

Jn. 14:21-24 (LD 49) "Love and Obedience"

For the Children: We often find it easier to obey those whom we like or love. That is because we usually want to please the people we love. We should love the Lord more than anyone else. We should want to please Him more than anyone else. If we want to please Him, we will do everything we can to encourage ourselves to obey His Word. That means reading His Word. It also means asking for His help to trust and obey it. And it means asking for forgiveness when we disobey. God gives that help to those who ask sincerely in Jesus' Name.

Questions: What are some things about God's Word that encourage us to obey it? Why will love of God lead us to pray to Him? Do we deserve the rewards the Lord gives to those who love Him and obey His Word?

Introduction:

First Point: The Nature of God's Will

- 1) Revealed and Secret: God's "secret will" covers the purposes and outcomes He has hidden from us. We can pray about such things "Lord willing." Our greater focus, though, should be on His "revealed will" – the promises and commandments He has revealed in His Word. The revealed will of God is spoken of in vss.23-24 as His "commandments" (precepts) and "Word(s)." These terms cover all He reveals re doctrine and life.
- 2) The Trinitarian Will: The revealed will of God is from Father, Son (v.24) and Holy Spirit (vss. 16-20, 26). The Triune Source emphasizes the importance of listening to this revelation.
- 3) The Attributes of the Word: The "perfections" of God's Word spring from His attributes. The Word is true, sovereign, good and gracious. Those characteristics also remind us that we should take this Word seriously – trust it and strive to obey it. But sinners need help to do that, so we seek the Lord's help by praying e.g., the 3rd request of the Lord's Prayer.

Second Point: Demonstrating the Love of God's Will

- 1) Having and Keeping His Word: Vss.21 and 23 make it clear that love of the Lord Jesus leads to a habit of obedience to His Word. See also v.15. Our text focuses on individual obedience, while v. 15 speaks collectively.
- 2) The Opposite Demonstration: The opposite is also true. The one who doesn't keep His commandments doesn't love Christ or the Father. This is not referring to imperfection in obedience, but a complete lack of any habit of striving to obey.
- 3) How This Affects Our Prayers: If we have this love of Christ and desire for obedience, we will pray for forgiveness when we fail and for help to trust and obey. For these are the things that are most important to us when we love the Lord. As we mature in the faith, His interests should more and more dominate over our own personal, temporal concerns.

Third Point: The Gracious Reward for Seeking God's Will

- 1) The Love of God: Vss. 21 and 23 promise that the love of God will be upon the one who loves Christ and obeys His Word. But this is not a reward earned by our love and obedience. Rather, the love of God causes Him to give us love for God and a desire for obedience. He then graciously rewards that desire for Christ's sake.
- 2) Disclosure: Christ "discloses" Himself to the one who loves and obeys Him (v. 21) – though not to the world. Judas is confused (v. 22). Why would Christ display Himself in His Messianic glory on earth only to disciples and not to all men? But the Lord is speaking of Word and Spirit shining Christ's light into the lives of disciples after Pentecost, not the final manifestation of His glory at the end – and certainly not of an earthly, political kingdom.
- 3) Indwelling: Father, Son and Holy Spirit will also dwell within those who love and obey Christ (v. 23). The language implies a close, intimate, permanent relationship. All of these blessings are promised only to those who love the Lord and express that love in trust and obedience – which will also lead to prayer.

Conclusion: