**His Commandments Are Not Burdensome**

*1 John 5:3*

**Introduction**

1. **1 John 5:3** says that the commandments of the Lord aren’t burdensome. John had to write this because there was an obvious view of the Lord’s commandments that they were indeed burdensome.
2. It seems that the aversion people have toward authority, and the Law of Christ rests on the idea that His commandments are a burden.
3. Christians should not view His commandments in this way.
4. Why might they seem to be burdensome?
5. Misunderstanding of Their Purpose
   1. **The view of the Jews**:
      1. **Romans 2:17, 23** – make their boast in the law.
      2. **Romans 3:20** – seek to be justified by the law.
      3. **Romans 10:3** – seek to establish own righteousness.
         1. **Cf. Philippians 3:9** (Paul speaking of self) – righteousness from the law.
         2. They attempted to MERIT righteousness by the keeping of the law.
      4. **Consequence** – self-righteousness:
         1. ***“seeking to establish their own righteousness” (Romans 10:3).***
         2. Pharisee and Tax collector **– Luke 18:9-12**:
            1. ***“fast twice a week”*** – the Law only required fasting on the annual Day of Atonement.
            2. ***“give tithes of all that I possess”*** – beyond what the Law required – income.
            3. **His boasting was upon his own righteousness in going BEYOND what the Law even required! 🡪**
         3. **Matthew 23:1-4** – The scribes and Pharisees not only disobeyed the Law that they taught, but they bound beyond what it taught.
            1. **(vv. 1-2)** – They are the teachers of the Law of Moses. (**However, they went further and USURPED the role of LAW GIVER**.)
            2. **(v. 3)** – They are hypocrites – do what they say, not do – insofar as the Law actually requires.
            3. **(v. 4)** – Added traditions to the Law which they bound on others, but did not do themselves.

Traditions served as a safeguard to keeping the law.

**Cf. Matthew 15:1-3** – the traditions had the opposite effect. (**cf. Deuteronomy 4:2** – immediately were wrong by nature)

These burdens on top of the Law were hard to bear to the extent that they themselves did not observe them.

**Then, they made others feel bad for not keeping them – RESULT – commandments seem to be burdensome.**

* 1. **Judaizers:**
     1. **Acts 15:1, 24** – seeking to bind something the law of Christ does not bind – circumcision.
     2. **Acts 15:19-20** – James’ conclusion after Peter, Paul, and Barnabas showed the Law of Moses was not binding:
        1. ***“not trouble them”*** – with more than they should be concerned about.
        2. **(vv. 28-29)** – No greater burden than necessary.
        3. **(vv. 30-31)** – After hearing such, they were encouraged.
           1. **Before, were likely very discouraged.**
           2. Commandments seemed burdensome because of the additions from the Judaizers.
  2. **Commandments** – not a tally system of righteousness:
     1. **Romans 7:12-14** – The Law of Moses was good, and spiritual. Meant to lead its subjects in spiritual life.
     2. **2 Timothy 3:15-17** – Paul told Timothy they made him wise for salvation.
     3. **NOTE: They are meant to be kept, but when viewed like the Pharisees, seem more like a burden than a blessing.**

1. Lacking the Correct Approach
   1. Are we holding on to sin?
      1. **When we are trying to hold on to sin, and keep the Lord’s commandments, we assign ourselves an impossible task.**
      2. **James 1:21** – In order to be doers of the word, we must lay aside our sin.
      3. **Matthew 6:22-23** – We must not be letting in darkness with the light, or we will become darkness.
         1. ***“good”*** – *haplous* – single.
         2. Our vision must not be split, but focused.
         3. **(v. 24)** – We cannot serve two masters!
   2. Keeping them out of love:
      1. **1 John 5:3** – the love of God is keeping His commandments.
         1. Successful keeping of God’s commandments is predicated upon our love for Him.
         2. **Cf. John 14:15, 21** – intimately related. Almost synonymous.
      2. **1 John 4:9-10** – When we comprehend, and come to appreciate what God and Christ have done for us, keeping commandments becomes much easier.
      3. **Matthew 22:36-40** – Loving God includes keeping His commandments.
      4. **Like our love for physical parents, our growing love for God makes His commandments less burdensome.**
   3. Keeping them in faith:
      1. **When we don’t trust that God’s commandments can be kept, and we can abstain from sin, we will utterly fail.**
         1. **1 John 5:3** – positive – commandments aren’t burdensome.
         2. **1 Corinthians 10:13** – negative – no temptations are too great.
      2. **Children of Israel:**
         1. **Deuteronomy 7:16-19** – Command to destroy the nations given with a reason for faith/trust.
         2. This after the failure of the previous generation – **cf. Numbers 13:30-31.**
      3. **Disciples (cf. Luke 17:1-6):**
         1. **(vv. 1-4)** – Don’t cause offenses, and forgive offenses.
         2. **(v. 5)** – Increase our faith – to do what Jesus commanded.
         3. **(v. 6)** – If you have faith, you can do it.
         4. **Cf. Romans 10:17** – faith comes by studying God’s word – i.e. if God said to do it, we must trust we can do it.
2. **The commandments of God are not burdensome 🡪**
3. They Are Not Burdensome
4. They are a Blessing
   1. **God’s commands give us wisdom, guidance, and purpose:**
      1. **Jeremiah 10:23** – not in man to direct own steps.
      2. ***“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).***
      3. **Deuteronomy 4:5-8** – For Israel in going into Canaan:
         1. They would stand out from the rest if they kept God’s commandments.
         2. **(v. 7)** – Access to God’s aid is through faithful obedience to Him.
            1. If we’re faithful to Him, we can cast all our cares upon Him, and He will aid us.
            2. **Philippians 4:6-7** – The result of access to God through faithfulness is peace.
      4. **Ecclesiastes 12:13** – the whole purpose of man – therefore, the greatest fulfillment is in doing God’s will.
   2. **Christ’s commands lift the burden of sin:**
      1. **Matthew 11:28-30** – The yoke of Satan, and the burden of sin is far greater than that of Jesus’.
      2. Burden of sin lifted as we submit to God’s conditions of forgiveness.
      3. **Revelation 22:14** – Those who do God’s commandments are given life.
      4. **John 14:21, 23** – When we love Jesus/God by keeping His commandments, He makes His home with us.
   3. **The commands of Jesus are a blessing to us, and we should view them as such 🡪**
5. We Should Delight in Them
   1. **Psalm 119:92-93** – Because the Psalmist delighted in God’s law, he received life.
   2. **Psalm 1:**
      1. **(vv. 1-2)** – We should delight in God’s word, not sinfulness.
      2. **(vv. 3-4)** – Such leads to stability.
      3. **(vv. 5-6)** – Such leads to standing righteous in the judgment = entrance into heaven.

**Conclusion**

1. We must refuse the view of Christ’s commandments as burdensome.
2. We must approach them in a way which is pleasing to God, and beneficial to ourselves.
3. Christ does not burden us with His commands, but blesses us.