

A Simple Creature Unlettered.-Which Creature Afore Desired Three Gifts of God

by Julian of Norwich

Julian of Norwich shares her desires for three gifts from God: a deeper understanding of Christ's Passion, bodily sickness to the point of death, and three wounds of contrition, compassion, and longing for God.

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Psalm 51:17, Psalm 63:1, Luke 22:44, Philippians 3:10

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Suffering And Faith"

Description

Julian of Norwich shares her revelations from the year 1373, where she desired three gifts from God: a deeper understanding of Christ's Passion, a severe sickness to draw closer to God, and to receive three spiritual wounds. She longed to experience the physical and emotional pain of Christ's suffering, to be purged through sickness for a deeper connection with God, and to receive spiritual wounds of contrition, compassion, and longing for God. Julian's ultimate desire was to fully surrender to God's will, seeking a closer relationship and a deeper spiritual journey.

Transcript

THESE Revelations were shewed to a simple creature unlettered,⁷ the year of our Lord 1373, the Thirteenth day of May. Which creature [had] afore desired three gifts of God. The First was mind of His Passion; the Second was bodily sickness in youth, at thirty years 3 of age; the Third was to have of God's gift three wounds. As to the First, methought I had some feeling in the Passion of Christ, but yet I desired more by the grace of God. Methought I would have been that time with Mary Magdalene, and with other that were Christ's lovers, and therefore I desired a bodily sight wherein I might have more knowledge of the bodily pains of our Saviour and of the compassion of our Lady and of all His true lovers that saw, that time, His pains.

For I would be one of them and suffer with Him. Other sight nor shewing of God desired I never none, till the soul were departed from the body. The cause of this petition was that after the shewing I should have the more true mind in the Passion of Christ. The Second came to my mind with contrition; [I] freely desiring that sickness [to be] so hard as to death, that I might in that sickness receive all my rites of Holy Church, myself thinking that I should die, and that all creatures might suppose the same that saw me: for I would have no manner of comfort of earthly life.

In this sickness I desired to have all manner of pains bodily and ghostly that I should have if I should die, (with all the dreads and tempests of the fiends) except the outpassing of the soul. And this I meant⁸ for [that] I would be purged, by the mercy of God, and afterward live more to the worship of God because of that sickness. And that for the more furthering⁹ in my death: for I desired to be soon with my God. These two desires of the Passion and the sickness I desired with a condition, saying thus: Lord, Thou knowest⁴ what I would,--if it be Thy will that I have it--; and if it be not Thy will, good Lord, be not displeased: for I will nought but as Thou wilt.

For the Third [petition], by the grace of God and teaching of Holy Church I conceived a mighty desire to receive three wounds in my life: that is to say, the wound of very contrition, the wound of kind compassion,¹⁰ and the wound of steadfast¹¹ longing toward God.¹² And all this last petition I asked without any condition. These two desires aforesaid passed from my mind, but the third dwelled with me continually.

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