

Why things go wrong



Do you sometimes run into difficulty or get into trouble? Do you seem to have problems every day? Have you ever wondered why things didn't work out the way you wanted them to?

Here are just some reasons why life isn't always easy and trouble-free.

Everyday problems

The daily struggles and snags we get caught up in are a normal part of everyday life; they are part of the imperfect world we live in. People let us down or misunderstand us. The things we use don't always work as we want them to and they don't last forever. Yet these everyday problems aren't huge barriers that completely block our way in life; they are more like obstacles we can jump over or find a way around.

There are so many things that can go wrong every day. Sometimes, one has a day when everything seems to go wrong. Even the little things seem far worse than they really are and you end up having a really bad day.

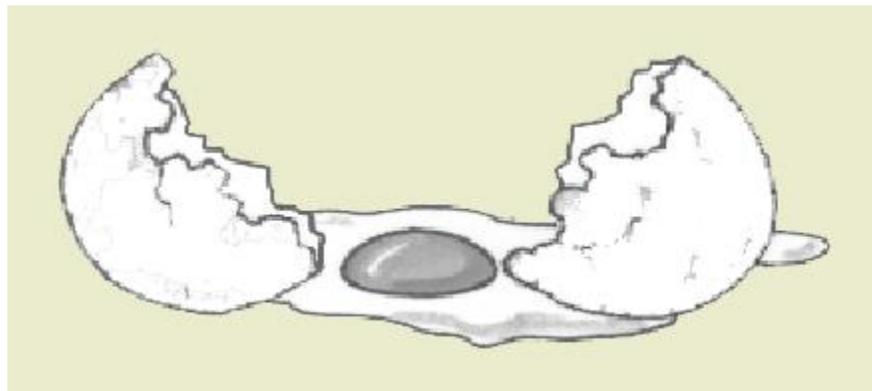
Does God know about these 'little' things? Does He care? The Bible says that God can make something good come out of every situation for those who love Him (read Romans 8:28).

When I mess up

You may be thinking: *I know that things sometimes go wrong and that bad things happen. But it's different when I mess things up—when it's my fault and I'm the one to blame.*

Trouble strikes! You have forgotten your bag at school or lost your mom's purse. Maybe you have misunderstood an instruction, forgotten to pass on a message or spilled the milk. Maybe you may have messed up so badly that you actually become angry with yourself.

Do you remember the last time you were blamed for something that went wrong? How did that make you feel? Maybe you felt stupid, embarrassed or even useless, especially if, with a little more care, you could have kept things from going wrong in the first place.



People often get upset if you've lost or broken something valuable or caused them a lot of trouble - even if it was a mishap or a mistake. At a time like this, you don't only feel bad about what happened but also because you've caused someone to be angry with you; before you know it, you are angry with yourself too.

A mistake is not a sin even if you feel guilty about it. Sin is when you do something wrong on purpose; when you go against God's rules or disobey your parents. So, always remember this: everyone makes mistakes—even those who love God and do their best to please Him.

When things GO wrong to keep you from DOING wrong

God sometimes allows something to go wrong when an ongoing sin becomes a growing problem. God loves us too much to let us deliberately carry on doing something that is wrong. He doesn't want us to get into bad habits that get a grip on our lives. God may allow something to happen that seems bad, yet it may help us see our problem before it gets worse. The Bible says that we should not become discouraged: "... do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves" Hebrews 12:5-6.

But not every problem is because of a sin! So how can you know whether the problem is God's discipline or whether it is something that would have happened anyway?

The Holy Spirit will work on your conscience, reminding you of a secret sin or warning you of a sinful habit. If you know in your heart that God is showing you a sin, you must stop doing that straight away and ask Him to forgive you. But God won't make you feel guilty just because you are not perfect. He will always show you exactly what needs to change - one step at a time. God won't keep reminding you of sin that has been forgiven.

If your conscience is clear and you can't think of any sin that you have not confessed, the problem you have is not a warning sign about sin in your life.

When trouble comes because of our faith

When Jesus was on earth, He told His followers to expect things to get pretty tough at times. Jesus hasn't promised *us* an easy life either, but He did say that He would be with us along the way and give us everything we need. Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" John 16:33.

When you put your faith in Jesus, there are those who will try to make your life miserable. They may tease you, be mean to you or ignore you in a mean way. If you have been insulted or hurt because you stood up for the truth, then you are blessed because there is already a reward waiting for you in Heaven (Matthew 5:11-12).

Each time you stand firm, your spirit grows stronger and closer to the Lord. You may not notice the change in yourself, but God is busy shaping you to become what He wants you to be. "... Is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete" James 1:2-4 (LB).

Is this from God?

Something terrible happens, crashing over your life like a huge wave. You feel powerless to stop what is happening or to put right what has already happened. Your family breaks up, you are being hurt by someone, or an accident leaves you injured for life. Suddenly everything changes and your life is never quite the same.

The pain from your wounded heart becomes part of your memory and a part of your everyday life. Your heart cries out to God but even He doesn't seem to do anything to help. You reach out in hope but instead you are pulled down by the weight of your problem. You struggle to pray, wondering whether your prayers are even being heard.

Don't give up hope! Jesus is right there with you - you can talk to Him like a friend. Trust Him to get you through this, for He will never, ever leave you. Even though you may not feel Him holding you, He is with you and He is feeling the pain you are feeling. He will help you carry your heavy load as you tell Him about your hurt. If you don't know the right words to say, just say His name. He understands. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" Matthew 5:4.

You may be trying to find the reason why this has happened, hoping that the pain would go away once you discover a reason and purpose for your suffering. But there are some things we can never explain and for which we will never know the answer. Yet there is only one thing you *can* know for sure: that it is not a punishment from God! He does not want to see His children suffer or being hurt!

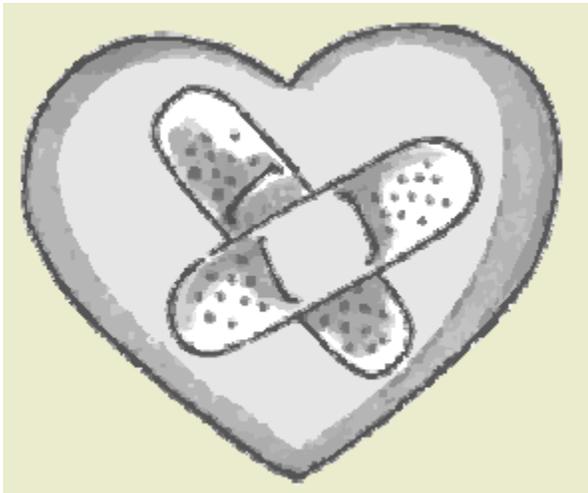
So why doesn't God keep bad things from happening?

- God has given every person the freedom to choose between doing good and doing evil. Sinful people who choose to do evil sometimes decide to hurt the weak, the young and the innocent ones. God is very angry when that happens and He will punish anyone hurting one of His children.
- There are those who may hurt you by the things they do even though they don't mean to hurt you. No one is perfect, and when someone makes a mistake, others may get hurt. Sometimes, a person's careless action or bad decision can change your life.
- When people disobey God's rules for life, their sinful actions usually affect others - often those closest to them.

- Even if we do our best to look after ourselves, our bodies can become sick or get hurt. That is the way our natural bodies are made. God did not make our bodies to last forever. But we have something to look forward to: “For we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer in sickness and death as they await this great event... We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us - bodies that will never be sick again and will never die” Romans 8:22-23 LB.
- Problems and difficulties make us tough for life. When we go through a time of pain, somehow our character becomes stronger and our relationships grow deeper.

Healing takes time

Hurts do heal, but be patient, it takes time. Tell God about your heartache and talk to those close to you about the way you feel. This will make it easier to get back to a more normal life again.



Remember, just like a cut on your skin, a wounded heart will also heal a lot faster if it is kept clean. Ask God to take away any feelings of bitterness and to fill your heart with His love and forgiveness.

When the wound has healed and the pain has gone there may still be a scar on your heart - a horrible reminder of what happened - but with Jesus as your best friend, even that will eventually fade away.

For now, hold on to this precious promise from God - a promise that He will heal your aching heart. “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds” Psalm 147:3.

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