

Dear Friends,

JOHN 14: 1-14

God wants to make God's home in you. Jesus tells you how to open yourself to God. He says, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our dwelling place with them". We make God welcome by loving Jesus which shows itself in keeping his word.

What does it mean to keep his word? If it means to perfectly obey every letter of his teaching then we are going to have to admit that we miss the mark. Will God turn away from us because we have gone off the right track?

There is more than one Greek word that gets translated with the English word "Keep". There is a heavy word which is about preventing someone or something from escaping. So, Paul one of the first Christians is kept by a soldier because he is a prisoner. If Jesus asked you to keep his word in this sense then perhaps he would be asking you to perfectly keep all his words and let none of them escape. But that's not the word that is used. The Greek word used in our verse is gentler. It means to keep your eye upon; watch over; take good notice of something in order to protect it; preserve it and guard it from injury or loss.

What Jesus asks of you is that you cultivate a desire for his word, that you keep your eye upon it and guard it in your heart. You may then mess up, time and time again. But God can see the longing within you and God will honour that by coming to you and making God's dwelling place with you.

God bless you,

Tony