

## Moments, Not Minutes

*The grass withers and the flower falls away, but the word of the Lord endures forever.  
1 Peter 1:24-25*

It's been a long time since I've sat inside a movie theater. This wasn't always the case; when John and I dated and were newly married, hardly a week passed when we didn't drive out and about to catch the latest flick. But the constraints of movie going proved wearing over time: talkers, chair kickers, long lines and the possibility of missing something important due to late arrivals or trips to the bathroom. Then came the advent of our "home theater in a box." Once we got it out of the box, it launched the current era of DVD viewing in our family room. And though we've rented many dogs over the years at least we can watch them in pajamas and fall asleep in the comfort of home.

In this setting we recently saw the movie "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button." And indeed a curious film it was, the story of a man who ages backwards. Now for the record, I didn't agree with its sympathetic portrayal of sex outside marriage, a constant in most of today's entertainment. That aside, some aspects of the story rang in me some familiar, poignant chords. Even "curious" ones, you might say. There were the curiously familiar mother-daughter dynamics in a curiously recognizable context where a woman's lifespan occupied almost exactly the same timeframe as my mother's life. There was also the curious timing of circumstances surrounding our watching this movie, barely a year after my mother's death and barely a day after the death of a good friend's husband.

Although this movie might not be everyone's cup of tea, personally I loved its tagline, "Life isn't measured in minutes, but in moments." I'm sure any spiritual application was light years away from the filmmaker's intent; still it's no less true that on a spiritual level, life isn't really measured in physical minutes, but spiritual moments. In other words, what really matters isn't how many minutes God gives us, but how much we let Him permeate our moments.

Yet life in this world necessitates that the spiritual be commingled with the natural, and hence physical birth precedes the opportunity for spiritual birth. Thus divine law decrees the natural to be placed first in order ahead of the spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:46), just as the natural man Adam preceded the spiritual man, Jesus. But God saves the best for last, for clearly Jesus, the spiritual "last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45)" is infinitely superior to the natural first Adam. Similarly, regardless of their order, our spiritual moments excel our natural ones on multiple levels:

### Whether past moments:

- More awesome than the moment of our physical birth was the moment when we became new spiritual creations, saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8)
- More significant than the documentation of our birth was the moment when our name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
- More noteworthy than all of our sinful moments was the one moment Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:6)
- Stronger than the power of death over us was the moment we died to sin (Romans 6:11)

### Or present moments:

- More worthy than countless moments of praise from man is any one moment of praise from God (Romans 2:29)
- Stronger than any anxious moment (Matthew 6:27) is the moment we cast that anxiety on God knowing He cares for us (1 Peter 5:7)
- More effective than our own momentary acts of revenge are those moments we instead allow God's vengeance on our behalf (Romans 12:19)
- More preferable than all the fleeting moments of sin's pleasure are godly afflictions (Hebrews 11:25) that pale against the light of eternity
- More lasting than these evil days are the moments of time we're able to redeem now (Ephesians 5:16) that are remembered by God forever
- More enduring than momentary suffering and loss is the exceeding, eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17) that can never be lost

### Or future moments:

- Better will be one moment in God's courts than thousands elsewhere (Psalm 84:10)
- More desirable than all our moments at home will be the moment we go home to be with the Lord in Heaven (2 Corinthians 5:8)
- More wonderful than the formation of our physical body will be the moment it changes into a glorious spiritual body forever (Philippians 3:21)
- More excellent than any momentary earthly inheritance will be receiving the incorruptible inheritance reserved for us forevermore (1 Peter 1:4)
- More amazing than the mist of our momentary earthly life (James 4:14) will be life with God in timeless eternity

Indeed, life isn't measured in minutes, but moments. Because it's not the physical quantity of minutes that counts but the spiritual quality of our moments. And unlike films like "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" whose value is determined by how much they pleased man, the moments of our lifetime will be replayed and evaluated in eternity by how much they pleased God.

*By Mary Nixon*