



YOU'RE NOT ALONE

July 2019

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,

Philippians 3:10-11

When I experience emotional pain I'd give anything to have friends and family appreciate what I'm going through. This is especially so when I'm finding it hard to continue—when I truly need someone to know how bad I feel.

Describing our pain to others is almost impossible. Though friends try putting themselves in our shoes to understand, they seldom can. In fact, they might instead develop doubts about how bad our pain really is. Suffering is a lonely business.

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But think of how Jesus must have felt with all he went through. Remember Gethsemane when he had asked his disciples to stay with him during his agony? They fell asleep. (Matthew 26:36-46) Jesus too knew what it was to be alone and in anguish. He felt the greatest pain imaginable.

When you suffer, Jesus feels along with you. He participates with you. Draw close to him. He's your friend—your brother. (Rom 8:29) You don't have to be alone.

Imagine how it would be if you were to consider *Jesus'* suffering, if you were to empathize with *his* pain in the way he empathizes with yours. You'd feel the distress together. As the Bible says, you would be in fellowship with Jesus, (1Cor 1:9), drawing even closer than before.

Scientists have shown that many married couples start to look alike after a long marriage. The following from *Bright Side** describes how relationships between married couples make them who they are. It helped me see how—in a similar way—spending time with Jesus helps make us who we are.

"Couples who are in tune with each other often mirror each other's habits and body language. It shows that there's emotional comfort and trust in their relationship. Scientists state that partners tend to change their own habits throughout their married life." (Bright Side - <https://brightside.me/wonder-curiosities/>)

When you stay close to Jesus through a period of suffering you're bound to take on some of his characteristics. You'll follow him closer than you did. As he models his love for you and for others, you'll be moved to love as he does. Caring for others will come more naturally—from the heart.

Suffering can be excruciatingly painful and sometimes lasts a long time. But keeping Jesus close through such a time will transform you. You'll develop more strength, more courage, more faith.

The Spirit of Christ will be living within you. You'll never have to be alone again.

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