

# 1 JOHN: DEFEATING MISLEADING SPIRITUAL ERROR TRULY TO COMMUNE WITH GOD

## Part VI: Blessings The Mature "Father" Has In His Walk With God

### H. The Blessing Of Heeding God's Commands Free Of Legalistic Pressure

(1 John 5:1-3)

#### I. Introduction

- A. True fellowship with God produces a tremendous, multifaceted, spiritually fulfilling lifestyle even on this earth, something John briefly stated in 1 John 1:3-4.
- B. So, having revealed the basic levels of growth, John gave insight into the blessings mature "fathers" enjoy for overcoming a reliance on others (along with the world's lusts) as a "little child" and of overcoming reliance on the world system and its lusts as a "young man". The **eighth** blessing John presents is that of the ease of being able to heed God's commands free of the pressure of legalism (as follows):

#### II. The Blessing Of Heeding God's Commands Free Of Legalistic Pressure, 1 John 5:1-3.

- A. After addressing the three levels of maturity in 1 John 2:12-27, John began an extensive treatment of the blessings that spiritual "fathers" experience as motivation for his readers to mature into fatherhood.
- B. The **eighth** blessing is that of heeding God's commands free of legalistic pressure in the process, a blessing John develops in his flow of thought in 1 John 5:1-3 as follows:
  1. John reviewed facts he had taught earlier in this epistle, recalling that those who are truly born of God also believe that Jesus is the Old Testament promised Messiah ("Christ" = Messiah), 5:1a with 4:1-3.
  2. He also reviewed an earlier teaching that every true believer who believes in Christ also loves God who sent His Son, and that this believer will also will love all who are born of God, 5:1b; 2:7-11; 3:14-18.
  3. John then noted that since such functions fulfill God's **commands** that men believe on His Son (cf. Acts 17:30-31) and that they follow that obedience up with His command for believers to love fellow believers (cf. John 13:34), they **recognize** they truly love the brethren by their love for God as seen in their **obeying** His **COMMANDS**, whatever those commands might be, 1 John 5:2.
  4. Indeed, John goes further to claim the **love** of God in the believer **expressed itself in his KEEPING GOD'S COMMANDS**, 1 John 5:3a, a fact that conforms to John's earlier observation in 1 John 2:5 that God's love is truly perfected in those who **obey God's commands!**
  5. Then, focusing on the believer's **heeding of GOD'S COMMANDS**, John noted that God's commands are **NOT "grievous"** (KJV) or **"burdensome"** (NIV, ESV), 1 John 5:3b, a fact we explain as follows:
    - a. The Greek term for the KJV's word, "grievous" or the NIV's and ESV's word, "burdensome" here is *bareiai*, meaning (in this context of **God's commands**) the "liberation from the yoke of the Law," cf. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. I, p. 556-557.
    - b. The **REASON** for this liberation is explained via the context: it comes from a spiritual "father's" dependence on the Holy Spirit to obey what would be otherwise demanding commands: (a) Paul noted he found it impossible in himself to do what was right, Rom. 7:15-23. (b) This left him feeling wretched, Rom. 7:24. (c) Yet, what Paul could not achieve in terms of heeding God's Law perfectly as he was powerless to do so in his sin nature, he found he **could** do when he **relied** on the indwelling **Holy Spirit** to live out God's righteousness in his life, Rom. 8:3-4; Galatians 2:20; 5:16. (d) Well, since we before learned that spiritual "fathers" have already passed the spiritual "young men" milestone in learning to live the Christian life by God's spiritual enabling (cf. 1 John 2:14b), "fathers" find God's commands to be easy and not burdensome to do: the Spirit of God is free to work in them both to will and to accomplish God's good pleasure in their lives, cf. Phil. 2:12-13!

***Lesson:*** *Spiritual "fathers" find God's Biblical commands NOT to be BURDENSOME, for they live IN FELLOWSHIP with GOD and BY the Holy Spirit's POWER, and God's Spirit CAUSES them not only to WANT to heed God's commands, but ALSO to be EMPOWERED to DO them with EASE!*

***Application:*** *(1) If we find we WANT to do and are ACTUALLY ABLE to DO God's Bible commands, we live by means of the Holy Spirit and are maturing in Christ. (2) If God's commands seem to be burdensome to us, (a) we are either in SIN and must confess it for restoration of fellowship status and POWER in living OR (b) we are trying to heed God's Word in our OWN power, so we must ADJUST!*