

# I Desired to Suffer With Him

by Julian of Norwich

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*Julian of Norwich shares her experience of near-death and her desire to love God more, ultimately desiring to suffer with Christ.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:4, Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21

**Topics:** "Suffering And Trust", "Christian Suffering"

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## Description

Julian of Norwich shares her profound experience of facing a life-threatening illness, expressing her unwavering trust in God's mercy and her desire to love and know God more deeply. Despite the fear of death, she longed to live solely for the purpose of loving God better and experiencing His eternal bliss in Heaven. Through her suffering and near-death encounter, Julian reflects on the significance of surrendering to God's will and finding comfort in the image of the Crucifix, ultimately desiring to share in Christ's passion and have a deeper connection with Him.

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## Transcript

AND when I was thirty years old and a half, God sent me a bodily sickness, in which I lay three days and three nights; and on the fourth night I took all my rites of Holy Church, and weened not to have lived till day. And after this I languored forth<sup>13</sup> two days and two nights, and on the third night I weened oftentimes to have passed;<sup>14</sup> and so weened they that were with me. And being in youth as yet, I thought it great sorrow to die;--but for nothing that was in earth that meliked to live for, nor for no pain that I had fear of: for I<sup>5</sup> trusted in God of His mercy.

But it was to have lived that I might have loved God better, and longer time, that I might have the more knowing and loving of God in bliss of Heaven. For methought all the time that I had lived here so little and so short in regard of that endless bliss,--I thought [it was as] nothing. Wherefore I thought: Good Lord, may my living no longer be to Thy worship!<sup>15</sup> And I understood by my reason and by my feeling of my pains that I should die; and I assented fully with all the will of my heart to be at God's will.

Thus I dured till day, and by then my body was dead from the middle downwards, as to my feeling. Then was I minded to be set upright, backward leaning, with help,--for to have more freedom of my heart to be at God's will, and thinking on God while my life would last. My Curate was sent for to be at my ending, and by that time when he came I had set my eyes, and might<sup>16</sup> not speak. He set the Cross before my face and said: I have brought thee the Image of thy Master and Saviour: look thereupon and comfort thee therewith.

Methought I was well [as it was], for my eyes were set uprightward unto Heaven, where I trusted to come by the mercy of God; but nevertheless I assented to set my eyes on the face of the Crucifix, if I might; and so I did. For methought I might<sup>17</sup> longer dure to look evenforth<sup>18</sup> than right up. After this my sight began to fail, and it was all dark about me in the chamber, as if it had been night, save in <sup>6</sup> the Image of the Cross whereon I beheld a common light; and I wist not how.

All that was away from<sup>19</sup> the Cross was of horror to me, as if it had been greatly occupied by the fiends. After this the upper<sup>20</sup> part of my body began to die, so far forth that scarcely I had any feeling;--with shortness of breath. And then I weened in sooth to have passed. And in this [moment] suddenly all my pain was taken from me, and I was as whole (and specially in the upper part of my body) as ever I was afore. I marvelled at this sudden change; for methought it was a privy working of God, and not of nature.

And yet by the feeling of this ease I trusted never the more to live; nor was the feeling of this ease any full ease unto me: for methought I had liefer have been delivered from this world. Then came suddenly to my mind that I should desire the second wound of our Lord's gracious gift: that my body might be fulfilled with mind and feeling of His blessed Passion. For I would that His pains were my pains, with compassion and afterward longing to God. But in this I desired never bodily sight nor shewing of God, but compassion such as a kind<sup>21</sup> soul might have with our Lord Jesus, that for love would be a mortal man: and therefore I desired to suffer with Him.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/julian-of-norwich/i-desired-to-suffer-with-him/>

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