### THE STRUGGLE IS REAL

## Matthew 11:28-30 KJV

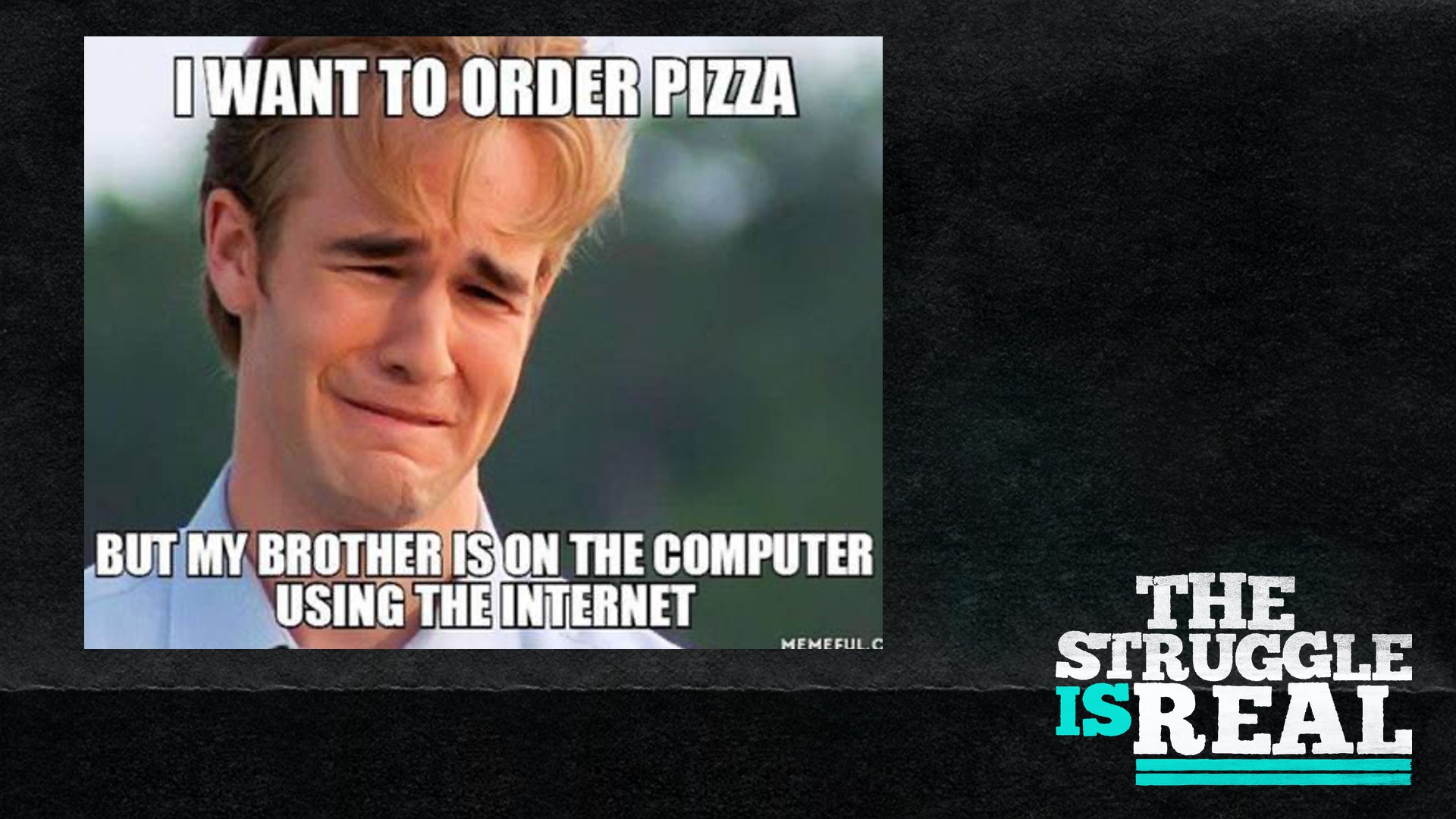
1. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
2. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
3. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

### Opening

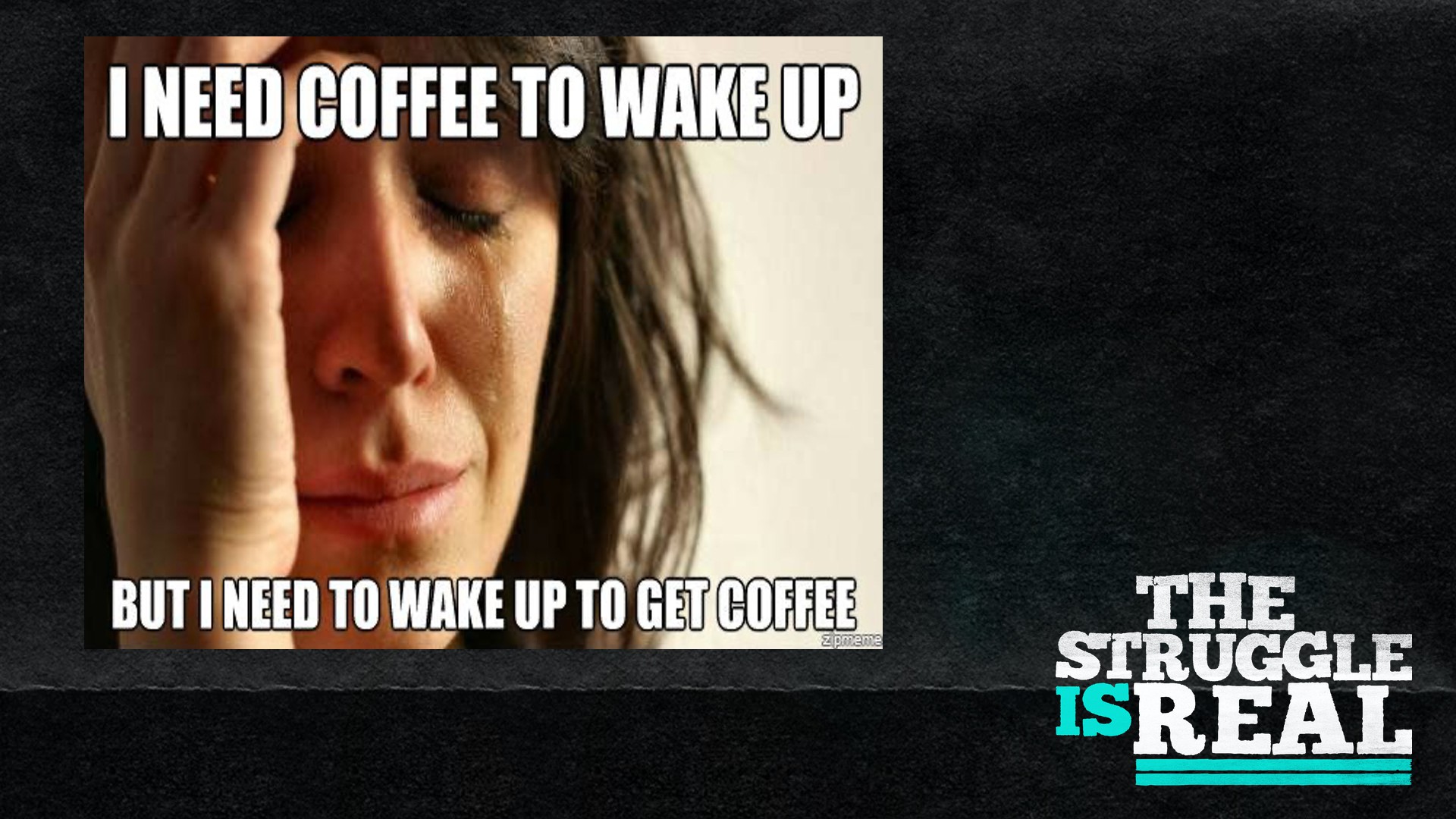
There is a popular phrase called THE STRUGGLE IS REAL.

People usually use this to go along with some silly first-world problem that they are dealing with.

I went and found some examples for you so you could kinda see what kind of struggles people are having.









The struggle is real…

I can say pretty confidently that struggle is one of the common denominators among us in this room.

Each of us can probably share stories of times that we struggled with something…physical, spiritual, emotional, relational… somewhere in your life you’ve had to struggle.

I am also confident that some of you at this very moment, you are struggling with something in your life.

There is one thing for sure about this life that we are living….there will be times of struggle.

There will be hard seasons. There will be times when you wonder where God is.

Believe it or not, living for God doesn’t eliminate you from trials.

Nowhere in Scripture did God promise that you would never have issues.

## Job 14:1 NLT

How frail is humanity! How short is life, how full of trouble!

This life that we are living on this side of eternity is full of trouble.

There are examples all through scripture of struggles…

### Job

Who can say that they have suffered more than Job?

He lost his children, his wealth, his health, his crops, his livestock, and even the relationship with his wife and best friends who turned on him and accused him of suffering because of sin.

In Job’s life, the struggle was real.

### David

Even after David had been anointed king and chosen by God, he still had to run for his life.

Some scholars believe he had to run for his life from King Saul for between 7 and 10 years.

David cried out often to God.

## Psalm 142:1-2 KJV

1 I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication.

2 I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble.

That sounds like to me that in David’s life, the struggle was real.

### Paul

Paul, one of the most important figures in the apostolic church, was someone who could relate to having some struggles.

## II Corinthians 11:24-27 KJV

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

I think it’s obvious that Paul knew that the struggle was real.

I could pass this microphone around and I promise you that there will be people who could share their own stories of struggle.

They could testify that, yes, sometimes, the struggle is real. But can I tell you something about the struggle tonight?

### SLIDE

***Anything worth having is worth struggling for.***

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE

YOUR PURITY IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE YOUR HOLINESS IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE YOUR FAITH IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE

THE MINISTRY THAT GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FAMILY IS WORTH THE STRUGGLE.

IF IT’S WORTH HAVING…IT’S WORTH THE STRUGGLE.

### Transition Moment

So life is full of trouble.

There are times that we can’t control the things that come our way.

### We can’t control what runs into us but we can control what runs out of us.

We do have control over the way we respond to those things. And our response to the challenges in our life is what defines us.

Our response to the problems that come is what shapes us and forms us into who we are.

What is the right response?

## Matthew 11:28-30

28. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

## The BHV, Billy Haley Version

1. Come unto me, all ye that know that the struggle is real and I will give you rest.
2. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
3. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

There are three things that stick out to me in this passage… three commands that Jesus gave.

# COME TO HIM

This is the first thing he said to do when the struggle is real: COME TO HIM.

As simple as that sounds, for whatever reason sometimes Jesus is the last resort.

Some people turn to Facebook before Jesus.

Some people turn to Instagram or Snapchat before they turn to Jesus.

Listen, we need to stop giving a public platform to our private struggles.

BEFORE WE UPDATE OUR STATUS, WE SHOULD UPDATE OUR PRAYER LIFE.

BEFORE WE SHARE THAT INSTAGRAM POST, WE SHOULD SHARE SOME TIME WITH THE WORD OF GOD.

WE NEED TO QUIT REACHING OUT FOR HELP IN PLACES THAT CAN’T HELP US.

JESUS SAID I AM THE WAY, I AM THE TRUTH, AND I AM THE LIFE.

YES, THE STRUGGLE IS REAL….SO TAKE IT TO JESUS. HE’S OUR HOPE.

HE’S OUR SALVATION.

HE’S OUR STRONG TOWER.

JESUS IS THE ANSWER EVERY TIME.

TAKE YOUR STRUGGLE TO JESUS.

Yes, the struggle is real…but He is still God in your struggle. He is still the way, the truth, and the life.

He is still the solid rock to stand on.

And His arms are open wide ready for you to come to Him with your struggle.

# TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU

29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

He said take my yoke upon you…for my yoke is easy and burden is light.

A yoke is an instrument used in farming.

It’s a device that a farmer uses to join two oxen together.

You place one side around the neck of this ox and the other side around the neck of this ox.

It connects the two together. It unites them.

When the lead ox goes to the right, they both go to the right.

If he goes to the left, they both go left. If he stops, they both stop.

Jesus not only wants you to come to him, but he wants you to take it a step further and get linked up with him.

When you’re linked up with Jesus, you can be confident that you’re going to be ok.

You can be confident that you are headed in the right direction.

Paul told the Corinthians that they should not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

The reason some of you are having such problems in the midst of your struggle is because you’re linked up with the wrong things and the wrong people.

You can’t be linked up with the world and expect to live a victorious life.

Victory is only found in a life that is linked up with Jesus.

And if you’re going to be linked up with Jesus, then you are also linked up with his church.

The church is the body of Christ.

How can you be linked up with Jesus but not linked up with His body….it’s not possible.

When the church is functioning the way it is supposed to, it is the physical presence of Jesus Christ.

So if you’re struggling today let me encourage you….stay connected to Jesus.

Stay connected to His spiritual body, which is the church. Don’t disconnect from the church when you’re struggling. That’s when you need it the most.

The devil is a liar when he tells you that you aren’t welcome here because of your struggle.

The devil is a liar when he tells you that you’re too messed up to go to church.

That you have too many struggles to show up to revival.

Listen, the whole purpose of the church is to be a place for people to have an experience with Jesus.

Don’t you believe the lie of the devil that you don’t belong here.

Stay connected to Jesus.

**John 6:66-69 KJV**

1. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.
2. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?
3. Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
4. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Peter understood something so powerful…he knew that, yeah, living for God wasn’t going to be easy.

But he also knew that there was no better place to be than to be connected with Jesus.

He knew that his best chance of survival was to stay yoked up with Jesus.

And the same is true now.

In the middle of the toughest struggles of your life. In the middle of the worst times of your life.

The best place for you to be is to stay connected with Jesus. Stay connected to Jesus.

You may be tempted to walk away.

It may seem too difficult to stick around. But there’s no other place to go.

Jesus is where we find the strength to press on.

Jesus is where we find the peace that passes all understanding. Jesus is where we find the way when there seems to be no way.

So the best thing we can do in our struggle is to stay connected to Jesus!

***MUSICIANS COME STAND***

# REST IN HIM

He promised that if we come to Him and link up with Him, that we will find rest.

He is the only one who can give rest to the soul.

In the midst of your struggle when your soul is tired, exhausted, heavy-laden, Jesus can step in and give you rest.

But the criteria is the same - you have to come to him. Some of you are just weary.

You feel like you have to drag yourself into the house of God. You wonder if all of this is still worth it.

If the struggle that you are having is worth it. Some of you are right at the point of giving up. You have the towel in your hand.

You’re staring at your problems and you feel like you don’t have a hope.

You’re tired of fighting. You’re tired of struggling.

But I’m telling you if you will come to Him and take His yoke, you will find renewed passion.

You will find renewed vision. Your strength will be renewed. Your joy can be restored.

And you will find rest for your soul.

Each of you have a choice this morning….

I know the struggle is real in your life…And I know that some of you are feeling weighed down tonight.

Some of you it’s just life. Some of you it’s sin.

Things you’ve allowed into your life.

But in both situations Jesus is still the answer.

Jesus is still the answer when everything else around you seems to crumble.

Jesus is still the answer when your world seems like it’s falling apart.

Jesus is the one constant in our life…in this life that is full of trouble and heartache and STRUGGLE…Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And I believe with my whole heart that the presence of God is in the room and He has come to encourage today.

He has come to lift some heavy loads and link up with some of you.

The first step is up to you. He said you have to come to Him.