



## “EVEN AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”

*Jesus said: “This is My commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.” John 15:12*

This is the second time our Lord uses the expression *Even as I*. The first time it was of His relation to the Father, keeping His commandments, and abiding in His love. Even so we are to keep Christ’s commandments, and abide in His love. The second time, He speaks of His relation to us as the rule of our love to our brethren: *“Love one another, as I have loved you.”* In each case His disposition and conduct is to be the law for ours. It is again the truth we have more than once insisted on—perfect likeness between the Vine and the branch.

*Even as I*. But is it not a vain thing to imagine that we can keep His commandments, and love the brethren, even as He kept His Father’s, and as He loved us? And must not the attempt end in failure and discouragement? Undoubtedly, if we seek to carry out the injunction in our strength, or without a full apprehension of the truth of the Vine and its branches.

But if we understand that the *“even as I”* is just the one great lesson of the parable—the one continual language of the Vine to the branch—we shall see that it is not the question of what we feel able to accomplish, but of what Christ is able to work in us.

**These high and holy commands—“Obey, even as I! Love, even as I”—are just meant to bring us to the consciousness of our impotence, and through that to waken us to the need and the beauty and the sufficiency of what is provided for us in the Vine.**

We shall begin to hear the Vine speaking every moment to the branch. *“Even as I. Even as I.”* *“My life is your life; and [you] have a share in all My fullness.”* *“The Spirit in you, and the fruit that comes from you, is all just the same as in*

*Me.”* *“Be not afraid, but let your faith grasp each ‘Even as I’ as the divine assurance that because I live in you, you may and can live like Me.”*

**But why, if this really be the meaning of the parable, if this really be the life a branch may live, who do so few realize it?** Because they do not know the heavenly mystery of the Vine. They know much of the parable and its beautiful lessons. But the hidden spiritual mystery of the Vine in His divine omnipotence and nearness, bearing and supplying them all the day—this they do not know, because they have not waited on God’s Spirit to reveal it to them.

*Love one another, even as I have loved you. Ye, even as I.* How are we to begin if we are really to learn the mystery? With the confession that we need to be brought to an entirely new mode of life, because we have never yet known Christ as the Vine in the completeness of His quickening and transforming power. Surrender to be cleansed from all that is of self, and detached from all that is in the world, to live only and wholly as Christ lived for the glory of the Father. And then with the faith that this *“even as I”* is in very deed what Christ is ready to make true, the very life the Vine will maintain in the branch wholly dependent upon Him.

*Even as I.* Ever again it is, my blessed Lord, as the Vine, so the branch—one life, one spirit, one obedience, one joy, one love.

*Lord Jesus, in the faith that Thou art my Vine, and that I am Thy branch, I accept Thy command as a promise, and take Thy “even as I” as the simple revelation of what Thou dost work in me. Yea, Lord, as Thou hast loved, I will love.*

