

God Means It For Good

by Bruce Smith

Did you ever watch an old tube television set warm up? You turn it on and the sound comes first, then the tiniest dot of a picture gradually spreads to fill the screen, and then it focuses to reveal lifelike forms that are easily recognized.

Do you remember what it was like waiting for all this to happen, particularly if you were anxious to see something that was on and worried that you might be missing it?

You sit on the edge of your chair, muttering to yourself, fidgeting uselessly with the knobs, for the picture will come only when it is ready to come. Meddling with mechanics you know so little about can only hinder the arrival of that awaited picture. So finally you resign yourself to the fact that you've done all you can to bring the picture by simply turning the set on. Knowing that it is connected to the power, you may now stretch out in your recliner and watch the image appear before your eyes.

You are reading this because, like myself, you have to some degree an inner desire, an expectant yearning, to see the picture of completion — the answer to all questions — the appeasement of your insatiable inquisitiveness. So do I have to explain my parable? Have you learned, as I have, to stop trying to bring the picture yourself, much less attempt to aid the supplying power?

I recently shared with a friend that both the greatest asset and the largest obstacle to my discovery of union life truths has been my mind. First, I was spurred on by a mysterious knowledge that there was indeed more than the up and down life I experienced as a "successful" Christian. Then, when confronted with truth, the same mind wanted to dissect it, figure out how it worked, and control it by mastering its secret of power. Which brings me around to my theme — God meant it all for good.

For it was the mind of Christ in me the entire time, providing me with precisely what was needed, molding me to the point where I could recognize the promised conformity to the image of His Son!

You ask me if I really believe that every question asked, every dead-end faced, every door opened was His perfect way to guide me to my present awareness, rather than me thwarting His divine efforts of grace. My answer is that I know it was all as He planned. It was necessary for me to spend time (not waste time) spinning dials in vain, for only then could I be convinced of the futility in doing such, and be cornered into giving up all self-effort. The illusory will had to be broken, and mine was just as strong as- anyone else's.

So I'm not one to complain about "wasted years." There are no such things. Even the vilest offender, acknowledging forgiveness on his deathbed, cannot justifiably suggest that God "should have come sooner," nor reason that his life drenched in sin prevented an omnipotent God from gaining a previous entrance. How absurd! The released, manifest power of God through the Holy Spirit is irresistible. When we see God in total control, we not only are seeing the focused picture, but also gaining incredible insight for those around us.

Knowing (not just believing) that "*God means it for good*" releases us from the habitual manipulation of circumstances that we perform "for God." There is no more need to manage the affairs of a prodigal brother or sister, for we can release the power of God into instant manifestation by simply acknowledging that God is accomplishing whatever He desires. What release! And I find that it is true. Over and over again. How does it work? I refuse to offer suggestions. It is clearly much more pleasant in my recliner viewing the

finished picture than it was on the floor, struggling to produce it myself. A dear friend shared with me just last night that she "has no more questions." When you realize, in faith, that you contain The Answer, then all questions become irrelevant. Even understanding the mechanics involved is a mere technicality.

Let me offer this, however, if it can help you to gain some insight into the matter. Before we even turned the television set on, we took it for granted that the sound and picture waves were already in the air. Does anyone test the electricity or call up the station to inquire if they're transmitting before turning on the set? By similar reasoning, does anyone turn on a television if he knows that there is no electricity or if there are no transmissions being made? So you see that there is an act of faith involved in turning the set on. That allows the power to flow uninterruptedly and produce the manifestation for you to see.

But, you say, it requires little faith to turn on a television set and expect a picture to appear. We don't even give thought to the waves in the air — we know they're there. And so it can be with God. Each begging prayer we make, asking Him to awaken to our needs, is calling the station to see if it is still transmitting. That's their job, so leave it to them. God's "job" is to supply — so why question if He's still in operation? You don't like the picture that you see? Believe (or better yet — know) that He means it for good, and even though you can't discern the mechanics of His plot, don't try to install your own plan. I tell you this not because I'm afraid you may interfere with God's working — that's impossible! I only want to prevent you from further frustration and emptiness, which is exactly what you'll experience. I can heartily attest to that. (But guess what? — God meant even that for good.)

Do you begin to see? Are you ready to sit down in faith and be used? Do you finally recognize the awesome God that encompasses all? It is all so elementary. A child's mind can comprehend and accept it, but for some reason we must make it complicated. But even that is God's proven way of breaking through to most of us. God means it for good. In all details of life. And best of all, it works.