**But God – But I**

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I have been reading and praying **Psalm 73:25-26** today:

*Whom have I in heaven but You?*

*And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You.*

*My flesh and my heart fail;*

*But God is the strength of my heart*

*and my portion forever.*

Like many before me, I am fascinated by the phrase “But God…” I just wanted to list some of these wonderful statements – things that show God’s greatness in the midst of overwhelming and difficult circumstances. Whenever you feel overwhelmed, just remember these verses that shout out above our problems, "But God!!" Read this list and enjoy God’s wonders:

**• The Lord overcomes the deceptions of men – Gen. 31:7** *Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times,* ***but******God*** *did not allow him to hurt me.*

**• The Lord overcomes the evil intentions of men – Gen. 50:20** *But as for you, you meant evil against me;* ***but******God*** *meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.*

**• The Lord is able to hide and protect us – 1Sam. 23:14** *And David stayed in strongholds in the wilderness, and remained in the mountains in the Wilderness of Ziph. Saul sought him every day,* ***but God*** *did not deliver him into his hand.*

**• The Lord fights battles on our behalf – 2Chron. 20:15** *Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours,* ***but God’s.***

**• The Lord is able to save us from the power of death – Ps. 49:15 *But God*** *will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, For He shall receive me. Selah*

**• The Lord gives us strength to carry on – even when we have no strength and feel like giving up – Ps. 73:26** *My flesh and my heart fail;* ***But God*** *is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.*

**• The Lord is a righteous Judge – even in the face of proud and wicked men – Ps. 75:7** ***But God*** *is the Judge: He puts down one, And exalts another.*

**• The Lord is our rock and refuge in the face of great trouble – Ps. 94:21-22** They gather together against the life of the righteous, And condemn innocent blood.

**But the Lord** has been my defense,  And my God the rock of my refuge.

**• The Lord is King over all nations and is able to put them in their place – Is. 17:13** *The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters;* ***But******God*** *will rebuke them and they will flee far away, And be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind, Like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.*

**• The Lord has proven over and over again that nothing is impossible for Him – Matt. 19:26** *But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible,* ***but with God*** *all things are possible.”all things are possible.”*

**• The Lord is the only one who can forgive sin – Mk. 2:7** *“Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins* ***but******God*** *alone?”*

**• The Lord knows the hearts of all men – Lk. 16:15** *And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men,* ***but******God*** *knows your hearts.*

**• The Lord is with His people through every desperate situation – Acts 7:9***“And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt.* ***But God*** *was with him*

**• The Lord has all power over the grave – Acts 13:30 *But God*** *raised Him from the dead.*

**• The Lord has shown us the ultimate expression of love – He died for us even when we were all unworthy – Rom. 5:8 *But God*** *demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

**• The Lord has chosen to put the world’s wisdom and strength to shame with things that are foolish and weak – 1Cor. 1:27 *But God*** *has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;*

**• The Lord is able to reveal His plans and mysteries to each one of us – 1Cor. 2:10 *But God*** *has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

**• The Lord is the one who completes His work in the earth – it is His harvest – 1Cor. 3:-7** *I planted, Apollos watered,* ***but******God*** *gave the increase.  So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters,* ***but******God*** *who gives the increase.*

**• The Lord is faithful to stand with us through temptation and give us power to bear and overcome it – 1Cor. 10:13** *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man;* ***but******God*** *is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

**• The Lord is rich in mercy and love for every one of us – Eph. 2:4 *But God****, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us*

**• The Lord extends His mercy and healing to all of us – Phil. 2:27** *For indeed he was sick almost unto death;* ***but******God*** *had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.*

**But I**

Yesterday, I posted many of the things God does for us as He intervenes in multitudes of difficult situations with the two little words: “But God.” We can see God invading darkness and trouble and inserting His greatness into impossible circumstances. Now I want to look at how ***I*** might respond to difficulties. In each of the verses I am highlighting, we can see trouble and strife on every side. Instead of falling apart, you can see these great men crying out with these words…”But I…” (I did not use the “but I” words of God or Christ…only those responding to His presence.) Sometimes you need to look at the surrounding verses to catch the full context.

 None of these statements and verses are coming from a place of superiority or criticism in my heart - I have failed in so many ways throughout my life - more than I can count!! But I desire to be pleasing to the Lord in all of these things - I pray each of the following verses over my life and yours as you read this list:

**• Others see trouble on every side…but I will follow the Lord with all my heart - Josh. 14:8** *Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt,* ***but******I*** *wholly followed the Lord my God.*

**• Others may come with their own strength, riches or power…but I will go out in the name of Lord – no matter what giants I have to face - 1Sam. 17:45** *Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin.* ***But I*** *come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.*

**• Others may give to God "on the cheap" ...but I will make offerings to the Lord with all my heart. I will not offer something to Him that cost me nothing - 2Sam. 24:24** *Then the king said to Araunah, “No,* ***but I*** *will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.*

**• Others may give in to the discouragements of the enemy...but I will trust in God’s mercy and grace no matter what - Ps. 13:5 *But I*** *have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.* **(Ps. 31:6; Ps. 55:23)**

**• Others may trust in riches and their own strength...but I will flourish in God’s kingdom just like an long-lasting, evergreen, fruitful tree - Ps. 52:8 *But I*** *am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.*

**• Others may run around doing wicked things and praising themselves...but I will sing praises to the Lord from morning to night - Ps. 59:16 *But I*** *will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defense And refuge in the day of my trouble.*

**• Others may seek to bring trouble to me on every side...but I will never loose hope in God - Ps. 71:14 *But I*** *will hope continually, And will praise You yet more and more.*

**• Others may do great wickedness...but I will praise God forever in word and song - Ps. 75:9 *But I*** *will declare forever, I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.*

**• Others may forget the great mercies of the Lord in their lives...but I will always remember the things God has done - Ps. 77:10** *And I said, “This is my anguish;* ***But I*** *will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.”*

**• Others may speak against me and accuse me of many things - even lies...but I will commit to prayer – especially during intense difficulties - Ps. 109:4** *In return for my love they are my accusers,* ***But I*** *give myself to prayer.*

**• Others may cause great strife in my life...but I will remember the Word of God, and keep His ways with all my heart - Ps. 119:61** *The cords of the wicked have bound me,* ***But I*** *have not forgotten Your law****.* (Ps. 119:69; 119:78; 119:87; 119:95)**

**• Others may give up as soon as trouble comes...but I will always hope in God’s Word - Ps. 119:81** *My soul faints for Your salvation,* ***But I*** *hope in Your word.*

**• Others may seek answers from various people and places...but I will always love God’s Word - Ps. 119:113** *I hate the double-minded,* ***But I*** *love Your law.* **(Ps. 119:163)**

**• Others may promote themselves and look for titles and positions...but I will seek to decrease, while I long for Christ to increase in every part of my life - 3:30** *He must increase,* ***but I*** *must decrease.*

**• Others may serve God out of their own interests...but I will go out with God’s full blessing - Rom. 15:29 *But I*** *know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

**• Others may fail the tests of holiness that often come our way...but I will discipline myself so that I might walk in integrity - 1Cor. 9:27 *But I*** *discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

**• Others may serve the Lord in their own strength...but I will yield to God’s grace and make sure that I do everything in His strength (and not my own strength) for the kingdom’s sake - 1Cor. 15:10** *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain;* ***but I*** *labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*

**• Others may preach their own pet doctrines and look for honor in their own words...but I will seek to preach a pure Gospel, not tainted by man’s ideas - Gal. 1:11 *But I*** *make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.*

**• Others may give up before the end - weighed down by the trials of faith...but I will press on without excuses, and take hold of God in all situations, seeking to attain everything he has purposed for me - Phil. 3:12** *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected;* ***but I*** *press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me*