341 To Keep (*Seruare*)

Christ proves openly that he is to be loved or not by this that his words are kept or not, John. 14[:23]: “If any one love me, he will keep my word.” Wherefore Augustine,[[1]](#endnote-1) upon this saying, who is there who says, I love the emperor, but I do not keep his laws, [1] John 2[:5]: “He that keeps his word, in him in very deed the charity of God is perfected.” And it is to be known that the sayings of God are also his words.

First, they ought to keep them in their heart just as the powers of the body are in the root, Prov. 22[17-18]: “Apply your heart to my doctrine: which shall be beautiful for you, if you keep it in your” heart.

Second, they ought to be kept in the mouth, just as the power of the tree shows itself in the flower, wherefore in the Apo. [3:7, 9-10] it is said “to the angel of Philadelphia ... I have loved you, because you have kept the word of my patience, I will also keep you from the hour of the temptation, which shall come upon the whole world.”

Third, they ought to be kept in work as if in fruit, Prov. 7[:2]: “Keep my commandments, and you shall live.”

Again, Matt. 19[:17]: “If you will enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Again, Prov. 27[:18]: “He that keeps the fig tree, shall eat the fruit thereof.” However, the fruit of the word of God is life eternal, Apo. 1[:3]: “Blessed is he, that reads and hears the words of this prophecy; and keeps those things which are written in it.” Because it is said [1] John 3[:24]: “And he that keeps his commandments, abides in him.” And then he bears fruit well, Can. 7[:13]: “All fruits, the new and the old, my beloved, I have kept for you.” But the foolish permit their fruit to be trodden under foot at the gates before the beloved might come.

1. Augustine, *In Epistolam Joannis* tract. 9.11 (PL 35:2053): Quis est qui dicat, Diligo imperatorem, sed odi leges ejus? [↑](#endnote-ref-1)