

When Is Obeying God Easy?

International Bible Lesson

1 John 4:13-5:5

Sunday, April 19, 2015

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“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3—KJV).

“For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3—NRSV).

John wrote his letter to Christian churches, a letter that he probably wanted circulated among the churches that he oversaw as elder. Some of these churches would have been named in his Book of Revelation. He wrote to those who were “born of God,” who believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and his letter was included in the Bible to help all Christians until Christ comes again as the Book of Revelation foretells. The Spirit of Christ indwells and transforms all Christians, bringing them from spiritual darkness and death into spiritual light and life. Through their faith in Jesus Christ, the Spirit of Christ fills believers with the love of God and enlarges their hearts to receive more of God’s love. As their expanding hearts are filled to overflowing with the love God, Christians love God and other Christians more and more. John wrote that just as Christians love their heavenly Father, so they also love His children. When Christians love God and one another, they are obeying God’s commandments: God’s commandments are to love God and others. God’s commandments are not grievous or burdensome because the Spirit of Christ and the love of God within Christians enables and guides them to love God and others in practical ways every day. God’s commandments are not burdensome, because God loves us and His commandments describe the best way for people to live in order to get the most out of the life that God has given them. Loving and obeying God through faith in Jesus Christ enables Christians to live victoriously when persecuted or tempted by the world.

– L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Give one way that we can know we abide in Christ from 1 John 4:13.

2. Describe who Jesus is from your reading of 1 John 4:13-5:5.

3. Who does John say God abides in?

4. What commandment did John emphasize in 1 John 4:13-5:5?

5. What is one of the things we can do to demonstrate our love for God?