

## LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 459

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will be about this command from Christ: **“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matt. 6:26)** There are about 9,800 different species of birds in the world and we can learn something important from each one of them. Let us, however, narrow our focus to only one bird and “look” at the arctic tern.

The arctic tern is a water-loving creature that hatches during the summer in the Arctic Circle. This is a tiny bird weighing only from 3.2 – 4.2 oz. During the unbearably cold, dark arctic winter, the arctic tern flies south, following the summer season all the way to the Antarctic Circle on the other side of the earth. The flying abilities of this bird are astonishing. Their round trip from the Arctic to the Antarctic requires them to travel some 56,000 miles every year. It takes them about 3 months on the journey south, but only around 40 days to fly back north again. This is mainly due to the strength of the prevailing winds. Both the Arctic and the Antarctic have 24 hours daylight in mid-summer and Arctic Terns are in both places in mid summer. They are probably the animal that experiences the most daylight of any other creature on the planet.

Even though they are small, they still manage to protect their nests. They dive bomb any animal or man approaching their nest. Every potential predator receives the same treatment. They call out in alarm and repeatedly attack from behind the head so they have maximum disorientation effect and are less likely to be harmed themselves. They keep going as long as they feel threatened and only stop when the threat is sufficiently far away. A frantic tern attack can even leave a polar bear with bloody wounds to the head! Remember! Jesus told us to look at the birds of the air so they can teach us!

Job also said: **“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12:7-10)** If we could “ask” the arctic tern, surely we could learn something from him. One thing, for example, involves the way God gives guidance. For centuries God guided his people from without as He guided Israel in the wilderness: **“By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so they could travel by day or night.” (Ex. 13:21)** This, however, is not the way God guides the arctic tern. God guides these birds from “within”.

Jesus also guided his disciples from “without” during the three years of his public ministry. He repeatedly told his disciples “follow me.” The Greek word for follow is “akoloutheo”. W. E. Vine in his *Word Studies* states: *“It is used 77 times in the Gospels, of following Christ, and only once otherwise, Mark 14:13”* On the night before Calvary, however, Jesus predicted that he would guide his apostles in a new way. Now he was going to guide them from “within”. Jesus said to them: **“Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.” (John 13:36)** Yes! Jesus was leaving them and going back to the Father, but he was not abandoning them like orphans. He was going to return to them in the person of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised: **“I will not leave you as orphans; I**

**will come to you.” (John 14:18).** This time, however, Jesus was not going to guide them from “without”, but from “within”.

In John 14:2 Jesus said: **“In my Father’s house are many mansions”**. The Greek word translated as “mansions” is “mone” and refers to a “dwelling place”. This word is only used two times in the Bible. First in John 14:2 which we have already quoted, and lastly in John 14:23: **“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”** Note that first of all Jesus is going to heaven to prepare a dwelling place for us, and secondly we are to open our hearts and prepare a dwelling place inside of us for Jesus. NOW, CHRIST IN YOU IS THE HOPE OF GLORY (COL. 1:23). Christianity is unique in this regard. It is the only religion in the world whose God lives inside of believers!

“Receiving Christ” is just another way of describing conversion. John wrote: **“Yet to all who receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God.” (John 1:12)** There are many exceeding great and precious promises for those who “receive” Christ., but principle among these promises is that Christ dwells in your heart by faith. **“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” (Eph. 3:14-21)**

Please - **“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”**

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce

P.S. For more information on guidance go to [https://boycemouton.com/downloads/guidance\\_web.pdf](https://boycemouton.com/downloads/guidance_web.pdf)