

Grace, mercy and peace are yours in abundance through faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

⁷In 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. **This is God's Word.**

In the name of our Savior, who is the source of all of our blessings, especially our salvation in heaven, dear Christian Friends,

“I want to do it myself.” That is something we might hear from our young son or daughter as they try to show their independence and their ability to take care of themselves. And I think we all have to admit that we, too, have the desire to, “Want to do it myself.” Sometimes that's okay but there are times when that kind of attitude can get us into trouble.

When something breaks, maybe we don't have the knowledge or tools or time to fix it right. When we get sick we try and “doctor” ourselves instead of visiting the professionals. As we get older we want to stay in our own home even though we struggle to maintain it and can't get around like we used to. “I want to do it myself.” It was that kind of attitude the writer of our sermon text was warning against as he wrote this portion of scripture.

The people he was writing to were being pressured to go back to the old ways – which emphasized trying to work your way to heaven. Sometimes we can get caught up in that attitude too. It's easy to think that as long as I am a good person or as long as I try hard, God will let me into heaven but scripture is very clear, **“Jesus is the Only Source of Eternal Life.”** As we consider the words before us, **“We See That Through His Submission,”** and also, **“Through His Suffering.”**

I. “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.” What is the writer talking about? The first part of this sentence isn't too hard to figure out. **“In the days of his flesh,”** is an obvious reference to when Jesus was here on this earth as true man. John explains that for us when he wrote in his gospel, **“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”** (John 1:14) But can you remember a time when Jesus offered prayers with loud cries and tears?

During this season of Lent, it is not hard to jump ahead to Maundy Thursday when Jesus and his disciples went out to the Garden of Gethsemane so Jesus could pray. Do you remember what Jesus said to his disciples? **“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”** ³⁹ **Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.”** (Matthew 26:38-39). We probably don't put a lot of thought into this prayer but at this point of time Jesus knew what he was facing and as we put these two parts of scripture together you might say that his human nature was recoiling in horror at what was coming. This

prayer was probably spoken with loud cries and tears and yet we see the submission of God's Son as he said, **"Not my will but your will be done."**

His prayer was heard because of his reverent submission to his Father's will. While God the Father could have spared Jesus from suffering and death this was necessary for our salvation. And so God the Father answered this prayer of Jesus, not by sparing him from the suffering and death but by giving him the strength needed to overcome the inclinations of his human nature. Luke tells us in his gospel that an angel from heaven appeared while he was praying and strengthened him. We see the resolve of Jesus to go forward as Judas entered the Garden with the soldiers and Jesus boldly stepped forward to meet him.

Why do most people dread going to the dentist? It's because they are afraid of the pain that they know they will experience especially if you are talking about root canals or having a tooth pulled. It's the same way for people who have surgery scheduled. They agonize over the thought of the pain that that surgery will cause them, especially if it's a repeat surgery or one they know will include painful rehabilitation. Now, take that feeling and multiply it a thousand, or maybe a million times, and you can get the feeling of what Jesus was experiencing as the time of his death drew near.

Sometimes we think it is hard to follow God's Word – maybe it will mean we have to change some things in our life or give up some of the friends we hang around with because they're not such a good influence. Maybe it means a loss of a job or a demotion because our boss wants us to do something unethical. Maybe it means to be singled out as a Christian in a world that is not so friendly towards Christian. While we might consider that difficult and hard it doesn't even measure up to what Jesus did for us.

We can never thank him enough for his willing submission to his Father and for taking the punishment we deserve and so when we find it difficult to follow God's Word may we always remember the sacrifice and love of our Savior that goes beyond our understanding because through his suffering we now have forgiveness and eternal life.

II. "Although 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," You might wonder why Jesus had to "learn obedience," but as God's Son he didn't face temptation like he did as true man here on this earth. As true man he was tempted in every way just as we are and yet he never gave in – he never sinned. Never in thought, never in word and never in his actions. He resisted them all and was perfectly obedient so that he could destroy the devil's work and be the source of our salvation.

Religions around the world would like you to think that there are many ways to achieve heaven but scripture is clear that there is only one name under heaven by which we are saved and that name is Jesus. Only through faith in him and all he has done can we have eternal life.

How foolish it would be for us then to think that we can try and do what Jesus has already done for us. It's like offering to do the dishes when someone else has already done them. We

can't take credit for doing what someone else has done. Or when someone gives us a gift, we don't offer to pay for it. All we can do is say "Thank You" to that person.

During this season of Lent, listen carefully and closely as you hear again all that Jesus has done for you. He submitted to and obeyed his Father perfectly, because we fail to submit to God's will and fail to obey him. He won the victory, paid the penalty, bore the cross, and reached the goal of salvation for you and me and he became the source of our salvation! As you hear that message, may you say "thank you" in your praises, with your words and in your actions – living to please God for all that he has done for you. Amen.