

Persue His Passion

Whether or not we can comprehend the Passion of Christ, it shows Gods loves us.

Two years ago, Christians flocked to theaters by the tens of thousands to see Mel Gibson's The Passion of the Christ. Never before in the history of filmmaking had moviegoers been so blatantly confronted with the horrific act of Jesus' crucifixion in such graphic detail.

I'm sure after the film ended and the last credit rolled from the screen many viewers were challenged by the thought that Jesus endured such inconceivable pain and injustice because He loved them. They may have struggled to understand the type of love that goes so deep that no crown of thorns, cat-o'-nine-tails whip or rugged cross could ever separate anyone from it.

No doubt thousands of believers walked away knowing in their hearts that the passion depicted in the movie was not only a portrayal of the unconditional love the Father freely gives to us, but also an example of the kind of love He expects us to exemplify in our daily walk before others.

Whether or not we can comprehend the Passion of Christ and His crucifixion, they show that God loves us. But what is your level of passion for Him? When was the last time a thought about the goodness of God interrupted your day? Have you felt that no-holds-barred, sold-out-for-Jesus love for God lately? What about the last time you took a praise break to thank God for His many blessings in your life?

Take a moment right now to evaluate your yearning for the things of God. Do you need a passion tune-up? It is important

to question ourselves about these things because what we focus on the most becomes the strongest influence in our lives.

So what is taking your focus away from God? Are you distracted by sinful impulses or worldly desires? What makes you question the Father and His promises to you? Is it your finances, your relationships, your job? Whatever it is, it can and will be adjusted just as soon as your passion gets a tune-up! Rest assured, anything worth having is worth pursuing.

I often encounter despondent people who say, "Paula, my marriage is in a shamble, my children have rebelled, my job is in jeopardy, and it seems as if God has left me." I don't judge them because there were times in my own life when it looked as if everything was going wrong and God had turned His back on me in the midst of my pain.

But I have learned that it only seems as if our prayers are falling on deaf ears. A wise person once told me, "The teacher never speaks while the pupil is taking the test."

If you have ever been completely down with no obvious hope in sight, then you know for yourself that God's love and presence are unyielding. We have become the unsteady factor!

What would happen if we were to hold tight to that "loving feeling" we first experienced, when the newness of God was our spiritual bread and butter? What if we made a decision to pursue God more each day than the day before—no matter what comes our way. If we were to do that, our passion would be continually renewed.

If you want to fully experience and maintain your passion for

God, you will have to work at it. As you learned from The Passion of the Christ, this kind of relentless love is not for the fainthearted. You will have to renew your mind to restore its focus on God. The power of the Holy Spirit, coupled with self-discipline, is at the core of your transformation.

If you are not dedicating the first quiet moments of your day to God, I highly recommend that you do so. Before any of the day's pressures can distract you, give thanks and praise to God, and then sit and allow Him to pour into your spirit.

As we celebrate the resurrection of Christ this month, we must remember that true passion for God is born in His presence. Only there can we begin to walk in the love He demonstrated for us 2,000 years ago at Calvary.

Paula White co-pastors Without Walls International Church in Tampa, Florida, with her husband, Randy, and preaches extensively throughout the United States and other countries. She is the author of He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not (Charisma House) and Deal With It (Thomas Nelson). For more ministry information, visit .