

A Blessed Gospel Chain

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately teaches that true Christian life is a blessed chain beginning with love for Christ, leading to obedience to His words, and culminating in the intimate indwelling presence of the Father and the Son.

Scripture: John 14:23, Revelation 3:15-16, John 3:16, Hebrews 12:6, Psalm 119:103, John 10:27, Romans 8:28, John 17:23

Topics: "Love for Christ", "Obedience to God's Word", "Divine Fellowship"

Description

In 'A Blessed Gospel Chain,' C.H. Spurgeon explores the profound spiritual journey that begins with loving Christ and leads to obedience and divine fellowship. Through an expository approach, Spurgeon challenges believers to examine their love for Jesus, the sincerity of their obedience, and the resulting intimate relationship with the Father and the Son. This sermon encourages heartfelt devotion and practical faithfulness, revealing the blessings that flow from walking closely with Christ.

Transcript

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." John 14:23.

THIS is a blessed chain of Gospel experience. Our text is not meant for the men of the world who have their portion in this life, but for the chosen, called and faithful who are brought into the inner circle of Christ's disciples and taught to understand the mysteries of His Kingdom. It was in answer to the question of Judas ("not Iscariot") as to how Christ would manifest Himself to His own and not to the world, that these words were spoken. Christ explained that it would be manifest who were His own people by certain marks and signs. They would be those who love Him and keep His commandments and so win the confidence of the Father—and the Father and the Son would come to these loving and obedient disciples and make Their abode with them. God grant that all of us may be able to take each of the steps here mentioned so that our Lord may manifest Himself to us as He does not unto the world!

The subject upon which I am about to speak to you is one which the preacher cannot handle without the people. I must have God's people with me in spirit to help me while I am dealing with such a topic as this. You know that in the Church of England service there are certain places where the clergyman says, "saying after me," so that it is not simply the minister uttering the prayer or the confession, but he is a sort of preceptor leading the rest of the congregation. In a similar style, I want you people of God, as the Holy

Spirit shall enable you, to bend all your thoughts and energies in this direction and step by step climb with me to these distinct spiritual platforms—ascending from the one to the other by the Spirit's gracious aid—that your fellowship may be with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

I. Our text begins with the first link in this golden chain, namely, LOVE TO CHRIST—"If a man loves Me."

This, "if," seems to me to stand at the portals of our text like a sentinel at the gate of a palace, to prevent anybody from entering who ought not to enter. It is an, "if," that may be passed around the present assembly, for I fear that all in this house do not love the Lord Jesus Christ. If you cannot answer in the affirmative the question asked by the lips of Jesus, Himself, "Do you love Me?" you have nothing to do with the rest of this verse. Indeed, what have you to do with any of the privileges revealed in the Bible, or with any of the blessings promised there, as long as you are without love to Christ? Let that, "if," stand, then, as with a drawn sword—like the cherubim at the gate of the Garden of Eden—to keep you from daring to intrude where you have no right to go if you do not love the Lord Jesus Christ! "If a man loves Me."

Are you a lover of the Lord, dear Hearer? Put not that question aside, but answer it honestly, in His sight, for there are some who only pretend to love Him, but really do not—some who make a loud profession, but their language is hypocritical, for their conduct is not consistent with their profession. Do you love the Lord Jesus with your whole heart? He is well worthy of your love, so let the question go round the whole assembly and not miss any one of us, "Do you love

Me?"

For there are some, too, who are Christ's disciples only by profession. All they give Him is a cold-hearted assent to His teaching. Their head is convinced and, in a measure, their life is not altogether inconsistent with their profession, but their heart is dead. Or, if it is at all alive, it is like that of the church of Laodicea, neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm—

and that is a state which Christ abhors! He must occupy the throne of our hearts and be the best loved of all, or else we lack that which is essential to true Christianity!

"If a man loves Me," says Christ. So, do you love Him? I do not ask whether you love His offices, though I hope you do. You love the Prophet, the Priest, the King, the Shepherd, the Savior and whatever other title He assumes. Each of these names is music to your ears—but do you love Christ, Himself? I will not ask whether you love His work, especially the great Redemption which comprehends such innumerable blessings. I hope you do, but it is a personal love to Christ that is spoken of here. Jesus says, "If any man loves Me." Have you realized Christ, personally, as still alive, gone into Heaven and soon to come again in all the glory of His Father and of the holy angels? Say, Brother, Sister, do you love Him? "If," says Christ, "if a man loves Me"—so it is right and wise for each one of us to put that question to ourselves, even though we know that we can answer it satisfactorily and say—

"Yes, I love You, and adore— Oh, for Grace to love You more!" And if there should be any doubt about the matter, we ought to put the question, pointedly, again and again and again and let not ourselves escape till there is a definite answer given, one way or another! Heart of mine, do you really love the Savior? Brothers and Sisters, put this question to yourselves—and if you do love Him, let your love well up like a mighty geyser—the hot spring that leaps up to a great height! So let the hot spring of your love to Jesus leap up now—and let each one of you say to Him—

"My Jesus, I love You, I know You are mine, For You all the follies of sin I resign. My gracious Redeemer, my Savior are You, If ever I loved You, my Jesus 'tis now."

If you can do so, then you may add—

"I will love You in life, I will love You in death,

And praise You as long as You lend me breath

And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow,

If ever I loved You, my Jesus, 'tis now." Remember that if you do love Him, He must have loved you first. Think of His ancient love—the love that was fixed upon you before the earth was—when He saw you in the glass of futurity and beheld all that you would be in the ruinous fall of Adam and by your own personal transgression—and yet loved you, notwithstanding all that! Think of Him when the fullness of time was come, stripping Himself of all His Glory and descending from the Throne of Infinite Majesty to the manger of humiliation and, being there, as a Baby, swaddled in His weakness! Will you not love Him who became God Incarnate for you? Think of Him all through His life—a life of poverty, for He had nowhere to lay His head—a life of rejection, for, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not"—a life of pain, for He bore our sicknesses—a life of dishonor, for He was despised and rejected of men! Will you further think of Him in the Garden of Gethsemane? Will not your love be stirred as you watch the bloody sweat and hear His groans and mark His tears as He pleads with God until He prevails? Follow Him to the judgment seat and hear Him there charged with sedition and with blasphem—y—if you can bear it!

Then see the soldiers as they spit in His face and mock Him while they thrust a reed into His hand for a scepter and put on His brow a crown of thorns as His only diadem! See Him tied up to be scourged till the cruel thongs lacerate and tear His precious flesh and He suffers indescribable agonies! And when you have followed Him that far, go still further and stand at the foot of the Cross and mark the crimson stream that flows from His hands, feet and side! Stand and watch Him when the soldier's spear has pierced His heart and made the blood and water flow forth for your pardon and cleansing. Did He suffer all this for you and do you not love Him in return? May I not tell that, "if," to get out of the way and let you pass, that you may take the next step? Track Him as He rises from the grave for you—as He ascends to Heaven for you and obtains great gifts for you! Up there, before His Father's face, He pleads for you and governs all things as King of kings and Lord of lords—and governs all for you! Up there He prepares many mansions for His own people and gets ready to come to earth the second time that He may receive His people unto Himself, that where He is they may be forever and forevermore!

As you think of all this, love the Lord, you who are His saints, you who have been washed in His blood, love Him! You who are wearing the spotless robe of His righteousness—love Him! You who call Him, "Husband," love Him—you who are married to Him—united in bonds that can never be severed!

II. If this is true of you, let us pass on to the next point—that of KEEPING CHRIST'S WORDS. "If any man loves Me, says Christ, "he will keep My words. "Let us see how far we have kept His words.

I trust that, first, we keep His words by treasuring them and prizing them. Brothers and Sisters, I hope that we venerate every word that Christ has ever uttered. I trust that we desire to treasure up every syllable that He has ever spoken. There is not a word of His, recorded in the Gospels, or in any other of the Inspired pages of Revelation, by which we do not set more store than for much fine gold.

I trust that we keep Christ's words, next, by trying to know them. Are you all diligent students of the Word of God? Do you search the Scriptures? Do you live upon the Truths of God that the Lord has spoken? You should, for every word that comes out of His mouth is the true food of your souls! I must ask you whether you are doing these two things. Are you keeping Christ's words by prizing them and by seeking to be so familiar with them that you know what His words are?

Then, next, do you endeavor to lift the latch and to find your way into the inner meaning of His words? Do you pierce the shell to get at the kernel? Does the Spirit of God lead you into all Truth, or are you content with the rudiments of the faith? This is the way to keep Christ's words, namely, by endeavoring, to your very utmost, to understand what the meaning of those words may be!

Then, when you know the meaning of them, do you seek to keep them in your hearts? Do you love what Christ has spoken so that you delight to know what it is and love it because it is His Doctrine? Will you sit at His feet and receive the instruction that He is willing to impart? Have you attained to that stage that you even love His rebukes? If His words come home to you and sharply reprove you, do you love them even then, and lay bare your heart before Him that you may feel more and more the faithful wounds of this, your beloved Friend? Do you also love His precepts? Are they as sweet to you as His promises, or, if you could do as you wish, would you cut them out of the Bible and get rid of them? O Brothers and Sisters, it is a blessed proof that Divine Grace has been largely given to us when even the smallest word uttered by Jesus Christ is more precious to us than all the diamonds in the world and we feel that we only want to know what He has said and to love whatever He has spoken!

"If a man loves Me, he will keep My words." This declaration of our Lord suggests this question—Do we keep His words practically? That is a most important point, for you will not be able to get any further if you stumble here. Do you endeavor, in a practical way, to keep all His moral precepts? Are you trying to be in your lives, as far as you can, like He—or are you selfish, unkind, worldly? Are you endeavoring to be like He who has left you an example that you should follow in His steps? Come, answer honestly! Is this the objective of your life? Are you seeking to be molded by the Holy Spirit in that way? And are you practically keeping Christ's words as to the precepts of the Gospel? Have you believed on Him? Believing on Him, have you been baptized according to His command? Being baptized, do you come to His Table according to His bidding, "This do in remembrance of Me"? Or do you turn on your heels and say that these are nonessential things?

Beloved, if your heart is right with God, you will want to know all His words and to put them into practice! What care I about the words of any earthly church? They are only the words of men! But search and find the words of Christ— and wherever they lead you, even though you are the only one who has ever been led in that way—follow wherever He leads. You cannot take the next step mentioned in my text unless you can deliberately say, "Yes, Lord, 'Your words were found and I did eat them; and Your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart, for I am called by Your name, O Lord God of Hosts,' and I long to walk in all Your statutes and ordinances, blamelessly, even to the end of my days." You may err, you may make mistakes—you may even sin—but the intent of your heart must be that having loved the Lord, you will keep His words in those various senses that I have mentioned.

III. If you have been enabled to pass through these two gates, you may now come to the next one which tells us of A HIGH PRIVILEGE AND GREAT JOY—"He will keep My words; and My Father will love him."

What wonderful words these are—"My Father will love him"! It is quite certain that He will do so, for when a man loves Jesus, he is in sympathy with the Eternal Father, Himself. You know, my Brothers and Sisters, that the Father's

love is fixed upon His only-begotten Son. One with Himself in His essential Deity, He has loved Him from eternity! But since Jesus has been obedient unto death, "even the death of the Cross," we cannot imagine what must be the Father's complacency in the blessed Person of our risen and ascended Lord! This is a deep subject and there is no human mind that can ever fathom the depths of it and tell how truly and how wonderfully the Father loves His everlasting Son! So, you see, Brothers and Sisters, that if we love Jesus Christ, our heart meets the heart of God, for the Father also loves Him! Have you never felt, when you have been trying to praise Jesus, that you are doing, in your feeble way, just what God has always been doing in His own Infinite way? The ever-blessed Spirit is continually glorifying Jesus—and when you are doing the same, God and you—though with very unequal footsteps—are treading the same path and are in sympathy, one with the other!

Then, besides the fact that you are in sympathy with the Father in having one Object of love, you are also in sympathy with Him as to character. Jesus said, "If a man loves Me, he will keep My words." Well, when you are keeping Christ's words—when the Divine Spirit is making you obedient to Jesus and like Jesus—you are treading the path where your Heavenly Father would have you walk and, therefore, He loves you!

Let me make a clear distinction here. I am not now speaking about the general love of God towards all mankind—that love of benevolence and beneficence which is displayed even towards the thankless and the evil. Neither am I speaking, just now, concerning the essential love of God towards His own elect whom He loves irrespectively of their character because of His own Sovereign choice of them from eternity. I am speaking of that complacent love which God, as a Father, has towards His own children. You know that you often say to your child, "If you do this or that, your father will love you," yet you know that a father will love his child, as his child, and always must do so even if his character is not all that the father desires it to be. But what a love that is which a father has to a good, dutiful, obedient child! It is a love of which he talks to him again and again, a love which he manifests to him in many sweet and kindly words, a love which he displays to him in many actions which he would not otherwise have done, bestowing upon him many favors which it would not have been safe to bestow upon him if he had been a naughty, disobedient child.

Never forget that our Heavenly Father exercises wise discipline in His house. He has rods for His children who disobey Him and He has smiles for His children who keep His commands. If we walk contrary to Him, He has told us that He will walk contrary to us. But if our ways please Him, there are many choice favors which He bestows upon us. This teaching is not suggestive of legal bondage, for we are not under Law, but under Grace. But this is the Law of God's House under the rule of Grace—for instance, if a man keeps the Lord's commandments, He will have power with God in prayer. But when a man lives habitually in sin, or even occasionally falls into sin, he cannot pray so as to prevail, he cannot win the ear of God as he used to do. You know right well that if you have offended the Lord in any way, you cannot enjoy the Gospel as you did before you so sinned. The Bible, instead of smiling upon you, seems to threaten you in every text and every line—it seems to rise up, as in letters of fire, and burn its way into your conscience!

It is certainly true that the Lord deals differently with His own children according to their condition and character. So, when a man is brought into such a state of heart that he keeps Christ's words, then his

character is of such a kind that God can take a complacent delight in him and, in this sense can love him. It is in such a case as this that the Father will let us know that He loves us, that He will assure us of that love and shed it abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He will give us special blessings, perhaps in Providence, but certainly in Grace. He will give us special joy and rejoicing—our horn shall be exalted and our feet shall stand upon the high places of the earth. All things—even His trials—shall be blessed to the man who walks aright with God—and the way to do that is to love Christ and to keep His words! Of such a man, Jesus says, "My Father will love him."

IV. If you have passed through these three gates, you come to another which bears this inscription, "WE WILL COME UNTO HIM."

This is a singular use of the plural pronoun—"We will come unto him." It is a proof of the distinct Personality of the Father and of the Son. Jesus says, "If a man loves Me," (do not forget the previous links in this blessed Gospel chain), "he will keep My words; and My Father will love him." And then follows this gracious assurance—"We will come unto him." Does not this mean, first, distance removed? There is no longer a gap between such a man's soul and his God. He feels heavy in heart, perhaps, and thinks, "I cannot get near to God," but he hears this comforting message, "We will come unto him" and, soon, over all the mountains of division that there may have been in the past, like a roe, or a young

hart, the Well-Beloved comes and the Great Father, when He sees, in the distance, His child returning to Him, runs to meet Him and holds him to His heart! What a wondrous Divine coming this is! Christ and His Father, by the Holy Spirit, come to pay the Believer a most gracious visit! Yes, Beloved, if you are living in love to Christ and keeping His words, there will not be any distance separating you from the Father and the Son, but the text will be blessedly fulfilled in your experience—"We will come unto him."

And while it means distance removed, it also means honor conferred. Many a great nobleman has begged himself that he might receive a prince or a king into his house. The entertainment of royalty has meant the mortgaging of his estates! That is a poor return for the honor of receiving a visit from his sovereign. But, behold, my Brothers and Sisters, how different it is with us! The obedient lover of the Lord Jesus Christ has the Father and the Son to visit him and he is greatly enriched by their coming! He may be very poor, but Jesus says, "We will come unto him." He may be obscure and illiterate, but Jesus says, "We will come unto him." Do you all, dear Friends, know what this coming means? Did you ever know the Son to come to you with His precious blood applied to your conscience till you realized that every one of your sins was forgiven? Have you taken Jesus up in your arms, spiritually, as old Simeon did literally, and said with him, "Lord, now let you Your servant depart in peace according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation"? Has Jesus seemed, to your faith, to be as near to you as one who sat on the same chair with you and talked with you in most familiar conversation? It has been so with some of us—and it has often been so.

This also has meant knowledge increased. Jesus has revealed Himself to us by coming to us even as He came to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. Then, in addition, have you not known the Father come to you in His Divine relationship, yet making you feel yourself His child and causing you to realize that He loved you as truly as you love your own children, only much more deeply and fervently than human love can ever be? Have you not received at His hands such tokens for good and such benedictions as only He could give—so that you felt the Divine Fatherhood to be something coming very near to you and the Spirit of God, operating within you, has made you cry, "Abba, Father," with an unstammering tongue? "We will come unto him." The Savior will come and the Father will come—and the blessed Spirit will represent

Them both in the Believer's heart!

So, "We will come unto him," means distance removed, honor conferred and knowledge increased. And it also means assistance brought, for, if the Father and the Son come to us, what more can we need? With Their gracious Presence in our souls we have Omnipotence and Omniscience, Infinity and All-Sufficiency on our side—and Grace to help us in every time of need!

V. The last clause of the text, and the sweetest of all, is, "AND MAKE OUR ABODE WITH HIM."

Can you catch the full meaning of that phrase? Jesus says that the Father and the Son will visit us—they will come to us as the three blessed ones came to Abraham when he was at the tent door and he entertained the Lord and His attendant angels—but they did not make Their abode with him. They went on their way and Abraham was left in the plains of Mamre. God often visited Abraham and spoke familiarly with him, but our Savior's promise goes beyond that. He says, "We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." To make your abode with a person is for that person and yourself to have the same house and home—and to live together. In this case, it means that the Lord will make His people to be His Temple wherein He will dwell continually. "We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." I have turned that thought over and over again until I have got the sweetness of it into my own heart, but I cannot communicate it to your minds and hearts—only the Holy Spirit can do that.

See what this expression means. What knowledge of one another is implied here! Do you want to know a person? You must live with him—you do not really know someone, however much you may think you know him, until you have done so. But, oh, if the Father and the Son come and live with us, we shall know Them—know the Father and the Son! This is not the portion of carnal minds—neither is it for professing Christians who have not fulfilled the conditions laid down by our Lord. It is for those who love Christ and keep His words—those who consciously live in the enjoyment of the Father's complacency and who have fellowship with the Father and with the Son by the Spirit! To these privileged individuals, God reveals Himself in His Triune Personality—and to them He will make known all that is in His Covenant of love and mercy!

This expression also implies a sacred friendship, for, when God comes to dwell with men, He does not thus dwell with His enemies, but only with those who love Him and between whom and Himself there is mutual sympathy. O Beloved, if

God the Father and God the Son shall indeed come to dwell with us, it will be to us a proof of wondrous love, dear familiarity and intense friendship! If you go to live with an earthly friend, it is quite possible for you to stay too long and to outstay your welcome. But God knows all about the man with whom He comes to live and Jesus says, "We will make Our abode with him," because He knows that His Spirit has purified and sanctified that heart and made it ready to receive Himself and His Father, too! You remember how Jeremiah pleaded with the Lord not merely to be as a sojourner? "O the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in time of trouble, why should You be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turns aside to tarry for a night?" But this is not the way that the Father and the Son deal with us, for Jesus says that They will make Their abode with us! Does not this imply a very sacred friendship, indeed, between God and our soul?

It also reveals the complete acceptance of the man before God, for, when anyone comes to stay with you, it is taken for granted that you exercise hospitality towards him. He eats and drinks in your house and, for the time, he makes himself at home with you. "But," you ask, "is it possible that God should accept the

hospitality of man?" Yes, it is. Listen to the words of Christ, Himself—"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Oh, the blessedness of thus entertaining the King of kings! Then will He drink of my milk and my wine and eat the pleasant fruits that are grown in the garden of my soul. Will that which I present to Him be acceptable to Him? It must be, or else He would not live in my house! And when the Father and the Son come to dwell in the soul of the Believer, then all that he does will be accepted. If he is, himself, accepted, his thoughts and his words, his prayers and his praises, his almsgiving and his labors for Christ will be accepted by both the Father and the Son!

What a blessed state for anyone to reach! For then it shall come to pass that this reception on God's part, from us, shall be followed by a sevenfold reception on our part, from Him. You do not imagine, I hope, that, when God the Father and God the Son make Their abode in a man that the man will continue to be just as he was when they came to him? No, my Brothers and Sisters, the Lord pays well for His lodging! Where He stays, He turns everything that He touches into gold. When He comes into a human heart, it may be dark, but He floods it with the Light of Heaven. It may have been cold before, but He warms it with the glow of His Almighty Love. A man without the indwelling of God is like the bush in Horeb when it was only a bush—but when the Father and the Son come to him, then it is with him as when the bush burned with fire yet was not consumed! The Lord brings Heaven to you when He comes to you—and you are rich beyond the intents of bliss. All things are yours, for you are Christ's and Christ is God's, and Christ and God have come to make Their abode with you!

Now, according to our Lord's promise, "We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him," it is implied that there they mean to stay. Let me take your thoughts back, for a minute, to the earlier links in this blessed Gospel chain and remind you that it is only, "if a man loves Me," and it is only, "if he keep My words," that the Savior's promise applies. "We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." Have the Father and the Son come to your heart? Then I charge you, do nothing that might cause them to depart from you even for a moment. If you ever get into conscious enjoyment of the Divine Indwelling, be jealous of your heart lest it should ever depart from your Lord, or drive Him from you. Say, with the spouse, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you stir not up, nor awake my Love, until He pleases."

"But," perhaps you ask, "can we keep Him? Can we always keep Him?" I believe you can. By the blessed help of the Divine Spirit who has taught you to love Him and to keep His words, you may have near and dear fellowship with your Lord by the month and by the year together! I am sure that we have too low a standard of the possibilities of Christian fellowship, Christian enjoyment and Christian living. Aim at the highest conceivable degree of holiness and though you will not be perfect, never excuse yourselves because you are not! Always aim at something higher and yet still higher than you have already reached. Ask the Lord to come and abide with you forever. You will be happy Christians if you attain to this privilege and stay in that condition. And we shall be a blessed Church if the most or all of us should attain to it. I mean to go in for this blessing, by God's gracious help—will not you, my Brother, my Sister? Can any of you be content to live a lower life than is possible to you? I hope you will not be, but that you will reach all of these steps that I have pointed out to you and ask God in prayer to help you to surmount them. "Lord, help me to love Jesus. Set my soul on fire with love to Him. Lord, enable me to keep all His words and never to trifle with His Truth in anything. And then, Father, look upon me with complacency. Make me such that You can take delight in me. See the resemblance to Your

Son in me, because you have made me to be like He and then, Father, and Savior, come and abide with me forever and ever. Amen." Such a prayer as that, truly presented, will be answered and the Lord shall get glory from it!

But, alas, many of you have nothing to do with this text because you do not love Christ! And the first thing you have to do is not to think about loving Him, but about trusting Him, for you know that the only way of salvation is by trusting Christ. So, if you do not trust Him, you are not in the way of salvation. Have you ever thought of what is involved in being an unbeliever? The Apostle John says, "He that believes not God has made Him a liar because he believes not the record that God gave of His Son." Do you really mean to make God out to be a liar? Surely you cannot! The very thought is too horrible to be entertained for a moment! Well, then, believe His record concerning His Son. That record declares that He is the Propitiation for our sins. Then if you rely upon that Propitiation and trust to Him who made it, you are saved!

I often have the remark made to me by an anxious soul, "But, Sir, I cannot believe. I wish I could." This is the answer which I generally give to the person who says that—"What? You cannot believe? Come, now, let us have that matter out. You cannot believe God? Could you believe me?" Of course, the answer is, "Oh, yes, Sir, I can believe you!" I reply—"Yes, I suppose that is because you have confidence in my character and believe that I would not tell you a lie. Then, in the name of everything that is good and reasonable, how is it that you dare say that you cannot believe God? Is He a liar? Has He ever given you any cause to say to Him, 'I cannot believe You'? What do you mean? Give me some reason why you cannot believe God! What has He done that you cannot believe Him?"

Well, they do not quite see it in that light but, still, they return to that sentence, "I cannot believe." Well now, Sinner, if Jesus Christ were present and He were to say to you, "Trust Me and I will save you. Believe My promise and you shall enter into eternal life." Would you look Him in the face and say, "I cannot believe You"? And if He asked you the question, "Why can you not believe Me?" What would be your reply? Surely a man can believe what is true. There have been times, with me, since I have known the Savior, when it seemed to me as if I could not doubt my Lord—as if I could not find a reason, even if I ransacked Heaven, earth and Hell, why I should doubt Him. I proclaim that I do not know any reason why I should not trust Christ! I cannot conceive of any. Well, will men continue this monstrous, unjust, ungenerous conduct? Alas, they will.

"But," says someone, "if I do trust my soul to Christ, will He save me?" Try Him and see. You have His own promise that He will cast out none who come to Him. So, if you believes in the Lord Jesus Christ this very moment—this very moment you are saved! What more need I say? May the Blessed Spirit cause you to cease, by your unbelief, from practically making God a liar and may you now come and trust in Jesus, the Substitute and Surety for His people! So shall you rest your weary hearts upon His loving bosom and it shall be well with you forever and ever. May God bless you all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: JOHN 14:15-31.

Verses 15, 16. If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you forever Is it not very sweet to think that the Spirit of God is given to the Church in answer to the prayer of Christ? Prayer is a holy exercise, for Jesus prayed. And what a powerful influence prayer has, for His prayer has brought to us "another Comforter."

17. Even the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him. This poor world will not receive anything which it cannot see. It is ruled by its senses—it is carnal and fleshly—and minds not the things that are unseen. It cannot discern them.

17, 18. But you know Him, for He dwells with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. That expression, "I will not leave you comfortless," might be rendered, "I will not leave you orphans."

19. Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me: because I live, you shall live also. What a wealth of meaning these words contain! The sentences are very simple, but they are also sublime. The gorgeous language in which some orators indulge is, when the meaning of it is condensed, like great clouds of steam which produce but a few drops of water! But here you have vast Truths of God pressed into a small compass and those that seem most plain are

really the most deep. "Because I live, you shall live also." As surely as Christ lives, so must His people! They cannot die, for He lives to die no more—and they live in Him.

20. At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. Mysterious triple union—Christ in the Father, we in Christ and Christ in us. This is a complete riddle to all who have never been taught by the Spirit of God.

21, 22. He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is who loves Me: and he who loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said unto Him, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself unto us, and not unto the world? He really did answer the question, though perhaps not directly. This is the process by which He manifests Himself unto His people and not unto the world—

23, 24. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves Me, He will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings: and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me. There is Divine Authority at the back of every word uttered by the Man, Christ Jesus. His message comes not from Himself, alone, but from the Eternal Father as well.

20-28. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. And truly so He was, for Christ had, for a while, laid aside His own greatness and taken the position of a Servant.

29, 30. And now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it is come to pass, you might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes, and has nothing in Me. His words must come to an end, for He was going to perform His mightiest deeds. He could converse no longer, for He was going from converse to conflict. He must meet His great enemy now and leave His dearest friends.

31. But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. And so He went to the Garden of Gethsemane—a brave, gentle, confident, victorious spirit "straitened" till He had accomplished the great work of our redemption!

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