

## A Dialogue with the Crucified God

Many years ago, I wrote a meditation that I called "A Dialogue with the Crucified God," to help people experience what I am so feebly trying to describe here. I suggest you wait until you have an open, quiet, and solitary slot of time, then pray it out loud so your ears can hear your own words from your own mouth. In addition, I suggest that you place yourself before a tender image of the crucified Jesus that will allow you to both give and receive.

And know two things before you begin:

- We need images to reveal inner states. You are going to look at an image of what humans deny and are most afraid of: exposure, shame, vulnerability, and failure. Like a homeopathic medicine, Jesus became the problem on full display—to free us from that very problem. The cross withdraws the curtain of both denial and fear from our eyes and from our psyches. Jesus became the victim so we could stop victimizing others or playing the victim ourselves.
- Any authentic image of the crucified one is already an image of resurrection. The open arms and the knowing gaze are already the victory over any suffering.

### JESUS SPEAKS TO YOU FROM THE CROSS

I am what you are most afraid of: your deepest, most wounded, and naked self. I am what you do to what you could love.

I am your deepest goodness and your deepest beauty,



which you deny and disfigure. Your only badness consists in what you do to goodness—your own and anybody else's.

You run away from, and you even attack, the only thing that will really transform you. But there is nothing to hate or to attack. If you try, you will become a mirror image of the same.

Embrace it all in me. I am yourself. I am all of creation. I am everybody and every thing.

#### YOU SPEAK BACK TO THE CRUCIFIED ONE

Brother Jesus, you are my life, which I deny. You are my death, which I fear. I embrace them both in you. Now I recognize—through you and because of you—that death and life are not opposites. You are my full self—exposed. You are infinite in action, which makes me infinite in becoming. This is my divine possibility. (*Stay with this thought until it moves beyond words.*)

You, Brother Jesus, are my outrageously ignored and neglected soul. You are what we do to goodness. You are what we do to God. You are the outrageously ignored and neglected soul of every thing. You are what we do to what we should and could love. You are what we do to one another. You are what we do to the Reality right in front of us. You are what we do to ourselves. (*Stay with this until it sinks in.*)

I hate and fear the very things that will save me. May this thought help me to love these things, be patient with them, and even forgive them.

I just cannot let anybody love me "for nothing." I insist on being worthy and deserving. And then I demand the



same of others too. Yet your arms remain outstretched and embracing to all the world.

You alone, Christ Jesus, refuse to be a crucifier, even at the cost of being crucified. You never play the victim or call for any vengeance, but only breathe a universal forgiveness upon the universe from this crucified place—your upside-down throne.

We humans so often hate ourselves, but we mistakenly kill you and others instead.

You always knew we would do this, didn't you? And you accepted it.

Now you invite me out of this endless cycle of illusion and violence toward myself and toward anybody else.

I want to stop crucifying your blessed flesh, this blessed humanity, this holy mother earth.

I thank you, Brother Jesus, for becoming a human being and walking the full journey with me. Now I do not have to pretend that I am God.

This is more than enough and more than good, just to know we are doing it together.

I thank you for becoming finite and limited, so I do not have to pretend that I am infinite or limitless.

I thank you for becoming small and inferior, so I do not have to pretend that I am big and superior to anybody.

I thank you for holding our shame and nakedness so boldly and so publicly, so I do not need to hide or deny our human reality.

I thank you for accepting exclusion and expulsion, being crucified "outside the walls" and allowing me to know that I will meet you exactly there.

I thank you for "becoming sin," so I do not need to deny



my own failures, and can recognize that even my mistakes are the truest and most surprising path to love.

I thank you for becoming weak, so I do not have to pretend to be strong.

I thank you for being willing to be considered imperfect, wrong, and strange, so I do not have to be perfect or right, or idealize the so-called normal.

I thank you for not being loved or liked by so many, so I do not have to try so hard to be loved and liked by anybody.

I thank you for being considered a failure, so I do not have to pretend or even try to be a "success."

I thank you for allowing yourself to be considered wrong by the standards of both state and religion, so I do not have to be right anywhere.

I thank you for being poor in every way, so I do not have to seek being rich in any way.

I thank you, Brother Jesus, for being all of the things that humanity despises and fears, so I can fully accept myself—and everyone else—in and through you!

Crucified Jesus, I thank you for revealing all these things to me in one great image of insight and mercy. Yes, what the medieval mystics said is true, *Crux probat omnia*—"The cross legitimates/proves/uses everything." (*Stay with this Christian maxim until it make sense to you.*)

I want to love you in this form, Brother Jesus. I need to love you in this way, or I will never be free or happy in this world.

You and I, Brother Jesus, we are the same.