

When Bad Things Happen

1. We can determine that some bad things are caused by people making bad choices.
 - a. If God stopped them from happening, free will would end.
 - b. Of the things obviously caused by people, some were the result of evil, some were accidents, some were not intended to be harmful, but turned out that way.
 - c. When bad things obviously are caused by people, we should learn how to avoid them in the future.
2. Some things are the result of what we call natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, volcanic eruptions, and such like).
 - a. Romans 8:19 – 23. The world was made this way.
 - b. Although negative, the results of natural disasters are not evil.
 - c. Remember, Eden was a garden, but the rest of the world was not. Adam and Eve ate, so something died. Because Adam and Eve needed to eat, their cells were dying and needed to be replaced. If they were immortal, the Tree of Life had no purpose.
3. We tend to focus on negative events and try to find whom to blame. But blame is useful only if people obviously caused it and we can do something to avoid letting it happen again. If the cause is not obvious or beyond our ability to fix, searching for the cause is counterproductive. Instead, learn from the experience.
 - a. Luke 13:1 – 5 The take-away lesson: repent.
 - b. Philippians 4:11 The take-away lesson: contentment.
 - c. 2 Corinthians 4:7 – 11 Overcoming demonstrates the power of God in us.
4. We are not supposed to be constantly and permanently joyful. We gain joy through the successes of faith. Paul was anxious about the condition of the church in Corinth and the safety of Titus, among other things.
5. Overcoming is a process (like 2 Peter 1). It takes time, but is acceptable while developing. So, we will have disappointments and bad days.
6. We can focus on the negative or we can focus on overcoming.