TITLE: Significance

Hymn--does Jesus care

TEXT: Mt. 10:29-31; Ps. 139:2-4; 1 Pet. 5:6-7;

Jn. 3:16; Ro. 5:8; Jer. 29:13

INTRODUCTION: This morning I want to talk about significance. If I were to ask you the question: How significant do you feel, what would be your response?

 Possibly, before you could adequately answer that question you would need that question qualified a little…significant compared to what?

How significant do you feel within your family?

How significant do you feel within your community?

How significant do you feel within your state?

How significant do you feel within your country?

How significant do you feel within your world?

How significant do you feel within the universe?

How significant that we may feel will largely be determined by these parameters.

Most here today will probably feel a certain amount of significance within our own families…Some may even feel a certain amount of significance within our communities…

Not many will probably feel very significant when we expand that thought out to our state and even less as we move up the food chain to country, world and universe.

What I want to talk specifically about this morning is our feelings of significance when it comes to our thoughts of God.

How significant do you feel in relationship to God?

**Matthew 10:29 - 31 (NIV) 29Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.  30And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.  31So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**

 The sparrow is the most common of all birds. Among the bird world a sparrow is probably like a china-man in china…If being common is defined by how many there is of a thing, the more that there is the more common it becomes, then a sparrow is common because there are so many of them….Just as a china-man would be common in China under this definition of commonness.

Here Jesus talks about the human law of supply and demand. The more of a thing that there is the less valuable it becomes. The less of a thing that there is the more valuable that it becomes..

 EXAMPLE: My Tom Hanks movie collection---several years ago I was looking for the movie Splash to add to my collection… Problem was that it was not being produced anymore on dvd. So I searched eBay and amazon and many other websites to try to find the movie. I would find them but they were so rare at the time that they were running between 75.00 and 100.00 dollars.

 After a few months of searching I found one on auction on eBay and I got it for 38.00.

 It was not that the movie was even that good but I had become obsessed with finding it for my collection.

 About 3-4 months later they re-released the movie on dvd and you could buy it at Walmart for 7.99!

 It is all a matter of supply and demand! From the world’s perspective, significance will often be determined by the quantity of a thing that is available.

 Splash remains the most expensive movie I have ever purchased. (If you want to rent it I can let you watch it for 5.99)

Jesus said: **29Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?**

What Jesus was saying is that sparrows are so insignificant because of the sheer number of them that they are not even seen as worth a penny a piece. They are sold two for a penny.

 But He goes on…

**Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.**

God knows - God notices and cares about when even a sparrow falls to the ground.

Even a common sparrow is significant to God…

So Jesus says to us…

**30And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.  31So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**

What Jesus is trying to point out to us here is just how significant we really are to God.

 God sees the single sparrow as significant and we are worth more than many sparrows. In other words we are much more significant to God then they are.

I love the illustration that Jesus uses here to try to drive home His point….**30And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.**

 I have never known whether to personally take this as a compliment or a put down..

Does God know me better than most because He doesn’t have to spend as much time with me counting the hairs on my head so He can spend His time with me doing other things or does He know you “hair endowed” ones better because He has to spend so much time counting the hairs on your heads?

 Seriously though, this speaks of the value that God places upon us individually. Some of us are *follicle-ly* challenged, some may be follicle-ly blessed, but God knows each of us so intimately that He literally knows the number of hairs on our head.

I love my wife a great deal but I don’t have any idea how many hairs she has on her head.

Here is a thought…. If God has the very hairs of our head all numbered then He knows anytime one falls out!

 Do you suppose He checks the tub drain every day? He had 2 million seven hundred thousand 2 hundred and thirty five yesterday—there is 47 here in the drain so that leaves 2,700,188 today. Probably not!

 The point is that we are so significant to God that He knows everything that there is to know about us.

 God literally knows more about you then you know about yourself!

**Psalms 139:2 - 4 (NIV) 2You know when I sit and when I rise;     you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3You discern my going out and my lying down;     you are familiar with all my ways. 4Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.**

 God not only knows where we are at any given moment today but He knows where we will be at any given moment tomorrow…

 He knows when we will go to bed and He knows when we will get up.

 He perceives our thoughts from afar and is familiar with all of our ways..

 He even knows what we are going to say before we say it!

**Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.**

 What does this tell us about God?

#1. Just how significant we are to Him!

We are so significant to God that He takes the times to know everything that there is to know about us. Down to the most intimate details of our being. He knows each hair on our head. He knows each thought before we have even formulated them into words.

God knows our sorrows. He knows our pains. He knows our fears and insecurities. He knows our joys. He knows what makes us happy as well as what makes us sad.

As a husband or a wife if your spouse knew all of these things about you in the intimate detail that God does do you know how it would make you feel?

It would make you feel VERY SIGNIFICANT!

That someone would care enough to get to know you in the most intimate of ways…

 When two people have been married for a long time, 40-50-60 years, it just seems that they develop the same brain.

 One can start a sentence and the other somehow can just seem to complete it. It is like they know what the other is thinking. How does that happen?

 They have lived in a relationship of significance and through that relationship they become so familiar with each other that they just know the other person that well.

Multiply that 10,000 times and that is how significant that God sees you and I.

We are so significant to God that He knows when we sit and when we rise;     He perceives our thoughts from afar. He discerns our going out and our lying down;     He is familiar with all our ways. Before a word is even on our tongue He knows it completely.

That is being significant!

 Did any of you watch the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life” over the Christmas Holidays?

Frank Capra, who directed “It's a Wonderful Life”, was asked years ago about the central message of his classic film. After thinking a few moments, Capra responded, "I believe the real message of “It's a Wonderful Life” is this: that under the sun, nothing or no one is insignificant to God."

 Everything that happens has intended and unintended consequences. Everything, because it happened, causes something else to happen. Everybody in that story is important, because he or she relates to everyone else. Nothing is insignificant under the sun to God.

 So what we find is that not only are we important and significant to God but everyone around us then is important and significant to God as well for fulfilling His purpose and His plan within our world.

So if we are this significant to God that He even knows the number of hairs on our heads, he knows the deepest fears and desires of our hearts, he perceives our thought from afar and knows our words before we speak them----If God views us as that significant to Himself--- the next question that remains is how will we, how have we responded to that truth?

Peter tells us how we should respond to this wonderful truth about Gods love for us….

**1 Peter 5:6 - 7 (NIV) 6Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.  7Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.**

 Have you ever thought of God as being meticulous, thanking him for his extreme care in the consideration of details?

 Any thoughtful glance at creation is enough to evoke praise. God’s intricate design is evident in countless species of insects, birds, flowers and trees. The human body, with its many marvels, proves God to be a careful Creator.

 And creation did not end his detailed care; even Calvary did not terminate his unconditional love. He continues to demonstrate that love today when he stoops to meet our tiniest and most commonplace needs.

So Peter says that we need to: **6Humble ourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift us up in due time.  7Cast all our anxiety on him because he cares for you.**

 Have you ever heard the story of how Indian boys were initiated into manhood and admitted to the circle of braves in some of the American Indian tribes?

 The small boy was taken from his family and led out into the forest.

 Then he was told that he must spend the entire night there alone--and left to his own devices.

 You can imagine what an ordeal this would be. To untrained senses and the imagination of a child, every sound would seem to foretell an attack by some fearsome night predator, and every shadow would conjure up the image of a huge monster.

 But, as day broke and the sun rose over the mountains, the boy's first sight would be his father.

 All night long, in the silence and just out of the boy's vision, his father had stood, bow and arrow ready, watching over and protecting his son.

 With incredible delight, the boy would run to his father, shouting, "Father, you were there all along!"

 This is what God does for us! He is always there, sometimes just out of sight but there none the less always watching over us.

 And because He is always there as a loving father watching over us we can humble ourselves under His mighty hand and cast all of our cares, all of our anxieties upon Him because He cares for us with a great love!

 The real question isn’t if you are significant to God or not?

 Whether you may feel like it or not you are very significant to Him.

 We are so significant to God that Scripture tells us –

**John 3:16 (NIV) 16“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

**Romans 5:8 (NIV) 8But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

1st--- For God so loved the world-- that is you and I, that He gave His one and only Son…

 God gave His Son knowing that He was giving Him to die on a cross for your and my sin…

Stop and think about that for a moment?

 Who would you give a son or a daughter to die for?

 Is there anyone that is that significant to you in this world that you would sacrifice one of your children or grandchildren for that person?

 I cannot even imagine doing that. There is not a person on this planet that I would willingly and voluntarily sacrifice one of my children or grandchildren for…

Yet God sees me, He see you as so significant to Himself that He willingly sent His son to die for our sins..

 And just as amazingly---he did so while we were yet sinners…

 **8But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

 Even when we were enemies of God, separated from Him by our sin, Christ came specifically to bear our judgment upon Himself, to die in our place..

 That is being significant!

Now realize this…Even if you were the only person on the planet God would not have done anything any differently!

 He still would have come and sacrificed Himself for you!

 You are that significant to Him!

The question that I want to challenge you with today in closing is:

Knowing this, how significant is God to you?

 How significant have you made the Lord in your life?

 Have you made Him your greatest treasure? Is He your pearl of great price?

 Have you truly given your all to Him who has given His all for you?

**Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV) 13You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.**

 Is God significant enough to you that in this New Year that lies ahead you will seek Him with all of your heart?

Will you strive to make God as significant to you as you are to Him?