

WALKING IN WISDOM (**Colossians 4:5**) Number #24

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All Scripture quotations from the Editor are from the New King James Version
(Bible Resources may be found on: www.johntpolkll.com)

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Why Do Bad things Happen To People?

by John T Polk II

QUESTION: Why do bad things happen to people?

ANSWER: Without the Bible, there is no adequate explanation. Re-read **Genesis** chapters **1-3** and realize:

1. **God's World for humans was perfect, but human sin ruined that set-up.** "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (**Romans 5:12**).
2. **The curses of Difficulties and Death were placed on Adam & Eve (and subsequently every human!) when they left Eden.** "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble" (**Job 14:1**). Bad things happen as a consequence of sin entering the world, but not all bad things are a consequence of an individual's sin: "Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him'" (**John 9:1-3**). Troubles in life challenge people to either "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (**James 4:8**), or, be like Pharaoh who, "hardened his heart" (**Exodus 8:15**).
3. **Every disaster or catastrophe gives people the choice to turn toward God or turn away from God.** Job exemplifies this truth; despite enduring the complete loss of his wealth and children, it is written: "In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong" (**Job 1:22**). Reminders of life's frailty are all around us, such as **Hurricane Helene's** devastation of the Southeastern United States by wind, rain, flooding. **The total devastation of this region has brought out either warm-hearted compassion or cold-hearted**

callousness. (1) *Those whose hearts are compassionate* understood Jesus' statement: "Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy" (**Matthew 5:7**) and have immediately responded with acts of kindness (water, food, tools, equipment, sweat, prayers, etc.). **All of this has come through civilians NOT Federal Government Authorities!** (2) *Those whose hearts are hardened* chose instead to [a] shut down seaports of entry with a union workers' strike which cripples or kills hope of assistance and recovery with the essential goods now isolated in cargo ships at sea. They have rather preferred to selfishly demand more for themselves than give humanitarian aid to their desperate neighbors; or [2] prefer sending our military personnel and equipment overseas rather than securing and facilitating much-needed help at home. Billions of dollars to fund war in Ukraine has not been diverted by the U.S. Congress to help our own devastated Americans! God says: "Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be heard" (**Proverbs 21:13**). "Say to them: 'As I live,' says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (**Ezekiel 33:11**). "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment" (**James 2:13**). God "has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens" (**Romans 9:18**). Our own actions ultimately determine how God will judge us. Let us choose mercy and compassion in the face of adversity.

4. **Even Jesus Christ was faced with this problem:** "Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (**Hebrews 5:7-9**).

(a) Jesus was “human” while in “His flesh” and was subject to all the temptation, weakness, pain and anguish as we all are;

(b) Jesus strongly felt the emotional need to present His fears to God, Who could have spared Jesus all of this struggle. If God “heard,” why didn’t He change things? If God could, why didn’t He change things? Just because we are in anguish, and present it to God, doesn’t mean God will immediately respond in the way we would like it: He didn’t for His own Son, why should He for us? With “godly fear,” “this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14). The guarantee is that we are heard, not that God acts according to our will!

(c) Jesus “learned obedience by the things which He suffered,” and shows, by example, that all suffering is a learning experience. “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal”

(2 Corinthians 4:17).

(d) Only those “who obey Him” can be perfected by tribulation and have the promise of “eternal salvation.” “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16).

Surviving disasters with God can make us stronger and serve Him better! -----jtpll

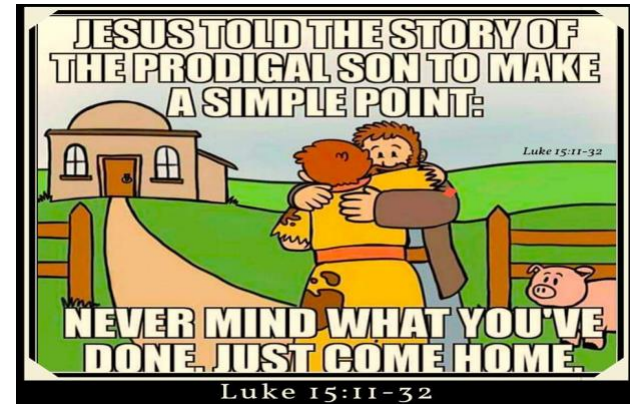
Salted Speech Colossians 4:6

~ *My object in life is to dethrone God and destroy capitalism.*

---Karl Marx

~*The bravest sight in the world is to see a great man struggling against adversity.*

---Seneca



What Motivates You?

We all could use some motivation from time to time to stay on the “strait and narrow”. And it’s always good to get advice from a seasoned Christian concerning matters like this. So let’s do so.

Paul mentions in 2 Corinthians 5:9, “*Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.*” In the six verses that follow it seems to me that Paul was listing some things that kept him motivated to continually make sure that his actions were pleasing God. Some of them may surprise you, but if you will utilize these as Paul did, you will definitely stay motivated. Notice what motivated Paul:

* **The Judgment** - “*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body...*” (v.10) - Paul knew that he would be judged by his actions and that prompted him to stay faithful. Note: It could be said that **Heaven** was also a motivational encouragement for Paul as he had was confident of going there after the Judgment (Philippians 1:21-23).

* **Fear** - “*Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...*” (v.11) - Paul knew that God meant what He said and he respected it and even feared disappointing God, and that kept him moving forward.

* **Others** - “*For we...give you opportunity to boast on our behalf...if we are of sound mind, it is for you.*” (v.12-13) - Paul knew that his actions affected and influenced others, and that spurred him on to keep doing what was right.

* **Love** - “*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.*” - Knowing that Christ loved him and died for him drove Paul to return that love to Christ and keep on living for Him.

Need some motivation to keep on keeping on in the faith? Then remember the coming Judgment of God, that God means what He says, that we can influence others toward God, and how much God loves us! Stay motivated!

- Edd Sterchi