

Free Birds

Leanna Bolden
Eternally Speaking Now



[Listen to the Podcast Here](#)

The past two weeks have been extremely difficult. My parents have had to make the tough decision to sell their house, and it's been challenging to accept.

They have been extraordinarily patient with me as I've asked to explore alternative options, like keeping the place and renting it out. After hours of crunching the numbers and talking through practicalities (which have proven far from practical), the decision is confirmed: **it's time to let it go.**

I could list at least ten convincing reasons to do otherwise, but at that point I'd be kicking against the goads or beating a dead horse or shall I say, smothering a bird that's meant to fly? No matter how you approach the issue, the result is the same: **it's time to let it go.**

In a way, you could liken this situation to **setting a bird free.**
Our family embraced and delighted in visiting my parents
at their glorious beachfront home for 25 years,
and now it's time to let that property—our dear bird—
fly away to its next destination.

Intriguingly, I've been keenly aware this summer of the various stages that birds experience. As I've gone about my daily business, the Lord has directed my attention to specific scenes that capture each phase of a bird's life. At each moment, it's like He cupped my chin in His hands, guided my sights to another bird scene, and nudged me to take a photo. It turns out, with each of these steps, He was providing the fuel for this writing. What follows is a compilation of all these 'bird sightings,' illustrating the process of a bird's life from before its beginning to after its end.

But, wait. This blog is not about birds.
It's about you and me and our seasons in life.
It's about wholeheartedly embracing what is to be cuddled, while also being willing and courageous to **let go of what needs to be released.**

Let's begin with the montage of bird sightings. As you peruse the following, see if you can identify the 'birds' in your life and the specific seasons they're in right now.

Nesting & Preparing



This picture was taken in Illinois **while I prayed** with a friend on the phone. I watched the bird fly back and forth with twigs for the nest.

Meet Birdie. Here she is, resting momentarily from her extensive labors constructing a nest for her babes.

Are you building something new? Preparing for something yet to be revealed? You have a vision in your mind of how it may eventually look, but in reality, we never know exactly how things will transpire.

Be faithful, work hard,
take healthy rests,
keep all projects and plans in prayer,
do it all for the Lord,
and **let it go to Him.**

"Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin..." Zechariah 4:10

Incubation



I was **surprised to discover** this egg and nest while going through boxes to prepare for my parents' estate sale in Michigan. The photo fit this menagerie wonderfully!

Meet Birdie's baby, still growing and yet to be brought forth into this world for God's good purposes.

Are you in charge of something conceived but not yet born? Feed it well. Defend it. Protect it during this vulnerable and critical time of growth.

Remain teachable, as God's full plans for it are not yet clear.

Delight in the simplicity and anticipation of this season,
and let the Lord's purposes reign.
Hold it all with an
open palm before Him.

Nurturing



*This nest of babes was in the front lawn of my sister-in-law's home in Tennessee. The parent bird was **always nearby**, often with a worm in the mouth.*

Welcome, Birdie babies!

Birdie now has multiple little ones who depend upon her for food, love, and shelter.

What active, moving entity have you been given to steward? It depends on you to care for it well, as this foundational phase will set the stage for the future. Water it, nurture it, and pour your heart into it.

Cry out to God
at every turn, and
surrender it all to Him.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

1 Corinthians 15:58

Training to Fly



*As my family sat at an outdoor cafe in Kentucky, we had the honor of watching a **parent bird teach** these grown chicks to fly.*

The teens are ready for their flight permits. Mama and Papa Bird do all they can to train them up in the way they should go.

This is the stage of push-back and surprises. You are the trainer, the mentor, the guider, yet your birdie was created by the Lord with a specific design or personality you may not have originally anticipated.

Trust in God. **Yield to Him.**

Seek *His* will, not yours.

Stay the course and remember your purpose: to faithfully implement the Lord's assignment and to humbly walk by His Spirit and not your flesh.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Launched!



*This fell into my hand in Michigan as I sorted through a collection of dolls **from around the world**. The bird was supposed to be attached to one of the dolls, but...it **had broken off**.*

Look who's no longer in the nest!

Detached and independent, this readied one is poised to explore the world and set out on new adventures.

Is your birdie launching?

Does the idea of setting it free make you happy? Excited? Relieved? Nervous? Feeling out of control? Scared?

It had to happen. This is what you've been working towards!

Give it to God, and ask Him to glorify Himself through it. He will minister to your heart as you lean on Him and trust Him through this transition. And if your bird isn't to this point yet, **surrender the idea to Him now**. Launching will become a reality sooner than later.

Empty nESTed



*Here are two empty nests, appropriately **tucked away** in a **LOVES** sign, with a **big red heart above**. If you zoom in, you'll see two birds, each resting by a nest.*

While there's a timely word in this stage for the 'birdie' who is no longer in his nest, I sense the greater message today is for the one who stays behind-- the one empty nested-- you and me.

Are you holding a nest that at one time held your birdie? Do you feel empty and alone? Do you find yourself asking things like, "What do I do now? Who am I? Did I do all I could for my birdie?"

Notice in this photo how the nests appear in the word Loves, but more specifically in the letters, 'e' and 's'. A friend reminded me this week that 'es' means 'is' in Spanish.

God IS love.
God IS our refuge.
God IS our purpose,
and He meets all our needs.
He *is* I AM.

I believe the Lord wants us to remember
that He loves us. His heart is over all.
Our season of 'empty nESTed'
is literally nESTled in His great name, *I AM*.

So, **freely submit that void to God.**
Hand the nest to *I AM*.

CHALLENGE

Did you notice the consistent theme in
every stage highlighted above?

Surrender that birdie to God.

Wherever we find ourselves,
regardless of the season or the definition of our bird,
whether we're releasing it out the door or still bottle-feeding it,
we must freely let it go to the Lord.

Gripping, squeezing, or clinging too tightly will hinder its growth
and will hurt ourselves in the long run.

**Relinquish all control to the One who
is faithful to take care and to the One who will *not* let go.**

**"...being confident of this very thing,
that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it
until the day of Jesus Christ..."**

Philippians 1:6

So, what's your birdie?

It may be a job, a responsibility, a friendship, an opportunity, a project.
It may be a property, a possession, a ministry, a habit, a medical decision.
Maybe it's a vision or an idea for something yet to be revealed.
Maybe it's a person: a spouse, a friend, or a family member.
It may literally be a toddler in the midst of potty training,
a teen freshly out of the DMV with his driver's license,
or an adult child already flying independently.

We're either preparing for something new, incubating it, bringing it forth,
feeding it, training it, launching it, passing it on, or even experiencing its
loss. In most cases, we're juggling several different birdies simultaneously,
with each one at a different point of its own season.

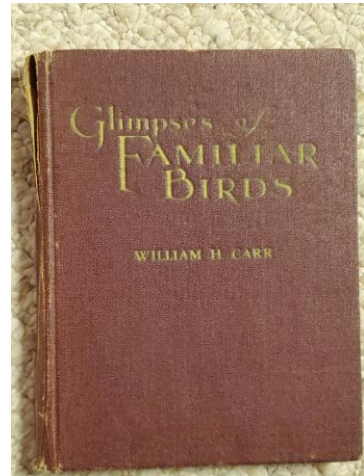
My birdie was my parents' home,
and I needed to **let it go** instead of re-nest it.

Are you still nesting when you're supposed to be launching?
Are you running ahead of the incubation,
prematurely enrolling your bird into flight school?
Do you just want to skip over the training part?
Please don't. Each component is crucial to your birdie's growth,
and the Lord has chosen *you* to be the one in your current position.

As I helped my parents move out, my dad gave me a box of antiques he'd set aside for me to peruse. Most of the items were my grandfather's books, over 100 years old. When I came across this one, the title grabbed me:

"Glimpses of Familiar Birds."

How fitting. Have you noticed that every season I've mentioned is **nothing new** to us? (My guess is you were already **familiar** with the life cycle of a bird before today.)



While we may be **acquainted** with each season of life, as we encounter a new one, it can feel like we're stepping into a foreign land never before inhabited. This leaves us feeling uneasy about **letting anything go**, let alone something dear to us. This is because we only see a **glimpse** of the bigger picture.

A **glimpse** is a **partial view**.
It is **brief perception. Incomplete vision.**

Dear friend, when we obediently submit our birdies to Jesus, *we do so without seeing the whole picture.* We do so with just a **glimpse** of those **familiar birds**.

I don't know who will be blessed next with the home my parents are selling. We don't know what financial need will be met through that sale. We haven't seen yet how the process of closing the doors on one house will open new doors in another.

There are a thousand dominoes our birdies will tap,
and we have no idea how things will proceed into the future.

Here is what we *do* know, though:
We can trust the Lord with it all.

Whatever your birdie is,
whatever its season is,
keep it **free to fly** by **letting it go to God**.

BONUS: I cannot urge you enough to scroll down and take advantage of more encouragement on topics closely related to this. May the Lord bless you through these lessons as He has me.

Dead Dreams

We all have dreams that have died. Be lifted up as you sink down into the soothing comfort offered by the hope of new beginnings. It's time to view dead dreams through the lens of autumn leaves.

[Listen to Podcast](#)

[Read Blog](#)

Hands On, Hands Off

This testimony was spurred on by another experience with birds. I wanted so badly to jump in and fix a problem, but I couldn't! Read or listen, and walk away with more faith to turn everything over to God.

[Listen to Podcast](#)

[Read Blog](#)

Like Dominos, Like God

Every step of our lives is aligned perfectly together, even in the midst of imperfect situations. Enjoy hearing about this series of unexpected events that made a huge impact on others. God is doing the same for you.

[Listen to Podcast](#)

[Read Blog](#)

Thankful... for the Construction?

This message documents a range of emotions and reactions to major upheaval. Be led by the Lord as I was, from frustration and discontentment into peace and gratitude.

[Listen to Podcast](#)

[Read Blog](#)

Freely pass along the inspiration! Social share buttons are below.



[Share This Email](#)



[Share This Email](#)



[Share This Email](#)