

## Articles and Sermons :: Jesus Learnt Obedience by Zac Poonen

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In Hebrews 5:8, we read that "although He was a Son He learned obedience from the things He suffered." Jesus had to learn obedience. "Learn" is a word connected with education. Jesus had to get an education in obedience in the days of His flesh. As God in heaven, He had never obeyed anyone. If you have never done something in your whole life, then when you do it for the first time, you learn something. Jesus learnt to obey when He came to earth as a Man. Then He not only had to obey His Father, He had to obey Joseph and Mary as well. Joseph and Mary were sinful, imperfect people. They must have made mistakes, just like all parents do. Yet Jesus obeyed them. That must have been difficult. He obeyed and suffered in His obedience. That means that He suffered the pain of denying His own will and obeying His Father, all through His life. That is how He learnt obedience when it cost Him suffering.

Some areas of obedience can be enjoyable. If you tell your child to eat up his ice-cream, he enjoys obeying you. There is no suffering for him there. But when he is playing with his friends and you tell him to stop playing and come in and do his homework, then obedience becomes painful. Even so, in our life, there are certain areas where obedience may be easy and enjoyable. We obey knowing that it is good for us. But the real test of our obedience is when we have to do something that we don't like to do, something that involves denying our will, something that brings us pain. That is where our obedience is tested.

Jesus learned obedience by denying Himself. Anything that His Father said, "No," to, He also said, "No" to. He learned obedience through the things He suffered, and at the end of this education "He was made perfect" (Heb. 5:9). "Perfect" here means "complete". Jesus graduated and got His degree. It is the same degree that we also need to get. We too have to overcome numerous temptations as He did. What happens if we fail in a test? Then we have to do that test again! When we pass all our tests finally, we get our degree. Then we are overcomers! That is the most important degree in life that we can ever get. Every other degree is, comparatively speaking, rubbish. When Jesus says, "Follow me", He is asking us to do what He did as the Captain of our salvation. He will never ask us to face a temptation that He Himself never faced. Let us go boldly then to the throne of grace and get grace to help us complete our education. If we have to suffer, we will suffer. But we are determined to learn obedience and complete our education.

In Hebrews 5:9, we read, "Having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." Jesus has now become the Professor in this college of obedience. He went through the same college from the lowest level to the highest and obeyed in everything. We as servants of God are now called to be junior lecturers in this same college of obedience. The more you have learnt obedience through suffering, the more you can be a true servant of the Lord who leads others also to obedience. That alone is true Christian ministry.