

It's Hard to Obey God

# Relationships illustrate difficulties

Parents: clean your room

- Children: abuse!
- School: opportunity or prison?
- Boot camp: “Much easier than working on farm” . . . “One of hardest things I ever did”

Sometimes it's hard to obey God . . .  
But it's harder not to obey

1 Pt.4:17

# I. The Objection

# 1 Jn.5:3, **not burdensome**

1: *whoever believes...* (Ac.2:44-45)

2-3a: one who claims to love God is telling the truth only if he <sup>1</sup>obeys God's commands and <sup>2</sup>loves God's children

**Obedience is the only proof of love**

3b: not burdensome

- Burden: too heavy to carry, troublesome

# 'Not burdensome' seems to contradict...

- Other passages –
  - Mt.7<sup>13</sup> Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. <sup>14</sup> Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.
  - Lk.13<sup>24</sup> strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

# 'Not burdensome' seems to contradict...

- Common experience –
- Romans 7:
  - 14, sold under sin
  - 17, sin dwells in him (controls)
  - 22-23, despite good intentions, temptations overwhelm him
  - 24, Law accused but could not cure
  - 25: Answer: Jesus, the Way (8:1-4).
  - Gal.5:17, Christians also struggle with sin

## The solution: 1 Jn.5:2-3, love for God

- Gn.29:...20, Jacob, working for Rachel
- Gn.31:38-42, Jacob, working for Laban
  - ‘He’s no’ a burden. He’s my brother’
  - Nurse stays up all night with patient . . .
  - Nurse stays up all night with own child . . .

“If you do what you love, you’ll never work a day in your life”

# Many passages echo this truth

- Mt.11:28-30, exhausted by guilt / traditions (23:4)
  - Lord's "rest" is not inactivity, but relief
  - We take His yoke by submitting to His authority . . .



# Many passages echo this truth

- Hb.8:10, heart is the key, in all areas of life...
  - Student – homework
  - Drowning man – forced to hold rope
  - Painful operation – slow recovery...
  - Word of God teaches right attitudes...

Can we look at what  
Jesus suffered for us  
and complain about our lot in life?

I. The Objection

II. The Obligation

- Obey exactly, 1 Sm.15<sup>22</sup>

Samuel said: Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.

- If Saul did 99% . . . was he obedient?

- Pioneer father to son:

1. Clear land

2. House on W

3. Barn on E

4. Well on S

- Obey exactly, 1 Sm.15<sup>22</sup>
- Obey without question, Mk.1<sup>26</sup> And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.  
<sup>27</sup> Then they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him.”

- Obey exactly, 1 Sm.15<sup>22</sup>
  - Obey without question, Mk.1<sup>26-27</sup>
  - Obey regardless of consequences, Ac.5<sup>29</sup>
- We ought to obey God rather than men.

- Obey exactly, 1 Sm.15<sup>22</sup>
- Obey without question, Mk.1<sup>26-27</sup>
- Obey regardless of consequences, Ac.5<sup>29</sup>
- Obey because Jesus is Savior, Hb.5<sup>9</sup> And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

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- Obey because Jesus is Savior, Hb.5<sup>9</sup>
- Obey to avoid condemnation, 1 Pt.4<sup>17</sup> For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

I. The Objection

II. The Obligation

III. The Obstacles



# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

## 1. Adolescence. 2 Tim.2:22

- Peer pressure.
- Temptation to adopt worldly standards
- Delinquency, dancing, drug abuse, drinking, smoking, immodesty... Prov.1
- “Respectable worldliness” – job, college, recreation . . . forget God

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.

2. Early adulthood.

- Marriage – choice of companion
- Employment – what about church?
- Employers – unscrupulous, ruthless
- Ja.4:13-17

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.

2. Early adulthood.

3. Parents.

- “Parental slavery” – children take over...
- Leave no time to study the Bible...
- Wrong emphasis. Gn.13:10-11

Lot emphasized prosperity.

Left him without prosperity or godly children.

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.
2. Early adulthood.
3. Parents.
4. Middle age.
  - Low energy; work fatigue; weekend is only family time...
  - Years of spiritual neglect weakened their resolve; easy to miss assemblies.

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.

2. Early adulthood.

3. Parents.

4. Middle age.

5. Retirement

- Time to travel, recreation, relaxation?
- Many are busier than ever before.

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.

2. Early adulthood.

3. Parents.

4. Middle age.

5. Retirement.

6. Old age

- Ec.12<sup>1</sup> Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, "I have no pleasure in them

# Inconvenience

All periods of life make it hard to obey

1. Adolescence.
2. Early adulthood.
3. Parents.
4. Middle age.
5. Retirement.
6. Old age.
7. Finally...perfect day arrives...
  - Acts 24:24-25
  - Ec.12:7

## Inconvenience

### Opposition and persecution

- Mt.10:34-37, foes, even in the family
- 2 Tim.3:12

Third century Epistle to Diognetus: “They love all men, and they are persecuted by all. They are reviled, and they bless; they are insulted, and they respect. Doing good they are punished as evildoers; being punished they rejoice as if they were thereby quickened by life. In a word, what the soul is in the body, this the Christians are in the world.”



Inconvenience  
Opposition and persecution  
Length of service

- In a race, starting is not as important as finishing.
  - Dieting
  - Exercise
  - Marriage
  - Serving God

2 Tim.4<sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.