





The male song sparrow has been gifted by God to sing as many as 20 different melodies on any given spring morning. As evening approaches, he may have improvised as many as 900-plus variations on his basic theme. This musical gift of serenading with such variety and passion wins the heart of his mate and then courtship begins. After all their duet singing, she lays 3 to 6 eggs and incubates them for 12 to 15 days. An inspired singer as well, she gets them singing and ready to fill the world with music in about 10 days, as one by one they leave the comforts of their own recital hall. They become virtuosos like mom and dad as they make their way from one forest concert hall to another, glorifying God and bringing joy to all who are listening. The male's four-note basic theme has been described as very similar to the opening theme in Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony." Then off he goes with many, many variations sung very loudly and very clearly to keep danger far away from the growing choir under conductor mom. She conducts with a baton of love and joy and the youngsters create new compositions as they learn to be outstanding musicians. By fall, this sibling choir has matured into accomplished solo performers who continue in the same traditions of mom and dad. This is nothing short of stunning, miraculous and humbling for some of us less-talented musicians.

**"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."**

**Matthew 10:29-31**

As we read about all the positive qualities of the song sparrows and God's plan for them, we must stop and worship Him, our Creator. We are so much more valuable to God than we realize, and so much more gifted to do His work here on earth than the sparrows. Can we take a moment to marvel at their obedience? Yes, their obedience is a God-given instinct and, yes, we have been given free will. How can we work on surrender and obedience in the days ahead? Let's always take time to listen to God's still, small voice as we pray and as we read His word daily. Why? Because He loves His sparrows, but how much more does He love you? Can you give God first place in your day? Show your obedience by praying with a sincere heart.

**Prayer: Lord God, Creator of all life, this is the first day of the rest of my life. I need you more than ever! I am beginning to realize how marvelously you have created me and I do want to know your future plans for me. Help me to grow spiritually as I read through and absorb these devotional pages. Give me Holy-Spirit power to apply the word of God to my life and to share my progress with others who need to hear my testimony. Show me, Lord, where I am going wrong and where the next right path leads. I confess that I often want what I want. Forgive me and restore your closeness to me. I love you, Lord, because I know that you first loved me, in Jesus' name, Amen.**





These calling cranes are most likely announcing, to let others know, that it is mating time. They are well-known for their “tribal war dance” or “wild courtship antics.” If you are invited to this performance, you will likely tell others the next day that it was your most memorable sight ever in the avian kingdom. The eggs the female lays are incubated both by mom and pop crane. In 30 to 32 days, these sandhills become parents and look after their young for about a year. You may agree that this photo is stunning, from the long legs reflected in the pools of water to the sunset reflected in the background. God is to be praised!

**“As God’s fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. For He says, ‘in the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you. I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.’”**

#### **2 Corinthian 6:1-2**

God is calling the cranes to start a new generation, and in their instinctive obedience to call out to each other, we might want to stop and listen to the word of God in 2 Corinthians. Could the calling cranes be reminding us that God often calls out to us? Have you heard God’s call for salvation, the unmerited grace to receive forgiveness for your sins? Today is the day of salvation, a free gift from God. Or maybe you are saved but a bit backslidden from close fellowship with Jesus, our Redeemer King? He is a jealous God, and He may be calling you back to safety underneath His wings. He wants intimacy with you in His secret place, your heart! Can you allow God’s heart to invade your heart so you can become more like Him?

**Prayer: Lord God, forgive me when I take my relationship with you for granted. I am all too often self-centered, busy with what is good, but not with what is BEST! To know you and to hear your voice, Lord, I know I must spend quality time with you. That is how close relationships are formed and blessed. I want to spend time not only talking with you, but also listening and waiting for your answers. Today, I receive your death on the Cross of Calvary as payment for my sin debt. Come, Holy Spirit and fill me with your power to set me free from the bondage I have accepted as life. I desire the best, the new life in Christ and a daily time in your presence that I might hear you and live for you and your purposes. Lord, be glorified in my life, in Jesus’ name and for His sake, Amen.**