

Call to Obedience #308  
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## **The Sacredness of the Moment**

By Reimar Schultze

***“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you”—Exodus 3:13-14***

In sending Moses to Egypt to deliver his people, God wanted Moses to know that the secret of victory was in the conquest of the present and not in the plans of the future. He did not want Moses to think of God as the one WHO WAS or as the *one* WHO SHALL BE, but as the one WHO IS. God is the God of the present and only those who live in present abandonment to his will succeed in being holy. It is indeed man’s natural tendency to almost constantly live in past memories or future dreams that prevents him from embracing the present moment as the overflowing source of holiness. It is man’s preoccupation with what has been and with what is to be that causes him to be so ungodly in the now.

### **ALL OUR SINS AND VICTORIES ARE PRODUCTS OF THE MOMENT**

We never sin in the future. Every sin that is ever committed is committed in the present. Prayerlessness, jealousy, selfishness and unkindness are never the product of tomorrow but always the product of the NOW having been neglected. We plan to be good and holy and faithful tomorrow. Our intentions are always good. Therefore, we have a tendency to lose ourselves in our future dreams of good intentions - so we think we are good. The fact of the matter is that we sin and fail left and right in the present. It is what we do in the present that counts and not what we dream for the future. All our sins and failures are in the present. All our victories are in the present. All our life is in the present. It is here where we win or lose again and again. If a man can be holy every moment of his life, he will be holy. So it is not what you have done yesterday or what you plan for tomorrow but what you do now that determines whether you are holy or unholy, disciplined or undisciplined, kind or harsh, patient or impatient, dedicated or indifferent. How you handle this moment tells me who you are. The past is gone and the future is yet to come. What you do with the sacredness of this moment tells me your character. So it is not whether you plan to be in church next Sunday or whether you were there last Sunday but whether you are there now that matters. It is not whether you have rejoiced yesterday or intend to do so tomorrow that counts, but whether you do so now. *“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”* (2 Cor. 6:2). *“All our moments are productive by our obedience to the will of God, which reveals itself in thousands of different ways, each of which successively becomes our immediate duty and together they mold and perfect within us that new self”* (Pierre de Caussade).

### **IT IS ON THE ROAD TO THE BIG EVENT WHERE WE WIN OR LOSE AT HOLINESS**

Because we fail in the small things, God is not with us in the big things. The road to the big things is always filled with a number of unpleasant disruptions, intrusions, unexpected trials, trivialities and bypasses. This is where we lose God on the way to the big event for which we so desperately need him. It is in a man’s desire to be successful in next week’s

business meeting that causes him to be unsuccessful when his wife interrupts him as he prepares for it. The unkind word or the abrupt response causes him to lose God on the way to the big event. It is the wife who too often loses God's presence on the way to the "all important" birthday party she has planned. By being so focused on the party, the moments of getting there are desecrated and spiritual duties such as prayer and praise are neglected. It is as we are on the way to the big thing where we need God so badly to help us succeed, that we bruise and bump and crush and disappoint husbands or wives, secretaries, clerks, laborers, waiters, fellow Christians or pastors. It is for this reason that we must cease to look at any one event as bigger than any other and consider that the present moment is always the biggest and that it must never be lost at any cost in order that it might indeed become an eternal treasure of Christlikeness. **It is when we give unequal attention to moments and people that we lose the moment at hand.**

To capture every moment for God requires an inner attitude of constant self-denial that consistently says, "I will follow Jesus." There is never anything more important than what God wants us to do at this particular moment, whether it is praying or handling our most frequent interrupter when we are pressed to go to some important event. If we make that moment of interruption a moment of holiness, of Christlike love rather than one of resentment and anger; a moment of redemption rather than one of irritation, **GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF US WHEN WE GET TO THE NEXT MOMENT.** And if I then devote myself to the duties of the next moment, allowing the Lord Jesus to act through me as he wishes, then I will enter the third moment with his anointing. It is in this way that the anointing abides within us, and it is by virtue of this manner of living that we are refined, sanctified, transformed and perfected. It is handling each interruption, intrusion, by-pass and mishap as if each were supposed to happen. Let them serve as stepping stones to glory that help us to come to inner rest in the midst of it all. Quoting de Caussade, "To achieve the height of holiness, people must realize that all they count as trivial and worthless is that which can make them holy." God's name is **I AM**. He is the God of the moment. To him the moment is everything; it must not be anything less to us.

Indeed, it is just as St. Francis said, "The duty of the present moment is the most vital part of spirituality." Most of us glance at the moment, but we gaze at some "big future" event. It must be the other way around. Our gaze must be on the now and our glance on the tomorrow. In that sense holiness is easy. In that sense holiness consists in one thing only: doing the will of God in the moment. In any one moment, there is only one will of God to be done. Therefore, there must be a total abandonment to God's will. There must be a certain degree of indifference toward anything outside of "*Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done***" (Ma. 6:10). There must be a great measure of flexibility to accommodate change to what we have planned, how we have planned it and how and when we get there. There must be a resolute recognition that God's ways are higher than our ways (Isa. 55:8,9) and that a detour or interruption may be of greater divine significance than the distant object we had on our mind.

It was not the large crowd at Jericho but the one man in the tree that made history. In that light, it may not be the church service as much as a man the evangelist meets on the way that is more important—if he can only get the message of the sacredness of the moment. The anointing of a preacher is not determined by how much time he spends on his sermon but by what he does on the way to its delivery. Seminaries must spend more time in preparing preachers for the moments of getting to the pulpit than in what they are to do once they have gotten there. If we miss a moment in the process of getting there, we may have missed what we came there for. If we miss being Christlike during an interruption while preparing for the pulpit, we may be without the anointing when we try to feed hungry souls from the pulpit. Simply put, our "pulpit" must be everywhere. In that light, it may not be your getting to the bank that is important but your speaking to the teller at the bank who just lost her husband. Whenever we let the call of what is ahead of us rush us onward we miss what God

has placed before us. We miss most of the great opportunities simply in an effort to get THERE at SUCH AND SUCH a time. Moments are lost by our preoccupation with the future and so the future is lost because we lose the present. We hurry through too many “Jerichos” without finding the “Zachaeuses” in the trees, and through too many “Samarias” without finding the “women at the wells.” Oh, how skillful our Savior was in capturing the sacredness of the moment. Is it any wonder that he, too, said, “*Before Abraham was, I AM.*” (John 8:58)? Oh, may we not be disgusted with the unexpected or become weary at the intrusions, but may we find God’s will in them— if not to minister, then to die and be refined.

Those who have surrendered themselves to such a life of abandonment, conquering every moment, become sermons to others. God gives a special force to all they say and do, and even in their silence they speak and call people to holiness. Through them God emanates a special scent: a healing, convicting, comforting or consoling power—whichever he sees fit at the moment to administer through them. It is they who can say more in a sentence than others can in a thousand words, who know that nothing they ever do is without significance, who are recipients of every blessing God has in store for them and who, in time, come to all the treasures of the kingdom of God. As de Caussade said, “Others may ask the Lord for all kinds of gifts and blessings, but they (those living in the sacredness of the moment) don’t have to ask, they find them in the will of God because they are always there.”

#### **CHRISTLIKE TRUST IS ESSENTIAL IN CONQUERING THE MOMENT**

Being in such abandonment to the sacredness of the moment requires childlikeness. Our Lord said, “... *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*” (Matt. 18:3). The more education you have, the more you are prone to rationalize and the more difficult this road will be for you. Such people are accustomed to plotting, analyzing and are goal oriented. Their gaze is often way ahead of themselves. Although this is necessary in the secular realm, it is a handicap in the kingdom of God. It is the moment that counts for little children—they know of no tomorrow and do not remember yesterday. Every moment to them is a moment of trust. Thus, you can see why it took Moses 40 years in the wilderness to meet the great I AM. He had known God as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but the revelation of the I AM was a greater one—it required 40 years of learning for Moses to capture the moment rather than to look far ahead of himself. It is this looking ahead that caused Moses to lose it at the moment when an Egyptian was quarreling with a Hebrew. It is this carelessness with the moment that God had to slay out of him. To set Israel free, God needed a man who could trust him for the moment, who would capture each moment for God. God’s lesson began for Moses with the sacredness of the ground (Exo. 3:5) and it proceeded with the sacredness of the present, “*I AM hath sent me*” (v. 14). The old Moses never would have taken a nation out of Egypt into the wilderness without a plan for food and water. But the new Moses could take that nation to the edge of the Red Sea without knowing ahead how to cross it! He knew that I AM would be all he needed. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah! So, my friend, from now on know that I AM is also calling you to the sacredness of the moment. Don’t desecrate it any longer.

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