

God Cares for Ishmael

Read: Genesis 21:8-21. And Matthew 10:31

Theme: "You Are Worth More Than Many Sparrows"

Prepare: Printed pictures of different kinds of birds; a pair of binoculars or picture of binoculars. Place the images of the birds around the room. Make sure one of them is a sparrow.

Say: What are some hobbies that people enjoy? (Allow time for children to respond.)

Reading, knitting, and photography are popular hobbies. Some people like to build things like model cars or airplanes. Others may enjoy outdoor activities like fishing or hiking. Do you have a hobby? What's your hobby? (Allow time for children to respond.)

Do you think God has a hobby? OK, I know the Bible doesn't tell us that God has a hobby, but if He did, do you know what I think one of His hobbies might be? Bird watching! If I use my imagination, I can see God sitting in heaven with a pair of binoculars. (Look through the binoculars.) Perhaps He has a book with pictures of all the beautiful birds that He has created, and He is trying to see how many of them he can find with His binoculars. If I really stretch my imagination, I can even hear Him saying, "There's a Bluebird and a Cardinal. Oh look, there's an Eagle, a Meadowlark, and a Sparrow." A Sparrow? Of course, He would see a Sparrow; there are millions of them. You've seen them -- common, ordinary, brown Sparrows -- but God must have loved them because He made so many of them.

What birds do you see around the room? (Allow kids to find the birds and say what's unique about each bird.)

One day Jesus was teaching His disciples that they should not be afraid. Jesus said, "Don't be afraid when people threaten you. Two sparrows are sold for a penny, but not a single sparrow falls to the ground without your Father knowing it. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows."

A sparrow seems like a common bird. It has been said, "God must have loved the common people because He made so many of them." I don't think that God sees us as common or ordinary. If He did, He would not love us in such an uncommon and extraordinary way! The Bible says, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you." We are more precious to Him than a whole flock of sparrows -- and we know how much He loves the sparrow. And just like he takes care of the sparrows, he takes care of each one of us. Our Bible story reminds us of that by the way God took care of Ishmael. Let's thank Him now.

Pray: Dear God, we know that we are precious in Your sight. Thank You for loving us with such an uncommon and extraordinary love. And for taking such good care of each one of us. In Jesus' name, amen.