



BELLVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa

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You are sons and Daughters of God

Hebrews 5:8

~ Brent Russell ~

- Rod spoke last week on us being 'Called'
- About God Calling us
- When we turn to faith in Jesus we are called out
- We are new creations, no longer are we just men and women, but rather sons and daughters of God
- Galatians 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus

- When we are called as such we can expect that God will treat us as his children
- As he did Jesus
- We become Jesus brothers and His sisters
- One recalls him Saying that whoever does God's will is his mother, sister and brother
- We are called into God's family

- It is not because of us that we are called this
- but rather because of our relationship to Jesus
- It is Jesus sacrifice that has given us this privilege

- But what does it mean to be sons and Daughters of God
- Siblings of Jesus Christ?
- Gods people, his chosen Nation
- There are a great many things that come with being sons and daughters of God

- We receive Eternal life (John 3:16)
 - We receive answer to prayer (Matthew 21:22)
 - We receive Gods Holy Spirit (John 7:39)
 - We will receive an inheritance (Isaiah 53:12)
 - We will share in Jesus Glory (1 Peter 5:1)
 - We share in Jesus Holiness - Because he paid the price for us (Heb 12:10)
 - We will be inwardly renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16)
 - Given Joy and peace (Romans 15:13)
- 2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.
- Amazing things that we are given by our father in Heaven when we become his children
 - These are the things of god for the People of God
 - They are things given to Jesus by the father
 - but now they have too be passed on to us...
- But this leaves one with the question - can we as believers expect the perfect life?
- If anyone here manages to watch channel 103 on DSTV - the religious channel
 - You might expect that in fact life as a believer will be perfect
 - Once you have sonship you will have only good things all the time
 - In fact some of the teaching I have heard in books and TV tells us that we have only received Gods blessing when things go well for us!
- If you are poor or if you are of ill health it is a sign that God has not blessed you they will say
 - And whose fault is that - well it must be ours of course
 - A lie told by those who do not understand the Christian truth
 - Let us read - **Hebrews 5:4-10**

4 No one takes this honor upon himself; he must be called by God, just as Aaron was. 5 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father." 6 And he says in another place, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." 7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he 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. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered 9 and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him 10 and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 12:7-12

7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. 9 Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! 10 Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. 11 No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

12 Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees.

- One of my favorite books in the Bible
- I imagine that if we had to decide on one person who God should spare from any suffering it would be Jesus
- But here we read that even Jesus was not spared suffering
- Gods own son suffered
- And we will all suffer at some point in our lives
- Hardly anyone will avoid the experience of the loss of a loved one to death
- Not many will be spared illness in some form or another
- We will all suffer hardships in one way or another
- For one it may be the fight to find enough money to scrape through each month
- For others it may be an illness that saps our strength and our spirit
- But there is purpose in the pain we experience

Sonship does not exempt us from suffering

- Please don't believe the prosperity teachers who tell us that it is only in wealth and health that we have been blessed by *God*
- Things will go well sometimes and in others not
- More so than us, Jesus was *God's* son the firstborn amongst many brothers - Yet *God* did not spare him from the suffering
- Jesus himself cried out in the garden of Gethsemane Luke 22:42 "**Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.**"
- Jesus understood what it was like to be a son yet not to have the burden of suffering lifted from His shoulders
- No Honour that *God* gives to his sons and Daughters will remove all suffering
- No Holiness or righteousness of our lives will remove our suffering
- No prayers - no matter how earnest will relieve all of our suffering Paul pleaded with *God* to remove the thorn in his flesh but *god* did not - My grace is sufficient for You
- We only have to look through the Bible for those who loved the Lord to see that suffering is (and as you will see should be) a part of our lives
- Job - lost everything
- David lost his son Absalom
- John the Baptist - scorned and rejected, finally imprisoned and killed
- Peter finally being crucified in Rome
- It seems that alongside our walk with Jesus suffering will be close at hand - we may be sons and daughters but we will not be spare this affliction

Suffering does not disprove our Sonship

- The trials that we may face, the sufferings do not disprove Gods love for us
- So often when we face hard times we call out to God
- We wonder if he still hears us - hears our prayers
- We wonder what have I done wrong - has God rejected me because of my sin?
- We question our status in His Kingdom
- Rod spoke last week about God's "call"
- It is irrevocable -

- We will remain Sons of God even through our sufferings
- Jesus was always and shall always be God's son yet he was not spared suffering

- His poverty did not disprove he was God's son - born in a manger that served animals , Joseph and Mary where not wealthy
- His temptations by Satan in the desert did not make him any less God's Son
- His fear and Sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane did not disprove his sonship
- His desertion by His friends did not make him no longer a son
- His being forsaken by God did not make him any less God's son - My God My God why have you forsaken me...
- Isaiah 53 speaks about Jesus being a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering
- Our suffering does not and never will mean that we are no longer children of God

Suffering has a peculiar ability to Teach us obedience

- Obedience is not something we can just talk about
- it is something that we have to DO
- If a parent tells a child never take a sweet from a stranger but the child never ever gets offered a sweet by a stranger - is the child obedient?
- It is only when the stranger offers that the child will show obedience
- So it is with us and so it was with Jesus
- It was in His sufferings that Jesus learned obedience to God
- Suffering was the teacher of obedience for Jesus and so to for us...
- When life goes well we are full of pretenses
- That we are bigger, better stronger than we actually are
- These are all things that stop us from hearing God's instruction
- But it is in those moments when we suffer that we find that we learn the most
- Our pretenses cannot face the suffering - that cannot stand under any pressure
- There is a story that may or may not be true about a man
- When the suffering comes it is the real us that must face it
- and it is through this that we truly learn
- Charles Spurgeon one of the greatest preachers of all time said "*I owe more to the fire, hammer and file than to anything else in my Lords workshop. I sometimes question whether I have learned anything except through the rod. When my schoolroom is darkened then I learn the most*"
- Suffering shows us who we really are
- It cuts to the bone
- It tests the truth of our new nature in Jesus
- It tests our prayer, our faith our repentance - are they real or are they a show
- Suffering tests our endurance and our faith

Conclusion

- Jesus suffered so that he could learn and so that he could be made perfect
- Jesus was morally perfect in every way
- holy and sinless
- But I believe it was because he still needed to learn more fully what it meant to be human
- And despite what some many believe, suffering is in someway inexplicably tied to the human condition
- It is because of mankind's disobedience that we live in this broken world
- and where suffering is an every day experience for us
- And Jesus as Gods only Son did not escape it either
- Even though he should be the one whom God would have spared He did not
- Because it was at this time of suffering that Jesus learned what obedience was
- Perhaps even slightly paradoxically Jesus learned obedience through suffering and also His suffering produced obedience.
- The two walk hand in hand
- So when we are going through trials let us not be despondent
- Because we are sons and daughters does not mean that we will not suffer
- Because we suffer does not mean that we have lost our sonship
- We need to remember that our suffering teaches us more than we could ever hope to learn elsewhere
- Romans 5:3-4 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.
- And we can further rejoice knowing that Jesus understands our suffering firsthand