

It would be like seeing the Oklahoma University logo in orange not crimson. Like summer in Oklahoma where it's not over 100 degrees. Like driving down NW Expressway and hitting all the lights green. These just aren't normal. And they're noticeably not normal. No way OU would ever put their logo in any color other than crimson and white. No way we can avoid 100 degrees during the summer. And when have you ever driven NW Expressway and hit every light green? We know normal and these aren't normal.

If you came in the doors on the east side of the building did you notice it hanging on the wall? It's only been there as long as the building has been here, but I'm thinking many of you don't notice it. The print of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Now you'll definitely notice because I'm calling attention to it. Beautifully done it captures the moments Jesus was there before things really started for him.

That print might be how you picture Jesus in the garden. Eyes towards heaven, light shining around his head, darkness all around, light from heaven, stoic expression against what's coming. I'll admit that's how I always pictured Jesus. But the writer to the Hebrews in the second lesson paints that picture differently. More is there than what's shown. Something's not normal...

**Not your normal Jesus  
Praying but submitting  
Obedient but suffering**

The tornado struck without warning dropping out of the sky. Buildings were swallowed up. People were hurt and killed. Property was thrown for miles never to be recovered. What if people had warning? Not sirens going off, get to your shelter, kind of warning. What if they were told everything that would happen but they couldn't change anything that was going to happen? It would probably cause immense pain. Some would still pray that it not happen. This was Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had every detail of what would happen to him. Knew exactly what was coming and how bad it would be. But couldn't and wouldn't change the outcome.

In the garden wasn't the only time Jesus prayed. But the most was on the line this time. This was why he came. If he messed it up now it would nullify everything he had done through his entire 33 years on earth. The pressure was on. Is it any wonder the sweat came out like drops of blood? **"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."** Jesus prayed to express his needs. He cried out petitions that were urgent requests of extreme need. Jesus knew what was coming and all he could do was cry out in loud screams of agony and tears. This doesn't sound like your normal Jesus.

I think still we don't fully grasp what Jesus was going through. We still can't understand the full intensity. The writer to the Hebrews is describing someone begging for his life. Jesus on the ground, head down, eyes full of tears, sweating drops of blood, crying out at the top of his lungs. **"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me."** The cup was more than just what he would physically go through. Imagine a cup, given by God, filled with the world's sins. It's overflowing. Jesus had to drink the entire cup of our sins. It was extreme agony. He was human after all. The thought of carrying all the world's sins made his entire body recoil. His sweat, his crying out, his begging showed just how fierce the struggle was for Jesus. That's not your normal thoughts about Jesus.

Have you ever wondered if Jesus knows what you're going through? Does Jesus get it when kids at school make fun of the way I dress? Does Jesus understand why I have to go along with people at work when they're telling jokes about the boss? Does Jesus even know how hard life is sometimes? Our 'normal' for Jesus is seeing him as far greater than us, and somewhat disconnected from us. He was perfect, how could he know my pain?

Jesus prayed because he knew. He knew all you go through and more. A weak and humble human being took on the mission to save sinners. **"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."** Jesus, fully aware of his human weaknesses, places no confidence in his human nature. God is his only help. He trusted unshakably in God the Father. **"And he was heard because of his reverent submission."** Jesus trusted and submitted to God the Father's way. So he prayed, **"yet not my will, but yours be done."** We might think that Jesus' prayer wasn't answered because he still went to the cross and died. But that was exactly it; that was the answer. Jesus had to drink the cup. He had to go to the cross. **"What shall I say, Father, save me from this hour? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour."** That was his victory, the answer to his prayers. Work accomplished, payment made, for you and for me. Reverent submission that meant death. Not your normal Jesus. Still no way he wouldn't do it. He submitted to go to the cross and he was strengthened to face it.

Parents teach their children from early on how to pray. They teach them to fold their hands and bow their heads. They teach them because it's not natural in them or any of us. Jesus probably learned from his parents how to pray. His human nature learned how to go to the Lord when he needed help. Going to God in the Garden of Gethsemane was quite normal. Parents also teach obedience to their children. Mary and Joseph undoubtedly taught young Jesus to obey, though obedience was normal for him. But in the garden is not your normal Jesus. He needed to learn a different kind of obedience. Obedience that would lead to suffering.

Jesus growing up never was disobedient. His moral perfection meant that he was without sin. But it was obedience that he needed to learn. **“Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered.”** He had to actually suffer in order to learn obedience. He had to face what the Father sent him to this world to face. He had to go through with the cross. He had to stand in our place as our substitute and take on the punishment God would give to all human beings for their sins. Jesus would be crushed by this weight to the point of death. But he had to go through with it. His pleading in the garden showed he was ready. His sufferings in the hours after that would be the actual obedience he learned.

Are you feeling alone because you think you're going through something that no one else knows about? It might be a specific form of cancer that you don't make a big deal about but it's there. It might be the loss of a job that you haven't shared yet because it's embarrassing to be let go and not have anything else to do. It might be a bankruptcy that you've filed for and don't want others to know about because of shame. These are weaknesses you feel, loneliness you're plagued with, sufferings you're going through. Does Jesus know, can Jesus relate, can Jesus help?

Yes. Jesus knows all about your suffering because he faced his for you. Jesus didn't escape the suffering even though he could have because he was doing it for you. He eliminated the worst suffering, the suffering of hell separated from God. He removed from you the sins that would keep you from a relationship with God and an eternity in heaven. **“Once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.”** Jesus was made perfect by going through the suffering in perfect obedience. He faced the cross and the suffering. He faced it and defeated it for you and me. He didn't cut short his time of suffering because he didn't want you and me to have to suffer what he suffered. Not the normal path you'd take, but the perfect path Jesus did.

We might not normally say it's joyful to think of a seed being put in the ground and dying as a seed. It must die to produce other seeds. But it is joyful when it pictures what Jesus would do for us. He was that seed that went to death so other seeds could live. You are one of those seeds that lives because Jesus died. This joy is balanced with the picture the writer to the Hebrews paints in the second lesson. Jesus, fearful, shouting, crying, being crushed by the weight of his task. Not your normal Jesus. The two are connected. Jesus isn't our Savior without both. He can fully say he prayed but was submissive to the Father's will. And he can say that he was obedient and suffered for you and me the torture of death for our sins. Now perfect as our Savior he is the source of our eternal salvation.