

Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
October 14, 2020

"LOVE BIRDS"

Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Matthew 6:26 (NLT)

Since moving south from Venice to Gulf Cove Kay and I have been taking inventory of the local birds. Many of the ones we see here are the same as "up north". That would be the ibis, the crows, mockingbirds, mourning doves, red shoulder hawks, and a few others. We've even heard the barred owl hooting in the night. The same turkey vultures are daily circling our house waiting and hoping that one or both of stops moving on a permanent basis. In the meantime, they appear to have enough armadillos to keep them well provided for. One species that we haven't seen, and I'm not certain we will, are the whistling ducks. They seem to prefer fresh water. We're still waiting on the pelicans, and I figure that they'll move to more of the inland waters as the Gulf of Mexico water temperatures cool and fish move back in from the beaches. There is one more variety of bird that we're expecting soon, and that would be the "snowbird". The seasonal migration is going to be of high importance to us as more than half of our new neighborhood is made up of their winter nesting grounds, and on each of the sides of our house there are two houses that have been unoccupied since our arrival back in July. Soon there will be new folks to meet and form relationships with. God loves the birds, Jesus tells us so in the passage above, and he loves all birds, whether they be of the feathered variety or human; snowbirds or "staybirds". The context of Matthew 6:26 is that it's a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, the section where Jesus teaches us about worrying. In reality, He doesn't need to teach us to worry, we all come by that naturally, He tells us here how to fight that temptation. Basically Jesus says to us, "look around you, at God's marvelous creation, and see how He watches over it and maintains it, how He provides for the needs of all His creatures, even armadillos." (then they decide to wander out in the road at night to be runover and turned into vulturechow...I wonder if maybe that ought to worry about traffic a little more). Of all the creatures of God's creation, we...humans...are the only one that God made in His own image. Mankind was also given the responsibility of managing and caring for all of His creation. *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* (Genesis 1:26) Maybe that's where the worrying began, all that responsibility? Nah...it had to be a little later, in chapter 3, when sin broke the bond of total trust between God and man. It's obvious that in the year 2020 people have a lot to worry about, and that includes the folks who will be showing up to occupy the houses around us. That's where the high importance comes in. Worrying is the result of sin, it's the opposite of faith. Worrying says that I don't trust God to provide the things that I need, not only today but for all eternity. Worrying is ultimately a sin in and of itself, one that we all are prone to commit, over and over again. But God is in the forgiveness and reconciliation business, and He's given me employment in that business, and you too! God doesn't want my new neighbors to be worried. I don't either. I want them to be joyful and content, I want them to be filled with peace and love. So, it is up to me, and Kay, to meet, greet and get to know them, so that they might come to see those things in us, and hear them in our words. As they get to know us, I pray that they'll indeed see and hear this in and from us and be prompted to ask what kind of strange birds that we are. We're "freebirds", birds that are set free in Jesus from the worries and concerns of life in the world trusting in the loving kindness, providence and protection of our God Savior and King. Yes, we do fall back into Satan's trap of becoming "worrybirds" at times. But as we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2a), as we're anchored in His Word, fear, anxiety and worry melt away and are replaced by faith through the power of God's Holy Spirit that lives within us. God loves all his birds and wants to bring all of us into His eternal Kingdom to enjoy our beauty and songs forever.