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Agape Love Way Ministries



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ADDRESSING THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH NEEDS OF THE MODERN CHRISTIAN, AND SECURING A FUTURE IN GODLY HOPE.

What to do when bad things happen to Godly people?

by Keith R. Thompson



Why do Christians experience pain and suffering?

Why do bad things happen to good people?

Why do bad things happen to God's people?

Those questions have been asked since the beginning of time when Cain killed his brother Abel, and although many books have been written on that subject and many sermons preached people still grapple with the enormity of these questions: why does God allow pain and suffering; hunger and poverty; even certain types of deaths to be visited upon his people?

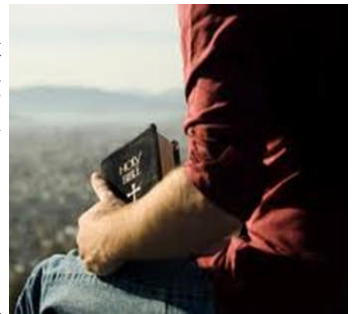
The answer to the question of why do bad things happen to good people may be surprisingly simple, namely there is none

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How to Raise a Good Man:

How to bring up a son with character & integrity

It's every parents' greatest desire, growing up a young man to be both God-fearing and respectful of others in this individualistic and self-centered world. Arguably it's harder for young men than for young women in America today, but whatever the perception the reality is that the pressures on parents today is harder than ever before.



Even Hannah from biblical times grappled with the issue of properly growing up a young man to be God-fearing so much so that she gave over young Samuel to the Prophet Eli to be raised by him in the tabernacle (see I Samuel chapter 1).

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Editor's Note

Agape Love Way is a ministry devoted to the principles and practices of the First Century Church, and the Great Commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, namely: Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul & strength, and Love your neighbor as yourself [Matt. 22-35-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-28].

§ Word of Wisdom Section §

What to do when bad things happen to Godly people?

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good but the Lord therefore since we are inherently bad we deserve our lot in life. That, however, is a very simplistic statement that is not fully grounded in scriptures.

A more thorough and theologically sound answer lies in our understanding of God's purpose of salvation within our lives. Many of us have the mistaken belief that God has saved us in order to bless us with many of his bountiful provisions. In short God simply wants to bestow upon us health, wealth and prosperity without any sufferings. However it is important to note that God's plan of salvation have both primary and secondary benefits. The primary benefits of God's salvation plan are the only things that are guaranteed to us, and that is "we are saved from the wrath to come." [Matthew 3:7, Luke 3:7 & 1 Thessalonians 1:10]

Meanwhile the secondary benefits of salvation are auxiliary benefits. They are nice to have, but not guaranteed. The Apostle John exhorted us in the Holy Scriptures in 3 John 1:2 that he "...pray that you may prosper in all things



and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (NKJV). Clearly emotional, mental and physical health, while desirable in and of themselves are not guaranteed, but can be aspired to.

Likewise Matthew 5:45 reminds us that God "...makes His Sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain

on the just and on the unjust." This scripture reveals that God allows his blessings to fall upon both good and evil persons, thus material possessions should never be used as a barometer of Godly blessing.

In addition, 1 Timothy 6: verses 6 & 7 informs us that "...godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (NKJV). It is therefore clear that we should not judge our accomplishments mainly by the material possessions that we have but by our levels of spiritual gain which is eternal life.

The next time therefore that you are questioning a major challenge in your life, don't look at the things you are lacking, or the pain you are experiencing, instead focus on the things you have already accomplished and that should encourage you to be thankful for what the Lord has already done. §

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Granted Hannah's concerns also had to do with her barren condition and therefore fulfilling a promise she made to God but her actions nonetheless underscore how many modern-day parents feel, that raising young men in this ever-changing world requires divine intervention, and a commitment to Godly principles.

Dr. James Dobson in his seminal book *Bringing up Boys* states "with so much confusion about the role of men in our society, it's no wonder so many parents and teachers are asking questions about how to bring up boys. Why are so many boys in crisis? What qualities should we be trying to instill in young males? Our culture has vilified masculinity and, as a result, an entire generation of boys is growing up without a clear idea of what it means to be a man."

How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word.

PSALM 119:9 (NKJV)

How to Raise a Good Man

By Laura Flynn McCarthy

The instant you looked into your newborn son's eyes you knew that every hope you had for his future rested on what you did from that moment on. Would you be able to help him grow into a caring, confident, responsible man? Every mother questions how she's doing when it comes to raising her boy. But if you follow the advice below, chances are, your son will turn into the kind of man you want him to be.

Number 1: Give Him a Hand at Managing His Emotions



The strong, silent type and the macho tough guy may be appealing on the big screen, but in real life, the good guys are the ones who know how to deal with their feelings—the right way. "Some qualities that we stereotypically think of

as 'manly' are actually repressive—being stoic and in control, not showing how you feel," says Christine Nicholson, PhD, a psychologist specializing in adolescent therapy in Kirkland, Washington. "If your son is upset and you say, 'Buck up, it's not that bad,' he learns to hide his feelings."

In fact, she adds, research shows that parents ask daughters how they feel more often than sons, and when girls get hurt, parents comfort them more than they do boys. The result? Many boys grow up feeling ashamed of their emotions and become men who can't communicate well—bottling up or lashing out—which makes it hard for them to relate to others.

What You Can Do

• Get him talking.

If your son is grumpy after school, don't swoop in with questions. "Simply say, 'Looks like you're upset. I'm here to help if I can,'" says Dr. Nicholson. Then bring it up later: I'm concerned that something bad happened at school. If he lets you in a bit (School is boring), echo his feeling (Yeah, school can be

boring). Odds are he'll open up: That teacher gives me so much homework. Again, validate his feelings, but this time coax out more: You do get a lot of homework. What do you have for tonight? "Your son will know that you're on his side and that you're not going to lecture, so he'll feel comfortable talking more in depth," says Dr. Nicholson."

• Help him find solutions.

Getting boys to open up about how they feel is one thing; getting them to understand that while bad feelings may linger, they don't last is quite another. "Boys prefer to focus on the problem rather than the emotion," says Dan Kindlon, PhD, adjunct lecturer at Harvard School of Public Health and coauthor of *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*. "Part of a parent's responsibility is to teach his or her son that emotions—whether pain, sadness, anger or fear—don't always go away quickly, and that's OK. Eventually he will begin to feel better."

It's a lesson Patrick Coleman of Maplewood, Minnesota, learned from his mom when he tried out for the high school hockey team. "All of his friends made the team, but he didn't," says his mother, Patty. "He was devastated and wanted to quit hockey completely." So she sat down with him to talk about it, but let him fill her in at his own pace, without interruption. When she sensed that he'd gotten it all

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off his chest, Patty acknowledged her son's feelings, then offered ideas on how to make things better. "I told him I knew he was hurting, but that he could still play on another team if he wanted to," she says. After thinking about it, Patrick realized his mom was right, and eventually joined his community hockey team despite his sadness. "He ended up having fun and learned that good things can come out of disappointment," says Patty.

Number 2: Teach Empathy



When boys are able to understand how someone else feels, it makes them better friends now and better husbands and dads in the future. "Empathy is a valuable social skill that helps you feel for others and prevents you from doing things that are hurtful," says Shari Young Kuchenbecker, PhD, assistant professor

of psychology at Chapman University in Orange, California. "It's one of the best foundations you can give your son."

But studies suggest that moms may have their work cut out for them. According to researchers at the University of Michigan, today's college students are 40 percent less empathic than they were 20 years ago. Two likely reasons, researchers say, are violent video games that numb kids to the pain of others, and social networks filled with virtual "friends" kids don't get to know in a meaningful way.

What You Can Do

• Play "what-if."

Encourage your son to put himself in others' shoes by using examples from something he enjoys, like sports. If he's watching a baseball game, for instance, join him on the couch and say, *The pitcher looks like he's under a lot of pressure. How would you handle being on the mound?* "It takes just a few seconds here and there, but you're teaching your son to consider others' feelings and put himself in their place," says Dr. Kindlon. "If you do that enough over the year

he'll grow into someone who can handle emotional situations well."

• Encourage him to read novels.

Ongoing studies at York University in Toronto show that people who read more fiction than nonfiction score higher on empathy tests. Why? Researchers theorize that the parts of the brain we use to understand how fictional characters feel are the same ones we use to figure out how real people feel. And the more we use those parts of our brain, the stronger our ability to understand others.

Number 3: Strengthen His Sense of Self

Think of men you admire. Odds are they have an important trait in common: a healthy dose of self-esteem. When a man feels good about himself, it doesn't mean he's egotistical. It means that he feels confident, competent and worthy—exactly what you want for your son.

What You Can Do

• **Skip the false praise.** Saying *You're the smartest kid in the world* or *You're the best basketball player ever* sets expectations your son can't live up to. "Praise his efforts rather than his tal-

ents," says Dr. Kuchenbecker. According to studies at Columbia University, young kids feel more accomplished and better able to handle challenges when they're praised for how they do a task (*You worked hard*) and for completing it (*Good job getting that done*), rather than when they hear general kudos like *I'm proud of you*.

• Don't label him.

Never say *Boys will be boys* or use other expressions that blame your son's behavior on his gender or that suggest he can't control his actions. "The messages kids get from parents play a major role in the development of their self-esteem," says Paul W. Schenk, PsyD, a clinical psychologist in Tucker, Georgia. "When your son hears words that attack who he is, it has a negative impact on his self-worth." Bottom line: He'll begin to believe what those phrases imply—that boys are troublemakers.

Number 4: Instill Respect for Others

"A boy who grows up listening to authority figures, obeying rules and interacting in a caring manner learns a baseline

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of treating people with respect,” says Michael Gurian, author of *The Purpose of Boys*. By the time he is a man, that respectful manner will be second nature.



What You Can Do

- **Set rules and enforce them.** If your son breaks a rule—whether it’s using bad language, missing curfew, or some other infraction—impose consequences. “Boys respect people who hold their feet to the fire,” says Gurian. “If you coddle your son and don’t follow through with consequences, over time he can become unmotivated, and ultimately spoiled and uncaring.”

- **Set a good example.** Treat other adults in your son’s life, such as teachers, coaches and his friends’ parents, with respect. Insist that he do

the same. If a conflict does arise—say, between your son and his teacher—handle the situation with grace. Don’t immediately side with your son, says Gurian. “Hear both sides of the story, and even if your child is right, explain to him that rudeness to a teacher is never acceptable,” he says. Then say: *I’ll talk to your teacher to see if we can resolve this. If something like this happens again, I want you to tell me, and not talk back to your teacher.* “You’ll teach your son problem-solving skills while emphasizing respect for others,” says Gurian.

Number 5: Show Affection

Your son loved your hugs and kisses when he was little. Once he hit adolescence...not so much. It’s normal for boys this age to begin separating from Mom in order to establish independence, says Dr. Kindlon. But remember, men who freely give affection grew up getting it, so find ways to show it to your son—even if he acts like he doesn’t want you to.

What You Can Do

- **Time it right.** If your son resists, choose your moments carefully. He’ll likely be

embarrassed if you try to kiss him in front of his pals, but a quick peck as he heads to bed or a brief hug if he’s feeling down lets him know you care without crowding him. “Boys need and want the caring touch that a mother provides, even if they don’t always show it,” says Dr. Kindlon. “Boys need to experience that physical tenderness if they are to become affectionate men later.”

The Father Factor



When it comes to raising boys, Dad has one distinct advantage over Mom: He knows where your son is coming from because of his gender. “A mother can certainly help her son become a good man, but a father can actually show him what it means—and that’s very powerful,” says Roland Warren, president of the National Fatherhood Initiative, a nonprofit advocacy group. Here, are three key things dads can

do.

Be there.

“It sounds so simple, but it’s a profound thing for a son to have a father who spends a lot of time with him,” says Warren. Boys get the message: Dad loves me, enjoys my company, and is available if I need him—which gives them a sense of security and demonstrates what good dads do.

Treat women well.

One of the ways a boy learns how to relate to women is by watching his father. “So when a dad interacts with women, especially his wife, he should be able to admit when he’s wrong, apologize when necessary, and speak and behave respectfully, especially during a disagreement,” Warren points out.

- **Get physical.** Studies show that the kind of playful wrestling or roughhousing that many dads share with their sons helps boys learn to control their physical impulses and regulate their emotions. “In addition, the physical touch of a father hugging and kissing his son is incredibly affirming for boys,” adds Warren. §

SPOTLIGHT ON A SUPPORTED MISSION:



In May of 1983 Morris Shelter, Inc. was created as a private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization providing beds and meals to the homeless in the region around Morristown. The organization changed its name in the mid-nineties to reflect its expanded mission that included the development of affordable housing for working poor families.

Today, Homeless Solutions, Inc. provides shelter for 25 homeless men, 10 homeless women, 10 families and 20 Safe Haven guests. Their guests receive services including case management, transportation to work and necessary appointments, money management and employment assistance, housing search assistance and daily living skills training. Referral services for counseling, substance abuse intervention, and prevention are also provided.

HOMELESS SOLUTIONS

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Shelter -

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Source:
<http://www.homelessolutions.org>

More About Agape Love Way Ministries

Agape Love Way is a non-profit organization established to promote charity care initiatives within a religious context, and according to the Holy Scriptures. It emphasizes the underlying precept of the Great Commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, namely "Love the Lord with all your heart, mind, soul & strength, and Love your neighbor as yourself."

Agape Love Way engages in services that support the homeless and those in need of basic food sustenance. As such we aim to help individuals in all areas of accommodation needs, food aid, and basic social services, all the while promoting the Word and the work of the Lord. We also provide financial, organizational and administrative support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that are engaged in such services. To learn more about who we are and what we do send us an email at:

info@agapelove.org

Agape Love Way is led by its Executive Director, Keith Thompson, who is also a Professor of Business, Economics and Finance at a local NJ college. Professor Keith Thompson is a man anointed and inspired to teach the Word of God through Love. Email him at:

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If you like something about this Christian newsletter, or even if you just have a comment to share then we look forward to hearing from you so email us at:

contact@agapelove.org

To help the Agape Love Way fulfill its mandate and support our various ministries please consider donating to the cause. We accept cash and in-kind donations such as food items, lightly-worn clothing and household appliances that are no longer needed. 100% of ALL donations will go to our various charities. To learn more about how to donate to us please send us an email at:

donations@agapelove.org

**Inasmuch as ye have done
it unto one of the least of
these my brethren, ye have
done it unto me.** Matthew 25:40

SPOTLIGHT ON A SUPPORTED MISSION:



The Community FoodBank of New Jersey began humbly in 1975 when founder Kathleen DiChiara began distributing groceries out of the trunk of her car.

In 1982, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey was incorporated and moved to an unheated former meat-packing plant in Newark's Ironbound district. By 1993, continued support and program growth led the Community FoodBank to their current 285,000 square-foot facility in Hillside, NJ.

Today, the Community FoodBank distributes 40 million pounds of food a year to more than 1,000 non-profit programs, as well as more than 400 programs served by its Partner Distribution Organizations (PDOs). Through their combined efforts, they feed 900,000 hungry people in 18 New Jersey counties.

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey is a designated 501 (c)(3) charitable organization, and is a member of Feeding America, the nation's largest network of food banks, as well as a member of the New Jersey Federation of Food Banks.

Community FoodBank of New Jersey

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Phone: (908) 355-3663.

Source: <http://www.cfbnj.org/>



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