

Family Faith Formation

Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. - Deuteronomy 11:18-19

Faith in Real Life: Thinking About Difficult Situations

Alex, who is a really great High School athlete, found out that all of the pain he was having in his lower back was due to a rare genetic defect. It had gone undetected by doctors for a very long time, but finally one doctor started to solve the puzzle. Alex's back had a curve in it that was causing pressure on his ribs and pelvic bones. He needed to have surgery or within ten years he would be unable to walk because of the pain.

This was scary news to Alex. For one, he didn't want to have surgery. The whole idea terrified him! The second problem was that he loved sports so much that he didn't want to miss out on the next two seasons of soccer and basketball. The doctor told him he would be in therapy for at least six months and that he wouldn't be able to play. Alex was sad and disappointed.



Alex went to talk to his coach the next day. Alex was surprised when Coach said, "Thank God they finally figured out what is wrong with your back!"

Alex didn't want to hear that; he only wanted the problem to go away so he could play sports. The coach put his arm around Alex's shoulder and said to him, "Alex, if you don't do this surgery, you will be crippled some day. You have to think of your future, not just this moment. God will be with you to comfort and heal you, but you have to do your part too."

Questions for Family Discussion

- 1. Why is it so disappointing when things don't go our way?
- Our first thought might be to blame God for our misfortune, but God does not cause us pain. God walks with us through the pain. What would you say to Alex if he was your friend?
- **Read together Psalm 23.** What does David mean by "the valley of the shadow of death?" Does that have to be physical death? Can it be the death of a dream? What sort of "death" was Alex facing with his injury?
- Where is God in the midst of all our struggles and trials? How do we know?

From Luther's Small Catechism

The Introduction

Our Father, who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

God encourages us to believe that he is truly our Father, and that we are truly his children, so that we may boldly and confidently pray to him, just as beloved children speak to their dear father.

- Thinking about God as our perfect, loving Father, do you think that if we ask God for something, he will hear us?
- Does that mean we always get what we ask for? Why or why not?

Thinking about the story, fill in the blanks below. Use the words from the Word Bank:

faith	lives	hears	trust
answers		understand	good
	answer	God	

In those times in our _____ when we struggle, we can _____ that God is with us. He _____ our prayers and _____ us. Sometimes the _____ is hard to understand, but we trust that God knows what is _____ for us and is working all things for _____.

We might not _____ the purpose of our struggle, but we will see _____ if we have eyes of _____ to see.

Color in the words below:

Your rod and
staff comfort
me.

Pray Together

(if your child is not a reader, have them repeat after you, a few words at a time)

Lord God, hear our prayers and answer us when we call. Help us to trust in your holy will for our lives. Comfort us when we are hurting and show us your Fatherly love always. Amen.