

LEARNING AND GROWING

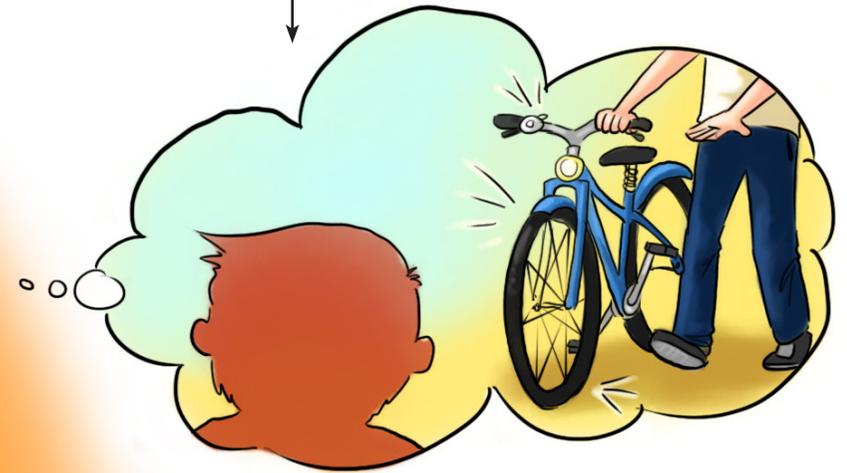
"YOU KNOW THAT WHEN YOUR FAITH IS TESTED, YOUR ENDURANCE HAS A CHANCE TO GROW" (JAMES 1:3 NLT).



WE ALL ENJOY GOOD AND FUN TIMES. IT'S NATURAL TO WISH THAT OUR LIVES WOULD BE FILLED WITH ONLY THOSE GOOD TIMES, BUT WE ALSO EXPERIENCE TIMES THAT ARE DIFFICULT FOR US. WHEN SOMETHING DOESN'T GO THE WAY WE WANT IT TO, SOMETIMES WE MAY WONDER WHY IT HAPPENED THE WAY IT DID.

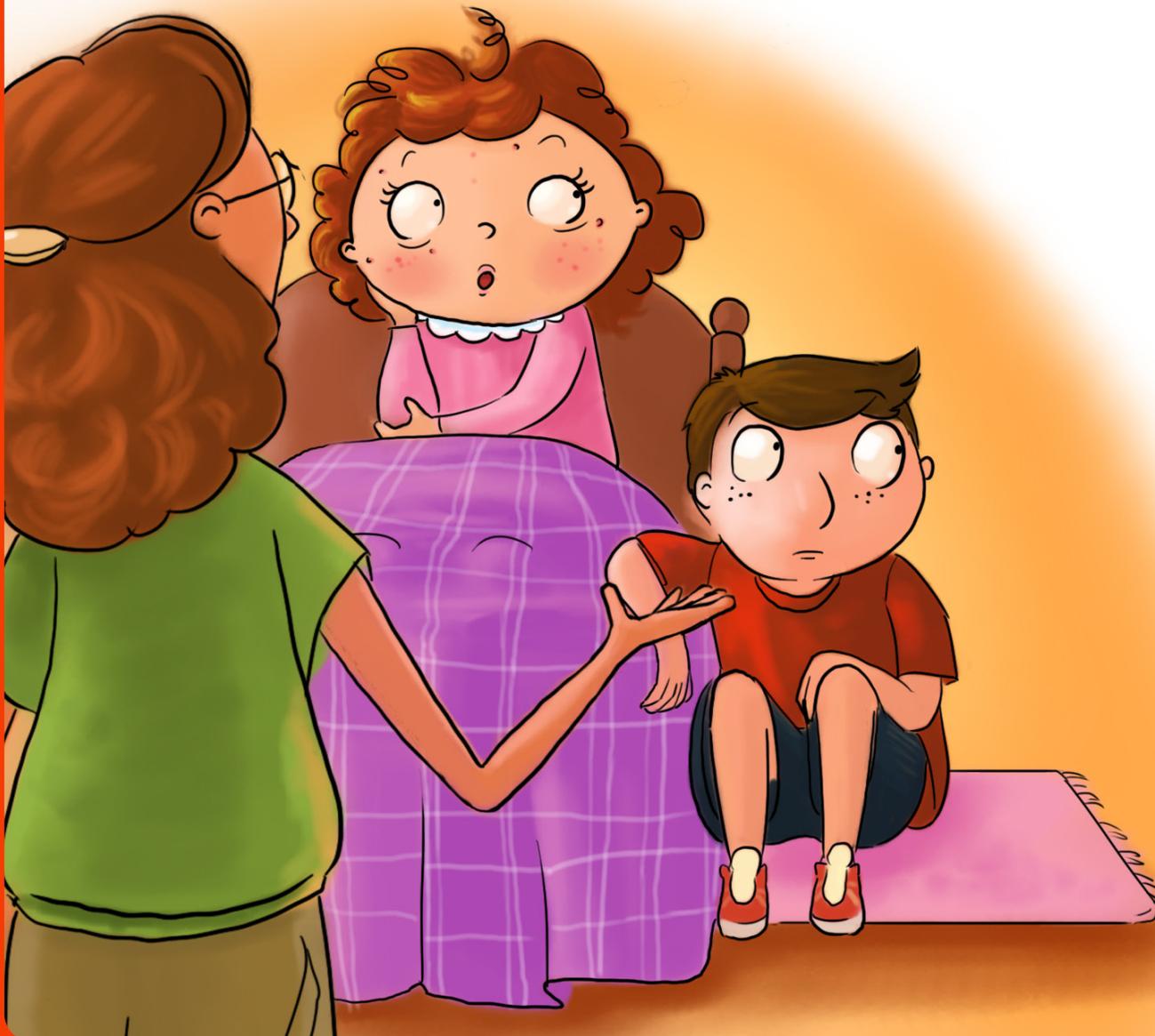


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HOW WE WISH THINGS TURNED OUT.



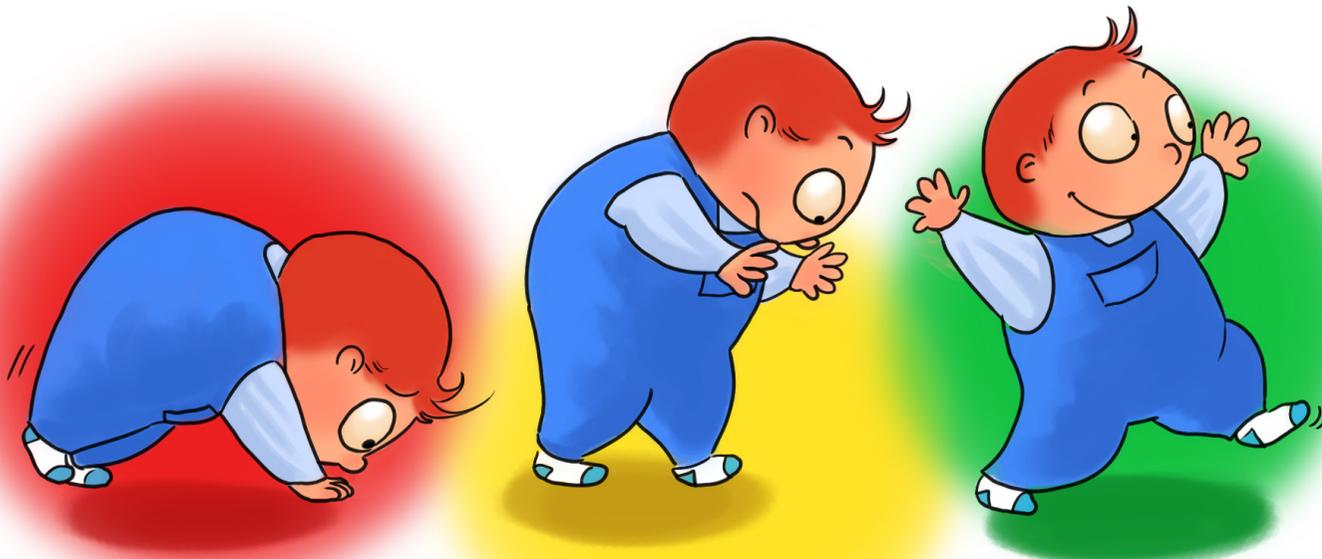
JESUS LOVES YOU VERY MUCH, AND HE'S ALWAYS WITH YOU, WATCHING OVER YOU AND TAKING GOOD CARE OF YOU.

BUT YOU MIGHT WONDER WHEN YOU ASK HIM SPECIFICALLY FOR SOMETHING WHY HE DOESN'T MAKE EVERYTHING BETTER FOR YOU RIGHT AWAY.



OFTEN, OUT OF LOVE FOR US,
JESUS WILL USE A DIFFICULTY
THAT WE EXPERIENCE TO HELP
US GAIN GROUND IN FAITH,
ENDURANCE, AND OBEDIENCE.

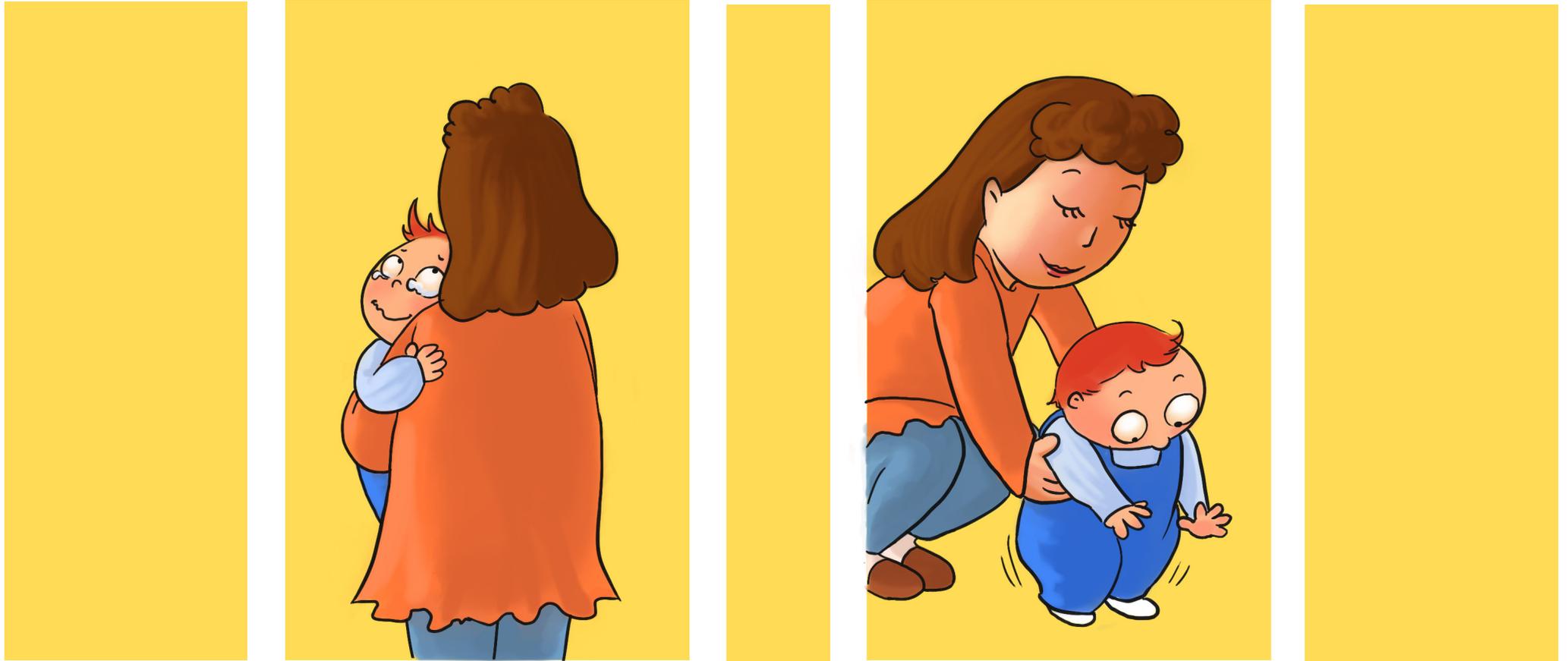
LET'S COMPARE THIS TO
HELPING AXEL, YOUR LITTLE
BROTHER, LEARN TO WALK.
ONE OF US ALWAYS TRIES
TO BE THERE TO PROTECT
AXEL WHILE HE'S LEARNING
TO WALK, BUT YOUR LITTLE
BROTHER STILL FALLS
SOMETIMES. IF WE ALWAYS
HOLD ON TO AXEL SO HE
NEVER FALLS, HE WON'T
LEARN HOW TO KEEP HIS
BALANCE AND WALK ON
HIS OWN.



ALSO, IF SOMEONE
CARRIES AXEL EVERY
TIME HE FALLS, HE
MIGHT GET LAZY AND
NOT MAKE THE EFFORT
TO LEARN TO WALK.

JESUS IS ALWAYS WITH YOU, AND HE LOVES YOU MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE. HE WISHES TO HELP YOU MAKE IT THROUGH ANY PROBLEM OR DIFFICULTY, HAVING LEARNED LESSONS OF FAITH AND OBEDIENCE, AND TO HAVE GAINED FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING FOR HOW TO FACE FUTURE PROBLEMS.

SOMETIMES AXEL TRIPS AND CRIES, AND ONE OF US WILL PICK HIM UP TO ENCOURAGE HIM, BUT WE THEN SET HIM DOWN AGAIN SO HE CAN TRY AGAIN TO WALK.



WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE OR EXPERIENCE A DIFFICULTY, JESUS WILL ALSO ENCOURAGE YOU, BUT THEN HE WANTS YOU TO KEEP GOING ON AND TRYING.

JESUS DOESN'T PREVENT EVERYTHING THAT IS DIFFICULT FROM COMING YOUR WAY, BUT HE IS ALWAYS THERE TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE.

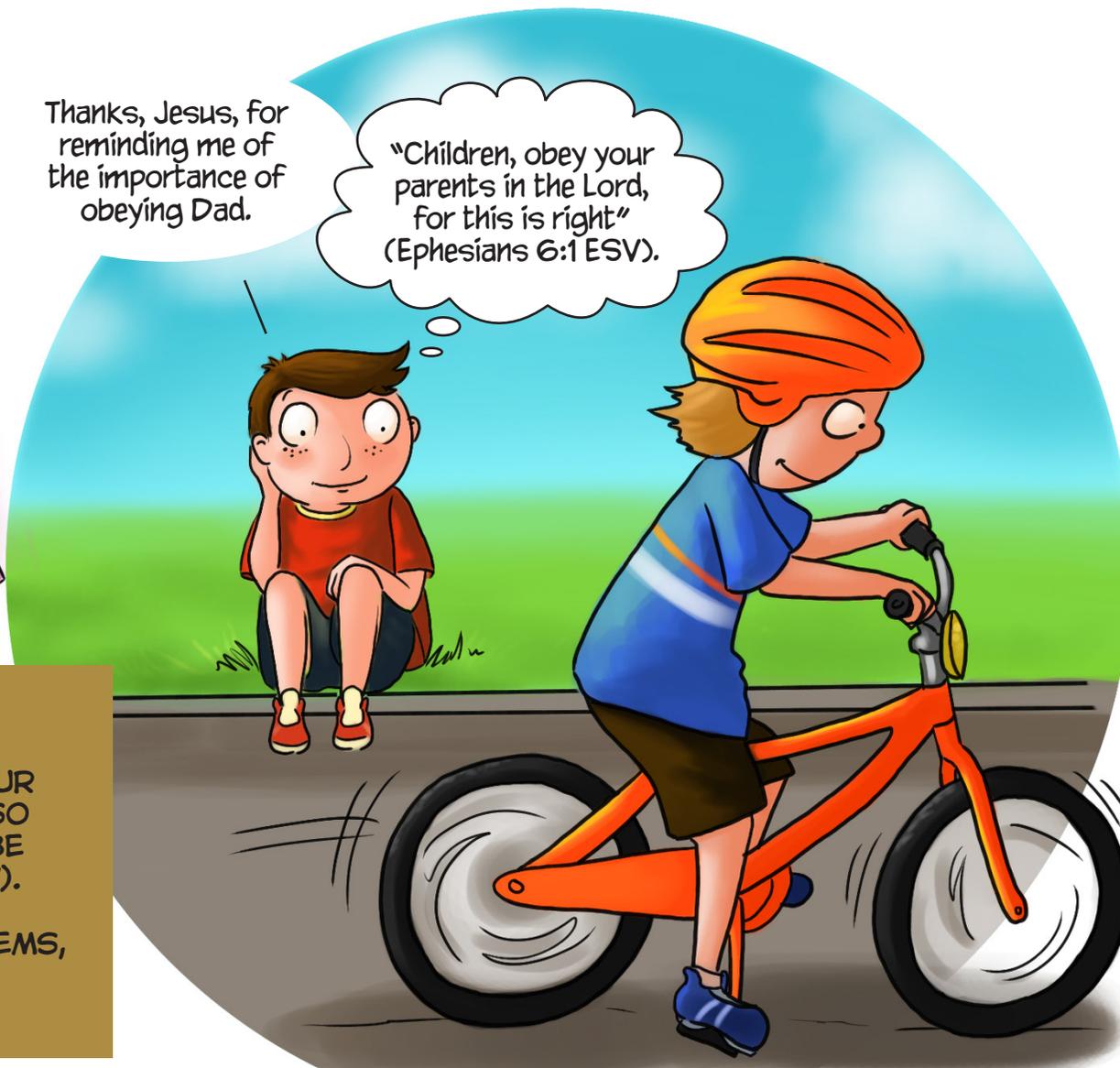
I've discovered how to be happy, even when I miss out on another fun activity I wanted to join in on.



JESUS OFTEN SOLVES PROBLEMS QUITE QUICKLY FOR US, BUT NOT ALWAYS. EVEN IF A PROBLEM PERSISTS, WE CAN FIND COURAGE IN OUR FAITH IN JESUS, AND THROUGH OUR FAITH WE CAN DISCOVER WHAT STEPS TO TAKE TO HELP US OVERCOME.

Thanks, Jesus, for reminding me of the importance of obeying Dad.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1 ESV).



"NO TEMPTATION HAS OVERTAKEN YOU THAT IS NOT COMMON TO MAN. GOD IS FAITHFUL, AND HE WILL NOT LET YOU BE TEMPTED BEYOND YOUR ABILITY, BUT WITH THE TEMPTATION HE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE WAY OF ESCAPE, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO ENDURE IT" (1 CORINTHIANS 10:13 ESV).

"IT IS GOOD FOR ME THAT I HAVE HAD PROBLEMS, SO THAT I LEARN YOUR WAYS" (PSALM 119:71, PARAPHRASED).