

John 14 – Very great and precious promises. (9) Love & obedience rewarded. (refs for Bible study 14/2/19).

*If anyone loves me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. v23*

Speaking of v23, J.C.Ryle says: *'There is more of heaven to be had on earth than most believers realise.'* And C.H.Spurgeon adds, *'This verse describes a blessed chain of gospel experience.'* Each link in the chain leads inevitably to the next, so we will consider it one link at a time, i.e. phrase by phrase.

**If anyone loves me:** *'If'* reminds us there is a clear distinction between those who love Christ and the world. We are dealing with true believers here. Those who love him are those who will experience what's described in the rest of this verse. Some only **pretend** to love him, but they are empty, 1Cor.13v1-3. Some merely **profess** to love him. Some only **play** at loving him, Rev.3v16. So the first question is: Do you love him?

**he will keep my word:** This follows. It's a statement not an exhortation, see v21. Love and obedience go together as 1John clearly explains. You can't love Christ and live disobeying his word. His *'word'* includes not just commands, but teachings, promises, encouragements, rebukes, warnings. Consider e.g. Mt.12v36-37, Jn.13v14-15, Mt.5v29. Do you treasure his words? Do you know them? Do you keep them in your heart? Do you put them into practice?

**and my Father will love him:** The next link cannot mean that we *earn* his love! We love him because he first loved us, 1Jn.4v10,19. Not vice versa. Nor is it some kind of legal bondage that says 'if I love him a bit more, he'll love me some more'. That's a complete fallacy. No, this phrase refers to our *experience* of his love. Nothing pleases the Father more than that we love and obey his Son. That brings joy to his heart, and in he turn allows us to *enjoy* his love more. Conversely if we don't love and obey him as we ought then we shouldn't be surprised if we find the heavens are as brass to us, if our assurance is shaken, or if serving him becomes a drudge.

**and we will come to him:** The next link again refers to our experience. *'we'* means the Father and the Son together. Spurgeon suggests 4 ways that you experience this. You feel him near. You are honoured with his royal presence. Your personal knowledge of him is increased. You know more of his assistance, Rm.8v31.

**and make our home with him:** The final link is the sweetest. It includes all the above blessings – and more! The Father and the Son do not just come to visit, they intend to stay. When you make your home with someone it's permanent, and you share all things. To summarise: the person who loves and obeys Jesus, will experience the Father's love in ever greater measure as the Father and the Son come to him and make their home with him.