

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (Jms. 1:2-4).

I think the coronavirus qualifies as “trials of various kinds.” I do not know about you, but I am starting to get a bit weary and tired of this virus. Over a year after we first began working to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 we are seeing as many cases as ever in our state. We may know more about this virus than we did a year ago, but we still have not been able to contain its spread. Everyone in my house is vaccinated, but we are still taking all the recommended precautions. We are wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, and sanitizing all we can.

I feel like these inconveniences are not that life altering, although they are an annoyance. What troubles me the most, is how ineffective I feel in ministry. I worry about our congregation and the distance many of our members might be drifting away from our fellowship. I do not know who is participating with worship online. I do know who is in church and Bible study. I am encouraged by everyone of you I see, either in the pew or online. I am encouraged when I receive an email, text, or call, because I know there is still a connection to Trinity. But what worries me the most, is the people I do not see or hear from.

I am willing to bet, most of us have some area in our life we feel is suffering because of this pandemic. As I mentioned above, for me, it is my ministry. For others, it might be their business, their family relationships, their job or financial security, their health or emotional wellbeing, or any number of things. We wonder, where is all this heading? When will it end? What will life look like when it does?

In the passage above, we are encouraged to consider these trials as a testing of our faith. These times are forcing us to turn to God in prayer and trust. We do not know where all of this is going, but God does. We do not know what life will look like down the road, but God does. He is the One who can perfect and complete us in ways we would not have imagined.

Please pray with me that all our members, you and all your family, your friends, your neighbors be drawn closer to the Lord during this time of testing. Pray that we be given the wisdom to make the most of a difficult situation. Pray that our faith be demonstrated in such a way that the name of Christ is glorified, and others are brought to the foot of the cross. Pray that the Lord would give us a sense of joy, during trials, because, despite our worries and insecurities, Christ is still risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true!