

Thus Was I Learned to Choose Jesus for My Heaven, Whom I Saw Only in Pain at That Time

by Julian of Norwich

Julian of Norwich reflects on her profound choice of Jesus as her true Heaven, emphasizing the interplay between suffering and divine grace.

Scripture: Psalm 73:25, Romans 8:6, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:2

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Divine Grace"

Description

Julian of Norwich reflects on her profound spiritual experience of choosing Jesus as her Heaven amidst great suffering, finding comfort in the assurance that He would unbind her when He willed. She emphasizes the importance of always choosing Jesus as our ultimate destination, whether in times of joy or sorrow, recognizing the inward spiritual life as superior to the outward fleshly struggles. Julian highlights the divine grace that draws the inward and outward parts together, leading to eternal unity and bliss through Christ's virtue.

Transcript

IN this [time] I would have looked up from the Cross, but I durst not. For I wist well that while I beheld in the Cross I was surely-safe; therefore I would not assent to put my soul in peril: for away from the Cross was no sureness, for frightening of fiends. Then had I a proffer in my reason,⁷³ as if it had been friendly said to me: Look up to Heaven to His Father. And then saw I well, with the faith that I felt, that there was nothing betwixt the Cross and Heaven that might have harmed me.

Either me behoved to look up or else to answer. I answered inwardly with all the might of my soul, and said: Nay; I may not: for Thou art my Heaven. This I said for that I would not. For I would liever have been in that pain till Doomsday than to come to Heaven otherwise than by Him. For I wist well that He that bound me so sore, He should unbind me when that He would. Thus was I learned to choose Jesus to my Heaven, whom I saw only in pain at that time: meliked no other Heaven than Jesus, which shall be my bliss when I come there.

And this hath ever been a comfort to me, that I chose Jesus to my Heaven, by His grace, in all this time of Passion and sorrow; and that hath been a learning to me that I should evermore do so: choose only Jesus to my Heaven in weal and woe. And though I as a wretched creature had repented me ⁴² (I said afore if I had wist what pain it would be, I had been loth to have prayed), here saw I truly that it was reluctance and

frailty of the flesh without assent of the soul: to which God assigneth no blame.

Repenting and willing choice be two contraries which I felt both in one at that time. And these be [of our] two parts: the one outward, the other inward. The outward part is our deadly flesh-hood, which is now in pain and woe, and shall be, in this life: whereof I felt much in this time; and that part it was that repented. The inward part is an high, blissful life, which is all in peace and in love: and this was more inwardly felt; and this part is [that] in which mightily, wisely and with steadfast will I chose Jesus to my Heaven.

And in this I saw verily that the inward part is master and sovereign to the outward, and doth not charge itself with, nor take heed to, the will of that: but all the intent and will is set to be oned unto our Lord Jesus. That the outward part should draw the inward to assent was not shewed to me; but that the inward draweth the outward by grace, and both shall be oned in bliss without end, by the virtue of Christ,--this was shewed. TOC

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