

Day 12 :: Feb. 16

Sometimes, I struggle with God. There are days when I wonder what He's doing, and why. There are days when I wonder if He's really as All Powerful, or All Good, or All Knowing as I believe He is. There are days when I doubt Him. And then there are days where I don't doubt Him at all, but I don't like what He has to say, or the things He does, or the things He calls me to do. Some days, I struggle with God.

I am comforted by the fact that I am not alone. Almost everyone I talk to, counsel, mentor, Direct, or just listen to struggles with God, too. As long as you take God and your faith seriously, you will have times when you struggle with God. But it's not just a modern day issue. This idea of struggling with God goes back through history, past Martin Luther (the Father of Protestantism, not the Civil Rights leader), past the early church mothers and fathers, even past Jesus Himself (remember the garden of Gethsemane?). This tradition goes back and back, all the way to Jacob, who struggled, wrestled, with God both figuratively and literally.

This is one of my favorite stories in scripture because it is so comforting when I am struggling. Jacob, one of the great manipulators of the entire scripture, meets God all alone one night while in the middle of yet another manipulation (this time of his brother Esau, again). And what does he do? He wrestles with God. And though he loses due to a disjointed hip (dirty pool, God), he still wins because he is changed by the event. And any meeting with God that changes you is a win in my book.

We have to notice that God doesn't have a duel with Jacob; no "40 paces, turn, and fire!" God doesn't have a boxing match with Jacob; not a single punch is thrown. You see these styles of fighting are distant. In them, the fighters stand apart and throw things at each other, whether ammunition or fists. But that's not how God fights. God doesn't box – God wrestles! Why? Because wrestling is intimate. Wrestling is relational. Wrestling, if set to music, can be like dancing.

When God agrees to fight us, to wrestle with us, to struggle with us, it is yet another means of building relationship with us, of drawing us in to Him. He holds us as we struggle. He hugs us as we try to squirm away from Him. This is why God wrestles, and I believe why God named His people "Israel" which literally means "wrestles with God".

Sometimes, I struggle with God. And like Jacob, I always come away changed, closer to God, and better because of it.