Two Birds

One morning as I was preparing to read scripture, I happened to look out the window of my office. There perched near the top of a tree, on a dead branch I saw two birds. There they sat for quite a while.

What were they doing there? Enjoying the view? Taking in the morning sun and breezes? It was cooler that morning, beautifully bright and sunny!

I watch them closely as they sat there looking round. I was too far away to really assess what kind of birds they were but I noticed they were not busy pecking the tree trying to get bugs out of those leafless branches. Then they disappeared. Then first one flew, then the other.

I felt a great desire to have their tree top perspective. I may never know why those two unknown birds were perched up there but they certainly helped change my view that morning.

As summer rounds the bend and fall is approaching, we change gears. School starts soon. Days slowly get shorter. The hot gradually gets cooler. For some this is a welcome relief while others mourn the loss of long, sunny, warm days.

Like the birds we each need to step back, go up and free ourselves from the hubbub, the chatter and goings on. When we give ourselves times to ponder and consider -whether alone or with a trusted friend- we can gain perspective on the world around us and the world within us.

Two examples from scripture are Jesus and Elijah. Jesus chose to go up the mountain to be in conversation and quiet with God. Elijah stood in the cave waiting for God to come. We don’t have much detail about Jesus’ mountain top visits but Elijah knew it was God when he heard the sheer sound of silence. As Psalm 46:10 reminds us: “Be still, and know that I am God!” Truly God delights to meet us in the quiet, as we wait like two birds on a tree.

In these moments, our viewpoint often changes when we place ourselves and our attitudes and our concerns before God. God’s perspective is above all else that bothers us or threatens our peace and calm. God’s outlook is gentle, welcoming but also penetrating and persistent.

When we are at our most stressed or anxious, when our lives are chaotic or coming apart, when we feel left alone or hopeless, or even when everything is great, I invite each of us to take a little time to go up a hill, or sit on a porch or find a new place to stand or sit before God. Jesus spent the whole night on the mountain and Elijah had to wait through the wind, earthquake and fire for the sheer silence of God’s presence in a cave. Our situations will each be different. But like the two birds, if we stay there, expecting that in those moments God will meet us there; we will find God was waiting for us there already! God will wait for us as we let the wind of our words. the earthquake of our circumstances and the fire of our anger die down so we can then hear God’s still small voice- which may sound a lot like silence! God is listening to us, waiting to hold us, shape us, and direct us. As we are quiet God can work in us God’s will which is good, perfect and loving.

Maybe the best way to know God and God’s will is to sit with our Friend Jesus, God’s Son. As he told us he is the Way, the Truth and the Life and our Intercessor as we seek God today. Then when we join together with others in praise and prayer as God sends the Holy Spirit to join us together to be one in Jesus and live out God’s will together. Let us then: “Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.” Ps. 37:7