

SOMETHING BAD - SOMETHING GOOD

On the morning of Friday, December 17, 2021, our e-mail was hacked. Around 10:30 that morning I started getting messages, phone calls, and texts from people about an e-mail they had received that my wife Nadine was asking for help. I could not keep up with all the messages. I would be on the phone talking to one person, and could hear my phone beeping that other calls were coming in. I would check my voice mail messages as soon as I hung up and discover my mailbox was full of messages. As soon as I tried to listen to some of them the phone would ring again. In amongst the phone calls, I was bombarded with text messages from people. Nadine was not home at the time, so I was dealing with this solo. I could not even sit down at the computer to see how the problem happened or try to resolve it with our internet provider Bell. For 90 minutes it was a non-stop frenzy of calls, texts, and voice messages. The timing of this could not have been worse. Nadine and I were planning to go to the church after lunch to film our on-line service for Sunday. I had to go to St. Thomas later that day for a funeral visitation. I still had a Christmas Eve service to work on that morning for the following week. An already busy Friday turned into a very hectic and chaotic day all because our e-mail was hacked.

This was the first time that my wife and I have ever experienced having our e-mail hacked. I know of others who have experienced it and I would not wish it on anyone. When Nadine did get home, she was finally able to get on the computer and contact Bell about what happened. She had to spend a lot of time on the computer and on the phone with various technicians. Due to a few mishaps and miscommunications on Bell's part, it took ten days for us to get the situation fully resolved. With Christmas being such a busy season, this misfortune happened at the worst time for us.

One thing this unfortunate situation did do was remind Nadine and I how much people care. There were several people on our e-mail contact list that we have not seen or corresponded with in a couple of years. When they received the e-mail from the hacker, some of these people responded immediately. I could not believe how many people from our past reached out. One of these individuals actually took the time to call us. My daughter played basketball with his daughter three years ago. For the past several years they have played on different teams, and we have lost touch. The fact that he called us as he did, meant so much to us. It was a reminder to Nadine and I that people care.

Something bad like having our e-mail hacked turned into something good as we were reminded that people care. To see this positive thing in the midst of a bad situation did not come as a surprise to me. One of my life verses that guides my thinking and perspective on things is found in **Romans 8:28**. Here is what the apostle Paul says:

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them.

This particular verse has been so beneficial and helpful for me. Paul is not saying that everything that happens in our life is good. What he is saying however, is God will take even a bad situation in our life and turn it into something good for us **because He loves us**. I have seen God do this time and again for me as I have endured some unfortunate things in my life including having my e-mail account hacked. Having Romans 8:28 as a life verse helps me to keep my focus on God even when I experience mishaps like I did on December 17th. Instead of getting angry or dejected in these situations, I know God is already at work to make something good come out of it. This understanding allows me to remain patient and hopeful no matter what unfortunate situation I might be going through. I think you might begin to see the sense of peace this life verse can provide to your emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being when something bad happens in your life. God has been so faithful in my life in doing what is promised in Romans 8:28 whether that bad situation was my e-mail being hacked, enduring a chronic illness for two years, or the very premature birth of our daughter in 2006.

As you begin this new year of 2022, I pray that you never experience something bad happening to you like your e-mail being hacked or something even more serious. As much as we try to control bad things from happening in our lives they still can occur. If something like this does happen to you, I hope you **find strength and comfort** from my life verse. When you experience bad situations in your life, and truly believe God is at work to turn it into something good, it makes all the difference. Trust me, I have had a lot of experience with this one.

God Bless and Keep Safe

Pastor Dean