

As I Lay Dying

By Richard John Neuhaus

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Several years ago, a ruptured tumor almost killed Richard John Neuhaus. During a series of complicated operations, weeks in critical condition, and months in slow recovery, he was brought face to face with his own mortality. As he lay dying and, as it turned out, recovering, he found that despite his faith he had been quite unprepared for the experience. This book traces his efforts to understand his own reactions and those of his friends and family, and explores how we as a culture understand and deal with death.As I Lay Dying testifies that dying is-and is not-part of living. We can and should live our dying. Neuhaus interweaves his own story with thoughtful inquiry, circling through philosophy, psychology, literature, theology, and his own experiences to create provocative meditations that explore the many aspects of dying: the private and public experience, the separation of the soul from the body, grief, surrender, and mourning. The result is a book that shakes the foundations of our being-and yet is oddly and convincingly tranquil.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Every night as we lay down to sleep we practice a form of death, according to Richard Neuhaus in *As I Lay Dying*. The rhythm of life and death is indeed as natural as the rhythm of waking and sleeping. But few of us know it as literally as does Neuhaus, who found himself drifting in and out of consciousness after a tumor ruptured his intestines and the subsequent botched surgery caused internal hemorrhaging. One night he was visited by two beings, which he calls angels, who assured him that "Everything is ready now." Dramatic as all this sounds, *As I Lay Dying* is not so much Neuhaus's near-death-experience tale as it is a Christian discussion of death from the vantage point of a Catholic priest who heard death knocking at his door.

This is not a feel-good book about the white light and smiling family members at the end of the tunnel. Relying on Scripture, Catholic doctrine, and the words of poets and famous writers, Neuhaus ponders questions such as: Can the soul live on, separate from the body? Is it possible to have death with dignity? How is it that we can be propelled into a tailspin of grief over one death, but be indifferent to the ethnic slaughter of millions in central Africa? Is there really life after death? Christians who are close to death, whether it be their own or that of a loved one, may find this a useful companion, if only for Neuhaus's willingness to shed light on our darkest fears while being brave enough to not know all the answers. --*Gail Hudson*

From Publishers Weekly
"I almost died." With those three words that form the theme of his latest work, Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and former Lutheran pastor, recalls his brush with death and his thoughts as he was passing through it. Readers in search of sure answers and sweet comfort about the fate that awaits every human being may not be interested in this series of reflections. But those willing to join Neuhaus in pondering the complexities of mortality and the Christian promise of eternal life will emerge all the richer from his sojourn into mystery. Seven years ago, Neuhaus nearly died when a tumor ruptured in his intestines, wreaking havoc on his body and plunging him to the brink of death. As he lay dying in an intensive-care unit, he became keenly aware of his condition, particularly the possibility of his soul separating from his body, and of the reactions of those closest to him. His musings, mercifully free of minutiae from his medical chart, are wholly honest and hardly the stuff of those death-and-dying books that seek to remove all fear from every person's passage out of this world. But they also offer some succor to people of faith. For example, in analyzing his own "near-death experience," in which two seemingly heavenly beings inform him that "everything is ready now," Neuhaus lifts the veil ever so slightly into the life beyond. His report is worth examining by all who have considered their own death or faced that of another.

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From Library Journal
The one event that everyone experiences is death always a disturbing thought. Even people who firmly believe in an afterlife and are convinced that they are headed straight for paradise often fear death. We don't even like to use the word: instead of referring to people as having died, we say that they have passed away. Several years ago, Neuhaus, a Catholic priest well known to readers of religious literature and president of the Institute on Religion and Public Life, suffered a ruptured tumor and a series of appalling medical fiascoes, which left him on what seemed to be his deathbed. Miraculously, he recovered, having experienced dying but not death, and his book relates his thoughts about various aspects of life and death. Yes, dear

reader, he did have a "near-death experience" but not of the bright-light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel sort. Neuhaus's was much less dramatic and much more credible. Neuhaus is an experienced and gifted writer. His book is not easy to read, but it is certainly worth the effort. Appropriate for public and academic libraries with collections related to theological and philosophical aspects of death. Mary Prokop, Savannah Country Day Preparatory Sch., GA
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Shawn Marsh:

This As I Lay Dying book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This As I Lay Dying without we comprehend teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't become worry As I Lay Dying can bring whenever you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even telephone. This As I Lay Dying having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

Kelsey Palermo:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be update about what going on or details even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is always change and move forward. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to you is you don't know which you should start with. This As I Lay Dying is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Leona Tidwell:

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Brian Hill:

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