THE PROBLEM AND POWER OF PAIN
WEEK 3 • DAILY BRIEFING 3 • MADE PERFECT

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

James 1:2–4

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, [3]for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. [4]And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

This week follows Sunday's sermon, "Purpose & Possibility in Pain." You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You that Jesus did not avoid suffering to save me. When I am hurting, help me follow His example and walk the path He forged ahead of me. Finish what You are doing in me, even when it comes at great cost. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

On Sunday we saw that God uses pain to place you, prune you, and perfect you, and that "perfect" means complete, not sinless. Today is about that third word, and it shows up in a surprising place. The Bible says God made Jesus "perfect through suffering" (Hebrews 2:10). If suffering was part of how the sinless Son of God was made complete for His calling, we should not expect our own growth to skip it. It also means the One we pray to knows exactly what suffering feels like.

Most people treat pain as a detour from the life they were supposed to have. The plan was the career, the marriage, or the healthy body, and then the pain got in the way. But the Bible treats suffering as part of the road for anyone who follows Jesus, because it was part of the road for Jesus Himself.

Nobody knows for sure who wrote the book of Hebrews. It was written to Jewish Christians in the first century who had already paid a price for following Jesus. They had "endured a hard struggle with sufferings," and some had watched their property taken from them (Hebrews 10:32, 34). Now some of them were tempted to give up on Jesus and go back to their old way of life. The writer answers them by showing them who Jesus really is.

In the Old Testament, a high priest was the man who stood between God and the people. He offered sacrifices for their sins and prayed on their behalf (Hebrews 5:1). Hebrews says Jesus is our High Priest, the final One. When it says He was made "perfect," it does not mean He was ever sinful or flawed. He was tempted "yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). It means that through suffering, Jesus finished what He came to do and became fully qualified to save us.

READ & MEDITATE

Hebrews 2:10, 17–18

For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. … [17]Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. [18]For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Hebrews 5:7–9

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. [8]Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. [9]And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,

“Propitiation” means a sacrifice that satisfies God’s justice against sin. As you read, notice how honest these verses are about what Jesus felt.

REFLECT

Answer these honestly. This is between you and God, and nobody else needs to see what you write.

The writer of Hebrews says God did something with Jesus that sounds strange at first.

1. Fill in the blank from Hebrews 2:10: “should make the founder of their salvation _____ through suffering.”

In your own words, what does it mean that Jesus was made perfect if He never sinned?

The Greek verb here, teleioō, comes from the same family as teleios, the word for “perfect” in James 1:4 that we looked at on Sunday. It means to bring something to its intended goal. The word translated “founder” means a pioneer, someone who goes first and opens the way for others. Jesus walked the road of suffering ahead of us.

Verse 18 explains why this matters for you.

2. What does Hebrews 2:18 tell you about how Jesus relates to you when you are hurting?

Hebrews 5:7 most likely describes Jesus praying the night before He was crucified.

3. What stands out to you about the way Jesus prayed?

The Gospels record that prayer. Jesus asked His Father to take the suffering away, and then He prayed, “nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will” (Matthew 26:39). Honest grief and full surrender were in the same prayer.

Verse 7 says Jesus “was heard,” but He still went to the cross.

4. How can both of those things be true?

God did not answer by keeping Jesus from death. He answered by bringing Him through death and raising Him to life. It is the same pattern we saw with Paul’s thorn and Peter’s failure. A no to removing the pain is not a no to the person.

Most people want the growth without the suffering that produces it.

5. What painful season in your life has shaped you the most?

What do you think God was completing (perfecting) in you through it?

Jesus “learned obedience through what he suffered,” and He is now the source of salvation “to all who obey him.”

6. What would obedience look like in the pain you are facing right now?

What part of that pain have you not yet brought to Jesus?

PRAYER

Bring what you just wrote to God. Write your prayer or pray out loud.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite James 1:2–4 from memory.