

Sermon Transcript
09.07.2025
Hebrews 5:5-10

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- Good morning! Please open your Bibles to Hebrews 5. We'll be in vss. 5-10 today.
- This past few months, I've been reading a whole lot of books on abortion for our upcoming Culture and Theology on the topic next month.
- During my studies I read a story I want to share with you this morning.
- A doctor was presenting a seminar to a class of medical students. He shared this case study with them: "The father of a family has syphilis and the mother tuberculosis. They already have four children. The first child is blind, the second died, the third is deaf and mute and the fourth has tuberculosis. Now the mother is pregnant with her fifth child. She is willing to have an abortion, if that is what you as her doctor suggests."
- So, what would you suggest? When the students voted overwhelmingly to terminate the pregnancy, the lecturer responded. Congrats, you have just murdered Beethoven.
- This reminds me of another story where a doctor was talking about 2 babies born on the same day at the same hospital. They were the only two births that particular day. One boy and one girl.
 - The parents of the boy were overwhelmed with joy. He was their fourth child, but all three of their previous children had died in infancy.
 - Meanwhile, the parents of the girl were extremely depressed because the girl happened to suffer from Down Syndrome.
 - Some fifty years later, this girl now a woman was still living at home. Though handicapped, she was the sole caregiver for her mother who had suffered a stroke. Meanwhile, this boy now a man had shot himself in a bunker in Berlin. And that little detail may have led you to rightly guess his name was Adolf Hitler.
- I love these little bits of historical trivia. Especially when there's a touch of irony or surprise. Kinda like a gotcha moment. Like Nathan confronting David and saying, that's you dude.
- I remember a professor doing that for me in seminary as he asked us to describe the attributes of humanity. We are created, we are embodied souls|ensouled bodies, we're mortal. As we spoke each attribute, he would write them on the board. We kept going. We are finite & limited. We're depraved, wicked, sinful. After a few minutes, we had quite the list & were quite pleased with ourselves as the professor stepped back & asked, so are these essential attributes of humanity?
- We should've sensed a trap, but we didn't. We heartily approved of the list.
- Until the professor spoke up & said, I had no idea that you didn't think that Christ was human. After a pause to let it sink in, he asked, or is it that you think that Christ's wicked, depraved, and sinful? Pick your preferred heresy. If your list is right then Christ isn't human or isn't sinless.
- Talk about feeling trapped. But the lesson stuck and that was the point.

- Its all too easy for us to overlook Christ's humanity, to think of him kinda like Superman, never sick, never tired, never vulnerable. The thing about Superman is that Clark Kent was always an illusion. He looked and talked and probably even smelled like a human, but he didn't really know what it was like to be human.
- Some people think of Christ's humanity like that. As a result, we think Christ doesn't really understand us, doesn't really get us, doesn't really know what its like to be us. He can't sympathize with us because its all an illusion, a trick, an act.
- But as we've seen over the past few weeks & as we'll see again this morning, that just isn't true. He fully experienced humanity, including all of the weakness and sadness and want and need.
- As we've said before, Hebrews is fascinating in that it provides perhaps the most robust vision of Christology of any book of the NT. Not only do we have some of the richest evidences of Christ's deity, but also some of the clearest testimonies to His humanity. In the exact same book.
- He was like us in all respects, sin excluded.
- Let's pray and we'll see how the author continues to develop this. Self, others, me.

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; as he says also in another place, "You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:5-6)

- Last week, we looked at verses 1-4 which begin the 5.5 chapter exposition of Christ's high priesthood which is the central idea of the book and remember how it ties into the overarching theme of Hebrews which is the supremacy and superiority of Christ.
- Christ is better. He is better than the angels in chapters 1 and 2. Better than Moses in chapter 3. Leads us into a better Sabbath rest in a better land as a better Joshua in chapter 4 and then chapters 5-10 describe how He is a better priest offering a better sacrifice establishing a better covenant built on better promises.
- Christ is better. And as an implication of that, we'll see in chapters 11 and beyond that He is better than sin. Whatever fleeting pleasure that sin offers, Jesus is better. Obedience is always better. So, for instance, we read that Moses left Egypt according to 11:25
 - *choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. (Hebrews 11:25)*
- Christ's supremacy is why we'll read in chapter 12
 - *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)*
- So we'll get there, but I wanted you to see the practical application of Christology. The supremacy of Christ is aimed at our sanctification. You'll never mortify sin except by trusting that Christ is better. Better than that affair, that image, that lie, that slander, that gossip.

- This means that if you never struggle with sin, if you've arrived at perfection, then I guess this constant refrain on supremacy is rather redundant, you can tune me out because you fully believe in that Christ is better, but if not, if you still struggle, then you need this reminder. We need to be reminded until we actually believe it. Every time we sin, we demonstrate that there is a part of us that just doesn't believe that Christ is better.
- But not only is the supremacy of Christ aimed at our sanctification, but also our suffering. As 12:3-4 says
 - *Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.* (Hebrews 12:3-4)
 - After that, the author spends a couple of paragraphs walking through the sanctifying effect of Fatherly discipline.
- In other words, suffering for His sake is worth it because He is better. We can suffer today because He has purchased a tomorrow. Disease doesn't win, death doesn't win, persecution doesn't win. Christ does.
- And that would have particularly relevant to the first-century context composed of Jewish Christians being tempted. The entire book functions as an apologetic for Christ's supremacy in order to bolster the faith and encouragement of these Christians who were tempted to renounce the faith and drift back to Mosaic Judaism.
- So the author systematically dismantles each and every aspect of the Mosaic system in order to show Christ's superiority.
- Last week we began to really dive into the priesthood. And we saw two major characteristics of Aaronic priests. Remember that we distinguished between the Levitical priesthood and the Aaronic priesthood. Levi was the tribe from which priests were appointed, but it was from the particular family of Aaron within the tribe of Levi that the high priesthood was chosen. So when talking about the Levitical priesthood, we mean the priesthood in general. When talking about the Aaronic priesthood, we're talking about the high priests in particular.
- Last week we saw two of the qualifications of high priests. First, they must be appointed. They don't merely volunteer for the office. There wasn't a vote. They don't hold elections for high priest every few years. They didn't flip a shekel. High priests were appointed.
- Second, they were appointed FROM the people so that they could be FOR the people. Remember that we talked about the idea of representation. In order to represent the people, they must be of the people.
- Those were the two qualifications that we saw applied to the various Jewish high priests.
- As we'll see today, Christ shares in those qualifications.
- Remember that is an essential aspect to the typology that the author is using in the passage. In typology, there is a God-intended correspondence between OT institutions, events, and persons, and the NT fulfillment.
- So Christ is the true and better David, the true and better prophet, the true and better temple, the true and better Passover lamb, and the true and better priest. That's typology.

- The OT shadow is called the type, the NT substance is called the anti-type.
- There is both similarity and dissimilarity between the type and the anti-type, the shadow and the substance.
- In other words, we should expect that Christ is both like the Aaronic priests and unlike the Aaronic priests. We'll get into the dissimilarity throughout chapters 7-10, but today's text is mostly setting the stage by showing the analogy, the similarity.
- As Jewish high priests were appointed from among the people, so Christ was appointed and as a human He represents a new humanity.
- As the text says Christ did not exalt himself to be made high priest. That word exalt is *doxazo* which has the *doxa* root from which we get the word *doxology*, a word of praise or glory. So Christ did not exalt himself could also be translated as Christ did not glorify Himself.
- Where have you heard that before? Well, from Christ's own lips. In particular, from the gospel of John. Chapter 8 to be precise. Look at John 8:50
 - *Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge.* (John 8:50)
 - *Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'"* (John 8:54)
- We see this interesting idea of mutual glorification in the godhead. The Father glorifies the Son, the Son glorifies the Father, the Spirit bears witness to and glorifies the Son. There is this beautiful other-centeredness of the trinity. The Spirit almost says, don't look at me, look at Jesus. And Jesus kinda says, don't look at me, look at the Father. And the Father says, this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.
- Christ doesn't glorify Himself. We talked about that quite a bit in Philippians as we saw that though Christ was by nature equal to the Father, yet He didn't grasp or cling to that glory, but instead took on humanity.
- In the context, we saw how that should challenge us. If Christ, in all His actual glory and esteem and value, was able to lay aside His privilege and preference, how much more should we lay aside our perceived rights and preferences?
- But here in Hebrews, the author isn't bringing all of that into the conversation, rather the point is simply that Christ didn't exalt Himself. So who exalted Him? Who appointed Him?
- Well, the one who said, you are my Son today I have begotten you and You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.
- Let's look at each of those in turn.
- First, you are my Son, today, I have begotten you.
- That was already quoted back in Hebrews 1:5 and we talked about how its quoting Psalm 2:7.
- And as we've talked about quite a bit, when we discuss Christ's sonship, we need to distinguish between multiple layers of meaning because Christ is God's son in two distinct senses.
- First, He is ontologically the Son. Ontologically means related to his nature or essence, *ontos* being the Greek word for being or existence. As the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God is eternally and essentially Son.

- But there is another sense in which Scripture speaks of Christ's sonship. In keeping with the idea that the Davidic king or Israel were sometimes called the son of God in Scripture, so Jesus is also Son as the Messiah, the Christ.
- In other words, just to summarize: Christ is son in two different ways. First, He is eternally Son by virtue of His deity. And second, He is appointed Son by virtue of His humanity, as the messiah, the Christ, the Davidic king.
- That's why the passage says, today, I have begotten you. If you read that and apply it to His deity, you'll be super confused. You'll end up with thinking that the Son of God wasn't eternal. That's a heresy called Arianism. But that's not what the passage is saying. He is eternally God, but He is not eternally the Davidic king. He has always been God, but He became human. He became our Savior and Redeemer. He became the Christ. He was always and eternally Son by virtue of His deity, but He became the Son by virtue of His role as the Messiah.
- So when did He become Son in this sense? Well, He became human when conceived by the Spirit in Mary's womb, but when He became the messianic King is harder to nail down. In some sense, you could say that He was born king since He was the rightful heir to the Davidic line. Or you could say that He became king when He began His ministry. Or when He died. Or when He was raised. Or when He ascended & sat at the right hand of the Father. This final response is perhaps the best answer or we could just not dissect the various stages & just say that His entire earthly life, death, resurrection, & exaltation viewed as a whole is when He became king.
- That was when He was begotten in this Messianic sense.
- Begotten by whom? By the one who spoke these words. Who was that? Well, God Himself. Remember, that's a unique feature of Hebrews. The author will continuously presuppose the inspiration of Scripture. Whatever is said in Scripture is said by God.
- And if God spoke Psalm 2:7 you are my son, today I have begotten you, then He also spoke Psalm 110:4 which says you are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.
- Now, we've already seen Psalm 110 back in chapter 1. We'll see it quoted or alluded to many more times. After all, it's the most commonly used Psalm in the NT. It's quoted by Jesus, Paul, and Peter, but it receives its fullest treatment in Hebrews and only in Hebrews is verse 4 and the mention of Melchizedek referenced.
- Remember how Psalm 110 begins:
 - *The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."* (Psalm 110:1)
- So this is a Psalm about the messiah. Remember how Jesus befuddles the Pharisees by asking, how David could call the Christ his Lord?
- But in this psalm about the messiah, we read in verse 4 that the king is also a priest after the order of Melchizedek. And in that we see some of the little hints of dissimilarity between Christ and the Aaronic priesthood. Christ is not from Aaron. He is instead after the order of Melchizedek. Who was that and what's the significance? We'll get to that in a few weeks. Second, notice that He is a priest forever. That too will be expounded later. Unlike the Jewish high priests who held a temporary office, Christ is priest forever. We'll see all of that in depth in chapter 7 so we'll kinda table Melchizedek until then.
- For now, the point is simply to note that the same way that God appoints and installs His Son as King, so He appoints and installs Him as priest. In other words, the Son didn't

appoint Himself, didn't exalt Himself. He was appointed by another. Just like all high priests.

- Let's keep going. Vs. 7.

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. (Hebrews 5:7)

- Remember what we read in 4:15
 - *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. (Hebrews 4:15)*
- As we talked about then, Christ's sympathy is tied to His experience of the weakness and frailty of humanity. He knew what it was like to hunger and thirst. He knew fatigue. He knew sadness and grief. He knew what it was like to be slandered and betrayed.
- In fact, that is probably what the author wants to symbolize by using the phrase, in the days of His flesh. The word flesh often has connotations of weakness. For example,
 - *A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. (Isaiah 40:6-7)*
- Or, as Christ says, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is what? Weak.
- Or in Romans 6, Paul says that he is speaking in human terms because of the weakness of the flesh. And in 2 Corinthians he speaks of a thorn in his flesh and then talks about how God's power is made perfect in weakness.
- Other times, the word flesh means sinful, but that isn't how Hebrews is using it. As we've already seen, Christ was without sin. He took on flesh in the sense of a human body and human weakness, but not in the sense of sinning.
- So this passage is another helpful text to show the fullness of Christ's humanity. In fact, this text was one which was used to combat the ancient heresy of Apollinarianism which taught that Jesus possessed a human body, but not a human soul or mind. Countering this, the church father Theodore of Mopsuestia asks:
 - "If the divinity did take the place of his mind in the assumed Man, as you say, how is it that he felt fear in his Passion? Why did he need strong prayers in the face of necessity, the strong prayers which he offered to God with a loud voice and many tears?" (Theodore of Mopsuestia)
- Only one who had a human spirit could truly experience the range of emotions that would lead to such agony and intense intercession.
- And so Christ was acquainted with suffering. As Isaiah 53:3 says He was
 - *...a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief... (Isaiah 53:3)*
- But, let's not downplay that sorrow or cheapen the grief by neglecting or diluting His humanity. Each Christmas we sing, "The cattle are lowing, the Baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes." But why would we think He wouldn't cry?
- That kind of stoic Jesus can't sympathize with our weakness, but the biblical Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears. As Calvin says:

- “If Christ had been untouched by any sorrow, then no consolation would come to us from His sufferings.” (John Calvin)
- There’s a scene in the M. Night Shymalan movie Unbreakable where Bruce Willis’ character is in an accident & pretends that he’s injured. In reality, he is as the title suggests, rather unbreakable, but he acts like he’s hurt so that he can stop playing football & spend time with his girlfriend.
- Well, Christ isn’t like that. He isn’t pretending when praying. Those aren’t crocodile tears. He is truly disturbed, truly sad, truly overwhelmed with sorrow. He was troubled and afflicted and distressed.
- This obviously reminds us of Gethsemane as He was so overwhelmed that He sweat drops of blood while imploring His Father. And it reminds us of the cross where He cries out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me.
- It might also remind you of the various psalms of lament that we see in Scripture whereby David cries out to the Lord. Since Christ is the true and better David, the true and better king, so He identifies with that Davidic suffering that we see in the Psalms.
- And notice the language that the author uses. Notice the verb that describes His prayers and supplications. He offered them up. This word offered will be used about a dozen other times in Hebrews in reference to priests offering up their gifts and sacrifices. For instance,
 - *For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.* (Hebrews 8:3)
 - *And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God...* (Hebrews 10:11–12)
- And I think that this hints that Christ’s prayer, like the high priests, was representative. As the high priest offered up sacrifices for himself and the people, so Christ prays for Himself and His people. We see that idea of representative prayer elsewhere in Scripture.
 - *Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.* (Romans 8:34)
 - *I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.* (John 17:9)
- So He offers up His prayers as a form of sacrifice. As Psalm 51:17 says:
 - *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.* (Psalm 51:17)
- And Christ wasn’t despised. He wasn’t forgotten. He wasn’t forsaken, at least not ultimately.
- The author writes, that He was heard because of His reverence.
- By reverence, he means fear of God. Christ was acquainted with fear. He was tempted by fear. He tasted fear. But He never gave in to that fear. The natural fear never descended into sinful fear.

- In other words, He feared God more than He feared death and that's the pattern that we should imitate. That's the pattern that should encourage the Hebrews to remain steadfast in the face of suffering.
- Our natural response to fear is to hide or run away. But Christ runs toward. In desperation and absolute dependence, the Son runs toward the Father. He turns nowhere else, prays to no one else, trusts no one else. He submits Himself fully to the Father saying not what I will, but what you will. He submits to the one who hears.
- And notice, the Father does hear. He was heard because of His reverence.
- And remember what hearing represents throughout Hebrews. As we've seen in chapters 2-4, hearing presupposes action. Those who hear the word, heed the word.
- Well, likewise, God's hearing implies His acting. He hears the Son and so He responds to the Son's pleas.
- Now, this obviously doesn't mean that the Father saves the Son from death, but it does mean that the Father ultimately delivers Him from death. The resurrection is the ultimate manifestation that the Father heard and heeded the Son's prayers.
- BTW, last week, I said that Christ's ability to be merciful isn't owing to His own need for mercy, but I want to amend that statement a bit. If by mercy we mean not getting something bad that you deserve, then the statement stands because Christ never deserved suffering or death, but if by mercy, we simply mean help or compassion, then Christ did know what that was like.
- Christ did cry out for mercy, grace, compassion, and help.
- That's what the author is portraying here. Christ is crying out for help, for compassion, for mercy. And in that He is a faithful and perfect example of how we are to respond to fear and suffering.
- Rather than fight or flight, we are respond to fear by drawing near in faith.
- Let's keep going. Vs. 8.

Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8)

- When we get to chapter 12, we'll see nearly an entire chapter devoted to how God disciplines His children for our good. How God uses suffering to sanctify His sons and daughters.
- Well, Christ walked that same path. Although He was a son, He nonetheless learned obedience through suffering.
- Now, by saying that He learned obedience, that doesn't mean that He was formerly disobedient just like the statement that He became a merciful and faithful high priest didn't mean that He was formerly apathetic and unfaithful.
- Or consider Luke 2:52
 - *And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.*
(Luke 2:52)
- The fact that young Jesus increased in wisdom doesn't imply that He was formerly foolish.
- Christ was fully obedient from the very moment of conception. And yet, at the same time He grew in and learned obedience.

- You can see a hint of that even in your children. What obedience entails at 2 is pretty different than at 10 and even more so at 16. To whom much is given, much is expected.
- So what is this obedience that the author is talking about here? How did Christ learn obedience?
- Well, throughout chapter 3, we saw that obedience was tethered to faith. Why could the Israelites not enter the promised land? The author uses two words: unbelief and disobedience. Those are two sides of the same coin.
- That's why we can't really divorce faith and obedience. In fact, Romans begins and ends with the phrase, the obedience of faith as an inclusio. Faith comes from hearing and hearing presupposes obedience so faith presupposes faithfulness. Those can't be divorced.
- So, when Christ learns obedience, the idea is that He grew in experiential trust in His Father. Though there was never a time where He disobeyed or distrusted His Father, Scripture does present His faith & obedience as being dynamic & not static. It doesn't ebb & flow, but it instead continually increases. As He experiences more of the weakness of the human condition, He learns what its like to trust the Father through that. As He hungers, He learns to trust the Father in the midst of famine. With each new circumstance, He learns how to trust in that circumstance.
- Suffering has a way of chastening us like that. Perhaps you can attest to that in your own life. As much as it hurts to suffer, there is a refining effect and you end up growing in your confidence in the Lord's compassion and control as a result.
- When suffering strikes, we are naturally wired to do whatever is necessary to avoid it. When we touch a hot stove, we instinctually draw back in pain. But Christ was able to so trust God that He was willing to run into the flames, into the suffering because His primary goal wasn't His own pleasure and comfort, but the glory of His Father and the good of His people.
- He learned obedience through suffering.
- Let's keep going. Vss. 9-10.

And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 5:9-10)

- Again, don't think that the fact that he is made perfect implies that He was previously imperfect. The word translated perfect means complete. Morally, He was always perfect, but missionally, He was made perfect as He grew & matured such that when all was fulfilled, He cried out it is finished, which, by the way, is from a related Greek verb to the phrase made perfect.
- Since He was made perfect. Since it was finished. Therefore, He became the source of eternal salvation. Not temporary salvation. But eternal salvation. We'll peel off the layers of that reality in chapters 7-10. If eternity can cease, then so can your salvation. Our salvation is as secure as Christ Himself.
- For He is our salvation. He is our righteousness. He is our wisdom and justification and sanctification and life.

- So He is the source of eternal salvation. That word source can also mean legal ground or basis. He is the cause, the forensic rationale for our eternal salvation.
- That is, for those who obey Him. Again, bear in mind the way that the author thinks of obedience. Obedience is not contrasted with faith, it is the natural and inevitable demonstration of faith. As James says, faith apart from works is dead or useless.
- As was said of the wilderness generation, they were unable to enter because of unbelief or disobedience. Both are true because both imply the other. All disobedience is ultimately rooted in disbelief and all genuine obedience is ultimately rooted in faith.
- So, by all who obey him, we could just as easily write, to all who believe him, but the author is using obey because he is trying to stress that faith does something.
- Remember He isn't writing a systematic theology textbook. He's writing a letter to encourage the readers to actually do something so He wants to stress the practical response of faith.
- Faith holds fast, faith stands firm, faith perseveres, faith clings to the promises of God. So there is a good reason for him to speak of obedience rather than faith in order to show the tangible expression of faith by means of works. Works such as considering Jesus and taking hold and holding fast and drawing near and so forth.
- Christ secures our salvation as our high priest & His priesthood is in the order of Melchizedek. Again, we'll come back to that after a short digression which will begin next week in verse 11.
- But first, what do we do with this today?
- Normally I don't like to just do a drive by splattering of application where I just throw out a few thoughts to consider, but I am going to do that this week given the nature of this passage. As mentioned, this is really setting the table for the true feast which is coming in chapters 7-10. We'll really drive each of these points home in the coming weeks, but for now, I just want to give a few applicational points as an appetizer.
- First, one application of this passage is to trust Christ. To believe that Christ is truly better. To consider the efficacy of His work. To reflect upon the meaning of His perfection and the eternal salvation that He offers. If you are struggling with guilt and shame, this would be something to bask in this morning. If you are in Christ, then you are clean, you are sanctified, you are saved, justified, loved, accepted, forgiven, and free. Believe that. Believe that Christ is better than the lies of shame and fear.
- Second, by way of application I would encourage you to imitate Christ in His desperate prayer. As you face suffering, are you showing desperation and dependence upon God? Is your response to suffering to drift or draw near; to fall away or fall down in worship? Do you run to or away from the cross and grace?
- Third, I encourage us all to learn the lesson of suffering. Christ learned obedience. Are you learning from what you are suffering? As J.C. Ryle once said,
 - "There are no lessons so useful as those learned in the school of affliction." (J.C. Ryle)
- So what are you learning from your suffering? What are you learning about God and about His faithfulness and love and sovereignty? What are you learning about yourself?
- As Paul writes in Romans 5
 - *...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)

- Let's pray.

Communion

- Fence table
- As we prepare our hearts for communion, I want to read about the institution of the Lord's supper from Mark's gospel.
 - *And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, "The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us." And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover. And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, "Is it I?" He said to them, "It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me. For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Mark 14:12-25)*
- We see Christ's death connected with the Passover lamb which was sacrificed by the high priest each year. So Christ is both the priest and the lamb. Both the one who offers and the one who is offered.
- And as we'll see as we continue to move through the book of Hebrews, the crucial difference between Christ's offering and that of other priests was the efficacy of Christ's death. In short, it was efficacious. It is finished.
- You are forgiven, fully, freely and forever.
- So take a second and respond. Respond in gratitude and contrition and repentance and joy.
- I'll give you a second.
- Let's partake.