

This Single Verse Will Pick You Up if You Fall to Temptation

Temptation is certainly nothing new to the human experience. It's nearly as old as the creation itself. And the feelings of guilt and shame that follow are too. Think back to the beginning. After succumbing to the bait of Satan, Adam and Eve quivered among the trees of the garden, naked and ashamed. It was pitiful. Guilt and shame led the crown of creation to hide in the very brush over which they were given dominion. And far worse: Suddenly overcome with such a sense of worthlessness, they simply couldn't bear to face the Creator.

As I believe the first couple experienced, often worse than the actual sin, it's the follow-up accusations that are most condemning—especially for a believer. It doesn't take long for the nagging voice of, "Look what you've done;" "And you think you're a Christian?" or "Now God can't use you!" to beg you to retreat in defeat.

God's Response to Failure

None of us is immune to failure. Even your most seemingly spiritual heroes fail at something from time to time. Though we fall, we don't have to let our failures drag us down into the weeds of Adam and Eve or to the noose of Judas, where Satan succeeds to steal our voices, kill our ministries and destroy our destinies. In the case of Adam and Eve, we can be sure God wasn't pacing around heaven after their sin, murmuring, "I can't believe this! How could they?" No, our all-knowing Father was prepared to put His plan in place. Despite their rebellion, He came down to initiate reconciliation and provide for them a covering so that they could live.

When you and I fall today, God pursues us the same. He doesn't wash His hands of us, but He draws near to show us the way out of our torment. And as I discovered through my own bout with Satan's threats and accusations, there's a verse of Scripture that reveals His plan in a profoundly freeing way.

Experience Your Forgiveness

I vividly remember the moment. Under the weight of Satan's accusations, God led me to a familiar verse that I never really noticed, even though I read over it many times before. These are the words of John the Baptist: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, ESV).

Out of this verse, God brought my attention to a single word: "behold." What's so special about behold, you might ask? "Behold" isn't a quick glance, but it's a close study. In this one verse, John the Baptist directs us to see, observe, consider, look closely at, meditate and fix our gaze upon the remarkable sight of Jesus as God's Lamb, taking away the sin and shame of the world.

To truly behold Jesus as John the Baptist instructs is to experience the moment of the cross. It's to mentally, emotionally and spiritually go to the foot of the place where Jesus is in His position of taking upon your filth and failures, satisfying God's punishment for your struggles and then giving you His righteous identity as pure, spotless, clean, loved and made worthy. And that's what I experienced that day.

In my book, *Silence Satan*, I give the specifics of what I saw when God took me to behold the Lamb—and I lead readers there too. But suffice it to say, gazing into Jesus' suffering brought me to freshly encounter the weight of the stripes that crushed my habits and resurrected me above the pains of my past.

If you're currently tormented by a failure, enter into prayer

right after you read this. Ask God to take you to “behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.” Then with your mind’s eye, go there to the cross and finally see it, feel it and hear it. Yes, you’ll see a gruesome sight—your sin will look exceedingly sinful—but through it, you’ll freshly encounter the lengths of God’s forgiveness and His boundless love for you.

Live in Victory

Behold it! Your perfect Savior took on the filth, the shame and all its consequences—suffered for things He wasn’t guilty of—so that you may be forgiven, included in the Father’s family and avert punishment. He did it all so that you may have eternal, resurrected life and relationship with Him.

Compelled by love, the cross was God’s greatest pursuit of you. He left the brilliance of heaven to identify with your pain so that He could lead you out of it and show you the better way. He hung upon that tree of scorn to demonstrate to you that He knows the sting of rejection and humiliation. He understands what it’s like to feel worthless. He felt the breath of Satan upon His face and the pressure of every temptation. *Jesus understands you.* And He chased you from heaven to prove that these things don’t have to define you; they don’t have to defeat you. The life He lived and the death He died reveal that sin and its consequences may be victoriously overcome.

Kyle Winkler () is the creator of the popular *Shut Up, Devil!* mobile app. His recent book, *Silence Satan*, has helped thousands shut down the enemy’s attacks, threats, lies and accusations. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Connect with him on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.