

**Darah Henley: 7/8/20**

**The Struggle is Real**

Hi! My name is Darah, and for those I have not met yet, I try to be real and vulnerable in hopes that someone never feels alone.

For about a year I have had questions. Let me take that back a little more. I have had questions about the Bible and God for lots of years, but only in the last year or so have they really bothered me. I was attempting to read through the Bible beginning in Genesis all the way through, which I had never done before. Don't get me wrong. I had heard the stories all through my life and read a lot, but never all the way through. I was using a video series to help get a better contextual view. Something that was said in one of the videos made me think a little harder and kind of rocked my world. The man in the video giving an overview of a story in the Old Testament called a statement "clearly satire," and he continued to explain why. Wait, what?! Rewind. If this theologian is telling me this story was clearly satire, what other things do I believe to be true that may be satire?! That was not the only incident that made me question things during this period, but I was wrecked for months. Every time I even wanted to pick up the bible to read, I got angry. I was angry that I did not know context. I was angry because I did not trust anyone to tell me answers, because how do they really know what they are talking about is THE truth. I was angry that I was not sure why and how and when and who. I began to ignore the feelings and just not go there. Nothing made sense. I do not know why it happened when it did, maybe a midlife crisis. Who knows?

One day, I was asking God about all of it very frustrated, and I heard the Holy Spirit say, "Darah, you do not have to understand me to know me." What I heard was freedom. I am free to ask. I am free to be confused. I am free to be frustrated. I am free to question. I am free to struggle. I am also free to trust Him and Him alone. I do not have to take anyone else's word because of Jesus, The Living Word. When there are no questions, there is no growth. Before, I felt bound by the questions. I felt trapped. But when I take it to Jesus, there is always freedom.

I do not and will not have my questions answered. I still struggle, but I am ok with it, and I think God is too. What I do know because of my personal experiences is how faithful He is, how loving He is, how forgiving He is, how incomprehensible He is, and how His ways will never be understood by my mind. I know that Jesus was the Messiah to come to save us all, and to me that is all that matters.

There's freedom in the struggle. I do not have to understand to know.