

God's Awesome Creation: Parenting

It is an amazing sight; a blackbird chasing off a crow three times its size and weight, or a crow dive-bombing an eagle that is cruising in its nest territory. With no regard for personal safety or the odds it's facing, the adult bird flies into action to protect its young.

Another delightful experience this summer was watching the Chipping Sparrow family that moved into the bush next to our veranda. The creative patterns and care with which the adults approached the concealed nest was a lesson of love in action. The frequency and speed with which they brought food was something else!

Having young seems to bring out courage, creativity, patience and stamina in adults. This summer I experienced it again in a new generation in my family. It brought tears of joy to my eyes seeing these characteristics in my nieces and their husbands whose lives have been revolutionized by new life; one couple becoming first time parents and another couple becoming parents journeying with a child who required major medical intervention. While courage, creativity, patience and stamina are obvious in their actions the overriding feeling these parents exude is tender, joyful love.

Hosea describes a similar scene where God was parenting Israel even when Israel did not respond. God's words exude tender, faithful love, *Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them (Hosea 11: 3,4).*

If we ever find ourselves uncertain about God's love for us, I'd recommend watching parents of any species and in the marvel of what we observe be assured of God's tender, joyful and never ending love.

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