

Jesus the Suffering Priest

Hebrews 5:7-9

- In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience through what He suffered. And being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him”-Hebrews 5:7-9 (ESV)

- Pray:

- Fletcher now is a little over a year and a half. And I'll tell ya, those terrible 2's are coming early...and it's not fun!

- I know a lot of people get all bent out of shape if I say anything negative about my son...and none of it makes me love him any less, I wouldn't trade him for anything in the world and I love being a dad SO MUCH...

- I just want to be real and honest that having a toddler is not for the faint of heart...it's a lot.
- And I've also found that others with toddlers or have had toddlers enjoy moments like this where we can be open and honest about the struggle...because it's not easy, especially whenever he is in the stage that he is right now
- The kid will throw an absolute tantrum when he doesn't get what he wants.
- We were at Isla's birthday party the other week with the Redding's, and normally Fletch would give us some problems at home, but almost never out in public.
- He's normally quieter and more shy in those settings so tantrums weren't really a problem
- However, he just doesn't care any more. We were at the party and they had some mini cup cakes out. They were delicious and the presentation was beautiful

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- And Fletch has a couple of them. But he wanted more. And when we told him no, to having another cup cake...you would have thought we just sawed his arm off or something.
- He started wailing and yelling. And other parents know what it's like to be in that position in public, you don't know what to do.
- The only thing you know you can't do, is give in to the wailing and just give him what he wants...you can't do that
- But these situations are a little bit easier to handle at home, because you're not worried about how much he cries when you're not around a group of other people that you barely know.
- Like, Fletch has this tendency to want to go outside, no matter what the temperature or weather conditions are, he'll walk to the back door...starting pointing...
- "Go! Go!"...he wants JoJo to go with him so he'll start yelling, "Doe-Doe! Go! Go!...and then after he realizes he's not getting what he wants right away, then he starts to hit the glass a little harder, and starts to tear up...
- That's when I'm like..."Bro, it's 20 degrees outside, it's pouring rain, you have no socks or shoes on because you hate those too... you're not going outside!"
- That's when the bottom lip comes out, then he slowly drops to the floor, puts his face right into the hardwood, and starts "Waaaahhhh! Waaaahhhh! Waaaahhhh!"
- But I'm like you can cry as much as you want dude, but you're not getting what you want, it's not good for you, and especially not with that attitude!
- This is what came to mind whenever I first read the writer Hebrews write that Jesus was heard because of His reverence.
- And it convicted me, of how many times God has to let me just cry it out.

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- How many times am I just wailing and hollering at him because I'm not getting what I want rather than acknowledging that He's the One that sees the big picture and knows what's best.
- How many times in our legitimate suffering that we go through in this life do we lose perspective, we miss out on our sense of our hope and the source of our strength because we forget to give God the respect and reverence that He deserves
- How many times do I fail to check my attitude and my entitlement at the door whenever I approach the Throne of Grace
 - Because God is never going to give in to our tantrums and He tunes out pride
 - That's why James says that God resist the proud but gives grace to the humble.
- Now, I know enough of our stories in this room to know that there are those of us that are experiencing real spirit-crushing, life-

altering suffering and I refuse to minimize your pain in any way.

- Like we talked about last week, Jesus doesn't minimize it, because He is the High Priest that sympathizes and feels every ounce of your pain with you
 - And we Christians are not exempt from experiencing pain and suffering in this world. Jesus said in this world we would have trouble.
 - So we will not avoid trouble, we will not avoid suffering while we are on this earth, but we Christians are called to suffer well. And follow the example of our Great High Priest.
 - That's why Peter says, ***"For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in His steps. He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when He suffered. He left His case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly."*** -1 Peter 2:21-23 (NLT)

- This is the example that we are called to follow.
- But the question is how?
 - The writer of Hebrews is writing to those experiencing more suffering than any of us could imagine.
 - And he points his readers to Jesus, Who shows us where we should go to get what we need whenever we experience suffering in this life by giving us an example of how Jesus handles Himself whenever He went through His.
- The writer of Hebrews says, ***“In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to Him who was able to save Him from death”***
-Hebrews 5:7 (ESV)
- And in Luke’s account we get a glimpse of what He is talking about. In Luke 22 he writes:
 - ***And [Jesus] came out and went, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. And when He came***

to the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” And He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done.” And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” -Luke 22:39-44 (ESV)

- Here we see **Jesus Endured Suffering with Faith**
 - It’s a little mind boggling that the writer of Hebrews says that Jesus offered up His prayers to the One that was able to save Him from death
 - He was heard by the One that was able to save Him from death

- The One that was able to save Him from death sent an angel to strengthen Him
- Yet He still let Him die...
- This is one of the greatest hangups that we will ever have in our faith
 - *You're a God who heals! So why am I still in pain?*
 - *You're a God who saves! So why did I still lose my loved one?*
 - *You're a God who restores! So why did my marriage fall apart?*
- It's the oldest argument in the book against Christianity:
 - If God is so good, why would He let bad things happen to good people
 - Well first you have to be very careful about your definition of good because the bible says that, "No one is good except God alone.."
- Also, sickness, death, brokenness, and all forms of pain and suffering exist because sin exists.
 - And God will not completely wipe out all sin as of yet because He would have to wipe all of us out with it because we are sinful individuals.
 - But He does promise a day will come where He will wipe every tear from every eye and pain, suffering, and sin will be no more...but until that day comes He is giving as many people as possible the opportunity to come to Him.
- Now I do not necessarily believe that God is the one who causes the pain in your life, but I do believe that He can use it.
 - I firmly believe that we serve a God that works all things out of the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose
 - He gives purpose to the pain, He brings salvation through the suffering

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- God can use our suffering, use our story, use our trial in a number of different ways
- Again, I do not believe that He creates our suffering, but I believe God can take what the enemy means for evil and turn it for our good.
- **GOD CAN USE SUFFERING TO LEAD US TO FAITH**
 - There are some that don't give God or faith a single thought, until something bad happens. And then they get mad and blame God for it
 - And I don't think that God minds that. Why? Because at least they're acknowledging Him. And the Hope is that they're acknowledging Him will turn into leaning on Him.
 - ***"No doubt Pain as God's megaphone is a terrible instrument... it plants the flag of truth within the fortress of a rebel soul."***
-CS Lewis
- If God has to use suffering to get your attention, to get you to realize, truth, I promise it will be worth it
- Because: *"A pleasant life will not be worth the suffering of hell. But suffering in life, will all be worth the pleasure of Heaven."*
- That's why Paul says, ***"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."*** -Romans 8:18 (ESV)
- If some form of suffering is what leads you to eternal life, no matter how hurtful it may be, I promise it will be worth it
- Because this life is but a vapor, and you will have all of eternity to look forward to where there will be no more pain, He will wipe every tear from every eye, and suffering will exist no more
- And even for those of us who have already come to faith, sometimes God can use our suffering to steer us back to Himself whenever we've lost focus on Him

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- So God can use our suffering to lead us TO faith, so that we can be better prepared to endure our suffering WITH Faith
- Paul also says, ***“Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” -Romans 5:3-5 (ESV)***
 - Paul says, suffering will not crush you, but rather because you have God’s Spirit and love in your life, suffering will produce endurance, strength, and character in your life.
 - And the more that endurance, strength, and character is produced, the more that you can have Hope. The confident expectation that even in the midst of suffering God is working in and through it, not just to benefit you, but also everyone else around you.
- If life were always easy, you would never grow. You would never gain wisdom, you would never become a stronger individual.
- The writer of Hebrews says that ***“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience through what He suffered.” -Hebrews 5:8 (ESV)***
 - So we from the example of Jesus that when we endure suffering with Faith:
- **SUFFERING IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW**
 - In this context the writer is saying that Jesus practiced obedience through His suffering.
 - He shows us that suffering can actually be an opportunity to practice our faith through obedience to God
- That’s why James says, ***“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that***

the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” -James 1:2-4 (NIV)

- *The trials of life are actually the avenue in which we can reach spiritual maturity.*
 - The New Testament tells us that we cannot become more like Jesus unless we suffer in some way
- We've said before that the goal of Christianity is not to get other people to look like us, but for all of us to look like Jesus, right?
 - The Old Testament refers to Jesus as The Suffering Servant...Isaiah calls Him a Man of Sorrows
 - *It is impossible to be more like Jesus without experiencing suffering?*
 - *It is impossible to be more like Jesus without being betrayed*

- *It is impossible to be more like Jesus without being abandoned*
- It's impossible to be more like Jesus and not offer forgiveness to those who have done nothing to earn it.
- Suffering can be a way to know the Heart of Jesus more and the ways of God even better
- David says, ***“It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn Your decrees.” -Psalm 119:71***
- Suffering can actually be one of the greatest teachers in our lives.
 - Because pain and suffering will highlight to us the areas of our lives that we are weak and where we lack faith.
 - And that suffering can lead us to lean on Jesus more.
- In 2 Corinthians 12 Paul talks about a thorn in the flesh that he was dealing with. He refers to it as a messenger from Satan.

- Now we do not know exactly what that thorn in the flesh was. It could have been demonic oppression, it could have been a strong temptation, it could have been past regret that kept leading him into condemnation
- Whatever it was, it led Paul to write, ***“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.”Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” -2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (ESV)***
- So Paul was able to use his struggle, he was able to use his suffering as a way to depend and lean on the strength of Jesus in an even more powerful way in his life.
- Now it didn’t make the hurt feelings and the uncomfortableness of it all go away...but it helped Him realize more of who Jesus was and who He was in Jesus.
 - Because what Paul was understanding more and more was the fact that the more that we endure our suffering with faith, the more we realize that our sufferings cannot destroy us.
 - Sometimes we need to get to the place where we realize that there is nothing that can be taken away from us that means more that Jesus does!
- So sometimes God needs to use the suffering as a teacher for us to remind us that we are not dependent upon earthly things
 - Our joy is not tied to our comfortability
 - Our purpose is not dependent upon a pay check
- Therefore we need to learn to not praise our problems

- We do that so often. We have a tendency to give our pain and our problems all of our devotion and attention.
- They are the only things that we want to talk about and therefore we give them more weight in our lives than we do the Blessings of God.
- However, When we endure suffering with Faith:
 - **WE WILL NOT GLORIFY THE SUFFERING**
 - The biblical term for glorify means to give weight to
 - And the weight of our suffering will never outweigh the Goodness of God in our lives if we continually draw near to the Throne of Grace in our time of need
 - *You know it could be argued that God's glory is shown more through the suffering than the healing*
 - *Therefore the Christian is never a victim*
- Because no matter what form of suffering that you endure, even from outside influences beyond your control Romans says:
 - ***“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” -Romans 8:35-37 (ESV)***
 - So whenever we endure suffering with Faith, we know that no matter what happens to us in this life, we cannot be separated from the Love of God
 - And since you are more than a conquerer through Him who loves you, that means whatever affliction the evils of this world hits you with, it will only make you stronger and give you another platform to display God's glory through your life

- When you are weak, then you are strong, because God's power is made perfect in your weakness.
- Now, I am not here to tell you that your hurts and struggles are not important and you just need to get over them. Not at all.
 - I am here to encourage you that in the midst of your hurt and struggle there is a Hope that is more powerful than anything that could happen to you
 - There is a love greater than any hurt that could ever afflict you
 - There is a God Who's Goodness holds so much more weight than the sufferings of this life.
 - And there is a promise that: "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, Who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you." -1 Peter 5:10 (ESV)
- And the only time that our problems become our primary focus and consume our lives is whenever we try to fix them on our own power
- Instead we need to learn the example of Jesus:
- Again, His prayer in the Garden was, ***"Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done."***-Luke 22:42 (ESV)
 - So this is what during suffering with faith looks like:
 - We request that this cup be taken. But we rest in that His will be done.
 - Because the reality is, He will take the cup from you. Just as He took the cup from Jesus.
 - You might say, "Kenny what do you mean? He still went to the cross!"
- However, that phrase **"Take this Cup"** in the original language means: **To remove the bitterness of suffering**

- Not necessarily removing the suffering. But removing the bitterness from it.
- So taking the cup wasn't necessarily a change of the circumstances. It was more of a change of the effect of the circumstances.
- Let me explain: Again, the writer of Hebrews says in verse 7 that the God who was able to save Him from death heard Him
 - And that Word heard, means to have the request granted
 - So how was the request granted if he still died?
- Again in the original language the phrase **“Save Him From Death:”** means **To free from the fear of death. To enable one to undergo death fearlessly**
 - That was what the angel was strengthening Jesus in the garden to do
 - This was the request that was being granted. This was the cup that was being taken away...He was requesting that a cup of fear would be replaced with a cup of faith.
- Therefore, when He got up from that prayer and Judas kissed Him on His cheek...Jesus would have the strength to allow Himself be taken away like superman in handcuffs
- Had all of the power to escape, but kept the faith to endure
- Because God took took the cup of bitterness away from His suffering
- Which is why the writer of Hebrews was able to say in just a few chapters later, ***“..for the joy that was set before Him [He] endured the cross,”-Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)***
- And THAT is how we can consider it pure joy when we face our trials and rejoice in our suffering
 - Because God can take the bitter effect of suffering and replace it with Joy
 - And this joy, in the biblical sense is not an emotional state.

- This doesn't mean we just turn into fake Christians pretending the problems and struggles don't exist. No this should lead us to an even more honest and authentic faith
 - Because this Joy is a state of assurance. It is a sense of calm in the chaos of life
 - Its the assurance that:
 - *Even in the midst of pain, we can find purpose*
 - *Even in the midst of confusion, we can have confidence*
 - *Even in the midst of suffering you can find strength*
 - And you do not find that kind of assurance in who you are, but WHOSE you are
 - Because if you are a son of Almighty God, if you are a daughter of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords...your suffering CANNOT destroy you.
- That is why Paul says, ***“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.” -2 Corinthians 4:8-10 (NIV)***
 - *Will this life press on you from every side? Yes! But it won't crush you*
 - *Will you have times of confusion in life? Yes! But we still have Hope*
 - *Will you be persecuted and mocked for what you believe? Yes! But you'll never be alone!*
 - *Will you get struck down? Yes! But you'll get back up!*
 - *He is working all things out for good, because He loves you, and you love Him, and He has a plan and purpose for your life that pain and suffering cannot stop!*

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- *He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion!*
- Jesus suffered in this life and we are going to suffer in this life too
 - However, whenever we endure our suffering with faith, God's glory is never brighter in our lives and it will become contagious to the world around you
- Because if you are able to find joy in the midst of your trials, and have perseverance or patience in the most difficult times, people will notice
- And that is the hope that people so desperately want to find in their lives
- And they will ask, "how in the world you are able to find peace and contentment, in the midst of the most difficult circumstances??"
- And that will give you one of the most powerful platforms to speak Jesus into their lives.
 - That's what people are really searching for. Sure, we all love the thought of Healing in the

Moment but what we're really looking for is Hope for the Struggle.

- And we can't share that Hope unless we struggle.
- And when you endure your suffering with faith:
- **GOD WILL USE YOUR SUFFERING TO HELP OTHERS**
 - God is the only One that can Turn a Trial into a Testimony
 - How many times have you gone through something difficult, just to eventually come across someone who has gone through something similar and then you get the opportunity to speak into someone else's suffering??
 - If your Trial or suffering helps lead someone else either TO Jesus or to Grow IN Jesus... would it be worth it??
- Isn't that exactly why Jesus went through His suffering? To help us?

- The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus learned obedience through His suffering, and in verse 9 he says, ***“And being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” -Hebrews 5:9 (ESV)***
 - Being made perfect literally means: To accomplish the end goal
 - So the end goal of Jesus’ suffering, was so that we could be saved!
 - He went through what He went through SO THAT He could be The Source of our Eternal Salvation
 - Again, to quote Peter, he said...
- ***“For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in His steps. He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when He suffered. He left His case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.***
- And in the next two verses we see the result of His faithful suffering.
- ***He personally carried our sins in His body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By His wounds you are healed. Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.” -1 Peter 2: 21-25 (NLT)***
- We will not be able to have Him as our Shepherd and the Guardian of our souls unless we turn to him.
- In verse 9 the writer of Hebrews says that He is the source of salvation for all those who obey Him.
- That term **Obey (hypakouō)**: Means: **to listen, to harken. Properly: of one who on the knock at the door comes to listen who it is**
- So this gives the word picture of you sitting at home, going about your business and every day life. Until you hear a knock at the door.

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- So you get up and go to the door, and before you open it, you say, “Who is it?”
- And He says, “It’s Jesus. Let me in.”
- So Heaven’s version of saving obedience is simply this. Open the Door. Let Him in!
- This is exactly what Jesus said in the book of Revelation in chapter 3, **“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with Me.”**
-Revelation 3:20 (ESV)
- You see Jesus just wants to spend intimate time with you.
- His love language is definitely quality time!
- But He is not going to force his way in or kick the door down
- He’s going to stand there and knock.
- And it’s not even like you need to meet Him 50/50..it’s more like 99/1
- He came 99 percent of the way, He came from heaven to earth, was crucified, went back to heaven, sent down His Holy Spirit, and now He knocks on the door of your heart.
 - And all we gotta do is get off of our lazy butts and go the final 1% of the way!
- And He will not go the full 100% because He has to leave room for you to have a choice.
 - Because there’s no such thing as a one way relationship
 - There would be no love if you did not have the opportunity to reciprocate
 - God does not want a group of mindless robotic subordinates ...He is after a loving-intimate relationship.
- And it’s only in that relationship where we can find the strength to endure our suffering with faith
- It’s only in that relationship that we can confidently say as David said, “Yea though I

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walk through the valley of the shadow of Death, I will not fear...why?

- Because the problems don't matter?
- Because the pain isn't that bad?
- Because I'm going to get through it?
- No, "I will not fear...For You are with me."
- Do not allow your suffering to lead you away from the One Who suffered for you
- Draw Near to Him. When you are struggling, when you are suffering, that is when you should spend the most intimate time with Him.
- And in the context of a message like this I want you to know that:
 - Your pain is real. Your confusion, frustration, and hurt, they're justified
- All of us in this room, because we live in a broken world corrupted by sin we will always be in one of 3 seasons of life. We are either:

- In the midst of a season suffering, Coming out of a season of suffering, or Going into a season of suffering
- So the purpose of a message like this is not to belittle your pain or make light of your suffering, but rather it is to:
 - Encourage you: That this suffering will not destroy you
 - Convict you: To not Glorify your suffering
 - Equip you: To endure your suffering with faith.
- Because like we are about to sing. YOU GOT A REASON TO PRAISE
 - You have a God that has prepared a place for you when the struggles of this life are over
 - And a Savior who is here to hold your hand and stand by your side until you get there
- Paul says, "***For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal***

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***weight of glory beyond all comparison,” -1
Corinthians 4:17 (ESV)***

- Bow your heads close your eyes
- You might say, “Kenny it doesn’t feel like light. It doesn’t feel momentary”
 - I know...and you have every right to feel that way.
- And that’s exactly why the Throne of Grace is available to you.
 - Because He knows it hurts. He knows it’s painful. He knows it’s difficult
- And He drew blood, so you could draw near
- So draw near to the Throne of Grace in this moment, so He can bestow His Mercy and Grace over you in your time of need.
- And you might say, “Kenny, I’m not really in a time of need right now. Things have been good, and you’re kinda bringing me down!”
 - And praise God for that season!

- So use this time to allow the power and love of Christ to pour into your life in a fresh way. So that if and when that season of suffering comes you will be better prepared to endure it with faith.