



*A
testament
of life*

**DEFINING
MOMENTS**

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We all have moments that we remember. These might be good or bad events. I remember the day I proposed to my wife sitting in St. Mary's chapel. I think of the births of my children. I recall sitting on a rock watching middle schoolers sledding when my wife called me with a pregnancy update telling me everything was okay and by the way are you sitting down...twins!

I remember when I was 7 and my little brother Lionne suffocated in an old refrigerator and how he looked blue when my Mom crouched over his little body trying to resuscitate him. She said to older brother James "Take Chris for a walk."

I remember sitting in the back seat of the car listening to my Mom and aunt crying and talking about my brother James having Leukemia and not knowing what that was, but that it was serious. Some years later, I remember being invited to James' deathbed to say "goodbye".

I remember seeing my father's body lying on the ground at the nursing home before my senior year. He had multiple strokes over the years and finally one too many.

A significant moment happened to me as a young adult discerning God's will for my life. I was doing an interview for a summer pastoral assignment. In preparation, I had written a biography outlining the various pieces of my life and how it came to be I was considering ministry. I wrote something about how through the various tragedies God was calling me. After some basic interview questions, I was asked a question that completely took me by surprise, made me speechless, increased my heart rate, and made me very angry.

The interviewer having read my little biography asked me, "Do you think God did these things to you?" Hmm. I did. And yet, I knew that was NOT the God I believed in or wanted anything to do with.

I had interpreted so much of my life and my very relationship with God on a lie- that God was the source of all my personal tragedies. On a very basic level I had connected God as the cause and thereby maneuvering or "manipulating" me. I battled between what I had felt and assumed for so long and my own disgust and aversion for this notion that God did these things to me.

I woke one morning with clarity through a simple answer. God is not the source of death, but the source of life. This simple beautiful truth about God resonated in my mind and heart. The resurrection of Jesus is God's definitive response to death. For God it does not end with death but with life.

"God is the source of life" reframed my childhood assumptions about God's working in my life.

I saw clearly God continually bringing strength, courage, help, and life in the tragedies and struggles! God is pro-life. God is not on the side of death. God is all about life.

