

Jesus: King Over All

If Jesus is King over everything through all time, then that means he is reigning and ruling as king through every good and every bad thing that happens in the world. People throughout history have struggled to understand how bad things can still happen while Jesus is reigning as king over everything. Family and relationship problems, stress, anxiety, natural disasters, and all sorts of difficult situations are often a struggle for Christians to understand and navigate. While we may never know why bad things happen, we can know the best way to respond when we face things that seem overwhelming.

Why do bad things happen?

This question can be complex and difficult to answer. The possible responses to this question is not the goal of this lesson however any response to this question will fall under one of three categories:

- The Fallen Nature of Man - Because people are sinful and can choose to do sinful things. The result of a person's sinful choice(s) result in problems for themselves or other people.
- The Fallen Nature of Creation - When sin entered the world it affected not only people but creation itself also. Health issues and natural disasters that affect people exist simply because the world is not perfect has suffered the devastating consequences of sin.
- "Soul Building" - Sometime bad things happen to people not because of their sin, the sin of someone else upon them, or as a result of the fallen world. These are tests or trials of faith that God uses to build our relationship with him.

Jesus is King in all situations

Hebrews 4:14-16 pg. 582

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

- Since Jesus is King we can "holdfast" or endure difficult circumstances
- Jesus has gone through every aspect of difficulty and trial that we can experience yet did not sin
 - Jesus was betrayed by people he trusted, dealt with injustice and racism, had an imperfect family, had strained relationships, was exhausted by people always needing his time, etc.
 - Since this is true we can come to His throne with every problem and temptation we face and find help there.

Check out hegetsus.com, this is a great website that talks about things that Jesus experienced and dealt with and how His experience is relatable to things we face today.

How do we find help when we need it?

Luke 23:50-56 pg. 516

50 Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, 51 who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down and wrapped it in a linen shroud and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid. 54 It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. 55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

- Context: Jesus has been crucified and has died.
- Joseph of Arimathea - Good, righteous, looking for God, did not agree with the decision to crucify Jesus, likely a follower of Jesus
 - Offered to donate a tomb to bury Jesus.
 - He did a good thing because it was the right thing to do.
 - God used Joseph's action to fulfill a prophecy about the messiah
 - Isaiah 53:9 - *He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.*
- The women - Followers of Jesus, were grieving the loss of their friend and teacher
 - Saw the tomb and Jesus body in and made prepared the materials to entomb the body properly
 - This was the right way to honor and preserve the body of the deceased
 - However, they stopped and honored the Sabbath day according to God's commandment
 - They still went to temple and worshipped God though they were literally in going to finish burial preparations the next day.

We can look to the example of Joseph and the women as a way to respond when we face things that are difficult or overwhelming.

- **Do the right thing the right way because its right to do it.**
 - Joseph donated his tomb and the women set out to properly bury Jesus. These were simple things they were able to do and they were the right thing to do.
 - They could have made these things someone else's problem as they were already dealing with do so much. However they still did what they knew was right to do.
 - Too often when we face difficult circumstances we use them as a an excuse to not do anything or to "indulge" in things we know are not right or good.
 - It's easy to do the right thing when things are good. Its hard to still do the right thing when it is hard for us to do it.
- **Honor and worship God through your pain.**
 - They still honored the Sabbath. The Sabbath was much more than just rest. It involved time of prayer, worship, reading, and reflecting on scripture. It was very similar in function to going to church on Sunday.
 - Though they were grieving the loss of Jesus they still were committed to following God's law and were committed to worshipping Him.
 - If there was ever a time to say "God knows my heart, I just can't right now..." this was the time for it.
 - However, if they could worship God with a dead savior, how much more can we worship in our pain knowing our Savior is alive, reigning, and ruling?

Small Group Questions

- How is easy to forget that Jesus is King when we face difficult times?
- Why is hard for some people to understand that Jesus is still King when bad things happen?
- In what ways does understanding that Jesus faced similar struggles as us help us to find hope in difficult circumstances?
- How can reflecting on Jesus' own experiences help us to better understand and cope with our own struggles?
- Why is it easy to find shortcuts or ignore the things we know we should do when we are in the middle of difficult situations?
- Why is it helpful to still do the right thing the right way when we have struggles?
- How can we find comfort in knowing that God can use even difficult situations to fulfill His plans?
- Why do you think some people have difficulty worshipping God in hard times?
- How can we honor God's commands like resting on the Sabbath, even in the midst of grief and difficulty?
- How is it helpful to worship God through our pain instead of ignoring or running away from Him?