



it's not about your feelings

A word (or several) for the friend who's been feeling defeated:

Tomorrow has not defeated you already. Today and yesterday didn't defeat you, either. Your regrets have not defeated you. Here's why:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

*No, in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through him who loved us.*

— Romans 8:35-37

...and...

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

— Romans 8:1

You've worked and worked for nothing, it seems. It feels like nothing has come of it, and you're afraid that people see your incompleteness. You feel alone and like you've failed; you feel seen but in the wrong ways because what's incomplete is obvious and what's been going on under the surface is not.

You've been afraid that you stand out in the worst ways and don't fit in anywhere.

Here's the truth, though (because our feelings can be liars, easily manipulated by the enemy):

You're not incomplete, and you're not a failure. You're just not done yet. Get back to work and finish.

Yes, it feels like too much, like it's too hard and there's too far to go. But God has created a wrinkle in the path to shorten the distance for you. Start walking and watch what happens. You haven't gone too far in the wrong direction to turn back. Completion, forgiveness, repentance, and redemption are fast.

God sees you and has prepared a tribe for you. You are not standing out in the worst ways; you are a missing piece they've needed that fits perfectly in the space that's waiting for you. Reach for the thing you know is there, even if you can't see it yet.





But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

— *Ephesians 2:4-10*

It is not a matter of feelings. Our feelings are devious; high tide and low tide. They try to be the boss but they often have no idea what the big picture is because they tend to cloud over some really important facts. Romans 8 is a really good place to camp out right now to get those facts. So is Psalm 46. So are a lot of places. Run to the Word and know the Lord is moving. We can trust Him.

And another thing (this is me coming back to finish the argument after slamming the door) – just because things look bleak and hopeless doesn't mean they are. How many times in stories or history or the Bible have you seen everything look like all is lost, only to turn out better than you would've imagined?

The Cross and the Resurrection.
Haman's attack, and Esther's favor.
The Battle of Little Round Top.
The Battle of Trenton.
Gandalf and the Balrog.
Aslan and the White Witch.
Omaha Beach.
The Lord is not done in your situation, either.

Some things will be worse than you expect, true. But that's no reason to dread them or lose hope, because some things will also be better.





Dread and pessimism are flimsy weapons. Hope-grounded faith is undefeated.

*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.
For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.*
— Isaiah 35:5-7

That breakthrough you're working for seems so far away and impossible. It seems like by the time you get there, it might be too late. But it's not, and it won't be. You are not running out of time when you are waiting for God's perfect timing. And in His mercy, He often gives us no choice but to wait. He knows what's good for us, and He knows we might sacrifice the good for the easy when we start to feel desperate.

So He gives us a million choices except this one — He doesn't let us choose the timing. It's almost like He can work with all kinds of our fumbling and learning and risking and trying again, and He's not afraid of our failures because when they are rooted in obedience they are actually successes, even though it may not look that way to us in the moment. He can work with all of our imperfect efforts, but He alone holds the timing for completion.

He's not teasing us with riddles in order to achieve breakthrough. He's preparing us to steward the upgrade.

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
— Matthew 6:31-33

Jesus, You're good. And we trust You. But what is that hymn? "Oh, for grace to trust You more." We need that grace. That breakthrough that comes again and rewards us after long, hard waiting and believing and trusting when we cannot see. We need the grace of victory that only You can achieve; we've done everything we know to do and all we have left is to stand.

So we're standing. Give us the grace to trust You more, so we can shout in triumph, "See, world? I told You He said so and He never fails to come through."

