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GOD IN MY LIFE

By: C.D. COLE

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised. The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, Who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven, and in the earth! He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people. He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord." Psalm 113.

"When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language; Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion. The sea saw it, and fled: Jordan was driven back. The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs? Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob; Which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters." Psalm 114.

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: he is their help and their

shield. The Lord hath been mindful of us: he will bless us; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless them that fear the Lord, both small and great. The Lord shall increase you more and more, you and your children. Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth. The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men. The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord." Psalm 115.

"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted: I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people, In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord." Psalm 116.

"O Praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord." Psalm 117.

"O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever. Let Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever. Let them now that fear the Lord say, that his mercy endureth for ever. I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them. They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. They compassed me about like bees; they are quenched as the fire of thorns: for in the name of the Lord I will destroy them. Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall: but the Lord helped me. The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord: This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing: it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: we have blessed you out of the house of the Lord. God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar. Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, I will exalt thee. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."

Psalms 113 through 118 are called the Hallel (Praise) Psalms. They were sung in families on the night of the Passover, a memorial feast celebrating Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The first two (113 and 114) were sung at the beginning of the feast, and the last four (115, 116, 117, and 118) were sung at the close. All were songs of thanksgiving for the mercies of God. It must have been one of these that Christ and His disciples sang at the Last Supper. *"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."* Matthew 26:30.

Some think Psalm 116 is the resurrection song of Christ. The prophet thinks of Christ as having passed through the agonies of the cross. His work of atonement is finished, and He is risen from the dead. Sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on High, He proclaims to the world the blessings He received from God during the day of His incarnation, and the glories He has received in the kingdom of His heavenly Father.

Inasmuch as Christ *"...all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me,"* Luke 24:44. We can see how appropriately the words of Psalm 116 apply to Him. Moreover, the words of Psalm 116 are appropriate on the lips of every redeemed soul, for we too have experienced God's mercies and ought to voice our gratitude in song. We have three prominent themes in Psalm 116: Supplication, Redemption, and Devotion.

SUPPLICATION

"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." The Psalmist, speaking for himself and for all the redeemed, says, "I love the Lord because He has heard my prayers." Answered prayer leads to more praying: *"I will call upon him as long as I live."* The Psalmist was in dire distress: *"The sorrows of death compassed me."* As hunters surround the stag with dogs and weapons, so the writer is ringed around with trouble and danger. And when he saw no one around to help, he looked up to God and He helped him. And this was our experience in conversion. When there were no saviors around us, we looked up to Jesus Christ and He saved us. And let every redeemed soul say, "I love the Lord."

REDEMPTION

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." Salvation is of the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed us from death which is the wages of sin; He has dried our tears shed in mourning over sin; and He has kept our feet from falling into false ways of salvation. *"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings."* Psalm 40:1,2. *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,"* Acts 4:12. *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* Galatians 3:13.

DEVOTION

"I will walk before the Lord." This is the psalmist's response to God's deliverance. He says, *"Thou hast,"* "I will." By a man's walk is understood his way of life. To walk before God is to live as under His all-seeing eye. Some live as only in the sight of men, regarding their judgment and craving their favor. "Thou God seest me" is a better influence than "My neighbor sees me."

There is "walking with God," which means communion, fellowship, and companionship. *"Enoch walked with God."* Genesis 5:22. *"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God,"* Hebrews 11:5. We also read of "Walking after God", which means guidance, direction, and example. *"I said in my haste, All men are liars."* Psalm 116:11. The Psalmist is not saying that no man ever tells the truth, but that no man tells the truth all the time. There is only One of Whom it can be said that He never told a lie, and this is Jesus Christ, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life,"* John 14:6.

Samuel Horsely: "In an ecstasy of despair, I said, the whole race of man is a delusion." The RSV: "I said in my consternation, Men are all a vain hope." Jonathan Edwards: "The meaning seems to be this -- I was greatly afflicted, I was in extreme distress, I was in great astonishment and trembling (as the word rendered "haste" signifies trembling as well as haste). "And shall say unto them, Hear, O

Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them." Deuteronomy 20:3. And in these circumstances I did not trust in man; I said, "All men are liars, not fit to be trusted in." It is a way of saying that Jesus Christ is the only Savior, the only One to be trusted. *"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,"* Acts 4:12. *"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?"* Psalm 116:12. This is the question of every saved soul. "How can I ever pay God back for all He has done for me?" The Psalmist answers, *"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord,"* Psalm 116:13. The way to requite the Lord is to enjoy His salvation and call upon Him for more blessings. There are no material things with which we can requite Him; we can only pay Him back in love and thanksgiving. God needs nothing. He says, *"If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof,"* Psalm 50:12. *"...God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things,"* Acts 17:22, 24, 25.

We are indeed to give to the support of His cause, but this is not to enrich Him; it is to enrich ourselves. Christ said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* God calls for our gifts, not because He is needy, but because we need the blessedness of giving. *"The liberal soul shall be made fat,"* Proverbs 11:25. *"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it...,"* Malachi 3:10, 11.

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people," Psalm 116:18. What will secret disciples say to this verse? We pay our vows in public; first, by open confession in baptism, and after that by taking part in public worship, by tithes and offerings, and by witnessing to others.

A GOOD MAN LOST AND A BAD MAN SAVED

BY: C.D. COLE

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," Luke 18:9-14.

INTRODUCTION: A short and simple story. Spoken to self-righteous people who despised others. All who trust in their own righteousness will despise others. They had a superiority complex religiously. The story of two men. We follow them to the house of God and watch them in worship. In parable there is a comparison and contrast. The men were alike in some respects and much unlike in other respects. We will note:

Their similarities:

1. Both men were religious. Both went to church and prayed. Both went to the right church, the proper place of worship. The place God had set apart. They did not go to the idol temple. Man is a religious animal. God has impressed the truth of His being in the very nature of man. No man is irreligious by nature. Atheist is the man who has schooled himself into the abnormal position of denying there is a God. Irreligious is not the trouble with this world, therefore religion cannot cure the ills of men.

2. Both were actual sinners. This is proven by the whole tenor of the scripture. By the parable itself. one man confessed he was a sinner; the other man went down to his house condemned by God, therefore he must have been a sinner.

Their differences:

1. Differed in the eyes of men. No doubt the Pharisee was a much better man in the eyes of his neighbors. Pharisees were a highly respected class and tax collectors were despised.

2. Differed in their own eyes. Pharisee saw nothing but good in himself. He was highly complimentary of himself. The publican saw nothing but evil in himself. He called himself nothing but a sinner, even the sinner. The Pharisee was filled with thoughts about

his good deeds. The publican was filled with thoughts about his evil deeds.

3. Differed in their appeal. The Pharisee asked for justice. He said pay me that thou owest. The publican asked for mercy.

4. Differed in their hope or object of trust. Pharisee trusted in himself, his hope of salvation was based upon what he was and what he did. And he did not fail to remind God of his goodness. He was so proud that he was not like other men, even this publican. The publican trusted in the sacrifice made for sinners. He knew the meaning of the sacrifice that had been slain. He knew there was blood behind the veil in the Holy of Holies. That blood was his only hope. So in faith he cries, "Be thou propitiated to me the sinner." I need mercy, I look to the mercy seat where the blood was sprinkled. The Pharisee did not see the meaning of the sacrifices made for sinners.

5. Differed in their condition when they left the building. The good man, good in his own eyes, good in the eyes of his neighbors, went home lost. The bad man, bad in his own eyes, bad in the sight of his neighbors, went to his house justified. He was justified, not because he was good, but because he was trusting the blood, justified by faith.

6. Here is a principle that runs through every conversion: *"for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted,"* Luke 18:14. Does man have to be humbled to be saved? Certainly! But what is it to be humbled? Does a man humble himself by getting down on the floor? Not necessarily. The publican did not, for we are told he stood and beat upon his breast. A humble man may get down on his knees or stand erect. Or a man may go down on his knees and not humble himself. What is humility in this connection? It is to take the place of a sinner. A man may get on his knees and think that would help save him, but that would be the very opposite of humility. Humility is to confess and realize there is nothing the sinner can do to save himself. The Pharisee trusted himself; the publican trusted the blood.

Sometimes the non-professor accuses the believer of being a hypocrite because he professes to be something when he is nothing. But listen, the true believer does not profess to be anything. It is the unbeliever who professes to be something. The real believer confesses he is a sinner and asks for mercy; it is the lost man who says he wants God to give him justice.

7. What did this publican do to be justified? He did exactly what every man has

to do to be justified, that is to believe. He not only took the place of a sinner, he also trusted the blood. Of course, Christ had not actually died on the cross, but He was to die, and before His death the Gospel was preached in type and ceremony. Animal sacrifices were instituted to typify the sacrifice Christ would make in His death. And that was what this publican thought of, he was thinking of sacrifice when he said, "Be thou propitiated to me the sinner." He looked for mercy on the ground of blood shedding. *"And without shedding of blood is no remission,"* Hebrews 9:22.

Now the Pharisee thought he would be justified by the deeds of the law. He pleaded his good deeds as grounds of acceptance with God. And he went home a lost man.

A linotype operator told this story of his conversion. He had become disturbed by setting type for some sermons. He was a great reader and always glad for weekends to come so he could spend time in reading. On a certain weekend he found himself without any fresh reading matter. And then it occurred to him that he had in his library a copy of the Bible. But he had never liked to read the Bible. So with nothing but the Bible to read he said, but I do not like it. And then the question arose, Why do you not like this book? He could not give any real reason. So he said as an intelligent and reasonable man, I must take myself in hand, I must subject myself to discipline, I will read the Bible. And when he had opened the Bible he soon came to Romans 8:7, *"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God."* Ah! he said to himself. This is the reason why I do not like the Bible. I do not like the Author. And he kept reading and finally came to Ephesians 2:8, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*