

How Can the Worst Be the Best?

“They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.”

Acts 4:28 (NIV)

Like others, I have had people seek to do me harm by way of gossip or action. Do not think that I have had an especially difficult life. I have met others who suffered much more than I have. Some of my sorrows have been of my own making and some created against me by the sin of others.

When we are in some exceptionally difficult situation—whether it is a health issue, slander against us, financial ruin, or any other unwanted and invited visitor—we tend to never see good coming from it at the time. We seem to think that the problem will destroy us.

In the lives of the first disciples of Jesus, the matter of His crucifixion was the most disastrous event in their entire lives. It was the worst possible thing that might have happened to their beloved Lord.

They knew of the illegal trial during the night that the Sanhedrin had conducted. John had witnessed it and told them all about it. They also heard that after five times proclaiming Jesus “Not guilty”, Pilate had turned him over to the soldiers for the death penalty.

While the twelve boasted they would follow Jesus to the death, it was a group of women who attended the cross. Bold behind closed doors, the men fled as fast as they could when their world fell apart in Gethsemane.

Only after our Lord proved Himself alive by many indisputable proofs did the church realise that the worst event in history had become the greatest. Between the cross and the resurrection, the disciples all shivered in fear and despair behind closed doors (John 20:19). They wondered how God could make anything good come from such a disaster.

It was through the pain, suffering, and death of the Lord Jesus that the greatest possible good had come to the world. The great good was the plan for forgiveness of sin and the promise that all who believed would be right with God.

Now, in Acts 4, the infant church was being persecuted by the authorities and they went to prayer. They had been in difficulties before, between Good Friday and Resurrection Day. Then they cowered in fear not understanding that God

uses bad things to work good. Now, with the lesson learned, they start their prayer reminding God that the authorities only did to Jesus what the Father had determined beforehand to be done.

It is remarkable that now the believers did not ask for the problem to be removed—only that they would be courageous in the face of frightening opposition (Acts 4:29-30).

They were now brave in the face of opposition and whatever dreadful things the government might dream up against them. Their history of God working past problems out for good was what fed their faith for the present crisis.

Can you see how the Lord took bad things in your past and used them for good? Use that history with God to help you face the present problem regardless of how large it looms on your horizon. It may not be long until you shall see how the worst situation has turned out to be the best by the sovereign grace of God.

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