

Psalm 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord... for I am a stranger with You..."

Ps 116 6-7 The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you..

Eddie Miller. The name means nothing to you. It means a great deal to me. I met Eddie just a couple of months after he was saved. He was in the youth group at our first church. I was a whole three years old in Christ. Eddie was from one of the strongest Catholic families I have ever known. His parents became dear friends of ours, although it wasn't that way at the beginning. Eddie found out he had severe adult onset epilepsy just a few months after coming to Christ. He lived for another twelve years. In spite of incredible physical struggles, a constant series of grand mal seizures, frequent hospitalizations, dozens of near death experiences and family opposition, he went to Bible College and taught at the little Christian school we started in Wilkes-Barre. Eddie became like a little brother to my wife and I. We spent thousands of hours together, as he nearly lived at our house. He never let his infirmities quench his desire for adventure, spiritually or physically. I took him on visitation on my motorcycle, took him horseback riding, and he watched our kids constantly as a faithful, adopted uncle.

I can't read Psalm 116:6 without thinking of Eddie. You see, that was his life verse. He whispered it on hospital beds into the ears of doctors and nurses, friends and family members. "I was brought low, and He helped me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has blessed you greatly." I spoke on this text at his funeral. The Catholic priest left the chapel when Eddie's dad asked me to say a few words. The priest was very opposed to it, but his dad insisted. So the priest just left, and Eddie's Dad invited me to the front of the chapel to speak. What an opportunity to share Eddie's Savior with his family and friends.

Of all the lessons I learned from Eddie, it was the difference between listening to myself and talking to myself.

We all tend to listen to ourselves way too much. David did. Verse 7 says.. "I said in my haste all men are liars." Ever been there? Disappointment is the most common cause of spiritual decline. *People are so human!* They fail, they struggle, they disappoint, they sin, and they say and do some very thoughtless and cruel things. And in the midst of our pain and discouragement, we listen to our own little chorus of disappointment like David's "all men are liars..." (not one of his best choral works!) or Elijah's "I am the only one who really serves You" (he was stuck on that one big time!) or Jonah's "I do have a right to be angry" or our own "what's the use" "I am such a failure" "we'll never make it".

Instead of listening to yourself and the broken record of your own complaints, try talking to yourself. Psalm 15:1-2 says "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly and works righteousness and *speaks the truth in his heart*. We need to learn how to give ourselves a good talking to. Telling ourselves what we know to be true. Listen again to David's "Return to your rest, O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you. "O my soul" is a frequent phrase of David. He learned how to encourage himself in the Lord his God by speaking the truth in his heart. "Soul, listen to me, God has been good to you, so chill out and can the complaining."

Eddie always found reasons to give thanks, reasons to praise, reasons to move ahead in faith. Almost anyone else with his afflictions would have given up. The early diagnosis proved accurate. But Eddie determined to tell himself the truth of God and to walk just as far and just as long on the journey as God would allow. We're pretty good at telling others the truth. Actually, that's our high calling. But let's not forget to tell ourselves the truth, too!

For further study: Psalm 42, Psalm 43, Psalm 103, 1 Kings 19, 1 Sam 30:6.

Lord, forgive me for listening to my own little lies. You know how easy it is for me to get stuck in the mire of my fears, my disappointments, and my discouragements. I choose today to believe you. Give me the help of Your Spirit to keep on telling myself what I know is true! Your Word is Truth! I bless You for Your goodness and mercy, for You have been so good, so very good to me. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Remember, we love you and are praying for you continually. Adios, Ron & Val