

3.2.2020

For Reflection:

This week as we *Grow Deeper* in Mark 14:32-42 we will spend some time in Gethsemane. Jesus is preparing for his death and with him we, as disciples, are being called to “die to self.” This does not mean that you as a person do not matter; that you are bad, or undeserving of God’s attention. The self we want to die (separate) from is the “sin” self. Sin is anything that breaks the relationship with God. If you need help understanding what types of things these are, there is a list called the Ten Commandments (Ex 20 & Deut 5).

We have learned to feel at home with the false sin self and are usually afraid to know the truth about ourselves. We really should not fear. Jesus, who had no sin self from which to separate is full of compassion. Compassion (feeling with) means he took on all our troubles, our pain, and our sin, and he allowed himself to be pressed.

Out of a pressed olive comes rich oil. Out of Jesus’ pressing comes love. Come be pressed with Jesus, and do not be afraid for out of our pressing comes transformation.

Today’s Scripture:

Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering,

yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

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 (Isaiah 53:4-5 NIV).*

Question to Ponder:

By Jesus’ compassion/forgiveness/love we are healed. Do you feel God’s love for you? For what would you like God to forgive you?

Prayer: Compassionate God, I don’t know if I want to know the extent of your suffering on my behalf. I would like to know of your love. I have an idea that I cannot know one without the other. Amen.

Practice: Confession - to “surrender our weakness and faults to the forgiving love of Christ and embrace practices that lead to transformation.”

Imagine you are in a safe place. Remember you are surrounded by the love of God. Using the Ten Commandments as your guide, journal your sins. Ask God to

forgive you and help you change. (You can burn your list in a symbolic act of what it means to have God remove your sins from you.)

(adapted from *The Spiritual Discipline Handbook*, Adele Ahlberg Calhoun/Confession)