*The Passion*

I think the Passion is beyond words yet perhaps a powerful image can catch a glimpse of what the Passion means. One writer portrays a vivid image. It’s a famous poem that at first glance seems unimpressive, but in depth is subtly potent. The poem is *The Red Wheelbarrow* by *William Carlos Williams.*

*So much depends*

*Upon*

*A red wheel*

*Barrow*

*Glazed with rain*

*Water*

*Beside the White*

*Chickens.*

Sounds too simple right? But take a closer look. It’s subtle yet every word is potent. Let’s look at this from a Christian perspective, though it could be read through other lenses too. Let’s look at the word *depends* in the first line. We depend upon Christ for salvation. We can’t do it on our own. Let’s look at the second group of words, *A red wheel barrow*. The wheelbarrow is *red l*ike Jesus’ blood, and symbolically, folks need the wheelbarrow for survival. The blood is from the chickens which provide sustenance. Let’s look at the third group of words, *Glazed with rain water*. When we are washed in baptismal waters, we are symbolically washed in the Blood of the Lamb which purifies us from all sin. We are purified, renewed and refreshed. Let’s look at the final coupling of words, *White chickens*. The chickens are *white* which is a word symbolic of purity. The chickens are an innocent sacrifice just like Jesus. Wow. Pretty amazing. We can see why this poem is famous.

Jesus loved us so much from the cross. In fact, Thomas a Kempis, a famous spiritual writer, said that we could gain more wisdom from gazing at the cross for fifteen minutes, than by reading many books. Why? Well, the cross allows us to glimpse what is beyond perception. I know that’s a contradiction but bear with me. God’s love is unimaginable and beyond words because it is Infinite. Yet, perhaps we can catch a glimpse of the Infinite? We can do this by looking at the cross. When you look at the cross and most are toned down too much; we don’t see any blood anymore. Maybe too much blood would scare folks. Still, I think we could have a little more. Why? Jesus shed so much blood for us He would have been unrecognizable, one massive wound of bloody flesh. When we look at a cross with blood streaming from His wounds, we can see that Jesus holds nothing back. He loves each one of us with everything He’s got. You can’t look at the cross and say that Jesus is holding back. He gives all. You can’t look at the cross and say that Jesus won’t forgive you. He not only died but was brutalized just for you. You can’t look at the cross and say that Jesus doesn’t love you . . . even more than yourself! His love is Infinite, blinding, beyond perception. Yet, perhaps . . . perhaps . . . the cross is a brilliant glimpse? ---just remember *The Red Wheelbarrow*.