



THE CROSS *and* CROWN

"No Cross, No Crown"

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We're in the middle of one of my favorite seasons: Hardcourt tennis season! I love watching tennis, and seeing a match in person at the US Open is on my bucket list.

If you've watched a lot of tennis, you may have noticed that, whenever a tennis player falls, he tosses his racket away from his body. It's easy to understand why: If a player falls while holding a racket and that racket hits the ground first, the player could jam or dislocate his shoulder. However, throwing the racket to the side isn't a natural reaction to falling. It's something that players practice over and over again so that, if they fall during a point, they don't even have to think about it.

Professional tennis players don't play with the fear that that they're going to fall. That would make them tentative, afraid to go after balls, and would cost them a lot of games. And no one lunges for a shot thinking, "Well, this is the time I'm going to trip over my feet and fall down." Still, they practice falling because they know that, with the amount of time they spend on court, sooner or later, they're going to fall.

As followers of Jesus, we can't pursue our Christian walk with a constant fear of falling into sin, nor should we expect to fall on any given day or in any given circumstance. At the same time, though, we must acknowledge that, as humans, we are inevitably going to fall, and, since we know that, we need to discipline ourselves so that we can respond well when a fall happens.

When we fall, Satan is quick to swoop in. His goal is to keep us from praying, by telling us that we're not worthy to be in God's presence, and to keep us from fellowship with other believers, saying that saying that, if we go to church, people are going to condemn us and gossip about us. It is our spiritual disciplines, developed in advance, that keep us from doing more damage when we fall.

Commit yourself to daily prayer and Bible study and to fellowship with believers. Build up those routines so that, whatever setbacks come your way, you have something solid to fall back on.

Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the Lord your God.

(1 Chronicles 22:19)

Thanks for Praying!

We depend on your prayers. Thanks for your faithfulness! Please continue to pray with us for:

- rest for those who have labored so long and diligently in sowing season,
- the upcoming school year and the new staff,
- wisdom, with a clear sense of where God's leading, and
- an outpouring of God's Spirit.







We hope to be able to open our archives to the public very soon!

We're praying with you!

If you're on our mailing list*, you're on our prayer list! If there's anything specific that we can join with you in praying for, please let us know. (We will only publish your requests in this newsletter with your permission.)

We really do love hearing from you! Every message and phone call helps us keep going!

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* **Important:** If you'd rather not be on our mailing list, we won't be offended! Just call or write us, and we'll remove you. (We'll still keep you on our prayer list!)

If you'd rather receive this letter via e-mail, please let us know, or subscribe to it at crossandcrown.online/subscribe !

Did you know?

Some believe that the tennis term for zero, "Love," comes from the French term, "l'œuf" (pronounced "luff"), which means "the egg." It would be similar to the English expression, "a goose-egg," used to describe a shutout.

You reject all who stray from your decrees, for their delusions come to nothing.

(Psalm 119:118)



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