

THE BUTTERFLY

The invisible things of God can be understood from the natural things He has made. Romans 1:20 tells us this: "God's invisible qualities are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made."

- A musician is understood by his music.
- An artist is understood by his paintings.
- God is understood by His creation!

That is why Jesus told so many parables, to teach us God's ways from natural objects: a mustard seed, different kinds of soil, a sparrow, flowers...

Solomon taught the wisdom of God from the things that God had created: trees, birds, fish, plants... (1 Kings 4:29-34).

This lesson we will study God's wisdom from the butterfly.

3 STAGES IN THE LIFE OF A BUTTERFLY:

STAGE #1 A CATERPILLAR OR WORM

When it hatches from its egg, the future butterfly is a only tiny little caterpillar -tiny -ugly -all it

can do is crawl very slow -nothing special or beautiful about a caterpillar or a worm.

The caterpillar has built into its genes the design, or the destiny, to become transformed into a beautiful butterfly! God planted that capability deep inside every caterpillar!

The Bible says that man is like a worm:

- Job 25:4-6; "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?"

- Is.41:14 'you worm Jacob'

- Ps.22:6 Speaking of Jesus on the cross: "I am a worm, and not a man."

Ps. 8:3-4 "When I consider the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have made; What is man, that You would be mindful of him?"

-1st part of the answer: We are only tiny creatures on this planet! When we look at the heaven- the sun and moon- What is man? We are like little bugs, like little worms!

What is so special about man? We are made out of dust! (Water, Calcium, Potassium, Iron, etc.)- chemicals in a person are only worth about P 100!

But the real answer to why we are so special lies deep within each person -in our spiritual DNA- in what we were created to be!

- In Gen.1:26, God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."

-We were created in the image of God! That is in our spiritual genes! To be like Him!

-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.

Rom.8:29- "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son." We are predestined by the plan of God, to become like Jesus!

HOWEVER, we need to prepare for this glorious hope of becoming like Christ! It is our calling! Its in our spiritual genes, God has created us for this destiny!

Col.1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory!"

EVERY CHRISTIAN **CAN** BECOME LIKE OUR GLORIOUS LORD BUT NOT EVERY CHRISTIAN **WILL** BECOME LIKE OUR GLORIOUS LORD! Not every Christian will make it to heaven and become a glorified child of God! But if we prepare correctly, it will be no problem for us to become like Christ. 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. But to qualify, we need to eat! eat the Word of God! Grow strong in the Lord! Drink the water of the Holy Spirit! Eat! Drink!

* Don't be lazy during the good times -prosperity -peace -we must grow and grow. Some caterpillars will grow to 1000 times their original size!

Rev.10:8-10 eat the words of God -whether pleasant blessing, bitter commands, eat! Matt., Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 & 2 Cor. Oh! so full- eat! You need to grow and grow because you need to be ready for the 2nd stage...

STAGE #2 IN THE LIFE OF A BUTTERFLY: THE COCOON

The caterpillar spins a small thread- around and around the caterpillar spins until the threads become a bag -a shell that surrounds the caterpillar. It is very strong thread- the thread of a silk caterpillar is 10 times stronger than steel!

The caterpillar surrounds itself until it is imprisoned inside a cocoon- and 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 cocoon experiences: darkness, prisons, suffering... situations where we are trapped! We can't escape our confinements!

- ... Maybe sickness (like Job)!
- ... Maybe persecution, or hurt by your relatives (like Joseph and his brothers...)
- ... troubles at work, not paid (This happened to Jacob with his father-in-law!)
- ... Maybe a time of darkness & discouragement, Isa.50:10.
- ... Maybe financial captivity- no money!
- ... Perhaps demonic attacks...

Why does God allow these trials? God puts us in a cocoon, to change us! Prov.3:15, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, lean not to your own understanding."

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 learn how to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ!

...2 Tim.2:12- If we suffer with Christ shall also reign with Him.

...Job, in Job 23:10 "But He knows the way that I take; When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold."

...Paul: 2 Cor.1:8-10, For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure...that we should not trust in ourselves but in God...

'Cocoon' experiences often happen to good Christians:

Job was a righteous man (Job.1:8) when he lost everything!

Joseph was a godly young man when he was sold into captivity as a slave!

Moses- when he was 40 years old, he tried to deliver Israel & failed! He then spent 40 more years in the desert as a failure- as a poor shepherd, no longer a prince of Egypt.

In the cocoon the caterpillar is slowly transformed. If he ate enough & grew big and fat, he will have the strength to overcome & 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 like Christ!

We cannot "help" the butterfly to escape its cocoon-even when it is breaking out - your kindness will kill it! It would be underdeveloped and cannot fly.

STAGE #3: THE BUTTERFLY

One day the cocoon shakes- splits -and a glorious butterfly emerges to fly away into the sky, no longer ugly, earth bound; but a new creation! The earthy caterpillar becomes a heavenly butterfly!

A caterpillar crawls on the ground, may only travel a few meters in it's life: but butterflies can fly up to 6000 km. in their life! Can fly over water for 400 kms without stopping! Amazing!

God puts us in 'cocoons' –impossible situations- to change us, and bring us out with the character and power of Christ in our lives!

We were not born again to just be natural people!

We are born again to be supernaturally victorious!

- Romans 8:37 "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

- Dan. 11:32 "The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits."

Ecc.4:14 ...he has come out of prison to become a king (like a butterfly)

- This happened to Joseph! He was betrayed by his brothers, falsely accused of rape, forgotten in prison...but he came out of the prison to become the Prime Minister of Egypt!

This also happened to Gideon. "Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under a tree while Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites." (Judges 6:11).

- Gideon was under distress (like being trapped in a cocoon) because of the enemy invasion. There was very little food, and Gideon was hiding from the enemy!

Judges 6: 12-14 And the Angel of the LORD said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!" Gideon said to Him, "O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about..." Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites."

BUT Gideon knew about the God of Israel... he believed in God's miracles... AND HEARD GOD'S WORD: transforming power! Worm>butterfly, fearful farm boy> mighty warrior, national hero!

God puts us in 'cocoons' –impossible situations- to change us, and bring us out with the character and power of Christ in our lives!

- Romans 8:37 "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

- 2 Chron.16:9 "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him."

- Phil.4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

- 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, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

We are also taught that our future hope includes not only victory, but also entering into Christ's character and glory.

1 Cor.15:47 & 49 The first man [Adam] was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man [Christ] is the Lord from heaven. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. WE WILL BE LIKE CHRIST! WE WILL HAVE HIS HEAVENLY NATURE!

When God became a man, He laid aside His glory in heaven to become a suffering Savior. But on the Mount of Transfiguration, He was changed (Metamorphocized) as He entered back into His glory!

This Greek word- Metamorphocize- is used by scientists today to describe how a caterpillar is transformed into a glorious butterfly!

This Greek word- Metamorphacize- is also used in the Bible to describe how we are being changed- metamorphacized- transfigured- to become like our glorious Lord!

2 Cor. 3:18- "But we all, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed (metamorphocized) into the same image from glory to glory."

1 John 3:2 "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be [we cannot see yet our future hope and calling], but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is [we shall become like Christ]."

- Every caterpillar has the hope of becoming a glorious butterfly, but you can't see it by looking at it! Every Christian has this glorious calling, even if now we sometimes feel like we are no better than worms!

1 John 3:3 "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

HOWEVER, we need to prepare for this glorious hope of becoming like Christ! It is our calling! Its in our spiritual genes, God has created us for this destiny!

Col.1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory!"

* are you a happy Christian, enjoying God's blessings? Do not be spiritually lazy or content- eat! eat! eat! Eat the word of God! Study the Bible! Pray! Drink more of the Holy Spirit! PREPARE! Grow big and strong in the good times (not comfortable and lazy). We must grow to become ready for the difficulties that will come in life- the cocoon experiences -or we might not have the strength to go thru the difficulties when they come!

* Are you going thru difficulties, like the caterpillar in the cocoon? Fight the good fight of faith! Struggle against the limitations! Believe God for a breakthrough! (HEALING! FINANCES! VICTORY OVER SIN!)

...Pray that God will release you with more faith & power & blessings, like Joseph, Gideon, & Moses, and Job!

JUST AS A CATERPILLAR WILL BECOME A BUTTERFLY, WE ARE TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST IN ALL OF HIS BEAUTY AND POWER!

LET GOD PREPARE YOU! SPIRITUALLY GROW!

GAIN VICTORY THROUGH THE TRIALS OF LIFE!

CHRIST IN YOU IS THE HOPE OF GLORY!
WE SHALL BE LIKE **HIM!**