

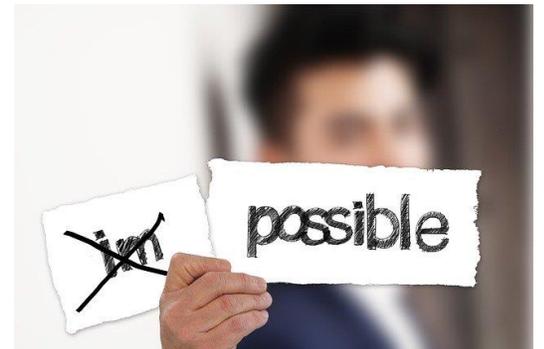
“The Wisest Thing You Can Do. . .”

Has a Bible verse ever made you flinch? How about when someone starts quoting Romans 8:28, “...we know that God causes all things to work together for good...” Now please don’t cancel me yet! It just seems that we always bring this verse out, after something has gone decidedly wrong. “My house burned down last night...” “Well you know that God causes all things to work together...”

Thank you Job’s good friend! (It can leave me wanting to quote Job 13:5. The CSV is the best!) We don’t always trot it out right away after devastation. Sometimes people wait for the proof before they pontificate. Six months after the girl breaks your heart by dumping you, you meet a girl who actually likes you too and what does Grandma have to offer? “Well you know, all things work together...!”

Our small town got locked down at an odd time. The lock down happened two months after a strange illness had swept through our high school sports teams. (Many of the coaches are convinced it was, but who knows?) We had one lady who was sick but also undiagnosed. Then came the lock down, the fear and the isolation as well as the emotional health issues that were bound to follow. But no sickness. I know our small island doesn’t represent “normal”, but we hadn’t faced a single diagnosed case. (We still haven’t.) Which left us wondering Why? For how long? When’s it going to hit? And I suppose like everyone else “Now what?”

By the grace of God, the last question was easily answered. God had provided our church with a couple of young guys on staff, Jackson Standafer and Jonathan Finke, who are part of the technology generation. By their efforts we were able to move forward, almost without a hitch. For some time now we had been talking about going to live streaming but hadn’t received the “push” to make it the highest priority. Covid forced us to take the steps. Even as we have carefully reopened our doors, this technology continues to be a blessing allowing us to reach out to people who cannot, and may never have darkened our doors.



At the same time God and my life coach Ken L. Roberts have been challenging me to step up. My personal gifting runs to pastor/teacher. Speaking is easy for me; visitation... not so much. I have resisted having any kind of an online presence personally. But just as Mr. Rogers, I have come to the conviction that technology offers opportunities to reach out for Christ. Where Covid forced our church, it freed me. Before the lock down, time was limited. But with coaching and visitation no longer even being an option, I received the gift of time needed to move forward in my personal ministry skill sets. In the spring I recorded a video series (in lieu of Sunday School) on getting the most from your personal Bible reading. This summer I invested the time to write another book; a study guide to go along with our fall sermon series on Titus. (think comparable to the books Chuck Swindoll sent out.) Had life and ministry continued on normal lines I may not have accepted the nudge to get ‘er done. But because of the “free time” available, God was able to prompt me to move to the next level in my service.

I guess it is always true that crisis also creates opportunity. This crisis has given us opportunities to grow in our outreach and faithfulness in ways that we may not have moved on for 10 years. None of us would have asked for this season, but God has done with it just what He promised. He has made it work together for good, just like He always does.

God Bless,

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