WHY DO I STRUGGLE?

1. There is an INVISIBLE war.

   Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (NIV)

   2 Kings 6:15-17 "15 When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my Lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. **16 "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."** 17 And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha." (NIV)

2. <u>WE</u> are involved in an invisible war.

   Ephesians 6:12 "For **our** struggle…" (NIV)

   2 Corinthians 10:3-5 "3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." (NIV)

   2 Corinthians 4:4 "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (NIV)

3. Our foe is FORMIDABLE.

   Ephesians 6:12 "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers**, against the **authorities**, against the **powers** of this dark world and against the **spiritual forces** of evil in the heavenly realms." (NIV)

a. These forces are POWERFUL.

b. These forces are WICKED.

Genesis 3:1 "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made…" (NIV)

1 Chronicles 21:1 "Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel." (NIV)

Matthew 4:1 "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." (NIV)

Revelation 12:9 "The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, **who leads the whole world astray**. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him." (NIV)

1 Peter 5:8 "Be self controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (NIV)

4. We fight FROM victory, not FOR victory.

Ephesians 6:10-11 "10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that **you <u>can</u> take your stand** against the devil's schemes." (NIV)

1 John 4:4 "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." (NIV)

1 John 5:4-5 "4 …for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." (NIV)

Revelation 12:10-12 "**10** Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. **11** They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. **12** Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the

earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

James 4:7-8 "7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and He will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." (NIV)