

GOD'S EYE IS ON THE SPARROW SO I KNOW GOD'S WATCHING ME

Who pays attention to sparrows? I have a pastor friend who is a birder. I have seen some beautiful pictures he has taken of birds in our community.

I have not seen any pictures he has of sparrows. That makes sense. Sparrows are not unique. They are not exactly pretty. We have sparrows living in our fern on our front porch. They are just plain or ordinary looking. They don't have bright colors that catch your attention. And yet, I have read that there are 15 different species of sparrows in America.

Jesus taught that in his day, a sparrow would be sold in the town market for a penny or two.

Our Gospel lesson today from Matthew says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows."

Luke's Gospel says it like this, "Are not 5 sparrows sold for two pennies, yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. But even the hairs of your head are all counted. Do not be afraid, you are of more value than many sparrows."

How does it make you feel to know you are that important to God?

And to realize that every single human being is that important to God.

So when things happen like the continued racism in our country that doesn't seem to go away, what do you think God thinks about that?

Everyone is so important to God that every hair on our heads are counted. Racism of any kind is a terrible sin that we need to repent of like our Bishop has said.

It may come as a shock to some people to realize that Jesus himself was not a blue eyed blond (or grey haired like me) Norwegian.

He also became a refugee as his family had to flee to Egypt to escape Herod back then.

So here we are with the promise that God loves us to death anyway even if we are Norwegian like me.

Some of us remember the words of a song about the sparrow.

It went like this:

“Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free,
For His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.”

Here is the history behind that song:

A woman by the name of Civilla Martin wrote, “Early in the spring of 1905, my husband and I were sojourning in Elmira, New York. We contracted a deep friendship for a couple by the name of Mr. and Mrs. Doolittle, true saints of God.

Mrs. Doolittle had been bedridden for nearly twenty years. Her husband was an incurable cripple who had to propel himself to and from his business in a wheel chair.

Despite their afflictions, they lived happy Christian lives, bringing inspiration and comfort to all who knew them. One day while we were visiting with the Doolittles, my husband commented on their bright hopefulness and asked them for the secret of it.

Mrs. Doolittle's reply was simple: 'His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me.'

The beauty of this simple expression of boundless faith gripped the hearts and fired the imagination of Dr. Martin and me. The hymn 'His Eye Is on the Sparrow' was the outcome of that experience.' The next day she mailed the poem to Charles Gabriel, who supplied the music."

The words of that song express the words of those bible verses for today.

"His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me.

I sing because I'm happy. I sing because I'm free,

For His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me."

Our creator's eye is on the sparrow and for sure on every single one of us.

And added to that every hair on our heads are numbered meaning God knows us inside out. God knows us better than we know ourselves.

If only we knew what God knows. If only we could see what God sees the life we are living would seem to be so much different.

We would see and know every day that we are given to live. We would know the future.

As Paul said, some day we will know fully even as we have been fully known.

For now, our lives are based on trust. We trust God to give us every breath. We trust that a brand new future is coming for us when we will be with God and our loved ones.

In the mean time we trust that God will use us to continue to create a better world we live in.

A world where everyone loves and cares for one another.

May God continue to work in our lives.

After all, God's eye is on the sparrow and we can know God is watching us and working in and through us.

THANKS BE TO GOD. AMEN