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Mowing in the Rain

“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?”
(Matthew 6:26 NIV)

Usually during the months of July and August, Kentucky lawns get brown and crispy, with great gapping cracks appearing in the clay soil. Not last year. Last year there was so much precipitation that the grass and weeds needed cutting every four days to avoid Long Rows of Clumped Grass (LRoCG), and Grandma Patti does not like LRoCG.

Saturday, after lunch and the mandatory power nap, it was time to mow again before the next deluge. The grass was still dripping as I muscled the lawn tractor along the driveway. It was kicking up plenty of clingy grass bits, together with clouds of moisture, and leaving in its wake the inevitable LRoCG. To make matters worse the strong south wind was blowing so hard it created a great cloud of sticky wet grass shreds. Legs, arms, hair (why didn't I wear a hat?), neck, shirt, undershirt ... I was COVERED! I could have been mistaken for a scarecrow. It was going to be a long afternoon. I gritted my teeth, closed my eyes and pressed onward. I was determined to finish the top 40, come tropical storm or high water. With each passing minute the rain came just a little bit faster,

but the end was in sight if I could just hold out for another fifteen minutes of this miserable afternoon. That's when the miracle happened.

Up in the sky, I saw three small birds with swallow tails. They were swooping and banking and chittering through the air just above me as they snacked on insects. Then they came closer. Before long I was surrounded because they were attracted to the bugs I was kicking up. For about the next five minutes they whirled and danced all around me. No ballet was ever more dazzling and graceful.

In an instant God transformed me from a grass-covered, frustrated, wet human into a purple martin—swooping and banking and flying with joy and freedom in the warm rains. Wow! What a gift! They left much too soon. I did finish mowing the top 40 that day. I finished dirty and soaked with a field full of LRoCG. But as the rains came down in buckets, I finished with a big goofy grin and joy in my heart. What a great day.



—Don Butterworth

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