

## Wednesday - March 20

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds for you know that the testing of faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

*James 1:2-4*

After a brief introduction, the Letter of James gets right to the point in verses 2 through 4! I have read these words many times in my life, but they've taken on new meaning over that past year or so. My 'trials of various kinds' have seemed to have come in alarming succession, and I keep going back to James' letter especially when all I want to ask is "Why me?" Where do we go when we hit those selfish words, "Why me?"

We go to Grace. We go to Hope. We go to Love.

"Love has another plan," Pastor Larry told us in a sermon last fall. "Always!" The context of his words were rooted in the Book of Ruth specifically the relationship between Naomi and Ruth. He went on to say that "...loss does not define us or them, they were found in God, and raised up with God, and in turn, *with us*." With us! I love those words together. The Grace, and Hope, and Love that we need is found WITH US, and I have found in numerous situations in my recent days that that's where we will find Jesus. I connected with the following passage from Bod Goff, in his book *Everybody Always*, as he commented on the singular word 'with:'

"...It's God's purpose for us. It's the reason Jesus came. It's the whole Bible in a word. People who are becoming love are *WITH* those are hurting and help them get home."

With us...God with us...Emmanuel! O come, O come, Emmanuel!

Todd

**Prayer:** Dear Father, strengthen me in Faith when the 'trials of various kinds' come my way. Let my heart rejoice in knowing that 'love has another plan' and with you and through you, I will find my way home. Amen.