

"His Commandments are Not Grievous"

Int.

1. Aim: To show that even though some people think of God's commands as grievous they should not be regarded in that way.
2. I Jn.5:3 "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - a. Grievous = burdensome, heavy, distressing, unreasonable, irksome
 - b. John states that the commands of God are not grievous or burdensome - a load
3. But Jesus did say that there are some commands that are burdensome..
 - a. Mt. 23:4 "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."
 - b. He is talking about the Pharisees - they did not observe their own strict rules!
 - c. These commandments devised by men are grievous or burdensome
 - d. We should not confuse them with the commandments of God!
4. Do you find that some of the commandments in the Bible are burdensome?
 - a. Many do consider them as grievous.
 - b. There are many reasons that mold such an attitude.
5. Let us study some facts about these so called "grievous commands" of God.
 - a. Grievous is not to be taken in the sense of difficult, for some of the commandments are very difficult.
 - b. But even the most difficult commandment is a pleasure to one who loves God.¹

¹ Annual Lesson Commentary Nov. 17, 57

Discussion

I. MANY HAVE THOUGHT GOD'S COMMANDS WERE GRIEVOUS!

A. Examples in the O.T.

1. The people of Noah's day must have thought that the preacher's command to repent was grievous. He preached righteousness; they refused to repent, and they perished!
2. Naaman the leper thought that the command to "dip seven times in the Jordan" was foolish or grievous. II Kings 5
3. Many times the Israelites thought the commands of God were grievous
 - a. Num. 13 & 14 - Command to go up and take the land of Canaan. Were fearful. Wandered 40 years in wilderness till their carcasses fell. Num.14:29 "Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,"
 - b. Num. 16:41 They murmured against Moses and Aaron because of the deaths of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. This was God's command, but they thought it grievous. God sent a plague on them and 14,700 died.

B. Examples in the N.T.

1. The rich young ruler "went away sad" because of the command of Christ to "sell out." That was grievous, burdensome, to him. MATT 19:22. "But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."
2. Acts 26:28 King Agrippa "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

3. Acts 24:24-26 Felix "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. 25. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. 26. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him."

II. WHY SOME THINK THE COMMANDS OF GOD ARE GRIEVOUS

- A. They don't understand them.
 1. Some have not studied their Bible and do not have any real understanding of what the commands of God really are.
 2. Others think that they must understand the "WHY" for EVERY thing God commands.
 - a. This is not true!
 - b. God's ways are not man's ways. Isa. 55:8-9 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. 9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."
- B. Some people say they don't see any sense in the commands of God [Baptism is an example]
 1. That is a major problem with man. But we must remember that things must make sense to God! Not man!

2. Many cry out "I don't see any need in that".
 3. God knows what we need more than we do
 4. Jer. 10:23 "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."
 5. We can find assurance in the fact that God knows the WHYS! - He sees the sense in it!!
- C. Some think the commands of God are Grievous because they demand that they give up their sins.
1. God's will is contrary to what they want to do.
 2. 1 Cor. 6:9-11 "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."
 3. I II. Person that one of the elders and I taught in Frankfort.
- D. Some think that the commands of God are grievous because they demand 100% perfection
1. This is just another excuse for rejecting God's word
 2. There are some commands that demand total obedience - baptism, you can't be halfway baptized.
 3. Other commands allow for growth - I I Pet. 1:5-7 Christian Graces

III. SOME COMMANDS THAT PEOPLE TODAY FIND GRIEVOUS

- A. The command to "deny self" Mt. 16:24 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."
- B. The command to Love our enemies - Mt. 5:44 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"
- C. The command to Worship in Spirit and Truth - John 4:24
 - 1. The command to attend the assembly - Heb. 10:25 Ps.122:1
 - a. Some people find no pleasure in attending worship services.
 - b. To others it is a foretaste of heaven
 - c. PS 122:1. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."
 - 2. Singing - Eph. 5:19 - no command, no authority for instruments. -
 - a. "But I like them" some will say - To worship God without instruments is burdensome
 - b. It is grievous to their mind not to have instruments
 - 3. The role of Women is grievous to some - 1 Tim. 2:12
- D. The command to live a godly, pure life - Gal. 5:19-21, Jas.1:27
 - 1. To dress modestly is grievous to many
 - 2. Godly living is distasteful to the worldly
- E. The command to submit to the oversight of the elders - Heb. 13:7,17
- F. The command to control our tongue - Jas. 3:2-12

G. The command to love one another

1. 1 Jn. 4:19-21 "We love him, because he first loved us. 20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? 21. And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."
2. Heb. 13:1 "Let brotherly love continue."

IV. WHY THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD ARE NOT GRIEVOUSA. Because they are given by God

1. Jn.1:17 "For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."
2. Everything from God is good - Jas.1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

B. Because they are given for our personal good.

1. They are good for us now and for eternity - 1 Tim.4:8 "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."
2. For our highest profit and happiness
3. Not one single commandment God made was for His own sake ²
4. Mt. 4:4 "...man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"

² ALC Oct.29,78

- C. Because they help prepare us for heaven - Rev. 22:14 "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."
- D. Because they are the standard of judgment - Jn. 12:48 "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."
- E. Because they are the "words of life" [To whom shall we go?] - Jn.6:68 "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Conclusion

1. Have you been rejecting the commands of God? " 1JN 5:3. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."
 - a. I Jn. 5:3 "Obedience is the only proof of love" ³
 - b. They are not grievous or burdensome -- Love of God lighten's the load.
2. We all must obey them without question
3. "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. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." Jn.14:23-24
4. A nine year old lad, struggling to carry his crippled five year old brother smiled and said, "He's not heavy, he's my brother." ⁴

³ Coffman's Commentary P. 460

⁴ G.A. Commentary p. 311

5. "Were we perfect, we should not find them commands at all, for they would be our natural impulses. The more sincerely we love God, the more enjoyment we shall desire from obeying him." ⁵
6. " 1JN 5:3. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Morning March 16, 2008
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⁵ Coffman's Commentary on 1 John p. 459