

Who is in charge around here?

*“Although he was a son,
he learned obedience from what he suffered...”
Hebrews 5:8 (NIV)*

I well remember a doctor friend of mine who had a very unusual patient. One day this patient came into the examination room area where patients were being attended behind closed doors and said in a loud voice, “Who is in charge here?”

The receptionist and other nursing staff sought to calm the person down and directed them to a place in the waiting area to be seated until it was their turn to see a doctor.

This person felt that life was chaotic and that everything they could see was a mess. Certainly they thought that no one was in charge because if some loving God existed life would be much better for them.

Many of us, in our times of suffering, can have the same view of life as the patient mentioned above. It becomes hard to believe that God exists and is in control of His creation when we suffer so much.

We find it difficult to believe that God is good, sovereign, and loving—when hardship is everywhere. So we want to know who is really in charge.

The writer to the Hebrew Christians was writing to a group of people who suffered greatly—and some even died—because of the actively evil ambitions of their enemies. What the writer does

all through the letter is to keep people coming back to the Lord Jesus and considering how He suffered while among us.

Our verse today is in the context of the writer talking about the prayer life of Jesus, and it seems especially to refer to the experience of our Lord in Gethsemane—where He prayed for relief from the dreadful death of the cross that loomed before Him (Matthew 26:30, 36-46; Mark 14:26, 32-42; Luke 22:39-46).

What we see in our verse for today is the mention of the relationship of Jesus with the Father.

Jesus was the Son of God, and God the Father had said audibly at Jesus’ baptism and again on the Mount of Transfiguration that Jesus was His Son and He was well pleased with Him (Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-23; Matthew 17:1-8).

In John 8:29 we hear Jesus say that He always did the things that pleased the Father.

In John 8:36 Jesus called on His enemies to show any sin in His life. No one took up the challenge. So Jesus was sinless, perfectly obedient to the Father’s will for Him.

So we might expect that the Father would excuse such a remarkable Son from suffering. However, Jesus went through the school of hard knocks—He actually en-

dured hardship in many ways and never deviated from the Father’s will at any time.

He accepted the humiliation, the brutal assaults on His body, the lies spoken against Him, the agony of the cross and the spiritual horror of being separated from the Father—for sinners.

Even though Jesus was so privileged as God’s Son He suffered dreadfully. So we may also expect to experience sorrow in this life. However, there is great comfort in knowing that even though we may suffer, we are in company with Jesus if we believe in Him.

Let us be determined to submit to the will of the Father and learn to accept whatever life brings to us.

The Lord will never lose His grip on anyone who has turned to Him for salvation. Come to Him today as Jesus did Who, “...offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.”

Hebrews 5:7 (NIV)

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