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What “Moment” is most memorable in your life? I can remember my first personal encounter with Jesus Christ at a summer conference between my Jr. and Sr. Year in High School. I remember the first time I met Debbie , my wife, on a southern college campus. I can remember when each of our children were born. There are so many memorable ‘moments’ that I just have to say “ I am blessed” in that regard.

Think for a moment of the “Most memorable moments” for the apostles of Jesus. For your consideration lets just use the Gospel of Mark. In the synagogue was the “*man with the unclean spirit.*” And those in attendance said “*With authority he commands even the unclean spirits , and they obey him!*” In the house of Simon and Andrew, Simon’s mother-in-law ‘lay sick with a fever.’ “*...He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up and the fever left her;*” In that evening the whole city of Capernaum was gathered together with ALL those “*who were sick and possessed.*” “*And he healed many who were sick...and cast out many demons. But he would not allow the demons to speak, because they knew him.*” Then Jesus ‘went out to a lonely place to pray...’ He went throughout Galilee “*preaching and casting out demons.*” He healed ‘*a leper*’ one who was removed from his

community because of his illness. What about the paralytic who was lowered through the roof to be healed? He ate with ‘tax collectors and sinners’ which riled up the ‘scribes and Pharisees.’ He healed the man with the ‘withered hand’ on the Sabbath. *“Whenever the unclean spirits beheld him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.”* Last Sunday we read of a feeding of 5,000 men (not to mention women and children) with five loaves and two fish. Which ‘Moment’ is most memorable. Can we even comprehend what the apostles had witnessed!

And today we find Jesus/God taking a stroll across the Sea of Galilee after having *“gone up on a mountain to pray.”* At the alarm of the apostles Jesus says *“Take heart, it is I; have no fear. And he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.”*

National Geographic went to great length to try and prove that “Jesus may have walked on ice, not water...” Experts point to contradictions in both the science and the biblical account. Even after the event the apostles find themselves with *‘hard hearts.’* What can this mean? If miracles alone create faith, the disciples have witnessed more than enough for their faith to be strong. Instead, the disciples are repeatedly shown how weak their faith really is.

This story is about a ‘moment’ between friends. It is about relationship. The dynamics of this incident show that the disciples’ relationship with Jesus had not developed to the point that they were putting total trust in his capacity to protect and provide for them.

The dispirited disciples, like most of us, are left dumbfounded by their limited view of Jesus and what he can do. But these episodes, rather than simply showing the disciples’ lack of trust, make the point that God can and does act as Provider and Protector without our total trust.

The world of physical, material reality is no challenge to the God of the universe. Jesus carries forth the power of the Father in all that he does. It is hardness of heart that can be the true barrier to receiving God and all that God is able to do in our lives.

How ‘hard’ is your heart? Have you had any “Jesus moments” lately? Have you been part of any ‘moments’ when God could have been ‘with you’ as He promises but you gave no credit to His appearance? Is this language just a little too mystical for you? It is around you daily. Are you paying attention?

We are just a little too ‘success’ oriented. We think that if we do something for our Lord that great ‘success’ will follow. ‘Success’ is not God’s plan for us. His plan has to do with recognition. His plan has to do

with faithfulness. The main point in the story is that Jesus “*got into the boat with them and the wind ceased.*” The process of getting to a place is not the issue with God it is your recognition of His love and presence with you in the tragedy and trauma and joy that is life.

God is a God of the ‘NOW.’ We struggle to determine God’s purpose for us. When the time came for a decision about ordained ministry I struggled mightily. I asked God in Church, at home, in my car, at work and the question was the same; “What should I do?” and God’s answer came through loud and clear. I DON’T CARE JUST KNOW I AM WITH YOU AND DO IT FOR ME. God’s purpose for you and for me is to depend on Him and on His power NOW![Chambers] When the seas get rough and your going finds you ‘*straining at the oars against an adverse wind*’ know that God wants you to be calm , in Him, faithful, in Him, unconfused, in Him for His purpose is not the process it is the NOW! In the words of Oswald Chambers if I can just see Him “walking on the sea” everything is all right. It is the process that is glorifying to God, it is not the outcome.

All that God has put into our life in training and recognition is for NOW. When you turn this morning and say “The Peace of the Lord be with You” that is a glorious moment for God. It means we ‘get it’ even if it is for only that one moment. It is Jesus elevating the conversation. Many do not

like that moment in our Eucharist for it requires contact at least of the eyes. But it is one of those moments when the 'sea gets calm' and you see into the very heart of God. We have nothing to do with even the next minute of our lives but we can take control with God of this moment.

On Thursday I played golf with my usual group and one of the fellas was overcome by the heat. We hustled him in and called 911 and they came and got him the fluids he needed and all is well. But my friend's comment to me as we waited for the ambulance was "I ain't ready to go. I have a lot to do." I said to him; "Now might be a good time to take inventory of who and whose you are." He called that night to thank me for saying that. It is NOW that matters. Jesus knew this . When he said "I Am" which is what the words he responded mean in Hebrew He was waking up the apostles to the power available to them.

God's purpose in your life and mine is to enable us to see that he can walk on the storms of my life right now. If we have a further goal in mind we are not paying enough attention to the present time. However, if we realize that moment-by-moment obedience is the goal, then each moment as it comes is indeed precious. [Chambers]