

THE BUTTERFLY

Romans 1:20 tells us that the invisible things of God can be understood from the natural things He has made. Just as a musician can be understood by his music and an artist can be understood by his paintings, in a similar way we can understand God by His creation.

This is why Jesus told so many parables. He spoke about a mustard seed, different kinds of soil, the sparrows, flowers, and many other things to illustrate the ways of God as revealed in nature. In the same manner we can learn God's wisdom from the life cycle of the butterfly. There are three stages in the life of a butterfly that can teach us important principles of Christian growth.



STAGE #1 THE CATERPILLAR

The future butterfly is a only tiny little caterpillar when it hatches from its egg. It seems ugly and useless- all it can do is crawl very slowly and eat. There seems to be nothing special about a caterpillar. However, the caterpillar has built into its genes the design and destiny to become transformed into a beautiful butterfly!

In a similar way, the Bible says that man is like a lowly, ugly worm or caterpillar. In Job 25:4-6 we read, *"How then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure... If even the stars are not pure in His sight, How much less man, who is a worm?"* Even the Lord Jesus, during His humiliation on the cross, was prophetically declared in Psalm 22:6 to have said, *"I am a worm, and not a man."*

The chemicals in a person's body are only worth about two or three dollars. Our natural life is very ordinary and insignificant, but the real answer to why we are so special lies deep within each person. In our spiritual DNA- in what God created to be- we read that God said *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness"* in Genesis 1:26. Just as a caterpillar was designed by God to grow into a butterfly, every Christian was designed by God to grow into becoming like Christ. However, we need to prepare ourselves for this glorious hope to come to fulfillment!

The way that a caterpillar qualifies to go on to it's future calling is very simple- it must devour much food and grow strong for its coming transitions. Some caterpillars will grow to 1000 times their original size! And for each young Christian to mature and qualify for God's best, they similarly need to voraciously eat the Word of God. (Study Luke 4:4, Psalms 119:11, 1 John 2:14, and Hebrews 5:11-14.)

The caterpillar does not simply eat enough to meet his present needs of life. No, it needs to digest far beyond its present needs, to grow and become ready for the future trials of life. That must also be the vision of each Christian, that we deposit an abundance of God's word into our hearts and minds so that we will be strong and prepared for our future needs of development.



STAGE #2 THE COCOON

After the caterpillar has grown very large, it begins to spin a small thread around itself until the threads become a bag or shell that imprisons it. It is very strong shell- the thread of a silk caterpillar, for example, is ten times stronger than steel!

The caterpillar surrounds itself until it is imprisoned inside a cocoon. There, in darkness and captivity, the caterpillar starts to die, but it also becomes transformed.

As we grow as Christians, God will bring us into similar cocoon experiences. We will face spiritual darkness and prisons where we suffer- situations where we feel trapped! It may be sickness, like Job. Perhaps it will be persecution, or being hurt by your relatives, like Joseph. It might be troubles at work, where you are not correctly paid, such as happened to Jacob.

We may wonder, why did God allow these trials? The answer is that God has a purpose for allowing suffering in our lives. Romans 8:28 tells us, *"All things work together for good for those who love God."*

When we are born-again, we do not go straight to heaven. We instead learn how to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ! Second Timothy 2:12 tells us that If we suffer with Christ shall also reign with Him. In fact, "cocoon" experiences often happen to good Christians.

It is in the cocoon that the ugly, insignificant caterpillar is slowly transformed. If he ate enough and grew big, he will have the strength to overcome his cocoon and break forth as a butterfly! If we eat the word of God and become strong Christians, every trial and difficulty in our lives can help transform us to become more like Christ.



STAGE #3: THE BUTTERFLY

At the appointed time, the caterpillar inside the cocoon will become fully metamorphosized. The cocoon will shake and split, and a glorious butterfly will emerge to fly away into the sky. It is no longer an ugly, earthbound caterpillar; it has become a new creation!

A caterpillar crawls on the ground and may only travel a few meters in its life, but butterflies can fly up to 6000 kilometers. Some can fly over water for 400 kms without stopping once! They are both beautiful and amazing in their capabilities once they have been metamorphosized inside their cocoons.

For this same reason God puts us in “cocoons,” or difficult situations, to change us. If we have grown spiritually strong enough by diligently eating the Word of God, we will have the ability in these cocoon experiences to become transformed into the character and power of Christ. Our earthly limitations will fall away as we emerge, having been metamorphosized from our earthly sinful nature into the likeness of our Lord Jesus!

Are you a happy Christian, enjoying God’s blessings? Do not be spiritually lazy or content—you must eat and devour the word of God. Study the Bible! Pray and prepare! Grow strong in the Lord during the good times, because we must become ready for the difficulties that will yet come in life. Otherwise we might not have the strength to go through the difficulties triumphantly when they come.

Are you already going through difficulties, like the caterpillar in the cocoon? Let God work the character of Christ into your being through your trial. You can become transformed from glory to glory through every circumstance that God allows to come into your life. Then, at the appointed time of deliverance, believe God for a breakthrough. Fight the good fight of faith and struggle against your limitations, just as the butterfly struggles to break out of his cocoon. Pray that God will release you from your trial with more faith, power and blessings; such as happened to Joseph, Gideon, Moses and Job. For just as the butterfly emerges from its cocoon, transformed in nature and freed from its former limitations, the Lord can bring you forth from your trials with the beauty and power of Christ!

Ephesians 3:20-21 *“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us...”*

“Christ in you, the hope of glory,” Colossians 1:27