

SEAGULL LESSONS

Finished with my daily chores, I was restless, bored. I wanted to do something; go somewhere, but where? Family and friends were all working, so I didn't have anyone to visit or go shopping with, but I didn't want to sit around the house either and waste the day.

I was surfing the Internet when I came across some coastal scenes and I knew exactly where I wanted to go. The coast was only a couple hours' drive, so I could spend some time there and still be home before dark. I packed a quick lunch, grabbed my camera, writing items, donned my sunglasses and headed out the door.

I love everything about the coast; the high winding roads with the beach and ocean below, favorite coffee stops, quaint shops and fish stalls, different smells and foliage along the beach, salt water taffy, tangy salt air, the cool mist upon my face, various rock formations, drift wood, and colors of the water, walks on the beach searching for treasure (always after that perfect sand dollar), peaceful, alone areas where you can rest and meditate, encounters with God's creatures, and best of all, the wonderful, life changing encounters with the Lord Himself. And the people; I love watching the interaction between people and with their animals.

The coast has been a time of enjoyment and refreshing for my body, soul and spirit since I was a young teen-ager. Many times on my beach trips, the Lord has quickened my heart to write a story from the things I see and experience. What will the Lord show me today I wonder, as I put the car in gear and head for the freeway?

Arriving at the beach, hunger pangs told me it was lunch time. I found a road off the beaten path that was perfect. The road hadn't been used much, as parts of it were overrun with grass. It ran alongside the cliff's edge and the ocean view was inspiring. I pulled over, stopped the car and ate my lunch. Sitting in the car relaxing; my windows down, CD playing, and a cool breeze blowing throughout the car, a group of black birds suddenly appeared up over the edge of the cliff. They definitely caught my attention.

I watched the black birds, six in all, circle several time and then land on a grassy knoll just a few feet from my car. I watched two, and then three seagulls appear, soar above them, and come in for a landing also. They landed several feet behind the black birds. One seagull, the largest of the group, ventured over toward the group of black birds and they separated allowing the seagull access to that part of the beach; yet, seemingly paying him no mind, as they searched for food.

Giggling, I thought, "Well, from the size of that seagull, I'd get out of his way too!"

The large seagull then started following the littlest black bird around. Curious, I watched to see what would happen next. You could tell the little black bird was not a happy camper. He kept moving away from the seagull, but the seagull kept following him and closing the gap between them. This went on for several minutes until I was about ready to jump out of the car and chase the seagull away. There was such a difference in their sizes, I was concerned that if the seagull attacked him, he would be seriously hurt or even killed, and the little bird was obviously distressed, I had no idea what that seagull had in mind. I felt he was up to no good though and I was ready to defend the little black bird.

Suddenly, as if on cue, the other black birds moving together as a unit, circled the seagull, chirping up a storm, and prevented him from advancing any closer to the little black bird. It surprised me! It was as if they were issuing a warning—“Enough, is enough! Back off buddy! He’s one of us!” The seagull got the point. He made good his escape and soared into the sky.

“Wow!” I thought, “Talk about sticking together and protecting your own!” It was truly a sight to behold.

I was amazed because I didn’t think the other black birds were even aware of what was happening to one of their own; let alone how they would react. That large seagull could have made mincemeat out of the lot of them, but when push came to shove, they rallied around the one in trouble, and the seagull was the one to take flight. It was a real lesson in love and protecting your own. I was so impressed with the whole scene, I wrote it down on a scrap of paper knowing someday I would write the story.

Friends always show their love. What are brothers for if not to share trouble? Proverbs 17:17

Then my thoughts returned to the seagull as I watched him circling above me. “How interesting” I thought, the other seagulls have moved on and this crazy bird is still here. Is he going to try another attack?”

I decided to sit a while longer and see what he was up to. He was fun to watch, as he displayed such ease in his aerial antics. He glided upward with little movement of his wings, and then zoomed downward as if riding in an elevator; up and down, up and down. Then he soared in wide circles, as he caught the air currents time and again.

“Why, that crazy seagull is putting on a show for me!” It was like watching a ballet dancer performing with the sky as his stage. The dance of the seagull went on for about two minutes before he finally flew away.

Here I thought that seagull was ready to devour that poor little black bird and then he soars and glides before me in the most magnificent, graceful performance, as if saying, “*See what I can do, I’m not such a bad fellow after all!*”

My seagull lesson: judge not from appearances; wait it out, see it through! You’d be surprised if you do.