

10 THINGS THAT AREN'T EASY  
(But They Always Pay!)

INTRODUCTION:

A. God's people have always been challenged by His Word;

1. Isa. 30:8-11 Now go, write it before them on a tablet, And note it on a scroll, That it may be for time to come, Forever and ever: That this is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children who will not hear the law of the Lord; Who say to the seers, "Do not see," And to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits. Get out of the way, Turn aside from the path, Cause the Holy One of Israel To cease from before us.
2. 2 Tim. 4:1-5 4: I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

B. Christianity, is a daily challenge:

1. Easy to drift.
2. Easy to do nothing.
3. Easy to maintain the status quo.

C. Jesus issued the challenge very clearly: Matt. 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

D. Some things aren't easy because of the flesh- Gal. 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

1. Attitude blocks- Prov. 23:7 "As he thinks in his heart. . ."
2. There are some things that aren't easy in our daily lives, but where they exist they pay rich dividends. (Blessings).

E. Today we want to notice 10 things that aren't easy, but they pay, in fact they are essential to

happiness.

BODY:

## I. TO SHOULDER A DESERVED BLAME.

A. The flesh tends to reject any blame that is directed toward it:

1. Adam blamed Eve and God "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."
2. Eve blamed the serpent. "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."
3. Gen. 3:9-13.

B. Some, however, have been big enough to shoulder their blame:

1. David- 2 Sam. 12: 13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die.
2. Paul.
  - a. Acts 26:9-11. Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, `Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' "So I said, `Who are You, Lord?' And He said, `I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you.
  - b. 1 Tim. 1:12-15. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And

the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

C. Confession is essential to please God.

1. Rom. 10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
2. 1 Jn. 1:8-10 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

II. TO APOLOGIZE:

A. Some people can't say: "I am sorry," "I have made a mistake please forgive me."

B. Pride stands in their way:

1. Obadiah 1:3-4 The pride of your heart has deceived you, You who dwell in the clefts of the rock, Whose habitation is high; You who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to the ground?' Though you ascend as high as the eagle, And though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down," says the Lord.
2. A stubborn heart will never say, "I'm sorry."

C. An apology brings relief:

1. Emotional and physical.
2. Spiritual happiness returns.
3. Burdens are lifted when you say I am sorry.

III. TO TAKE ADVICE.

A. Rehoboam good example of one who would not take advice.

1. 1 Kings 12:6-11 Then King Rehoboam consulted the elders who stood before his father Solomon while he still lived, and he said, "How do you advise me to answer these people?" And they spoke to him, saying, "If you will be a servant to these people today, and serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever." But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young

men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. And he said to them, "What advice do you give? How should we answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, `Lighten the yoke which your father put on us'?" Then the young men who had grown up with him spoke to him, saying, "Thus you should speak to this people who have spoken to you, saying, `Your father made our yoke heavy, but you make it lighter on us'--thus you shall say to them: `My little finger shall be thicker than my father's waist! And now, whereas my father put a heavy yoke on you, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scourges!"

2. This contributed to the division of Israel.

B. All of us, at one time or another, need good advice.

1. A wise man will always listen- Prov. 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.

2. Some despise advice- Prov. 1:30 They would have none of my counsel And despised my every rebuke.

C. To accept advice doesn't mean that:

1. You are ignorant.

2. It merely means that you are wise!

#### IV. TO BEGIN OVER.

A. Job is an example of a man who lost everything.

1. Job 1 and 2.

2. His end was better than his original status- Job 42:12-13, Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. 15-17 In all the land were found no women so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations. So Job died, old and full of days.

B. Paul gave up everything for Christ- Gal. 1:14 And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

1. Tops in his religion.

2. Family set him to Jewish School.

3. Friends all Jews etc.

C. Many setbacks come:

1. Death of mate--Rom. 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.
2. Loss of job--Ps. 37:25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread.
3. Divorce (God will comfort).

V. TO BE UNSELFISH.

A. Selfishness is an action of the flesh. Man, basically, is geared to look out for number 1: SELF: This is a major problem in our society.

1. "You deserve a break today."
2. "Do something good for yourself."

B. Failure to show mercy, which doesn't exist where selfishness is, brings one in danger of the judgment.

1. James 2:13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.
2. Matt. 5:38-42. You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.
3. It takes a renewed heart to go the second mile, to give your coat too.

VI. TO THINK BEFORE YOU ACT.

A. Our thoughts make or break us. Prov. 23:7 "For as he. . ."

B. It is a challenge to think before you speak or act.

1. A failure to do so causes much unhappiness in our lives.

2. This is a must for our daily lives.
3. There is no peppermint shoe polish.

C. We must constantly control our thoughts:

1. Lam. 3:40 Let us search out and examine our ways, And turn back to the Lord;
2. We must plan our actions.

## VII. TO PROFIT FROM OUR MISTAKES.

A. Only those who never do anything never make mistakes.

B. If we don't we are bound to repeat them.

1. This is a true statement.
2. The key is to recognize them and admit them.

C. We now know what is wrong or what won't work.

1. This is great.
2. This is vital to progress in the church.

D. Many, however, continue to make the same mistakes over and over. Even animals learn and don't repeat their mistakes.

## VIII. TO FORGIVE.

A. This may be the most difficult one of all:

1. So many people, even in the church, find it difficult to forgive.
2. Some claim that they can't forgive.

B. Forgiveness is not an optional matter:

1. Luke 17:1-4 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him.

2. How many would forgive 7 times in one day.

C. Notice where God places forgiveness:

2. He relates it to our forgiveness- Matt. 6:14-15 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
3. Matt. 18:21-35 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

3. This leaves us no choice if we want to be forgiven.

IX. TO KEEP ON TRYING.

A. Sometimes we get to the place where we feel like--"What's the use. . ."

1. Great men of God have been discouraged.
2. Jer. 20:7-9 O Lord, You induced me, and I was persuaded; You are stronger than I, and have prevailed. I am in derision daily; Everyone mocks me. For when I spoke, I cried out; I shouted, "Violence and plunder!" Because the word of the Lord was made to me A reproach and a derision daily. Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name." But His word was in

my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back,  
And I could not.

4. Jesus, no doubt, felt this way- Jn. 1:11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

4. Moses (came down from the mountain).

5. Noah, 120 years without a response.

B. We must, however keep on trying and trying.

1. We never give up.

5. The reward comes at the end- Rev. 2:10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

6. We must be like Joshua- No matter what we will not give up--Jos. 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

## X. TO BE CONSIDERATE.

A. This is kindness to others. It is commanded.

1. Eph. 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

2. This is not optional.

B. It is easy to be kind to those who are kind to us.

1. The challenge, however, is to be kind to the unthankful. Luke 6:32-36 But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

2. Jesus commanded us to be kind to the unthankful.

C. Everybody likes to be treated kindly:

1. To treat people kindly is a virtue of Christ-likeness, Phil. 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

2. It is needed in the church.

CONCLUSION:

A. Christianity is not an easy life:

1. It is a very possible and enjoyable life.
2. We can live it and enjoy its blessings.

B. There are, however, some things that aren't easy, but they do pay rich rewards if we practice them: (It isn't easy to:)

1. shoulder a deserved blame.
2. apologize.
3. take advice.
4. begin over.
5. be unselfish.
6. think before you act.
7. profit from our mistakes.
8. forgive.
9. keep on trying.
10. be considerate.