

John 15:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Jesus explains how to abide in His love: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love' (ean tas entolas mou teresete, meneite en te agape mou). Obedience is not condition for being loved but means of remaining conscious of that love. The verb tereo (keep, guard) suggests careful observance. Jesus then provides His own example: 'even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love' (kathos ego tas entolas tou patros mou tetereka kai meno autou en te agape). Jesus' relationship with the Father models believers' relationship with Him. His perfect obedience (tetereka, perfect tense) maintained conscious communion with the Father. This is not legalism but relational fidelity - obedience expresses love and maintains intimacy. The parallel structure shows that Christian obedience mirrors Christ's obedience to the Father.

Historical Context

This verse addresses antinomian temptation to divorce grace from obedience. Early church faced Gnostic movements claiming spiritual enlightenment rendered behavior irrelevant. John's epistles combat this: 'If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie' (1 John 1:6). The verse also counters legalism - obedience is not to earn love but to remain conscious of love already given. Reformation soteriology carefully distinguished justification (by faith alone) from sanctification (faith producing works). Wesley's emphasis on Christian perfection built on this verse - believers can grow in obedience through grace.

Pietist and Puritan movements emphasized practical godliness as evidence of genuine faith. Modern cheap grace that expects no life transformation contradicts this verse - genuine believers keep Christ's commands, not perfectly but characteristically.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does obedience enable us to abide in Christ's love without turning into works-righteousness?
2. What does Jesus' own example of keeping the Father's commandments teach about the nature of obedience?

Interlinear Text

ἐὰν	τὰς	ἐντολὰς	μου	τετήρηκα	μένω	ἐν	τῇ	ἀγάπη
If	G3588	commandments	my	have kept	abide	in	G3588	love
G1437		G1785	G3450	G5083	G3306	G1722		G26
μου	καθὼς	ἐγὼ	τὰς	ἐντολὰς	τοῦ	πατρός	μου	
my	even as	I	G3588	commandments	G3588	Father's	my	
G3450	G2531	G1473		G1785		G3962	G3450	
τετήρηκα	καὶ	μένω	αὐτοῦ	ἐν	τῇ	ἀγάπη		
have kept	and	abide	his	in	G3588	love		
G5083	G2532	G3306	G846	G1722		G26		

Additional Cross-References

John 14:15 (Love): If ye love me, keep my commandments.

1 John 5:3 (Love): For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

1 John 2:5 (Love): But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

John 4:34 (Parallel theme): Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 8:29 (Parallel theme): And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

2 Peter 2:21 (Word): For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 (Parallel theme): Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

Revelation 22:14 (Word): Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

John 12:49 (Word): For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

John 17:4 (Parallel theme): I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.