

## WHEN A SPARROW FALLS

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**Text: Matthew 10:27-31**

Insignificance. It's a horrible feeling when it seems that your life and the things that you do not amount to much in the grand scheme of things – or to anyone. Have you ever felt insignificant? In Max Lucado's book *Six Hours One Friday*, I read about a lady who evidently felt insignificant to the world in which she lived. All we know of her is found on her tombstone. He writes,

■ “The stone marks the destination of the body of Grace Llewellen Smith. No date of birth is listed, no date of death. Just the names of her two husbands, and this epitaph:

*Sleeps, but rests not.  
Loved, but was loved not.  
Tried to please, but pleased not.  
Died as she lived – alone.*

Words of futility.

I stared at the marker and wondered about Grace Llewellen Smith. I wondered if she'd written the words...or just lived them. I wondered if she deserved the pain. I wondered if she was bitter or beaten. I wondered if she was plain. I wondered if she was beautiful. I wondered why some lives are so fruitful while others are so futile.

I caught myself wondering aloud, “Mrs. Smith, what broke your heart?”  
Raindrops smudged my ink as I copied the words.

*Loved, but was loved not...*

Long nights. Empty beds. Silence. No response to messages left. No return to letters written. No love exchanged for love given.

*Tried to please, but pleased not...*

I could hear the hatchet of disappointment.  
“How many times do I have to tell you?” Chop.  
“You'll never amount to anything.” Chop. Chop.  
“Why can't you do anything right?” Chop, chop, chop.

*Died as she lived – alone.*

How many Grace Llewellen Smiths are there? How many people will die in the loneliness in which they are living? The homeless in Atlanta. The happy-hour hopper in LA. A bag lady in Miami. The preacher in Nashville. Any person who doubts whether the world needs him. Any person who is convinced that no one really cares.” (34-5)

In our text, it is in the middle of a discussion concerning the fear of persecution that Christ reminds His disciples of the divine care of God. He does so by reminding them that it is God who cares for the sparrow -- the smallest, and to some, the most insignificant of God's creatures. And yet, it is the death of one of these, seemingly insignificant creatures, that Jesus uses to show how much God cares for the disciples.

The sparrows spoken of (or small birds) were a cheap food for the poor; they are listed as the cheapest of the birds sold for food. They were sold two for a penny. They were the perfect illustration for those who would one day face great trials. There was great comfort in knowing that even these small birds were not outside the realm of the Father's concern or control. Even when one fell to the ground unnoticed by man, God noticed.

As we consider the significance of a fallen sparrow in the sight of God we can see the divine care that awaits us when we find ourselves in a similar situation. As we examine our text, notice that we can find the answers to several *questions* often asked in the time of trouble.

1. First, who knows?
2. Second, who cares?
3. Third, who is there?

## **I. WHO KNOWS?**

### **A. We forget that God is aware of all things.**

Often we cannot see the needs of others or hear their cries for help until it is too late. "If we had only known," we say. And then, sometimes we just forget.

■ A little fellow in the slum section of a large city was invited to attend a mission Sunday School, and became faithful little Christian. One day, someone in a thoughtless mood, tried to shake his simple faith in God, asking him, "If God loves you, why does he not take better care of you?" Why doesn't he tell someone to bring you shoes and a warm coat and better food?" He thought or a moment, and said, "I guess he does tell somebody, but somebody forgets."

### **B. We forget that God is always concerned.**

■ *Victor Hugo said, "Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake.*

■ *Psalms 31:7 reads, "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities."*

There is a little poem that speaks of God's care and concern for you and me entitled, "*God is Mindful of His Own.*" It reads:

#### ***GOD IS MINDFUL OF HIS OWN***

When distress and cares oppress you,  
And you seem to walk alone;  
Look up, friend, for God will bless you,  
"He is mindful of his own."

You may walk with him forever,  
He's a never-failing guide;  
He will not forsake you, never,  
He will keep right at your side.

What a word of consolation;  
Sweetest theme you've ever known;  
In the time of fierce temptation,  
"God is mindful of His own."

**WHO KNOWS? GOD KNOWS!**

## II. WHO CARES?

A sparrow is such a small bird. Insignificant in value. There are many more so who will miss it. Have you ever felt this way?

### A. Sometimes we may feel small or insignificant and that no one cares.

David felt that way in Psalms 142:4. He writes, *"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul."*

■ One could not help but be moved by the story of soldier who asked his officer if he might go out into the "No Man's Land" between the trenches in World War I to bring in one of his comrades who lay grievously wounded. "You can go," said the officer, "but it's not worth it. Your friend is probably killed, and you will throw your own life away." But the man went. Somehow he managed to get to his friend, hoist him onto his shoulder, and bring him back to the trenches. The two of them tumbled in together and lay in the trench bottom.

The officer looked at the would-be rescuer, and then he said, "I told you it wouldn't be worth it. Your friend is dead and you are mortally wounded." "It was worth it, though, sir," he said.

"How do you mean, 'worth it'? I tell you your friend is dead." "Yes sir," the boy answered, "but it was worth it because when I got to him he was still alive, and his last words to me were, 'Jim I knew you'd come.'"

**When no one else would come Jesus came. When it seems that no one else cares, Jesus cares.**

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS....

### B. No one is insignificant to God.

Jesus always mentioned the small things that he took notice of:

The hairs of your head.... Flowers of the field  
*One* lost sheep.... *One* lost coin  
Faith the size of a mustard seed.... The widows mite

■ *St. Augustine wrote, "He cares for everyone of us as if there were only one of us to care for."*

## **WHO CARES? GOD CARES!**

### **III. WHO IS THERE?**

There is nothing that seems to cause us to lose heart like feeling that we are alone.

#### **A. Friends and family may fail to be there for us.**

Everyone has their own lives so cluttered with "things" and "activities" as well as their own problems. We often wonder, "Where can we turn for help?"

Where do we turn when no one is there?

■ St. Augustine said in another place, "I have read in Plato and Cicero sayings that are very wise and very beautiful; but I have never read in either of them, COME UNTO ME ALL YE WHO LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN."

#### **B. Turn to Jesus, He is always there.**

*The great promise Jesus made was, "I will never leave you nor forsake you," will anchor our souls when we feel alone.*

*He said in John, 14:18, "I will not leave you comfortless: "I will come to you."*

#### **C. Who is there when no one else is? God is there!**

Imagine, if you can, the only attendant at a fallen sparrow's funeral. Who was there to feel the loss, to remember its beauty or to stand by the graveside?

**The same lone attendant at the funeral of the great man of God -  
Moses - is the same one who attended the funeral of the sparrow.**

**WHO IS THERE? GOD IS THERE!**

## **CONCLUSION**

The next time your tempted to dispair because of you situation just remember the truth from this little poem by Elizabeth Cheney entitled, "I Should Really Like to Know."

***"I Should Really Like To Know!"***

Said the Robin to the sparrow:  
I should really like to know,  
Why these anxious human beings,  
"Rush about and worry so."

Said the sparrow to the robin:  
"Friend, I think that it must be  
That they have no heavenly Father,  
Such as cares for you and me!"

*-- Elizabeth Cheney*

During a time of trial or difficulty, when it seem that you have to face life all alone and you wonder if anyone knows, if anyone cares or if anyone is there, remember these are the **questions** that we will all face one day. But they are questions that we have the answer to. God knows, he cares and he is there for us.