

## Achy Breaky Heart

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic  
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Jesus predicted what happened to the apostles. Although their hearts were troubled, they were not surprised that they were going to be persecuted. Similarly, as followers of Jesus, we too, can expect to be persecuted. As soon as we resemble the image of Jesus, we will get plenty of hate from the world. However, we are reassured by Paul that in all circumstances, especially during persecution, we must persevere because God works for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).

1. **The promise:** "And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." There are three parts to this verse:
2. **"And we know ..."**
  - 2.1. Do we know God? Do we have a personal/intimate relationship with God? Abraham knew the voice of God, and without hesitation went where God sent Him (Gen 22). He trusted God's promise, even when it took 25 years (Gen. 15).
  - 2.2. Do we have faith in Him? If we doubt Him, He is not pleased and we should not expect an answer (James 5:1-6; Isaiah 65:24).
  - 2.3. Do we trust His word? His promise is true. (Habakkuk 3:17-18).
  - 2.4. Are we consistent in our devotional life? We can use God's promises when making decisions (1Tim. 3:16-17). We must study the Word to know the Lord deeply.
  - 2.5. He gives supporting evidences of His truth (Mt 22:29). Even through grief, praise the Lord (1 Peter 1:6-7). Let us rejoice as we join in His suffering (1Peter 4:12-14 &16).
3. **God works for the good of those who love Him.**
  - 3.1. The storms of life remind us to be closer to Him. Joseph trusted God throughout his suffering. The Lord unfolded His plan when Joseph became assistant to the pharaoh (Gen 45).

- 3.2. God can turn things around only for those who love Him. He is not working to make us happy, but to fulfill His purpose.
- 3.3. We know we love Jesus by what we constantly do or don't do (John 14:15). We need to leave our comfort zones because God suffered for us (1John 5:3).
- 3.4. God looks at our heart (Matthew 22). True love cannot flourish without God. We all stumble and we sin. But, if we do not change our ways, then how can we say we love God (1John 1:6)?
4. **Called according to His purpose.**
  - 4.1. We are all chosen (John 15:16). As chosen people we form a new perspective, and with trust in God, we learn to accept persecution (John 1:12). There is always a purpose (Rom 8:29); our lives are not controlled by chance or luck.
  - 4.2. Paul did not focus on his situation and various trials; instead, he chose to focus on the Lord and advance the Gospel.
    - 4.2.1. Unfair circumstances (Phil 1:12-14). He became a victim of unfounded accusation and was imprisoned.
    - 4.2.2. Unfair criticism (Phil 1: 15-16). Throughout Paul's life, Christians sought to discredit him.
    - 4.2.3. Inevitable Death (2 Tim 4:16-17). He was rescued from the lion's mouth.

### Conclusion:

Friends may forsake us. We may be sick or victims of unfair circumstances. But, we must remember that the love of God will always be on our side (Mt. 5:10-11).

G.O.S.P.E.L: Go. Obey. Share. Preach. Evangelize. Let your light shine.

### Reflection:

1. During times of trial, how will you know God is there?
2. Do you follow all His commandments? Do you forgive those who persecute you?

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