

**Devotional Thoughts :: No storms, assaults, sieges, or pestilences by John Newton**

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(Letters of John Newton)

"We know that all things work together for good to those who love God--to those who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

September 28, 1774.

My dear friend,

Certainly, if my ability was equal to my inclination--I would remove your tumor with a word or a touch--I would exempt you instantly and constantly from every inconvenience and pain! But you are in the hands of One who could do all this and more, and who loves you infinitely better than I can do--and yet He is pleased to permit you to suffer! What is the plain lesson? Certainly, that at the present juncture, He, to whom all events and their consequences are present in one view--sees it better for you to have this tumor than to be without it! There is a cause, a need--be for it!

The promise is express, and literally true--that all things, universally and without exception, shall work together for good to those who love God. But they work together! The smallest as well as the greatest events have their place and use--like the movement of a watch, where, though some pieces have a greater comparative importance than others--yet the smallest pieces have their place and use, and are so far equally important, that the whole design of the machine would be obstructed for lack of them.

Some workings and turns of Divine Providence have a more visible, sensible, and determining influence upon the whole tenor of our lives. But the more ordinary occurrences of every day are adjusted, timed, and suited with equal accuracy--by the hand of the same great Artist who planned and executes the whole! We are sometimes surprised to see how much more depends and turns upon these minor events, than we were aware of. Then we admire His skill, and say, "He has done all things well!"

Such thoughts as these, when I am enabled to realize them, in some measure reconcile me to whatever He allots for my self or my friends; and convinces me of the propriety of that verse, which speaks the language of love, as well as authority, "Be still--and know that I am God!"

I sympathize with you in your severe trial, and pray and trust that your Shepherd will be your Physician. No storms, assaults, sieges, or pestilences, can hurt us--until we have filled up His appointed measure of service! And when our work is done, and He has ripened us for glory--it is no great matter by what means He is pleased to call us home to himself!