



Happiness is a Bird

Happiness? What happened to your happiness when all this isolation and quarantine began? Did you leave it out there, on the parking lot, by your unused, un-driven car? Perhaps you stood at your window looking out to that parking lot and longed for that orphan, your happiness, sitting out there, cold and alone.

Or, was it more like this; happiness slowly trickled away when the realization hit that going out to eat was not an option. Maybe you just finished a book, and you were at a loss because the library was closed, and now what are you going to read? That trip to Wisconsin? Forget it. Having the gang over for dinner? Forget that, too. Going to church? Wait a minute.

As I write this meditation, rain has started to fall and they are predicting heavy showers throughout the day. I remember there were days when I watched rain fall with a sense of happiness, maybe relief that so much on my to-do list will have to wait till tomorrow, and I am one of the really great procrastinators. I now have a reason.

Out on the deck there's a little bird that has been watching me over the last couple of days, when I have stepped outside to tend to something on the grill. It's just a little bird with a red cap and I'm sure my neighbor, Diane, could tell me exactly what that bird is.

Now it's hopping around on the rail and causing me to smile because that bird seems to love the rain. Maybe he's a messenger telling me to get over it, put 'used-to-be' behind, recognize the multitude of reasons I have to be happy, before they gang up and bite me on the you-know-what. Happiness.

Maybe happiness is a bird. Flitting around, dancing on your deck, singing you songs and making you smile. Maybe happiness is a bird, pretty to look at, pretty to imagine, that right there within your grasp, adding a shine to your day. Maybe happiness is a bird in the present,

not in the past. Happiness in the past is just a memory, it's not happiness. Happiness is the present, a Praise the Lord moment, it's the reason you smile, and others are brightened and lifted up. Happiness is a bird on your deck.

I'm not a Pollyanna, neither are you. I'm not a droopy-drawers, either, and neither are you. Here is a cliché we all can live by, given by our common Father: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35. Think about that, really think it through. It is a truth that turns things up-side down. Instead looking for that remembered happiness for yourself, Jesus tells us to seek and spread happiness around to others. The secret to finding happiness is giving it away.

Thank you, Lord, for we know that the Joy you give us, as we give happiness to others, is genuine, and deep and isolation-defeating. Happiness is a bird in our hand.

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This essay was the Meditation in Stan Escott's [Watchword](#) for May 15, 2020. These regular words of encouragement, reflection, scripture and devotional prayer, born from the Covid-induced isolation of a small Bible study group, are now available online. To explore Watchwords or sign up for the mailings, visit bosworth30.com/watchwords/.