



WOW: Word Of the Week

Wrestle

May 28, 2025

A strange WOW, at least until you have context. Perhaps startling at first. This week's WOW has a biblical context, is a biblical word!

"Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured" (Colossians 4:12, NIV). Epaphras wrestled in prayer on behalf of others. He implored God to help them stand strong and be mature.

The Greek word is *agonizomai*, related to our word agony. As Christians, we are called to endure and overcome, not only our own challenges, but also the pain of others. We wrestle on behalf of others—taking on their pain, helping solve problems, sharing words of hope. Such helping is often painful. Pain can easily pile up—combining what's going on at work, at home, in the church, in the lives of others. Too much all at once. You understand, right?

The temptation is to take the easy way out, to escape. Get out of the maddening cycle. But Christians have another solution. Church leaders do not take the easy way out. What do they do? They wrestle.

When I moved to Fort Gibson to serve in ministry in 1987, soon to be 40 years ago, the elders had the custom of meeting every Sunday morning to pray for the flock. Jan and I are back at Fort Gibson—that practice continues. These leaders are used to wrestling.

Do you know the blessing? The blessing of knowing that others are praying specifically for you? Helping you stand up under pressure? What if all God's people became spiritual wrestlers? What if we wrestled in prayer more often?

The New Testament has some interesting and relevant verses scattered along the way.

Luke 13:24, STRIVE to enter through the narrow door.

John 18:36, if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would be FIGHTING.

1 Cor 9:25, everyone who COMPETES must exercise self-control in all things.

Col. 1:29, STRUGGLING with all his energy; 4:12, WRESTLING in prayer.

1 Tim 6:12, FIGHT the good fight of faith

2 Tim 4:7, I have FOUGHT the good fight

Why these verses? You guessed it! These are *agonizomai* verses. These are wrestling verses. How are your spiritual wrestling skills? Do you need more practice? This would be a good time to start, to develop the skills. Life is a wrestling match. Spiritual wrestling. Wrestle with God's energy, in prayer, with faith.

May we, like Epaphras, be among those who are always wrestling in prayer for others!