

JESUS' LOVE AND SACRIFICE

Meditation

"But he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds, we are healed," (Isiah53.5)

"He bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that he might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed" (1Peter 2:24)

Consider: Jesus' sacrifice began earlier than the events of Good Friday—his suffering and death. It began the moment he took human form.

According to Scripture, Jesus is the son of God. He is the One who spoke the universe into existence. He breathed life into the human race. Jesus possessed all the attributes of God. His presence dwarfed the universe. His power and knowledge were limitless.

Yet Jesus laid all this aside in order to come to earth and dwell with his creation as a human being. He left heaven for a life of rejection, ridicule and betrayal on a planet plagued by death and sin. He became a baby, entirely dependent on his mother for care, and allowed himself to experience pain, sickness exhaustion, humiliation and ultimately death. He submitted himself to restrictions like hunger and thirst. He squeezed infinite presence into human flesh.

During his life Jesus gave up the comforts of home and family in order to proclaim his kingdom to others. He sacrificed his time and energy to teach, heal, comfort and challenge people.

He transformed lives, but those changed lives came at a tremendous personal cost. He was willing to pay that price for one reason:

" LOVE "

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters" (1 John 3:16)

Before Jesus died on the cross, he laid down his life in hundreds, even thousands, of smaller ways: healing touch, social visit, word of insight into God's nature, a loving gaze that said,

"You may be overlooked by society, but I see you, I know you. You value. You matter."

Such instances of everyday love and sacrifice can resonate for a lifetime. That's why Jesus' followers are urged to follow his example.

Questions to guide your reflections on Jesus' sacrificial love.

- When was the last time you were the recipient of an act of sacrificial love? What impact did it have on you?
- What are the biggest obstacles you face when it comes to demonstrating sacrificial love to others?
- Who is someone who is difficult to love?
- What specific actions can you take during this Easter season to show sacrificial love to those in need?

PRAYER

God, thank you for sending your Son to this earth. He exemplified sacrificial love in so many ways. Help me to follow his example by demonstrating love for others especially in this Easter season. Amen.