

PERFECT MOMENTS



Dear Opal,

From time to time in the early moments of dawn when the mind is truly focused on the present, a question that might be asked is, “Pray what things interest me today?” Suspecting the world might have recreated something viewed as ordinary into a new creation overnight, the senses may come to life with unstoppable energy.

After all, it is in these splendorous moments when the soft light of a new morning is still dancing on the walls with lingering dark shadows of evening, that the world seems to have begun a new and invites our soul to enjoy extraordinary times of perfection. Perhaps these golden nuggets of life are found in something as simple as a lone flower quietly hidden away from the haunts of man, whose delicate purple petals are unfolded for a short hour unseen, yet, when discovered by human eyes becomes a moment of pure magic; a gift bestowed on one by the Creator that will last a lifetime.

Thus, not overly impressed with itself, its fragile petals bow humbly in the presence of its Maker, then wither, having been discovered by only you. Yet, methinks nothing can rival its elegance and grace; a gift from the Lord admired by those of a soul fully engaged in the present. Oblivious as to its own impact, a moment of true perfection has transpired all because it is a fragile flower looking only toward God for direction.

For others, what resides in the treasure chest of memories is a perfect moment experienced by simply sitting at the edge of a small out of the way pond observing the quivering blue ripples moving across its glassy surface mimicking playful dancers, all displaying such an array of artistic motions, that one rises unaware and follows their lead.

Then, without fanfare, having become so deeply engrossed in their artistry, there is a failure to notice the chameleon transformation of color that has occurred inconspicuously. Totally taken off guard, their rich shade of dark blue has magically transitioned into a shimmering silver, akin to sparkling diamonds, as the rays of the rising sun connect with their wavelets. When reflecting back on the moment, God blessed you with an unexpected gift all because you were living in real time.

Personally, I recall a special happening when, as a weary traveler sitting in the middle of a hotel bed alone and bone tired trying unsuccessfully to read the Bible, that God touched his battle-scarred child in a way that could only have been a miracle.

Having tried several times to concentrate on his Word, this writer finally leaned against the headboard, looked toward the ceiling and cried out, "Lord, it would be wonderful to have a hug from you today!"

Then, in mere seconds, this writer's body that had been formed by the Great Potter's hands and loved immeasurably, received her wish. Suddenly, sweet tender caresses began traveling over every part of her physical presence, eventually penetrating all the way to the core of her soul.

Opal, when you think of how it feels to be hugged by a person, it does not even come close to the correct representation as to what occurs when your Creator gifts you with his embrace. In looking back, there are no words known to man that can appropriately describe how the sensations from the Creator's hands felt.

Simply stated, he touched me! He had redeemed me and I belonged to him. He responded to a child that was living in the present with his gift of unbelievable love during a time of need. A downtrodden believer had been given the honor of literally living in a perfect moment and experiencing a time of close communion with the Almighty.

Interestingly, although the interaction only lasted for approximately 3 minutes, as the writer completed her appointments throughout the day, the question she was asked by each individual was, "Did you have a massage this morning? You look wonderfully relaxed and at peace." Sweetly smiling, thanks were offered for their kindness without explanation, allowing the recipient time to internalize what had transpired between a child and her Heavenly Father.

Opal, the personal experience you just heard regarding the Master's touch that will forever be my most perfect moment fits beautifully with the following Scripture:

Psalm 34: 1

***The Lord is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.***

Certainly, we would probably all agree that having our mind focused in the present allows nothing to pass by without consideration. However, if we are wandering down yesterday's highways and trying to imagine what tomorrow holds, the mind is thousands of miles away from the magic that is unfolding right before our eyes.

Given the current nightmare that has stopped the world in its tracks, leaving no person protected from its dangerous grip, probably every individual on the face of the planet has tried to escape by living in the past; a time that, back then, was perhaps described as mundane and predictable.

Instead, due to no concrete solutions by learned individuals, it leaves everyone scratching their heads in total dismay that answers are not appearing in an instantaneous manner. After all, we are a consumer driven society that is accustomed to fast food, rapid responses, and a plethora of possibilities by simply tapping into the internet. Yet, here we are without a solution and asking folks in society as viewed of less importance to be propelled to the top with those responsible for saving lives and providing necessary services that make daily living possible for each and everyone.

There are healthcare providers in hospitals and nursing homes that are enduring impossible odds every moment they are at work that are classified as absolutely horrendous and life threatening. Their tired and hollow eyes barely visible behind taut facial expressions that are covered with deeply imprinted marks from masks they have tirelessly worn shift after shift, just keep on keeping on. Instead of them performing the duties they signed up for when choosing their profession, they now serve as guidance counselors, ministers, and family members to those having to die alone.

Additionally, there are workers whose skin is the wrong color in the eyes of many living in the same world during normal times, that are now thought of as playing crucial roles for people from all walks of life. The following quote from Emmet Fox says it best with these words:

**THE ART OF LIFE IS TO LIVE IN THE PRESENT
MOMENT, AND TO MAKE THAT MOMENT AS
PERFECT AS WE CAN BY THE REALIZATION
THAT WE ARE THE INSTRUMENTS AND
EXPRESSION OF GOD HIMSELF.**

- EMMET FOX -

Opal, it is not often that one is given the opportunity of seeing a quote that touches the heart come to life. However, that is exactly what happened to yours truly just last week.

Having heard the alert from the local news that the Armed Forces would be paying tribute to the brave men and women on the front lines of battle fighting against a virus threatening to savagely end the lives of people worldwide, a stealth bomber was to fly overhead the hospital facilities at exactly 6:22 pm in Springfield, Missouri.

As a result, this old gal, feeling intense joy that common man would be receiving such an honor for their incredible strength and courage in the face of the enemy, ran outside and stood alone at the end of the driveway with eyes glued toward the sky in anticipation of its arrival.

Then, exactly at the scheduled time, here came the stealth bomber, flown by those that are also responsible for protecting our country, appearing right above the writer's head. What overwhelming jubilation filled the heart of the onlooker!

Just think, Opal, common man had finally become America's heroes. How they must have felt to look up and see this majestic symbol of appreciation and love.

In response to what was transpiring, being caught up in the moment, the writer began clapping with tears running down her cheeks. Although she was the only

crazy lady on her street responding like a fool, it truly didn't matter because it was a fanfare for the Common Man, America's Heroes.

Therefore, as the writer clapped and wept, faces of other heroes that this moment represented came to mind. (Refuse collectors, meat packers, field workers, grocery store personnel, mail carriers, teachers, and maintenance staff.)

As 1 John 4: 12 states, **"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."** And...my friend, this was a perfect moment for our country.



As we close our time together this week, please accept the following poem written by Helen Lowrie Marshall from her book, "A Gift So Rare" as our last

words. Visualize God's hands on your forehead as you experience peace from her beautiful script.

BACK FROM THE ROAD

***Let me go back from the traveled road
Away from the crowds pushing by,
To a quiet hill where the woods are still,
Serene 'neath a clean, blue sky.***

***I would go back, far back from the road,
Away from the haunts of men,
I would find peace of mind
Where the hidden trails wind,
And strength to return again.***

Amen!

