



Helping Kids Handle Disappointment God's Way

When Things Don't Go Your Way

Raising Christ-Centered Kids | Feelings | Disappointment

By Nancy Fujii, Founder & Teacher, L.I.G.H.T. Kingdom Kids®

"Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand."
(Proverbs 19:21, *ESV*)

Key Takeaway

God's plan is bigger than ours.

The Biblical Meaning of Disappointment

Disappointment is part of life. Things don't always go the way we expect, and that can leave us feeling sad or discouraged. But the Bible reminds us that God is close when our hearts are heavy: "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18). Even when something doesn't work out the way we hoped, it doesn't mean God has forgotten us. Disappointment is not the end of the story—it can become a doorway to trust God more.

The heroes of Scripture often faced disappointment. Hannah wanted a child and prayed for years before God answered. Moses led God's people faithfully but was not allowed to enter the Promised Land after years of wandering in the desert. David waited years to become king, and even Jesus was rejected by many who heard Him. Yet in each of these stories, God's plan unfolded in a way that was bigger and better than anyone could imagine. Disappointment, then, is an invitation to lean on God's promises and remember that His purposes are always for our good (Romans 8:28).



Parent Guide | Disappointment

Understanding Disappointment: When Things Don't Go Our Way

For kids, disappointment shows up in simple but powerful ways—when a toy breaks, when they don't get chosen for a game, when a trip is canceled, or when they don't win the prize they wanted. It can feel unfair and hurtful. But in those moments, we can teach kids that disappointment is not the end—it's a chance to trust that God has something else in mind.

Parents can help children name their disappointment honestly ("I really wanted this, and it didn't happen") and then guide them to see that God is still with them. Sometimes His "no" or "not yet" is protecting us, growing us, or preparing us for something better. Disappointment doesn't mean failure—it means God is writing a story bigger than ours. Helping kids see this early on gives them tools to bounce back, hope again, and learn resilience grounded in faith.

Practical Steps: Helping Kids Handle Disappointment God's Way

1. **Pause and Pray** — Encourage kids to stop and tell God how they feel. He cares about their hearts.
2. **Name the Feeling** — Help them put words to their disappointment so it doesn't stay bottled up.
3. **Look for God's Hand** — Ask: "What might God be teaching or protecting you from right now?"
4. **Choose Gratitude** — Even when one thing goes wrong, thank God for what is still good today.
5. **Try Again with Hope** — Teach kids to start fresh, remembering God has a plan bigger than ours.

Scripture for Parents and Kids

- *"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."* (Psalm 34:18, ESV)
- *"Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand."* (Proverbs 19:21, ESV)
- *"We know that for those who love God all things work together for good."* (Romans 8:28, ESV)

Encouragement for Parents

Disappointment can feel like a closed door, but in God's timing, it often opens into something greater. As parents, modeling how you handle your own disappointments is one of the strongest lessons your child will ever see. When you choose trust over frustration, hope over despair, and prayer over bitterness, you're showing your kids that disappointment doesn't define us—God's faithfulness does. Keep pointing your children back to the truth that His purposes never fail.

CTMP Corner: Kingdom Kids in Action

- **Connect:** Share a time you felt disappointed.
- **Teach:** Remind kids that God's plan is always good, even when things don't go our way.
- **Model:** Show gratitude when your own plans fall through.
- **Pray:** *"Lord, help us trust Your plan when we feel disappointed."*