



Frightened Sparrows

By Paul Harvey, Retold by Philip Yancey

One raw winter night the man heard an irregular thumping sound against the kitchen storm door. He went to a window and watched as tiny, shivering sparrows, attracted to the evident warmth inside, beat in vain against the glass.

Touched, the farmer bundled up and trudged through fresh snow to open the barn for the struggling birds. He turned on the lights, tossed some hay in a corner, and sprinkled a trail of saltine crackers to direct them to the barn. But the sparrows, which had scattered in all directions when he emerged from the house, still hid in the darkness, afraid of him.

He tried various tactics: circling behind the birds to drive them toward the barn, tossing cracker crumbs in

the air toward them, retreating to his house to see if they'd flutter into the barn on their own. Nothing worked. He, a huge alien creature, had terrified them; the birds could not understand that he actually desired to help.

He withdrew to his house and watched the doomed sparrows through a window. As he stared, a thought hit him like lightning from a clear blue sky: If only I could become a bird—one of them—just for a moment. Then I wouldn't frighten them so. I could show them the way to warmth and safety. At the same moment, another thought dawned on him. He had grasped the whole principle of the Incarnation.

A man's becoming a bird is nothing compared to God's becoming a man. The concept of a sovereign being as big as the universe He created, confining Himself to a human body was, and is, too much for some people to believe.



Are all The Children In?

Author Unknown

I think of times as the night draws nigh
Of an old house on the hill,
Of a yard all wide and blossom-starred
Where the children played at will.

And when deep night at last came down,
Hushing the merry din,
Mother would look all around and ask,
"Are all the children in?"

'Tis many and many a year since then,
And the old house on the hill
No longer echoes childish feet
And the yard is still, so still.

But I see it all as the shadows creep,
And tho' many the years have been
Since then, I can hear my mother ask,
"Are all the children in?"

I wonder if, when those shadows fall
On the last short earthly day,
When we say good-bye to the world outside,
All tired of our childish play,

When we meet the Lover of boys and girls
Who died to save them from sin,
Will we hear Him ask as Mother did,
"Are all the children in?"

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Mark 10:14



Real Treasure

We went to Open House tonight at the local primary school. When Rachel's teacher met us, her eyebrows seemed to elevate slightly. She spoke kindly of our first grader but said she had some concerns. She then invited us to look at the artwork; we would see what she meant.

Dozens of brown paper treasure chests were tacked to the bulletin board. Each had a barreled top attached with a brad. On the front was printed, "A Real Treasure Would Be...."

We walked over and began opening the lids to find Rachel's treasure and see why it so concerned the teacher.

As we peeked into each chest, we saw TVs and Nintendos, a few genies, heaps of gold coins, and a unicorn. Rachel's chest was in the very bottom corner. We had to stoop to open it. Inside, our daughter had drawn Christ, hanging on a cross with red drops of blood shaped like hearts dripping from his hands. She had completed the sentence, "A Real Treasure Would Be.. Jesus."

"Do you see my concern?" the teacher asked, her arms folded across her chest.

"Yes," my husband agreed, "I see what you mean. The 'J' is backwards, isn't it?"

Robin Jones Gunn