

Ransom Notes

The Chosen

Do You Really Matter to Anyone?

What Are You Worth?

Will you be missed if you're absent from church?

Are your thoughts and ideas generally ignored during a time of sharing?

Have you ever felt unwanted, unloved, or unneeded?

At nights do you ever ponder whether getting up the next day is worthwhile?

Do you think financial worth is the criteria by which a person's value is determined?

If yes, what score do you give yourself?

Each person has a special role to play as a member of Christ's Church, but do you think you're flunking?

Recently our pastor started preaching about sparrows — yes, the wee, *ugly*, grey/brown bird found everywhere. For a moment I wondered if perhaps bird cages were going to be passed out as we exited the service, each containing a few feathered house sparrows. My mind zipped into problem solving mode. Birds were not to even be fed at our apartment complex. I was uncertain whether a cage of flitting feathers would be welcome indoors. Hmm! What could I do?

Before I had resolved the bird challenge Pastor Brooks shifted to another touchy subject — HAIR. Yes, hair. Could he tell that I had slept crooked that night and couldn't get my hair to pop into place? I considered dropping my head into my lap incase he spotted the grey/whiteish strands doing their own thing and cited me as an example.

Fortunately my focus turned back to the voice at the pulpit and our sparrows. He is sharing the message Jesus is speaking to his training team. Instructions are pouring from the Master's voice. As you read the tenth chapter of Matthew, you can eavesdrop on his "Do and Don't" list. The twelve must have been overwhelmed with where to go and into which communities they should avoid. They were not to take money or extra clothes as they moved forward spreading the Word. In fact, they were not to even call ahead for a motel room, but to search out some home in the village in which to rest.

Then a most frightening announcement was uttered by Jesus. *"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues"* (Matthew 10:16-17). Terror must have filled the heads of the 12 that day.

What would be going through your head now if you had been present and this information filtered into your brain? I know what I would have been thinking — "Where is the next donkey or streetcar I can find to get home to my fishing business or darning socks for my family? *Why did He choose me to be a follower?* I know I'm not worthy or suited for this assignment so I'm crawling back to my hometown. I'm quitting. I am afraid I'll be killed, but this guy Jesus says, '*Yes, your body may be killed but they cannot kill your soul*'" (vs 28).

Then Matthew, speaking that morning through Brooks, returns us to the sparrow message. I guess Jesus must have known the disciples might be feeling a tad nervous by now. He wants to encourage the followers and help them understand their worth and why they were chosen to follow Him. *"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care"* (vs 29). If God knows when a little feathered body with a beak dies, He certainly will know when each of His chosen is in trouble. He assures us that humans are worth more than a bird.

But, what about that hair I mentioned earlier? God is busy counting the hairs on our head. We may count the number of toes, eyes, or bones in our body or maybe even what we weigh, but NEVER, NEVER have most of us counted the hairs on our head. Guess what? God, however, has been busy. *"And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows"* (vs. 30-31). He had CHOSEN His team and CARES for them.

About that time I glance up and notice something that causes me to quietly grab my phone and take a picture of a person two rows in front of me. Why? Look at the picture above. What words are printed on her shirt? CHOSEN! Almost hidden you can also see peeking out, I'M. Yes, that morning this lady was wearing the very words we were suppose to be thinking about throughout the sermon, "I'm Chosen."

I'm Chosen. You are Chosen. We each have a role to play. You may lack confidence, be worried or afraid just as the disciples needed reassurance. God had his eyes on them. He has His eyes on you also. Go forth this week. Be brave.

You Are Chosen! You Are Worth Much More Than a Sparrow
Open Your Eyes and Find Your Spot(s) of Service for Our King Jesus

