

WHEN WE FALL, JESUS GIVES US HOPE

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“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ the Righteous One.” — 1 John 2:1

I don't know about you, but this verse speaks to me personally. I want to live a life that honors Jesus. I want my words, my choices, my attitudes, and even the things nobody else sees to reflect Him. But I'm also honest enough to know that I still stumble. Sometimes I find myself fighting the same battles I thought I had already surrendered. Maybe you know what that's like.

John doesn't make light of sin. He says plainly, “I write this to you so that you will not sin.” We aren't called to become comfortable with sin. We're called to become more like Jesus. But then comes that beautiful word: “But.” “But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ the Righteous One.” Friend, that's where the cross changes everything.

Jesus didn't go to the cross because our sin was small. He went because our sin was serious, filled when death, with no hope and there was no way for us to save ourselves. He willingly took our sin upon Himself, bore our punishment, shed His blood, and died in our place.

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree.” — 1 Peter 2:24

Think about that for a moment. The hands that healed the sick were pierced. The feet that walked toward the hurting were nailed to the cross. The sinless Son of God willingly took the place of sinners like you and me. And He didn't stay in the grave. Jesus rose again. That's why 1 John doesn't tell us to hide when we sin. It tells us that we have an Advocate. The Jesus who died for us is alive and standing for us.

“Christ Jesus...died—and more than that, was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.” — Romans 8:34

That gives me hope, how about you? When I fail, I don't have to pretend I didn't. I don't have to run from God. I can run to Jesus. I can confess my sin because the cross has already made a way.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” — 1 John 1:9

Grace doesn't give us permission to keep living in sin. Grace gives us the power and freedom to leave it behind. So let's keep our eyes on Jesus. Let's remember the cross when we're tempted. Let's remember the empty tomb when we're discouraged. And when we fall, let's remember that our salvation doesn't rest on how perfectly we walk—it rests on the One who walked perfectly for us and gave His life for us.

The cross reminds me that my sin is serious, putrid, hell bound indeed! But the cross also reminds me that God's love is greater. And when Satan whispers, "You've failed again. How could God forgive you?" we can look to the cross and answer: Jesus already paid for this. Our hope isn't in our goodness. Our hope is Jesus. Our righteousness is Jesus. Our forgiveness is Jesus. Our Advocate is Jesus. And because Jesus lives, we can get back up, confess our sin, receive His grace, and keep following Him.

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross." — Hebrews 12:2

So, my friend, keep your eyes on Jesus. Look to the cross. Trust His grace. And when you stumble, don't run from Him—run to Him. The One who gave everything for you is still holding you today.

"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them." — Hebrews 7:25