

The Romans 8:28 Way to Deal With Days That Don't Go According to Plan

Cute outfit? Check. Packed diaper bags? Check. Adorable baby dress and matching hair bow, baby included? Check, check. Cooperative and obedient toddler? Check ... ish.

The Sunday morning dawned beautiful and crisp, just as a Sunday morning should. It was the day of my daughter's baby dedication, and I was excited. Family was driving in for the special service, and a lunch was prepared at our church afterwards.

Everything was going exactly according to plan ... ish.

Evidently, my son forgot to read the memo I'd sent out earlier in the week. The one outlining how everyone should behave and wear their nice outfits and smile and look like a stinkin' cute Christian family, because doggone it, that's what we are.

My son was being way more resistant than normal. "I don't want this toast. I want water, not milk. I don't want to wear this. I want milk, not water. I'm not wearing that coat. I'm not going to church. I don't *want* to learn about God."

All this was followed by him going boneless, facedown on the floor, moaning about life's many woes.

After literally dragging him out the door and forcing his flailing limbs into his car seat, my husband and I settled into our seats, breathing hard from our efforts. We pulled out of the driveway, down the street, and then—

Sssspleeerrrsch.

The odd sound from the backseat was followed by a chilling

silence. And then—

“What is coming out of my mouth??”

My shoulders slumped when I realized what had happened. Fresh vomit was sliding down the backseat where my son had just sprayed it at what appeared to be a pretty high speed. It might have been impressive if it weren't also so disgusting and inconvenient. I was just thankful his car seat wasn't forward facing, otherwise the vomit sludge might be dripping down the back of my neck at that moment. (Are you grossed out yet? You're welcome.)

We drove back home and transferred one soggy and perplexed little boy (“*What* is coming out of my *mouth??*”) straight into the tub. After talking through our options, we decided my husband would stay home with our son and begin the painstaking process of sanitizing the now-soaked car seat while I would take our daughter to church.

Needless to say, the day ended up going a bit differently than planned. My dad stood with my daughter and me in front of the congregation where I (and my husband, from afar) committed to disciple her and her brother. Instead of eating lunch together at our church afterwards, we filled a pile of to-go boxes and all gathered together back at our house, much to the delight of a slightly queasy toddler and a very weary dad.

It was quite fitting that nothing went according to plan on this I'd-like-everything-to-go-right day. Because isn't that how parenting is? You have all these plans—really good plans, I might add—and then they usually end up falling through. You adjust and make sacrifices because at the end of the day, your family matters more than plans and appearances.

That day was meant to be symbolic of our commitment to love our children as Christ loves us. Christ's love is selfless, sacrificial, unconditional. So maybe the day went according to a better plan. One where my husband and I could practice being

flexible and compassionate with joyful hearts.

On the days that don't go according to plan, we can have peace knowing that, for believers, everything works according to our heavenly Father's will (Rom. 8:28-29). His plan is that we be more like Christ every day, and sometimes (many times) that involves us dying to ourselves in small, cleaning-up-throw-up kinds of ways.

Ultimate end result? Conformity to Christ.

Exactly according to plan. {eoa}

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