*“With the Master Before the Mirror of God’s Word”* by Susan Heck

A Ladies Bible Study on First John

Tuesday, February 25th, 2020

*“We all know what it’s like growing up as a child in a family and having to live by certain rules that our parents established for us. Many of these rules I believe were motivated out of love for us. But too often our attitudes and actions to their commands were far from a loving response. Sometimes we grumbled and complained about these rules verbally and non-verbally. Sometimes we thought these rules were a burden to us and that they were too hard and unreasonable. Sometimes we rebelled against these rules because we thought our parents were simply too strict. We who are children of God can often be guilty of having these same kind of attitudes and responses to our loving heavenly Father’s commands. Let’s learn together through the Apostle John if these kind of attitudes are “proper for one who is a child of God.”” (pg.’s 263-264)*

**Susan’s Summary** of Chapter 19– “God’s Commandments, a Joy or a Burden” – 1 John 5:1-3 (pg.273-275)

My dear friends, true faith produces:

1) *Love for God (vs 1)*

“…to believe that Jesus is the Christ…means to believe, to commit, to entrust one’s spiritual well being to Christ. It is not just an intellectual belief, but also an individual commitment to a person, the person of Jesus Christ…it is a continuing faith.” (pg.265)

2) *Love for God’s Children (v2)*

“Everyone who loves God, loves His children…It only makes sense that as we love the Father, then we will love those in His family.” (pg.267)

3) *Love for God’s Commandments (vs 2,3)*

“So here is how we show love to God, and it is by keeping His commandments ***(to do them; to continue to do them; to execute them; to carry out; to guard them****)*…and His commandments are not burdensome. It means that His commandments are not annoying, not severe, not irksome, not difficult to carry and not too hard to keep…are not heavy, not oppressive, and not demanding. Ladies, our Father, who loves us ever so much, does not give us any commandments that are too heavy or too hard to obey.” (pg.269)

What about you? What commands of the Lord are you finding to be too difficult?

Maybe for you it is the command in Titus 2 to disciple younger women. Perhaps you’re thinking, “Lord, I don’t do discipling, and I don’t have the time to fulfill that commandment. I need to have time to do my aerobics and shopping and art classes.”

Or maybe you are the younger woman mentioned in Titus 2 and you’re saying, “Sorry, Lord, I don’t do older women. I don’t want anyone to know my struggles.”

Perhaps you’re finding Colossians 3:18 to be too burdensome, where wives are commanded to submit to their husbands. Maybe you’re thinking, “Lord, I don’t do submission. And, by the way, that husband You gave me does not love me as Christ loved the church, so why should I submit to him?”

Maybe for you it is the command in Matthew 5:44 which says we are to love our enemies: “Lord, I don’t love anyone except those select few and my family. I don’t do loving enemies.”

Or maybe James 1:27 is the commandment that you balk at, which tells us that true religion is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world: “Lord, I don’t do orphans and widows; I mean, really, they are too much work. I have enough to do just keeping my own house intact. And keeping myself unspotted from the world—why, Lord, have you seen all that good stuff on TV lately?”

Hebrews 10:25 is a command that a lot of professing believers find very hard to bear: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Perhaps you’re in that group, thinking, “Lord I don’t do faithful church attendance. I mean, that pastor goes past 12:00 noon, and those people at that church are always asking me religious questions like, ‘What is God doing in your life?’ and ‘What are you learning in your daily Bible reading?’ And then there’s that conflict with my kids’ sports on Sunday. And all the good sports on TV—they’re always on Sunday!”

For us, as women, perhaps we don’t like the command in James 1:26 that tells us that real religion is to keep our tongues bridled, and that if we don’t then our religion is fake: “Lord I don’t do bridles! I mean, really, Lord, bridles are for horses?”

What commandments are you resisting today, and why?

And what is going to happen if you continue to resist them?

Let us also, by way of closing, remind ourselves of our precious Lord’s words in ***Matthew 16:24-26****:*

***“If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”***

My friends, please do not say, “No way, God!” to what He is asking, but say,

**“Yes, Lord; whatever You say Lord, that I will do.”**