I was at work and received a notification from the news apps I have on my phone.

It warned of a lockdown at a local community college citing a possible active shooter.

Later, I found out that it was reduced to a threat and it was brought to a peaceful resolution.

The police said that based on his statements, he was seeking suicide by cop.

The next morning I received a text message from my father telling me to look up who caused the lockdown.

The young man was identified as a 30 year-old from Chino, CA.

I immediately recognized him.

I’ve known him for five or six years at this point.

I actually trained him at the paper mill I used to work at.

Honestly, I was dumbfounded.

After a while, I made the realization that sometimes, you don’t know who people really are.

People can be in your lives, interacting with you and your family, and you have no idea what is going through their head.

God, however, is all-seeing and all-knowing.

He knows every thought that has ever been thought.

The night after this incident I was lying in bed praying.

This young man has a baby girl.

He had a good job.

He seemed to be a happy individual.

What would drive someone to do this?

What could push someone to want to give up?

Stress?

Depression?

Buried guilt or shame?

Feelings of inadequacy?

You see, sometimes we keep these things inside.

We choose to keep these things from our friends and family.

God knows us on such an intimate level that we can’t even comprehend it.

God knows our heartache.

God feels our depression.

Through Him we can find resolution.

Through Him we can seek comfort, rise above the negativities this world breeds.

In the book of James, we find verse that is sometimes hard to swallow.

*James 1:2-4: Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

We are told that the tough times, the low points, should bring joy.

What a tough notion!

But it is through these low points and tough times that we sometimes grow the most.

God uses these to shape us and mold us.

This is why we are told to consider them joyous.

If we learn to lean on God, we will rise above the challenges of this world.

James continues: *James 1:5-8: But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

We must keep our faith, especially in the hard times.

Faith is something that requires constant honing and care.

God remains faithful, consistently.

Faith requires our dedication.

We fall short.

We fail.

We sin.

Therefore, we must seek His kingdom.

It has to be a conscious decision that we make every day to keep God in our forefront.

He’s already with us, intimately.

Let us attempt to diligently seek Him just as fervently.