

QUIT STRUGGLING

Ephesians 2:8-9

Introduction: Most of us want to do things "our own way" and usually do. Some of us can't follow instructions and some of us don't want to be instructed in any degree. Then there are some who can't do anything without being told exactly how and when, while there are those who really don't care about what happens. "Whatever will be, will be".... When it comes to the things of God, there is but one way and that is God's way, like it or not, believe it or not, so to become a Child of God and live like God wants, we have to quit struggling and let God take over.

I. ETERNAL LIFE IS A GIFT FROM GOD

1. God's gift of eternal life comes to us through our faith and Jesus's forgiveness.
2. Our Repentance does not save us for salvation is through Jesus Christ.
3. We can do nothing whatsoever to gain or merit God's salvation, it must be accepted as a gift.
4. God's salvation involves three things: the Past, of which we are forgiven is erased; the Future, which we look forward to, which is a gift; and the Present, which is now.

II. LIFE MORE ABUNDANT IS ALSO A GIFT

1. Considering the present, it comes to us ONE DAY AT A TIME.
2. Jesus didn't need or demand our help in the matter of our salvation or our belief.
3. Jesus doesn't need our struggles to assist Him in DAY BY DAY successful living either.
 - The Christian life was not meant to be one long, continuous struggle as most have made it, the reverse is true. Whenever we struggle, it hinders Jesus' power.
4. *"...As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him..." (Colossians 2:6)*
 - So, how did we receive Jesus? In FAITH! How then are we to walk in Him? By FAITH!
5. We may not, cannot, in the smallest degree share with Jesus Christ the work accomplishing our salvation, yet so many imagine that in the matter of being successful, victorious over sin in living the abundant life, we must help, do it ourselves, "paddle our own canoe..."

III. TRUST, NOT STRUGGLE, IS WHAT THE BELIEVER IS TO DO

1. Jesus Christ can and will save us from the power of sin every day, every hour, every minute, etc. Even with our struggling, striving and groaning, He can do this, but is limited.
 - IF WE STRUGGLE, WE ARE NOT TRUSTING!

2. We might overcome sin once in a while, but it will eventually overwhelm us.
3. **"...Sin shall not have dominion over you..." (Romans 6:14)** says God's Word. The very desire to sin can be taken away, but how? Only through Jesus Christ.
4. The story is told by an alcoholic who had been saved, but still had the desire to drink and he constantly fought it. He was miserable, failing now and then, until he cried out, "Oh, God, can't you do a better job than I am doing?" Instantly God took away the desire to drink.
5. Jesus Christ will keep us safe from the power of sin IF we let Him. He can do it, He will do it, IF we will trust Him to do it.

IV. DOING IT YOURSELF BRINGS ONLY FAILURE

1. No one has ever led the abundant life by his/her self efforts. We must stop trying to be good, stop struggling, and turn everything over to Jesus and let Him take care of our lives for us.
2. Every Christian has fought and struggled with sin, winning some, but losing most of the time yet the very power needed to totally overcome sin has been there all along - Jesus Christ!

V. GOD'S WAY IS THE ONLY WAY

1. Salvation comes to us as a gift. Forgiveness of our sins is a gift. Heaven, the eternal home of the believer is a gift. Therefore living every day the abundant life with victory over sin is also a gift.
2. Struggling and agonizing have no part in salvation, forgiveness, heaven or the abundant life, they hinder and hamper in God being able to give them freely.
3. Satan is all around, tempting, trying, interfering, and sadly, too many find enjoyment in sin and don't really want to conquer it.
 - It is with the powers of sin and darkness that we must deal with and we are not equipped to fight against such enemies. That's why we usually lose when we try to do things by ourselves, our own way.
4. The answer to sin in the believer's life is always - LET JESUS DO IT!

VI. JESUS IS THE BELIEVER'S EXAMPLE

1. Where and when did Jesus fight and struggle in living as God wanted?
2. Face it, there will be many conflicts and battles within the believer's heart before willing to surrender entirely to Jesus Christ. The abundant life is a life free from struggle against sin and only Jesus Christ is able to keep and to win for the believer.

VII. HOW DOES ALL THIS COME ABOUT?

1. Whatever success/victory the believer might have over temptations and sin is won by Jesus and often in spite of our own efforts and getting in Jesus' way, He is still able to win a battle for us.
2. A dangerous thing is for a believer to major on WHAT CAN I DO FOR GOD instead of WHAT ALL GOD DOES FOR HIM/HER.
3. We must remember that WE DON'T DO GOD'S WORK FOR HIM! God works through us.
4. Whether an individual or a Church family, all success depends upon the degree in which Jesus is allowed to do His work and receive the praise and honor for it.

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you satisfied with your life as a believer?
2. Is your life one of battle and struggle, constantly falling into sin and at times you're just about ready to just give up and let sin have it's way with your life?
3. Stop struggling and fighting and let Jesus have your life completely. Let Him fight your battles with sin.
4. Forgiveness of sins is a gift! Eternal life is a gift! All from God must be received by faith. A life free from the habit of sin and failure is also offered by God as a gift and to be received like the rest of His gifts, by faith.
5. Believer, Christian, turn EVERYTHING over to Jesus and STOP trying to help!