

The Prescription for Spiritual Failure

John 16:25-33

July 5, 2026

You are going to fail the Lord you love. We are prone to leave the God we love.

Jesus is preparing them for their spiritual recovery.

What should I do when I rebel against the God I love?

Cling to the Teaching of Jesus v. 25

The teaching of Jesus can be difficult.

A crash course on redemptive history.

Using your “Get Out of Jail Free” card.

Cling to the Love of the Father, v. 26-27

Is God the Father only a stern judge? Spiritual failure must be punished.

You don’t have to ask me to talk to the Father on your behalf. Why?

Who does the Father love?

Cling to the Finished Work of Jesus, v. 28

“There and back again.” A good short summary of redemptive history.

Your recent failures are not news to God,

Cling to the Sovereignty of God, v. 29-30

When we say, “You are a know-it-all,” it is not a compliment.

Cling to the sovereignty of God in your failures.

Cling to the Peace of Jesus, v. 31-33

Is your faith strong enough for the trials that you will face tomorrow?

Jesus is handing them a prescription for their future failure.

Our peace is in Christ.

Meditation

Resting in the Righteousness of Christ

To be united to Christ by grace though faith is to be counted as having lived His life, obeyed His law, suffered His punishment, died His death, and risen in His resurrection. The believer is not merely inspired by Christ; he is represented by Him. Christ’s perfect obedience was rendered on our behalf; He fulfilled every command of God’s law in our place (Romans 5:19; Galatians 4:4-5). His death was not merely an act of martyrdom. It was the full exhaustion of the law’s curse for our sin (Galatians 3:13). And His resurrection from the dead is the public declaration from God that the believer is now justified, fully accepted and acquitted in His sight (Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 3:16).

This means justification is not a process, nor is it contingent upon our progress. It is a once-for-all verdict, grounded in the finished work of Christ, granted before we perform any act of obedience or experience any inward renewal (Titus 3:5-7). Our status before God does not rise and fall with our spiritual condition. It is as unchanging as the righteousness of Jesus Himself (Hebrews 13:8; 1 Corinthians 1:30). The gospel, then, assures trembling sinners that the moment they are in Christ, they are as justified as they ever will be (Romans 8:1; Colossians 2:10).

Such a gospel dismantles every attempt to mingle Christ’s righteousness with our own works. Even the slightest reliance on our obedience (whether in gaining or maintaining favor with God) undermines the very grace of the gospel (Galatians 2:21). It dishonors Christ by implying that His obedience was insufficient (Hebrews 10:14). Worse still, it leaves the conscience without peace, for if our standing with God is even partially based on our performance, we will never rest, never know security, and never truly be free from guilt (Romans 5:1; Hebrews 9:14).

But faith ... true, saving faith ... looks away from self entirely. It does not contribute; it receives. It rests wholly on the righteousness of Another (Philippians 3:9). This righteousness is not infused, earned, or grown into. It is imputed, credited by God Himself (Romans 4:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21). It is alien to us, but ours by grace. In trusting Christ alone, the believer finds unshakable peace, because his salvation rests not on shifting sands, but on the finished and faultless work of the Son of God (Isaiah 32:17; John 19:30).

Monergism