

Hebrews 5:7–9 5L Sermon 2024

In the days of his flesh, he offered prayers and pleas with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. 8Although he was the Son, **he learned obedience** from the things he suffered. 9After he was brought to his goal, he **became the source of eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him.**

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Obedience for everyone who obeys him.

“he learned obedience from the things he suffered” because we don’t.

Should someone else pick my favorite color for me, no thank you. I would like my own favorite color. We learn by experience – Jesus learned by obedience.

People prefer to learn obedience from the things we enjoy and appreciate – not through suffering. No one wants to suffer and when we do we are tempted to do everything wrong with life’s problem of pain. Jesus who was independent, free, and walked his own path – chose to remain special when he came down ‘in the days of his flesh’ to save us. Even though we pretend to ‘pick’ something, we can be persuaded to complain. For example I discovered that as much as I was thrilled to be a rock climber – I have a touch of a fear of heights. Those two things are not very helpful to each other. I would like to do something that my mind has a hard time doing. I could complain that I don’t get my way because of me – in a similar way that I can also complain about suffering.

Hebrews starts out with saying ‘**in the days of his flesh**’ and in the context of this lesson about devoted commitment we are being told by God that Jesus did something that we are afraid to do, are incapable of doing, and in fact are impossibly expected to do originally by God. ‘**In the days of our flesh**’ we can try to do the best we can, we can bleed, sweat and strive to reach the top of our limits and maybe even overcome certain weakness. However finally we can never be perfect ‘in the days of our flesh’

They are not the 10 suggestions, or the 10 ideas, or the 10 opinions, or the 10 feelings, or the 10 subtle hints – they are the 10 commandments.

Jesus came down in the days of his flesh to serve, obey and be perfect to God in our place. Each and every one of the 10 commandments was perfectly obeyed by Jesus in thoughts, words and actions in our place. Jesus’ perfect obedience happened “**in the days of his flesh**” as this lesson teaches. In the days of our flesh, we might pray, we might cry, we might ask the one who can save us from death, but we won’t be heard because of our reverence – we will only be heard because of his reverence. The reverence of Jesus Christ is perfect. The service of Jesus Christ alone was immaculate. The obedience of Jesus Christ was given as a substitute for all who selfishly sin against an unselfish God.

How can a God who already knows everything learn obedience? Good question. I don’t know – but I wonder if it was a type of learning through his ‘days of flesh.’ God had never taken on human flesh until Jesus came to do what he did. God had never before been limited in every human way human until “**the days of his flesh.**” Jesus came to serve perfectly because we can’t and we don’t. Jesus came to be obedient for us because we can’t and we don’t. Jesus came to suffer inside our ‘**days of flesh**’ so that we don’t have to, or need to.

Do we personally handle the days of our flesh with complaining, whining, and prayers for God to take it all away or even us away? Did Jesus handle his days of flesh like we do? No, he is the opposite as perfect and holy God. Sinners naturally avoid obedience. Sinners prefer to speak instead of listen. Sinners pretend to know it all by teaching instead of admit we don’t know it all by learning.

Rethinking Devoted Commitment

What are the ‘**pleas, cries, and tears**’ all about? Jesus quivered in the depth of agonized suffering – and obeyed. We do too but we fail to obey perfectly as Jesus did. We do too but we fail to have innocent ‘**pleas, cries, and tears**’ with our prayers. We do too but we are not suffering as Jesus did in his quivering. He was

taking on the sin and guilt of the entire world. Our suffering pales in comparison to what Jesus endured in those depths. He had “cries and tears,” means that God did something real.

This hearing of Jesus’ prayer is an answering. ‘**and he was heard because of his reverence**’ that does not mean that God saved him from suffering – but instead God saved us through Jesus’ suffering. Don’t cut Jesus prayer short! His full prayer is ‘**father, if it is possible – take this cup away from me, but not my will but yours be done.**’ God answering Jesus’ prayer is found in God’s will being done. God’s will is to save us through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ our Savior. God’s will is done by Jesus’ learned obedience in our place. God’s will is done not just in/with the Lord’s Prayer but in/with the Lord’s Promise.

Jesus is promised salvation because he arrived at his goal. God did save him on Easter Sunday by his Resurrection. God does save us through Jesus Christ who are Baptized into his death and raised to life by his Word of promise fulfilled. God gives his name to everyone through Holy Baptism.

Jesus came to fulfill that ancient promise to crush the serpents head by his devoted commitment to God in our place. Jesus was devoted first of all to God perfectly. With all of his divine and human heart he loved God his heavenly Father for us. With all of his divine and human soul he obeyed God perfectly for us. With all of his divine and human mind he loved all of his neighbors as himself. But even more Jesus’ learned obedience came through suffering.

What do we learn through our own ‘little crosses’ of suffering? Why can we endure through our own ‘little crosses’ of suffering? How do we cling to hope through our own ‘little crosses’ of suffering? Because Jesus obeyed for everyone. Everyone obeys thankfully, joyfully, and eternally what God teaches and says. We can never obey perfectly like Jesus but we can obey ‘forgivenly’ to thank him, serve him, and share him.

We are everyone whom he came to save for whom he pleaded, cried and begged that God would take his sacrifice and accept it in our place. God did grant that prayer and God does offer ‘**eternal salvation for everyone who obeys him.**’ How can we obey Jesus? Only in a forgiven way can believers see the value of the 10 commandments that highlight Jesus’ obedience of them for us. Only in a forgiven way can believers share the value of the 10 commandments that offer a way for souls who are eternally saved to say ‘thank you’ to Jesus for doing so.

Only in a forgiven way can believers offer prayers, pleas, and cries for God to bring others to trust in Jesus’ death and resurrection with us.

The older we get the more suffering may occur. The more suffering we endure the closer to heaven we can be. The more we learn about Jesus and his obedience, the more we can realize that everyone who obeys him are thankful, grateful believers who trust in his eternal salvation. In our obedience to Jesus we continue to learn from the Bible. In our obedience to Jesus we continue to make sacrifices for the sake of the Gospel. In our obedience to Jesus we continue to gather with everyone at church as a community who is saved by him and thankfully obeys.

If suffering does not have meaning then ½ of life with without meaning. The suffering of Jesus does not compare with ours. Suffering can bring opportunity, opportunity to return to God, opportunity to pray to God, opportunity to plea and cry to God to have him hear our prayers that his will is done – despite and in spite of our suffering.

Real love is self giving – Jesus is real love as he really gives himself out of love to save us. Real love is self giving – and even suffering for the sake of others. Jesus suffered for our sake. We can even endure suffering for the sake of Jesus to give him credit, glory and honor. “drawn to the cross” was a hymn we sang. Ask yourself what in your life can be drawing you closer to Jesus instead of away.

Jesus prayed for everyone. Jesus pleaded for everyone. Jesus cried for everyone. Jesus obeyed for everyone. Jesus learned for everyone. Jesus suffered for everyone, died for everyone, was raised to life for everyone ... so that everyone who obeys him [by faith] is saved.

When we pray, we pray in a forgiven way. When we pray, we pray in an obedient way. When we pray, we ask God to help but never tell God to help. He hears us not again, not because of our reverence, but because of Jesus' perfect reverence.

“Jesus became the source of eternal salvation” – for you, for me, for **“everyone who obeys him”** [in a forgiven way]. Amen.