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"CLOUDS" WITH A "SILVER LINING"

INTRODUCTION

(2 Corinthians 4:8-9) "We are hard pressed on every side, **yet not crushed**; we are perplexed, **but not in despair**; persecuted, **but not forsaken**; struck down, **but not destroyed**"

(James 1:2-4) "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, **knowing** that the testing of your faith **produces patience**. But let patience have its perfect work ... "

"count it" - stop and think; consider; deliberate; focus; look for a "silver lining."

"all joy" - not giddy or poly-anna; rather, find a peace that passes understanding; a state of well-being or contentment; (John 16:33) "... be of good cheer ... "

"various trials" - hardships of any sort; struggles; "in the world you have tribulations" (Job 14:1) "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble"

"knowing" - have confidence in something; understand; grasp; perceive.

"the testing of your faith" - we experience "hard pressed ... perplexed ... persecuted ... struck down;" our faith will be taken to the "proving grounds."

"works patience" - it's a "silver lining" or product of having faith "tested."

1. EVEN IN DEATH, THERE IS A BIBLICAL "SILVER LINING"

(Psalm 116:15) "**Precious** in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"

(Proverbs 14:32) "... But the righteous has a **refuge** in his death."

(Philippians 1:21) "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is **gain**."
(v23) "... having a desire to depart and **be with Christ**, which is **far better**."

(Revelation 14:13) "... **Blessed** are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, that **they may rest** from their labors ... "

(1 Thessalonians 4:18) "Therefore **comfort** one another with these words."

2. A FEW ILLUSTRATIONS FROM OUR EXPERIENCES

CLOSE - (Romans 8:28) "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, and to those who are called according to His purpose."

Not everything that happens is "good;" rather, we pull in all of God's resources, and we discover the "silver lining" that God provides.

Our challenge is find the promised "for good" in the midst of "various trials."