

Devotion from Jesus I Will Ponder Now: *Make Me See*

Make me see your great distress, Anguish and affliction
Bonds and stripes and wretchedness and your crucifixion
Make me see how scourge and rod, Spear and nails did wound you
How for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you

Christian Worship Hymn 98 stanza 2

I love beautiful paintings of Jesus loving little children, smiling and blessing them. I love images that reflect His warming love and peaceful grace; the comforting reminders that I am His child.

But that is not the picture here. We sing, "Make me see your great distress" – and not just a general view – this haunting melody drives us to remember the anguish that must have distorted His face and body; the affliction as He suffered the punishment of hell. Bonds and stripes, wretchedness – this is not a pleasant image but the hymn writer knows we need to dwell here. MAKE ME see how scourge and rod, spear and nails did wound you! My tender heart says, "No! Don't make me look!" but my spirit cries out to see His incomparable suffering – to look – and to remember. Because what I see in that wretched image is the payment for sin. "How for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you." This is how it had to happen; how God would accomplish it! The death of Christ paid for the sins of those who whipped stripes into His body without mercy. It bought forgiveness for those who mockingly crowned Him with thorns. His bloody sacrifice was poured out for those who hatefully crucified Him.

And then as I look, I see it. I see the payment for my sins. I see that all my failures and shortcomings drove the whips and nails into his body. It was my guilt that caused him the torment of hell. As much as it grieves me to look, and as uncomfortable as I am with the image - it is what I need to see. I must look to remember the price of sin and the depth of His love. I must look so I never become casual about Christ, never lukewarm or ungrateful. I will look because the darkness of hell and ugliness of sin make the gospel that much sweeter and oh, so needed. What a blessing to look – to be driven to embrace His forgiveness.

Make yourself look – you'll never take grace for granted again.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, as I meditate on your passion, burn on my heart the image of your suffering that I always remember how desperately I need you. Remind me that without your payment for sin, I would suffer in hell for eternity. I know my sins caused your suffering and I repent of them Lord and pray for your forgiveness. Give me the assurance that because you suffered, died and rose my salvation is secure. You are my Savior. Let me never take that for granted but let it instill in me a desire to love you and seek you in your Word. Thank you Jesus for all you have done to make me yours. In your holy name I pray, Amen.

This devotion was written by Naomi Schmidt and reviewed by President Emeritus, Armin Panning.