

*But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities;  
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.  
Isaiah 53:5*

Before we can celebrate the victory of Christ's resurrection, we must acknowledge "The Passion of Christ." It's that time of suffering before his ultimate death and often you will probably hear it referred to as "Passion Week."

After Passover, we see Him in The Garden of Gethsemane praying with such agony of soul that His sweat "became like great drops of blood falling to the ground" (Luke 22:44). Judas betrays him with a kiss. Peter vehemently denies Him. The Pharisees falsely accuse Him. And the disciples abandon Him. Christ is arrested and brought to trial. Back-and-forth they move him between the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman authorities with the final sentencing — the crucifixion of an innocent Messiah. He is tortured and hung on a cross. No anesthesia. A slow dreadful death.

Within a small amount of time, Christ experiences suffering like few have ever known. A suffering called "The Passion" because it shows a complete and perfect willingness to suffer for what He loved. You.

The Passion is the unfailing, everlasting love of Christ, who suffers of His own volition for His beloved creation. It is unconditional love on display.

A young student asked Karl Barth to share the most significant theological truth he had discovered in all of his years of study. Barth, one of the most proven theologians of the 20th century, wrote approximately sixty volumes of commentaries and theological studies. This brilliant man that many called the most important theologian of modern times thought for a moment, smiled, and said, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

When we reflect on The Passion of Christ and all that He suffered for us, it should intensify our expressive devotion to Him. When we understand the unlimited amount of love God has for us, it changes our lives.

### **REFLECTION**

- How has God's love for you brought change in your life in essence, expression, behavior, desires, identity and security?
- Remind yourself daily, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

### **PRAYER FOR THE DAY**

*Lord, help me know your love. You demonstrated your love for me by sending your son to die on the cross for my sin, even when I was still abounding in sin. I accept your gift and pray that you will help me rest in the knowledge that you are love and love me completely and unconditionally. In Jesus' name, Amen.*