

Read: Hebrews 5:7-9

Perfect Obedience

Hebrews 5:8,9

Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Whether you're already in school or aren't quite old enough yet, you know that school is for learning. During your school years, you learn lots of things from your teachers: math, reading, spelling, science, social studies, art (and also religion if you go to a Christian school). As you get older, you learn more and more things that you didn't know before.

In today's verses, we are told that Jesus learned too: he learned *obedience*. But don't misunderstand—Jesus didn't learn obedience like you learn math facts and English rules. He didn't start with knowing just a little bit about how to obey and then got better and better at it along the way. No, we know that Jesus always obeyed both his heavenly Father and his earthly parents perfectly. So how could he learn obedience?

We can understand better what the author of Hebrews meant if we keep reading and see that Jesus learned obedience *from what he suffered*. Throughout his life on earth, Jesus was called to obey in a way that he had never experienced before. He was called to obey in some difficult times, times that we've been hearing about during Lent. Next week, we'll hear even more about Jesus' obedience as his disciples left him in the Garden of Gethsemane, as he was put on trial before Pontius Pilate, as he was forced to carry his own cross, as he suffered and died on a hill outside Jerusalem.

And here's what happened: because Jesus learned obedience, because he obeyed perfectly, he *became the source of eternal salvation*. But... these verses say that Jesus is the source of eternal salvation *for all who obey him*. If you don't always obey perfectly, how do you know that God sees Jesus' perfect obedience instead of your own imperfect attempts to obey his commands? How can you be sure that Jesus is your source of eternal salvation?

There's another Scripture passage that helps us answer that question. 1 John 3:23 tells us that we obey God, that we keep his commands, when we believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ.

Because the Holy Spirit has worked faith in your heart, you *do* believe in Jesus. Because you believe in Jesus, you *are* living in obedience to God—even when your sinful nature doesn't obey perfectly. Because you are living in obedience to God through faith, he *is* your source of eternal salvation. What an amazing gift!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Think of a time when you didn't obey your parents perfectly. What could you have done differently to obey better?
- What did Jesus learn from what he suffered?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- If Jesus was perfect, how could he learn obedience?
- How do we obey God and keep his commands?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- How could his suffering teach Jesus to obey perfectly?
- Think of a time during his life when it was probably hard for Jesus to obey perfectly. What can you learn from his obedience in that situation?

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for living a life of perfect obedience. Be with me as I also try to obey my parents and others in authority. Amen.