

Devotion for Second Week of Easter, 2021

Birds

I hear a variety of birds every morning at our house. We have a feeder up in the back yard, and it has been attracting quite a few of these little chirpers. Every time Jim and I walk around outside to “survey” at the end of the day, we keep flushing them out of bushes and trees where they appear to be nesting. I will admit that my favorite bird is the cardinal. Not just because it’s so red, but because it’s so brave. I cannot figure out how a bird that color can avoid predators. How do you hide when you look like that? But somehow they survive, chirping and providing a bright spot of color in the yard.

I love to see the goldfinches return to the feeder and begin to turn more and more yellow. And finally, a bluebird appears, with the titmice and the Carolina chickadees hogging the feeder nonstop. This morning a red headed woodpecker showed up and gave me a thrill. One morning several weeks ago I looked out my upper bathroom window and there was a little fluffy yellow bird with a solid black head staring right at me. I still haven’t figured out what that bird is, but it sure was cute.

I think the reason I love birds so much is that they seem so free. I’m reminded of God promising to provide for the birds, and one of my favorite hymns is “His Eye is on the Sparrow.” But I also have a secret reason. Well, it won’t be secret anymore when I tell you about it, will it? I love them because they can fly. You see, I’ve always wanted to fly. And there’s a story about that.

One year at a PW Presbytery retreat at Rock Eagle, Sara Covin Juengst was our speaker. She was a noted author of our PW Bible Studies and other books. I forget the text she was discussing, but she announced that she was sick of all these TV shows and books about angels. She said, “I’ve got news for you. I doubt you’re going to be an angel when you die.” Well, I was completely flummoxed. So I went up to her after the session and asked her why I couldn’t be an angel. She looked at me, and said, “Honey, you want to be angel so you can fly, right?” Well – big gulp – yeah. She asked me if I’d ever dreamed I was flying, and I told her yes – once. And she said, “Wasn’t that a phenomenal thing?” Well, it was, and I want to be able to fly when I (hopefully) get to heaven. And this great, precious woman said, “Well, God says in the Psalms he made us a little lower than the angels. Believe me, you’re going to be able to fly when you get to heaven. And you don’t have to be an angel to do it. After all, in the Bible an angel is a messenger. Why do you want to have to work that hard?” We laughed and laughed.

So I watch the birds believing that one day I will be able to fly – way above the earth below - and zoom high and low, seeing all kinds of things that aren’t visible from the ground. In the meantime, I watch the birds zoom around and marvel at God’s good creation. I hope you dream of flying in this Eastertide of resurrection, free of the things that bind us.

Jeanne