

“Make me an instrument of Your peace.”

For many years I read and heard it preached that Jesus learned obedience from the things He suffered. For some reason a few years ago, in my quest for knowing God, I discovered the word “obedience” was better translated “to listen intently” (intently means with earnest and eager attention).

Jesus listened to His Father with earnest and eager attention. He did not listen to His own thoughts or advice of others. He entrusted Himself to no one for He knew what was in the heart of man. He said what He heard His Father say... He learned to listen.

I don't know if you know it, but it is “suffering” to give up your “life”. To say, “Not my will, but Yours will be done”. It takes years to get to the point where you can say that and mean it... say maybe 30 years... it did for Jesus. “By learning to die daily, you open yourself to Life.” He suffered in more ways than on the cross... the cross was the crowning moment.

The cross is an instrument of torture... the most extreme suffering, limitation, and helplessness a human being can encounter. It requires surrender and to suffer willingly. We are not asked to go to that extreme, but to understand through the example or pattern presented by Christ Jesus (He died to mortality). Remember, He was tempted in every way as we are.

“I delight to do Your will, O My God. Your Law is within my heart.”

Helen Bowden