

Don't Lose Focus When Bad Goes To Worse!

Exodus 5:1-21

Remember:

²⁹ Moses and Aaron brought together all **the elders of the Israelites**, ³⁰ and Aaron told them everything the LORD had said to Moses. He also performed the signs before the people, ³¹ and **they believed**. And when they heard that the LORD was concerned about them and had seen their misery, **they bowed down and worshiped**. - Exodus 4:29-31

1. God's Involvement Does Not Guarantee Immediate Results vs. 1-21

a) Negative Response- vs. 1-5

When Moses and Aaron met with Pharaoh as God's messengers in commanding Pharaoh to free the Israelites, Pharaoh rejected God and continued oppressing the Israelites just as God said would happen.

²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin^[ed] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. - 2 Corinthians 5:20

Jesus said to his disciples when he sent the 72 of them out to be his messengers...

¹⁶ "Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me." - Luke 10:16

When living for God, people may negatively respond to our loving words and actions because of their rejection towards Jesus who makes his appeal through us as we are His ambassadors.

Question:

- 1) Although God's word forewarns us that people may negatively respond towards the life we have with God, God has given us some encouraging knowledge.
 - We are just the messenger, but God is the originator of the message.
 - We are the most privileged of God's creation to be given this most honorable task of serving alongside God himself to reconcile the world.

In what ways can this knowledge give us confidence and boldness as we live out our life for God?

b) Negative Outcome Vs 6-21

Pharaoh caused oppression towards the Israelites to become more severe as a response to God's message which in turn influenced Israelite overseers to reject Moses as God's deliverer.

¹² Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³ But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. ¹⁴ If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. ¹⁵ If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. ¹⁶ However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. - 1 Peter 4:12-16

As Christ's Ambassadors, we too can expect temporary negative outcomes, but we can remain faithful to God because He is our faithful deliverer.

Question:

- 2) Pharaoh made it clear that distractions were unacceptable. The Israelites must do what he commands; no time off for religious observances, but always remain busy. So, he increased the oppression so the Israelites would struggle in focusing on God's promise of deliverance.

When life goes from bad to worse, do we fall into the trap of no longer protecting our religious observances? Do we fall into the trap of believing we are too busy to pray, read God's word and participate in Church ministry? What can we do to protect our time with God each day?

- 3) Think of a story from the Bible where things went from bad to worse to someone who was living for God. What lessons did that person learn from their experiences? In what ways did you see God remain faithful to that person? How did God's sovereign plan prevail?

Conclusion:

Do not lose our focus from the negative responses and outcomes that God forewarns may happen to us, but remember that although it may not be immediate, God's plan will always prevail.