

**Hebrews 5: 5-10 “Kneeling Beside Us” Rev. Janet Chapman & Bud Houston  
3/17/24**

**Today we are doing things a bit differently in this time. Inspired by the words from the book of Hebrews, one of the most difficult books in the Bible to understand, I wanted to try a new approach and ask one of our folks whose been a part of the church for quite awhile now, how the words of the text become real in his own life. Particularly, we are going to single out the phrase in vss. 7-8: “Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission... he learned through what he suffered.” To begin with, I want to give Bud Houston an opportunity to tell us a bit about himself, what was his job and for how long, and why he chose this particular vocation? (Response, including high school test which revealed could be ditch digger, truck driver, or preacher, because they have so much in common...lol)**

**So Bud, in that convoluted and confusing book of Hebrews, we read a bit about what Jesus experienced in his lifetime which qualified him to be called Son of God; also the things that Jesus lived through that we might identify with. It tells us that Jesus prayed with loud cries and tears, to the one who was able to save him from death and learned through what he suffered. this directly refers back to those moments the night before Jesus is crucified when he prayed to God in the Garden of Gethsemane, “Take this cup away from me...”. It is one of the most profound moments in Jesus’ life, a moment where he has to make a decision who he is going to be, who he is going to listen to. We worship with each other in this**

place on a regular basis, but rarely do we have the opportunity to openly reflect on those times when we may have prayed with loud cries and tears to God. We might be surprised how many of us know what that is like? Have there been those moments in your life? (Response – Ben’s death; marital divorce; job trauma physically and emotionally)

Sometimes our heart-felt prayers are not answered in the ways we wanted or hoped; sometimes death enters in and our prayers are answered in unexpected ways in the midst of grieving a death, a loss, or trauma and the after-effects. Through our suffering, it is possible that we learn, just as Jesus did. What, if anything, did you learn in such pivotal moments? (Response -God’s presence through it all)

God appointed Jesus our leader in the faith, our priest, to show us the way. In no way should we make the mistake that Jesus didn’t cry out to God in pain and tears, didn’t question the path he was on. He was human, the text calls it “in the days of his flesh,” and had the feelings of a human; if he wasn’t, then how could we ever be expected to follow him through our times of suffering, doubt, and confusion? Imagine if you will, Jesus kneeling beside you whenever you pray. Every day of our life, we are confronted with choices regarding who we will be, who we will listen to, and what path we will follow. It is a process of being chiseled and molded into the person God created us to be. With Jesus as our guide, our mentor, we can find that path towards wholeness, wellness and hope. Jesus’ path becomes our hope for one day realizing “peace on earth, good will to all.”