

## God Is Love

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When I lived in Central America I heard a story that went something like this: A young boy was throwing a ball against a neighbor's house. His mother warned him to stop, but he kept on playing. Suddenly, just as his ball struck the house, an earthquake hit. As the house was tumbling to the ground, his mother yelled, "*Look what you did this time!*"

While the story may or may not be true, we can all sympathize with the young boy. All of us have at one time or another been blamed for something we did not do.

God must understand. He is constantly being blamed for things he did not do. He is blamed for death, plane crashes, tornadoes, and cancer. People say that he takes babies from the arms of mothers and sends devastating floods and earthquakes. He gets the credit for wars, abandoned children, and political messes.

People who make God the villain are missing one of the most beautiful facts of life. God is love. He wants the best for us. Instead of being the source of troubles, God is "*our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble*" (Psalm 46:1).

The Bible says, "*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father*" (James 1:17). Why, then, does God get the blame for everything else?

Perhaps people tend to blame God for bad things because problems seem easier to accept if they come from a Good Source. Perhaps people often fail to blame Satan for evil because they hate to admit that he even exists.

However, the Bible indicates that the struggle on earth between good and evil is a result of Satan's rebellion against God in heaven. St. Paul wrote, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

The good news is that Christ has sealed the victory over Satan. Jesus defeated Satan by rising from the dead. He will return to earth some day to reign victoriously over evil. The bad news is Satan will continue to cause evil until Christ returns and throws him into the bottomless pit (See Revelation 20:7-10).

When bad things happen to us, we have a choice. We can blame God, or we can run to him and seek his comfort, love and power. In other words, we can face our problems alone, or we can trust in God and experience his supernatural power.

People who rejoice and give thanks regardless of what happens are set free. Instead of being controlled by others or by circumstances, they get to choose their own attitude.

Evil will be with us until the end of the earth. But so will good. Thanksgiving is a special time to realize that good is from God. It is also a great time to thank him for being with us in times of difficulties and trouble.

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