

# The Tangled Bird

By Curtis Peter Van Gorder



My wife and I were walking in a grassy field in Australia. We passed a fence that enclosed some horses calmly grazing, when suddenly we heard a pitiful racket. A small sparrow was tangled in some string. Somehow its foot had gotten caught in a string that was dangling from the wire fence, and the sparrow was flapping and spinning around, trying its best to get free, to no avail.

We tried to get close enough to free it, but the helpless thing would have none of that. The closer we got to it, the more it squawked and flapped in frantic desperation. My wife and I looked in our pockets for something that would cut the string. My wife found a key, which cut the string without any trouble. The sparrow flew away as fast as it could without ever looking back to thank us.

Sometimes we may feel like that sparrow: We feel trapped in hard circumstances and conditions. It seems that just when we're least prepared, troubles come calling. Maybe we get laid off at work, are stricken with illness, argue with someone we love. Maybe we get hit with depression, pressures at work, or economic difficulty.

Perhaps if we remembered the plight of this little sparrow it would help us realize that God is always there, trying to help us—if we would only let Him. Trusting in God means that our spirits are freed from worry and can be at rest, knowing He will work things out. All we need to do is believe and receive His help from Heaven. Like the sparrow, we can experience a happy ending to our troubles.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (The Bible, Psalm 46:1 KJV).

## Save a life—pray!

By Chloe West

Picture life-and-death situations and the solution that saves the day: A drowning man is thrown a lifesaver. Someone bound in chains is released. An abandoned baby is found, fed, and loved. A bridge is built across a raging river so people in danger can safely cross. A helicopter spirits passengers and crew from a sinking ship. This is what God does when we pray.

When we pray, we open the door for miraculous intervention to take place. We're allowing God's hand to move, to rescue those in need.

The next time you pray for some person or situation, stop and think of what is needed to change things, and then picture God's hand intervening in a miraculous way.

According to the level of your faith it will be done for you, in answer to your prayers.

Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive (Matthew 21:22 NKJ).

Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them (Mark 11:24 NKJ).

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened (Matthew 7:7–8 NIV).

"You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord (Jeremiah 29:13–14a NIV).

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