

How to make your life easier 06-26-16

The Staples Company has a marketing campaign that compares their business to an “easy” button. To make things easier, all you need to do is press that button. Probably most people wish they had an easy button for many things.

Jesus said "*My yoke is **easy** and My burden is light*" in Matthew 11:30. But He also said "*how **hard** it is to enter the kingdom of God!*" in Mark 10:24b. There is no question that Jesus yoke is not hard; it is not hard to understand the plan of salvation; it is easier to walk a Christian life than live with sin. But we must consider that sometimes the difficulty of being a Christian has nothing to do with Jesus, but with the things we add to the equation. In Hebrews 12:1 we are told "*since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*".

There are things that we do that make it hard to be a Christian. Consider these examples:

1. Consequences of decisions – 2 Sam. 12:10
2. Associations – 2 Chron. 20:37
3. Bad habits – Heb. 10:25
4. Long term behaviors – Luke 5:39
5. Disabling decisions – 2 Cor. 6:14

From these examples we understand that making every day decisions WITHOUT spiritual guidance is what makes life HARD. So let us make some spiritual applications from these points to make Jesus' yoke easier.

EASIER TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT THAN CHANGE WHAT IS WRONG: "*If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it*" - Genesis 4:7. As God told Esau, when we do what is right, things are easier. But when we misbehave, sin comes to the door, and we have to work at mastering it. What if we just did what was right in the first place? Then we would not struggle to master sin.

EASIER TO CREATE NEW HABITS THAN IT IS TO CHANGE OLD ONES: Consider that if you have the habit of setting aside time to worship God every week, there are no problems keeping that obligation. If you have a habit of saying the right things, you will not struggle with your word (1 Tim. 4:12). If you have a habit of good deeds (Tit. 3:8) you need not struggle with doing the wrong things.

EASIER TO START EARLY THAN TO START LATE: While not all of us heard the Gospel in our youth (Josiah – 2 Chron. 34:3; Daniel – Dan. 1:8; Jeremiah - Jer. 1:7), we understand that it would have been easier to walk with Christ if we had none of the burdens of our former lives in place. Let us simply apply this: no matter where we are in life, the sooner we turn to God, the easier the walk of faith is.

EASIER TO HAVE RIGHTEOUS FRIENDSHIPS THAN TO HAVE DISABLING ASSOCIATIONS: Consider the importance of having the right friends. David's friend Jonathan was a Godly man who was an encouragement to David to be righteous (e.g. 1 Sam. 20:16). One wonders what would have happened to David with Bathsheba if Jonathan had been there to counsel him! Yet look at David's grandson Rehoboam, whose friends gave him bad advice (2 Chron. 10:8). He lost his kingdom! We need to sever friendships with those who disable our faithfulness.

EASIER TO MAKE ENABLING CHOICES THAN TO MAKE DISABLING DECISIONS: in Ruth 1 we read about the Judahite Elimelech taking his family to Moab. Bad idea! He and his sons died there, and his widow had to return to Judah and beg off of her family. Many times Christians choose to work in places where there are no faithful saints, or take jobs that keep them working on the Lord's Day. We forget that important decisions need spiritual guidance. Decisions like where to work, where to live, who to date, who to marry need to be spiritually guided; otherwise, we make being a Christian VERY HARD!

Jesus promised an easy burden, but an easier life is YOUR decision. You have been spiritually equipped for every purpose before God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Every decision can have a spiritual impact. Will you make spiritual choices?