

“YE, EVEN AS I”

Jesus said: “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

We have had occasion more than once to speak of the perfect similarity of the vine and the branch in nature, and therefore in aim. Here Christ speaks no longer in a parable, but tells us plainly out of how His own life is the exact model of ours. **Jesus said that it is alone by obedience we can abide in His love.**

He now tells that this was the way in which He abode in the Father’s love. As the Vine, so the branch. His life and strength and joy had been in the love of the Father—it was only by obedience He abode in it. We may find our life and strength and joy in His love all the day, but it is only by an obedience like His we can abide in it.

Perfect conformity to the Vine is one of the most precious of the lessons of the branch. It was by obedience Christ as Vine honored the Father as Husbandman. It is by obedience the believer as branch honors Christ as Vine.

Obey and abide. That was the law of Christ’s life as much as it is to be that of ours. **He was made like us in all things, that we might be like Him in all things.** He opened up a path in which we may walk even as He walked. He took our human nature to teach us how to wear it, and show us how obedience—as it is the first duty of the creature—is the only way to abide in the favor of God and enter into His glory. And now He comes to instruct and encourage us, and asks us to keep His commandments, even as He kept His Father’s commandments and abides in His love.

The divine fitness of this connection between obeying and abiding, between God’s commandments and His love, is easily seen. God’s will is the very center of His divine perfection. As revealed in His commandments, it opens up the

way for the creature to grow into the likeness of the Creator. In accepting and doing His will, I rise into fellowship with Him. Therefore it was that the Son, when coming into the world, spoke: *“I come to do thy will, O God”!* This was the place and this would be the blessedness of the creature. This was what he had lost in the Fall. This was what Christ came to restore. This is what, as the heavenly Vine, He asks of us and imparts to us, that even as He by keeping His Father’s commandments abode in His love, we should keep His commandments and abide in His love.

Ye, even as I. The branch cannot bear fruit except as it has exactly the same life as the Vine. Our life is to be the exact counterpart of Christ’s life. It can be, just in such measure as we believe in Him as the Vine, imparting Himself and His life to His branches. *“Ye, even as I,”* the Vine says: one law, one nature, one fruit.

Do let us take from our Lord the lesson of obedience as the secret of abiding. Let us confess that simple, implicit, universal obedience has taken too little the place it should have. Christ died for us as enemies, when we were disobedient. He took us up into His love. Now that we are in Him, His Word is: *“Obey and abide; ye, even as I.”* Let us give ourselves to a willing and loving obedience. He will keep us abiding in His love.

Ye, even as I. O my blessed Vine, who makest the branch in everything partake of Thy life and likeness, in this too I am to be like Thee—as Thy life in the Father’s love through obedience, so mine in Thy love! Saviour, help me, that obedience may indeed be the link between Thee and me.