

November 17

All things work together for good

We know that for those who love God, that is, for those who are called according to His purpose, all things are working together for good. (Romans 8:28 ISV)

Go back to the place where, for the time being, the Lord has put you, where He has called you to live your life and do your work in all the trial and difficulty and suffering of it, and do not strain to get out of it. Do not lose the present value of it by always living mentally or hopefully in a time when you will be out of it, but go back there and recognize that if you are the Lord's, if you love God and are called according to purpose (as you are if you are in Christ), God is seeking to do something with you and in you by means of the conditions of your present situation. You will only defeat God's end if you try to get out, and will fail to recognize and accept what He is seeking to do. I can think of few things more regrettable and grievous than that we should look back upon any part of our life and have to say, "I might have realized some great purpose of God in that period of my life if only I had taken another attitude toward it than the one I did take; I was chafing, impatient, all the time looking for a way of escape; I was rebellious, living in another mental world of my own creating, in which I would do and be this and that; and I missed all that God intended at that time." I say, there can be few things more grievous than that.

So we must go back to the sphere and conditions in which the Lord has placed us, with this attitude – God has a thought which relates to me as one of His Own; and that thought is, that through the conditions and sufferings of my life He should develop in me the features of His Son. On the one hand, the features of the old creation may be seen to be more and more terrible and horrible, as I recognize them in myself; but over against that God is doing something which is other than myself, not me at all. He is bringing into being Another, altogether other, and that is His Son. Slowly, all too slowly; nevertheless something is happening. That sonship is not very much manifested yet, but it is going to be manifested. What God has been doing will come out into the light eventually – conformity to the image of His Son; "that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." So we look out upon the people of God on the earth amongst whom we are included, and we have to adjust our ideas as to why we are here. There may be things to do, but God is far more concerned with the being than with the doing, and we have to learn all over again what service is.

By T. Austin-Sparks from: [Conformed to the Image of His Son](#)