

Bird Theology

While encouraging them to greater trust, Jesus urged his disciples, “Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them” (Matt. 6:26).

God feeds the birds. But they eat my fruit! God feeds them the fruit of the labor of all gardeners and growers of agriculture.

That poses some theological questions. Am I opposing God or failing to trust him when I scare the birds away or protect my crop from them in any manner? Is it a sin to shoot the raven that is destroying my watermelons? Luke specifies that God feeds the raven (Lk 12:24). (Your gun may be of no help, for ravens are so wary that you can hardly get in shooting range of them.)

Many who are not all that God-fearing are crying out against killing any of the wild creatures. They are willing for you to feed them! To them being a vegetarian is more than just a healthful way of eating; it becomes theological. The pagan belief in animism is being revived in our time. The movie, *Pocohontas*, is a propaganda film purposely promoting the suppositions of animism. Other popular films like *Star Wars* and *The Lion King* are designed to popularize New Age concepts of theology.

Jesus also asked, “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father’s will” (Matt. 10:29). Does God also have the same concern for chickens and goats? God has permitted both Israel and Christians to eat meat, but may we rightly kill the birds to which he is feeding my crop?

“You are of more value than many sparrows,” Jesus concluded. The life of a disciple is of much more value than that of God’s other creatures. In the Genesis account of creation, God gave man dominion over his creatures. They can serve his needs to sustain him, and if they deprive him of sustenance, he may exercise dominion to control them.

Jesus was giving a simple illustration to instill trust. God sustains the sparrow until it is his will for it to fall to the ground. Likewise, he sustains those who trust in him until it is his will for us to die. []

(Cecil Hook)