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### GOD'S LOVE TO THOSE THAT LOVE HIS SON.

John xiv. 23. Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

The fall of man involved a twofold separation betwixt him and the God from whom he had revolted. First, a legal obstacle now intervened betwixt the rebel and the Sovereign whose laws he had violated. The honour of these laws must be maintained, the demands of divine justice must be satisfied; and it is when the sinner in faith lays his sins on the head of the sin offering, and looks for acceptance through the righteousness of Christ, that he who sometimes was far off is made nigh, even through his blood. But, secondly, a moral distance was created, thro' that alienation of heart from a holy God which is the characteristic of those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Sin not only exposes the sinner to a penal infliction for the violation of God's law, it withdraws his affections from God himself; and while, on the one hand, under its influence, men, like Adam in the garden, would wish to hide themselves from God, on the other hand, it is impossible that God should behold with complacency, those whose hearts are thus shut against him. For this evil, too, a remedy is provided in the cross of Christ. It is thence that that grace flows which draws the sinner as with the cords of a man and the bonds of love. The sinner's heart is naturally full of enmity against God; but that faith which is of the operation of God's Spirit is a faith

which worketh by love. The soul that truly rests upon Christ has been brought to see not only its own vileness, but the Saviour's suitableness—the Saviour's excellency; it sees him as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.

Now, this is the state of mind referred to by our Saviour, when, in answer to the question proposed to him by his attached disciple, Jude, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" he says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The case here put is that of a man whose heart has been brought to respond in grateful affection to the divine excellencies, which are revealed in their brightest lustre in the person, the character, and the work of Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh. The announcements of the gospel set forth the object to be loved.—They proclaim that God has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him: and while the faithful preachers of the word depict the excellencies of Him who is full of grace and of truth, in reference to the message which they bring, they beseech those whom they address that they receive not the grace of God in vain. With regard to the great mass of those whom they address, they have still cause to adopt the language of the Prophet Isaiah, and to say, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" for Christ is still despised and rejected of men. He is despised and rejected, not only by professed infidels—not only by the openly profane, but by