

light & dark

the struggle

memory verse - hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Begin each day by praying The Lord's Prayer (*Our Father*) slowly and consider what you're asking.

day one

Part of the Christian experience is the struggle with sin. Using the **PRONOUNCE IT** method, **READ** Hebrews 12:1. Sin entangles, binds, and prohibits us from running the race marked out for us.

Which sin is entangling you? What would it look like to *throw it off*? Which steps do you need to take to begin the process?

day two

READ Hebrews 12:1, 12-13. Many of us have grown so accustomed to our sins that we've become indifferent to them - giving up the struggle to *throw them off*. We don't recognize the damage they've caused and are causing us (*and others*).

ASK God to reveal the sins to which you've grown indifferent. **ASK** Him to open your eyes to the truth and nature of the destruction they cause. **CHOOSE** to struggle against the things which cripple and entangle us.

day three

Struggle and discipline play a role in our journey as we seek to know and become like Jesus. **READ** Hebrews 12:2-11. Without struggle we remain weak, and become less and less like Jesus.

Have you ever witnessed a butterfly emerge from its chrysalis? You may be tempted to help this little creature as you wonder if it will make it out. But without the struggle to break free (*movement which pumps hemolymph through its core and to the wings*), the butterfly won't be able to fly.

Our struggles and God's discipline sanctify and strengthen us thereby enabling us to fly. As you struggle against sin, what difference can understanding that statement make? What difference can it make as you experience God's discipline? How does it affect our attitude toward struggle and discipline?

day four

READ Hebrews 12:11-13 using the **PARAPHRASE IT** method. **THINK** back to the emerging butterfly. How difficult is it to watch the process without assisting? As parents, we want to protect our kids from the struggle. So it's often a struggle to allow our kids to struggle!

As we come to understand that struggling has a role to play in the life of our kids, should it change the way we parent them? Are we teaching our kids about struggles and difficulty? Are we protecting them from them? Are we teaching them how to struggle well? Do they see us persevere and endure as we deal with our struggles?

day five

READ the confession below. Use the **PERSONALIZE IT** and **PRAY IT** method to work through your personal answers to these questions.

CONFESS what's difficult, admit what entangles and keeps you from living out these truths. **ASK** God to give you His wisdom and understanding about the things in your life which keep you from wholeness that need to be thrown off.

A Confession of Surrender & Declaration of Forgiveness

(Answer yes to all these questions)

Do you confess you have sinned?

Do you reject the darkness of sin and turn to the light of God?

Do you believe Jesus is Lord and God made man?

Do you believe that His suffering, death on the cross and burial provide forgiveness for your sins?

Do you receive this forgiveness?

Do you forgive those who have harmed you?

Do you believe Jesus rose from the dead?

Is it your desire to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

Is it your desire to follow Him as your Lord and Savior?

Do you believe Jesus will return as Judge and King?

Will you strive to obey His teaching, and live with Jesus as your example and ultimate Judge?

Will you seek to love God and love your neighbor as yourself?

Have you or will you declare this commitment through baptism?

Based on the authority of Scripture and the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, I declare that your sins are forgiven.

You are a child of God given power through the Spirit to walk in newness of life.