

# Growing Spiritually Through Sorrow

All of us, including children, will experience sorrow in life. These sorrows can include the loss of a grandparent, the death of a pet, a divorce, or a personal sickness or sickness in someone they love. We live in a fallen world, a world full of sickness, death, and loss. Sorrow and loss were never God's plan for us, however, but they were introduced into the world through Adam's sin and we have all contributed to this problem through our own sin.

Remind children that God is not the source of sorrow, sickness, or death, but God did promise that He could use all things for good in our lives if we ask Him (Romans 8:28). As adults we understand the complexity and mystery of sickness, death and loss. Sorrow can come for many reasons, and there are examples in the Bible when God sent difficulties to people. But for children it is best to keep things simple:

Everyone experiences sorrow in life.  
God is NOT the source of bad things.  
We need to bring our sorrow to God.  
God will use our sorrow for good if we ask.  
We will grow in love for Him as we do this.

With every difficult experience in life, we have a choice. We can grow angry and bitter, and even blame God or others. In this case our sorrows make us a miserable person and we become less like God. Or, we can bring our sorrows and disappointments to God and ask Him to use them to make us more like Him. Remind children that God is not the source of their sorrow. Sometimes sorrow is a result of bad choices or sin. Sometimes it is from the bad choices of other people. Sometimes it is just the result of living in a fallen, sinful world. But whatever the reason, God can use my sorrows to bring me closer to Him when I ask.

All this being said, give grace for children to grieve when they experience loss. They may initially be in denial, angry, or depressed. This is just normal grieving. But, in time, bring them to the place where they bring their sorrows and loss to God. Acknowledge that the loss was not God's desire, but He did promise He would walk us through it and even use it for good in our lives. God loves us so much, that even when sorrow is our own fault, He walks with us through the consequences once we confess our sin. He is our perfect daddy in Heaven!