

Acts 4.23-31 | When things go wrong
Redemption Hill Church | Simon Murphy
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Acts 4.23-31:

James 1.2:

Up until this time, they had only known success and things were going very well. Jesus had been raised from the dead, they watched Him ascend to Heaven, the Holy Spirit was poured out, 3000 got saved at Peter's first sermon, amazing things happened in the church, generosity, giving, sharing, fellowship etc. Then there was a healing, the man at the gate beautiful. ***And then they get arrested!***

Why do bad things happen to good people?

This isn't how God made the world. There is sin in the world. Rebellion to God! This is the cause of problems. And it affects the whole world, not just you and I. We don't live a life based on we get what we deserve. It's a result of our rebellion to God.

Do we really want justice in the world? God is just. Judgment is coming.

God is Sovereign and in charge, and He allows some difficulties in our lives as tests, trials.

James say we should rejoice in them! Why? because when rightly dealt with they draw us nearer to God and are purifying. But when we don't deal with them rightly they destroy us.

Romans 8.28 "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good.." They are redemptive, make us like Christ ***if we respond rightly!***

How did they respond to this opposition and personal challenge? **5 Helpful things.**

1. They went to their friends (vs 23)

This speaks of community. This is why we need the church! Not isolation!

Proverbs 11.14: "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety".

Example: I've been spared from making some dumb mistakes through friends.

What is a good friend?

Honest: Proverbs 27.6: Faithful are the wounds of a friend. Truth in love Eph 4.15

Points you to Jesus (Luke 5.19) Friends are good but they can only do so much!

2. They prayed with their friends (vs 24)

They prayed loud and with a sense of passion. This was loud, corporate, united prayer.

Do you try to make a plan or fix it yourself, or go to God?

Heb 4.15-16: Take your burdens to God. We can't draw away but we need to draw near. This is Hebrews main thing. **This is the crux of trials. Make us run TO Jesus or FROM?!**

How do you draw near? You must see God as good, and as a Father!

3. Recognized God's Nature (vs 24)

Part of sins results is that it has marred our view of God. This was the test in the garden. Will we trust God? And we need to come back to God to see His nature and character.

A failure to obey, love, God is in part a failure to trust Him, believe that He is good!

In the Bible, when people pray, they recognize God's attributes!

Matt 6: "Our Father who art in Heaven".

Jeremiah 32: "Oh Lord, is it not you who have made the Heavens .. nothing is too hard"

Nehemiah 1.5: "O Lord, God of Heaven, the great and awesome God, keeps his cov.."

You may be here and not be a Christian. If you knew what he was like, you'd run to Him!

This shows us that when things go wrong, **we must start by faith with the facts of God** more than the facts of what we physically see. Else we make false deductions about God and His nature!

This is what we learnt in Habakkuk! His nature makes us run to Him!

4. Understood their problem in light of scripture (vs 25)

They saw that Psalm 2 was about the nations being opposed to God's king, ultimately Jesus. The world hates God's king, but God laughs at them, and insists Jesus will rule the universe.

They see a great spiritual conflict happening. The rulers want to oppose anyone claiming allegiance from the people.

Jesus used it. The sword.

Jonah prayed scripture.

We need to come to know Scripture! Are you reading it?!

5. They didn't just wait ..

They don't pray for an easier time. They don't apologize for causing a disturbance. They asked for more! They wanted a greater expression of God's rule and reign on earth, which included preaching the word for salvations and miracles!

Their opposition didn't totally discourage them. It was proof that something was right.

They were men of courage and conviction – Acts 5 'we will obey God rather than man'.

The HS was poured out. God's enabling, His grace is sufficient, to show Himself strong!

When we see that God is in charge and rules the world you want to charge ahead! We know that ultimately we win and we are in the palm of his hand. Jesus never grew weary or discouraged, (Isaiah 42) and when we are in Him we don't get weary or discouraged either.

Jesus promised that in this world there would be troubles. They can ruin your life and destroy your confidence in God or they can perfect you, making you love Him, more like Him, and letting His glory shine. **James says that we should count it all joy when we fall in various trials. Do you?**