

STRUGGLES ARE NORMAL

1. Why do we struggle?

Romans 5:12 (KJV)

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Everything sin touches dies!

Romans 8:18-22 New International Version (NIV)

I consider that our **present sufferings** are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration...in hope that ^{the} the creation itself will be liberated from its **bondage to decay** and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been **groaning** as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Genesis 1:31 New Century Version (NCV)

God looked at everything he had made, and it was very good. Evening passed, and morning came. This was the sixth day.

From Perfection and Wholeness to...Decay and Death...Via Disobedience and Sin

2. To struggle is Normal. Struggles will always occur in this life because we live in a world effected by sin.

John 16:31-33 The Message (MSG)

"...In this godless world you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world."

Matthew 5:45 New Century Version (NCV)

"...He causes the sun to rise on good people and on evil people, and he sends rain to those who do right and to those who do wrong.

3. How should we react when we struggle?

Consider these two possibilities:

1. Our trial is a result of **sin** (Adam and Eve) (Reap what you sow)
2. Our trial is a result of living in a sinful world and can be used as an opportunity for our **training** and **growth**. Luke 4:1-13...Even Jesus experienced trials!

5 things to do when we struggle

1. **Repent** of any sin_(God forgive me for _____. I'm turning away from _____ and toward You).
2. Ask "What can I **learn**?" (God give me the grace and strength to walk through this struggle. Teach me to depend on YOU and not myself. How can I grow through this struggle? How can I help others because of the struggles I've experienced?)
3. Don't **blame** God or others for your struggles. Don't allow **bitterness** to replace your **trust** in God's goodness.
4. Change your **perspective**!

James 1:2-4 Living Bible (TLB)

Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete.

5. Be aware of **others** and their struggles...how are the tests you go through becoming your "test"imony that you can share with others?

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Living Bible (TLB)

What a wonderful God we have—he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us.

Having HOPE in our struggles is ALSO normal

1 Corinthians 10:13 Living Bible (TLB)

But remember this—the wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it, for he has promised this and will do what he says. He will show you how to escape temptation's power so that you can bear up patiently against it.

1. **List 3 areas in your life in which you face temptations and struggles. Next to each one, list one way you believe God could show you a way out.**
2. **Think of one person in your life that is going through a struggle. Ask God to show you how He can use you to come alongside of that person in their time of trial and struggle.**