with the Lord would imply that we were in that condition of mind in which we could be taught of Him, could appreciate His goodness and our own insignificance; that we were receiving whatever instructions He was sending. While God made our race in His image, we have largely lost that image. Therefore we should be very humble and teachable in all things.

Comparing God's requirements of Israel, as given in the text, with His requirements of the Church, we would say that God *requires* nothing more than this from the Church. This is as much as justice could require from any creature. The peculiarity of the position of the Church is that it is not one of *requirement*, but of *privilege*. But we see operating in the Church a still higher principle than that of Law; namely, that of *sacrifice*. As Jesus loved the Father and loved righteousness, and sacrificed His earthly will and earthly ambitions and privileges, so He set us an example that we should walk in His steps. It was not required of *Him* that He should do more than justice, but He was *permitted* to do more. And so with the Church. *We* are not required to do more than justice, but are permitted to do more. If we present our bodies living sacrifices, and are faithful to the end, the Lord will count us among those to whom He will be pleased to give, very soon, the glorious Kingdom, the Kingdom for which we pray.

VARIOUS DEGREES OF LOVE

After we came voluntarily into this condition of sacrifice, it be-

came a bondage to us in that we had taken vows to this effect, and we are bound by *our own vows*. We vowed that we would lay down our lives in harmony with the invitation: "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." Still the Lord is not requiring more of us than justice. But He is waiting and watching to see to what extent we will be faithful to the agreement of our Covenant. If we are joint-sacrificers with Jesus, then we shall become joint-heirs with Him. At our consecration, we took His yoke upon us. Could we go back and take up the privilege of Restitution? No; this we gave up entirely! The only thing for us is to fulfil our Covenant of Sacrifice; and rebellion against that Covenant would mean the Second Death, everlasting destruction.

There are various degrees of love. That degree to which we have consecrated ourselves is the sacrificing love, which goes beyond what would be *just* to a brother, a neighbor or an enemy. This

is the Love of God, which is an all-absorbing, an all-comprehensive love.

That the requirements of the texts are very reasonable will be conceded by all. That God could not require less from those whom He is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident, and yet all of these qualities specified through the Prophet are comprehended in the one word--*Love*. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with our brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others--their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word seek to abridge or deny them. But, additionally, Love leads us to have the spirit of sacrifice that gladly lays down life itself for the brethren.

R3020 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

ABIDING IN DIVINE LOVE, CONDITIONAL

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."--John 15:10

SINCE ALL MANKIND are alienated from their Creator through sin and its condemnation, the application of the text by any individual implies that previously he has come to a knowledge of God's grace in Christ, and has accepted his share of the same through faith and has thus had access to the love of God, as one of the sons of God, begotten by the holy spirit. This is an important matter overlooked by very many who think to keep themselves in divine love and under divine protecting care without first complying with the conditions of admission to membership in the Lord's family. There is but one doorway of entrance "into this grace wherein we stand and [as sons of God] rejoice in the hope of the coming glory," and that is the doorway of faith in and acceptance of the atonement, accomplished for us by our Redeemer at the cost of his own sacrifice at Calvary. Anyone attempting to climb into the family of God otherwise "the same is a thief and a robber"--a rejector of the only way and name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.--Rom. 5:1,2; Acts 4:12.

But our text, like all of the holy Scriptures, is addressed to the Lord's people, who once were "children of wrath even as others," but have come into divine favor through the appointed way; and it calls our attention to something that is necessary to us beyond, after our full conversion or consecration to the Lord. It implies that getting into God's love is by no means the end of the Christian way, but merely the beginning of it: after we are in the way the Lord gives us commandments as his sons, and expects us to manifest the spirit of loyal sonship by obedience; --full obedience so far as the heart or intention is concerned, and as complete obedience as possible so far as the control of the flesh is concerned. Whoever neglects either to learn or to obey the commandments of the Lord, thereby manifests a lack of the true spirit of sonship, and thus condemns himself as unworthy to be longer reckoned or treated as a son of God. Thus seen the commandments of the Lord to those who have consecrated themselves and enter his spirit-begotten family, are tests, proving them either worthy or unworthy of the divine favors and promises assured to the faithful overcomers.

The object of these tests is manifest from the time we come to understand the divine plan of the ages--to comprehend how the Lord is now making selection of a royal priesthood to be joint-heirs with Christ the great King, and to join in the work of succoring, ruling, blessing and uplifting the world of mankind in God's due time, the world's "day of judgment," the Millennial age. We can readily see that divine law is necessary, in heaven and in earth, in order that God's will may be done--that righteousness, truth and love shall prevail; and it is manifest that whoever is not sufficiently in sympathy with the principles of righteousness expressed in the Lord's commandments, so as to will and to strive to obey them, would not be a fit person to be used of the Lord in enforcing the divine laws during the Millennial age, and assisting mankind in discerning their righteousness and the blessing which will follow their observance.

WHAT ARE THESE COMMANDMENTS?

Properly, we inquire, What are these commandments, the keeping of which is attended with such momentous results, and the neglect of which would mean the loss of our Redeemer's love and favor,--and hence, the loss of all the blessings specially prepared for those who love him? We answer, that our Lord's statement of these commandments briefly comprehends them all in one word, Love. Dividing the matter, we find that it has two parts--love for God and

love for our fellows. Without this quality or characteristic, of Love, being so developed in us as to be the controlling influence of our minds, we cannot hope to abide in the Lord's favor. True, he does not expect to gather ripe grapes from the new vineshoot when first it makes its appearance; rather, the great Husbandman (I Cor. 3:9) waits for the gradual development of the fruit, if after the shoot has come forth he sees upon it the bud of promise, which quickly develops, manifesting itself as the flower of the grapes. Nevertheless, manifestations of a coming fruitage of love are expected of the Lord, quickly after our union with him; and any smallness of development of this fruitage would indicate a corresponding lack of love and appreciation on our part, and would mean correspondingly small love for the truth and its principles: hence, the Lord's love for us would be correspondingly less than if more rapid progress were made.

Love would, necessarily mean the according of justice; because the law or requirements of the Lord are based upon justice, "the foundation of his throne." We are to view the commandments of the Lord from this standpoint, therefore, and to see first that our love for God is just,--must recognize that we owe him love, devotion, appreciation, because of what he has done and promises yet to do for us. Justice calls for our loving, reverential obedience to the Lord. It is the same with respect to our love for our fellowmen. Justice, as well as respect for our Heavenly Father's regulations, calls on us to do right to our neighbor,--to do toward him as we would have him do toward us. This is not more than absolute justice, and yet it is the very essence and spirit of the divine law of love. But ⁽¹⁾while justice is the first feature of the commandment of love, it is not the end of its requirements: it requires that going beyond strict justice, our love shall prompt us to the exercise of mercy and forgiveness. And in thus exercising mercy, we are again but copying divine love; for our Heavenly Father not only deals with all his creatures according to justice but going beyond the lines of justice, in great compassion and mercy he provided in Christ Jesus a Redeemer for sinners. True, he did not provide this in violation of his justice; yet so far as we are concerned it is just the same as though, out of love and compassion, he had overridden justice in our assistance. ⁽²⁾Hence in our dealings with others, who like ourselves, are fallen and imperfect, we are to remember this feature and not only be just toward them but additionally to be merciful, generous, kind, even to the unthankful,--that thus we may be children of our Father in heaven.

The Lord through the Prophet expresses this thought of how the law of love is divisible and covers all the requirements of Christian character; he says, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8.) ⁽³⁾That these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all; that God could not require less from those whom he is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident: and, yet, all three of these qualities specified through the Prophet, are comprehended in the one word love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the

⁽¹⁾ 1/2 Jan. 24 Manna, Pro. 3:3

⁽²⁾ 1/2 Jan. 24 Manna

⁽³⁾ Jan. 15 Manna, Micah 6:8

rights of others,--their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word, seek to abridge or deny them.

To "love mercy" is to go even beyond loving justice, and signifies a delight in yielding personal rights and privileges in the interest of others, where no principles are involved. It implies readiness to forgive the faults of others--a disinclination to be too exacting in respect to others, as well as a desire to be very exacting in respect to our treatment of others. The humble walk with God is included, also, in the commandment of love; because, whoever loves his Creator and appreciates his provisions for his creatures, in natural and in spiritual things, will love and appreciate God in return. And having such a proper conception of the greatness of the Almighty and of his own littleness and insufficiency, except by divine grace, he will be disposed indeed, to walk humbly with the Lord--not seeking paths of his own, but, trustingly, seeking to walk in the path which the Lord has marked out--in the footsteps of Jesus.

The same Apostle John who recorded our Lord's words of our text, commented further upon this subject of the love of God and of Christ, saying, "This is the love of God [i.e., proves or demonstrates our love of God], that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (I John 5:3.) This gives us the suggestion that the Lord not only expects us to keep his commandments of love to him and to the brethren, but that he expects also that in keeping these we should become so filled with an appreciation of the commandments and the principles that underlie them, that we would delight therein; not merely because they are God's commandments, but, additionally, because they are right, good, proper. This thought the Apostle expresses in the words, "And his commandments are not grievous." It is one thing to keep the divine commands or to seek to do so, all the while feeling more or less of restraint, lack of liberty, compulsion, duty, etc.; it is another thing to obey joyfully.

It is not improper to expect something of this spirit at the beginning of our experience as the Lord's people, seeking to keep his commandments; but we should expect, also, that as we grow in grace and grow in knowledge and grow in love, all these feelings of constraint, duty, etc., would disappear; so that, instead, we should delight to do the Lord's will, delight to keep his commandments of love, delight to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God,--and that there should be a total absence of the feeling that the Lord's commandments are grievous, burdensome, irksome. This is the higher Christian development, and can only be found where the individual has become truly "a copy of God's dear Son," where the Father's spirit has developed and brought forth the ripe fruits of the spirit in abundant measure --meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

Recurring to our text, we note that our Lord's words also imply the same thing;--the necessity for obedience to the commandments of love, and to such a growth ultimately as would separate them from any feeling of bondage or grievousness. Our Lord's words, showing this, are in the latter part of the text --"*even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*"

As we look back at the beautiful character of our Lord Jesus and see his love for righteousness, for truth, and his willingness to be obedient to his Father's arrangements--even unto death--we can perceive readily that our dear Master had a love for the principles which lie back of the Father's commandments. He obeyed the Father, not through restraint, not through fear, but from a perfect love. Recognizing the Father's commandments, but not as being grievous, using the language put by the Prophet into his mouth, his sentiment was, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is in my heart." (Psalm 40:8.) We are to understand the Lord, therefore, to mean, that in order to abide in his love we must reach such a heart condition as this which he had;--a love for the Father's ways, for the principles of righteousness and truth. We may abide in his love at first under other conditions, feeling through our love the restraints of his commandment of love, but as we grow in knowledge, we must grow in grace, and outgrow those sentiments, and grow up into the Lord's spirit and sentiment in this matter; so that obedience to the Lord will be the delight of our hearts, and any failure to do his will would cause a pain, a shadow, an earth-born cloud, to hide us from the Father's smile.

Seeing the depths of our Lord's requirements, many will be inclined to say, Ah, yes, it is true that we must attain to such character-likeness of our Lord, but that transformation and renewing of the mind is not our part of the work but the Lord's: He must do this for us, else it will never be done. Partly right and partly wrong, we an-

swer. It is true that when we consider ourselves, how weak and imperfect we are according to the old nature, according to the flesh, we have good cause for despairing and deciding that we never could accomplish such a great transformation from selfishness to love, in our own strength. It is true, also, that the Lord proposes to work in us --"both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13.) But it is just as true that we have a burden of responsibility in respect to this matter of overcoming. It is the Lord's part to provide the way, the truth, the life,--the means by which we may attain unto the condition to which he has called us; but it is our part to use the means and thus to attain the prize.

The Lord has provided for our justification, our reconciliation to himself, our acceptance to sonship, our anointing with the holy spirit, our instructions with the word of his grace, the word of promise: He works in us, to will and to do, through these exceeding great and precious promises and the glorious prospects and rewards that attach to them; but the amount that he will work in us and the results that will be worked out through these promises, depend upon us. As it depended upon us whether or not we would come into the grace which he has provided for us, and as we could have kept ourselves out of the love of God by refusing or neglecting the offer of his mercy and love, so we could neglect the word of his promise, neglect the various means of grace which he provides for our strengthening, establishing and upbuilding in the knowledge and grace of the truth. And thus neglecting his provisions we would proportionately fail to abide in his love--fail to obtain the promised favors. The Apostle intimates this, saying:--

"KEEP YOURSELVES

IN THE LOVE OF GOD"--JUDE 21

What, then is the essence of what we have foregoing found to be the divine instruction upon this subject? It is this. (1) Our hearts from the very beginning are to appreciate the imperfections of our own flesh and to look away to the Lord for the needed assistance to abide in his love.

(2) The exceeding great and precious promises must be studied, earnestly, that we may thus have them constitute in us "the power of God" for good-- keeping us in the knowledge of the Lord and, through obedience, in his love.

(3) This knowledge will profit us only as we put it in practice and seek to regulate our minds, our thoughts, our words, and so far as possible all our actions of life, according to this standard which God through his Word, established before us as an ideal. We are to remember that if we had all knowledge yet had not love, it would profit us nothing, but we are to remember, also, that in the divine arrangement it seems to be impossible that our knowledge should progress much in advance of our obedience to what we already know.

(4) We are to appreciate every evidence which we find, in ourselves or others, of such growth in obedience to the law of God,--the law of love with its connections of justice and mercy and reverence.

(5) We are not to expect the full results of joy in doing the Father's will in the beginning of our experiences, nor are we to feel discouraged if in the beginning the motive be, to a considerable extent, duty-love instead of a love for principles. We are to seek at the Lord's hand further blessing and further filling of his spirit of love. We are to seek to study and to appreciate the basic principles upon which the Lord governs the universe, and are to seek to bring our hearts into sympathetic accord with that law and principle and spirit of righteousness. We are to remember that much of our lack of appreciation of the principles of righteousness is due to our ignorance; and we are to expect that as we come to know the Lord and to understand his plan better, the eyes of our understanding will open the wider so that it will be possible for us not only "to comprehend with all saints," but to appreciate with all saints, the principles underlying and constituting the divine law of love.

Thus ^[4]we may daily and hourly keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to, and a growing love for, the principles of righteousness. And we are to rejoice in every experience in life,--its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, etc., no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies, and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which he has established, and to which he requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

[4] Jan. 17 Manna, Jude 21