

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 Peter 5:8-11

Lesson #45

Struggle

06/24/2018

## Two perceptions

The Christian life is a struggle.

It does not take long to realize this fact.

The Christian life should be a struggle.

This seems harder to realize.



1

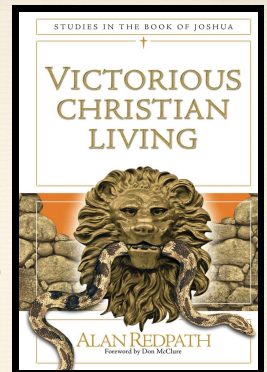
## Matthew 11

“28 Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and *you shall find rest for your souls.* 30 For My yoke is easy, and My load is light.”

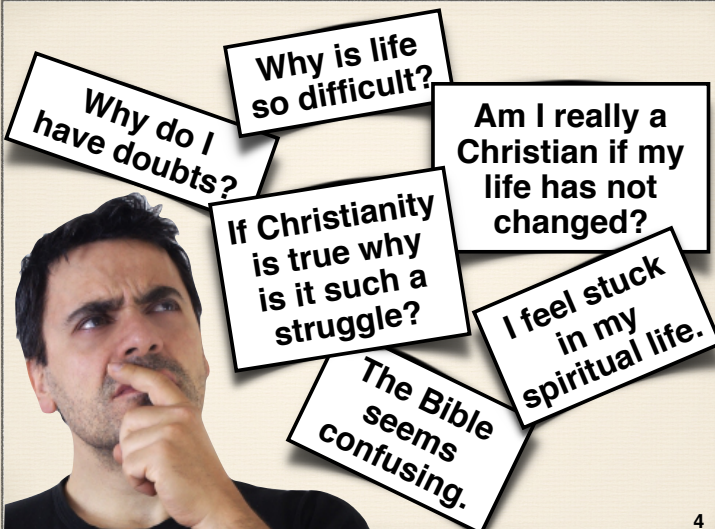
2

GOD SAID IT  
I BELIEVE IT  
THAT SETTLES IT

Let go and  
Let God



3



4

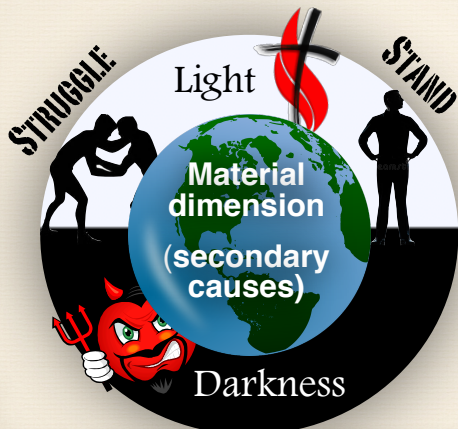
## Ephesians 6:12

“11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes (craftiness) of the devil. 12 For our **struggle** is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

1. Two dimensions - material / spiritual
2. Two forces - light / dark
3. Two postures - struggle / stand

5





6

### 1 Peter 5

“<sup>8</sup> **Be self-controlled and alert.** Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> **Resist him, standing firm in the faith,** because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of **sufferings**. <sup>10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself **restore** you and make you **strong, firm and steadfast**. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.”

- **Stay in shape** - struggle calls for alertness
- **Stand firmly** - struggle implies resistance
- **Suffer patiently** - struggle means suffering

7

### Common misunderstandings

1. **We should not expect to struggle** if we “walk in the Spirit”.

**Christ has won the fight for us** on the cross and we now are to live in Sabbath rest.

**We should claim and expect “total victory”** over spiritual obstacles in this life.

**Struggling is a sign of being “in the flesh”.** We should “let go and let God”.

**Note what the Apostles experienced and taught?**

8

### Our “struggle” consists of how we see things - what we really believe.

Satan does not want to take away our faith, hope, and love.

He just wants to control the

**object** of our faith, hope & love.



9

### Our “struggle” consists of how we see things - what we really believe.

#### Ephesians 1

“<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be **enlightened**, so that you may **know** what is the **hope** of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might <sup>20</sup> which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,”

10

### Our “struggle” consists of how we see things - what we really believe.

#### 1 Timothy 4

“<sup>1</sup> But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times **some will fall away from the faith**, paying attention to deceitful spirits and **doctrines** of demons, <sup>2</sup> by means of the hypocrisy of **liars** seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, <sup>3</sup> men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from food which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.”

11



**Our “struggle” consists of how we see things - what we really believe.**

*2 Corinthians 10*

“<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup> for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. <sup>5</sup> We are destroying **speculations** and every lofty thing raised up against the **knowledge** of God, and we are taking every **thought** captive to the obedience of Christ,”

12

**What is the nature of our “struggle”?**

1. **Purposes (expectations)** - unrealistic hopes. (*Walking by sight not faith*)

**If God loves me**, He will keep His promises as **I** imagine them, answer **my** prayers as **I** expect, make **my** dreams to come true as **I** see them.

**“Awfulizing”** - I am unacceptable, insignificant, a failure, powerless, and hopeless.

**If I am an obedient Christian** life will be fun, free, and fair.

2. **Perspective** - short term / long term.
3. **Priorities** - comfort over character.

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**What are we to do?**

*Ephesians 4*

“<sup>15</sup> but **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ,”

“<sup>22</sup> that, in reference to your former manner of life, you **lay aside the old self**, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**, <sup>24</sup> and **put on the new self**, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

*Ephesians 5:21*

“and **be subject to one another** in the fear of Christ.”

14

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**We should claim and expect “total victory”** over spiritual obstacles in this life.

**Struggling is a sign of being “in the flesh”.** We should “let go and let God”.

2. **We are powerless victims** who need to be set free through “deliverance” by the Spirit and prayer.

15

**Ephesians**

**We are fully equipped “in Christ”.**

“Put **Stand firm** in the Lord

6:10-20

“Put **Put off / put on** your life

ch.4-6

Position **Remember** Christ”

ch.1-3

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