

Unit C

Caterpillars

Truths discussed during this unit:

- Caterpillars molt and grow - as we shed sin we grow more like Jesus Christ
- Metamorphosis - we can become new creatures in Christ
- Every part of a butterfly changes - becoming new creatures includes having new eyes and eternal perspective
- Butterflies are patient - sometimes we have to wait upon the Lord

Enjoy your time in the Word!

Lesson 1

This week we are learning about caterpillars and butterflies! One thing we talked about today was molting. Do you remember what molting is? Yes, a caterpillar sheds its skin so that it can grow. A caterpillar's skin will not grow with it, so if the caterpillar wants to grow larger it needs to take off the smaller skin and leave it behind. Today we are going to talk about what we should take off and leave behind so we can grow.

Spending time in scripture

Hebrews 12:1

1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Discussion

Did you understand what this verse was saying? It said that we need to lay aside the sin that we struggle with, and “run with patience the race that is set before us.” Let’s talk about both of these things.

First, what is sin? *Discuss this for a moment, and perhaps provide some age-appropriate examples.*

Yes, and we need to lay aside our sins, or let them go, in the same way a caterpillar takes off its skin and molts. If we do not shed our sin, we struggle to grow just like a caterpillar would struggle to grow if it didn’t shed its skin. Our sins keep us from becoming more like Jesus Christ, but as we repent and change and do better with His help, it is like molting. We let go of those sins and we grow more like Him.

We don’t do this alone. Jesus Christ forgives sin as we repent and seek to follow Him. It is His sacrifice and suffering that makes it possible for sin to be forgiven and for us to be made clean.

Can a caterpillar shed its skin all and once and become a big caterpillar right away? No, it takes time. This is what the second part of

the scripture verse was talking about. Remember? It said, "...let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Caterpillars have to be patient, don't they? They would probably like to become butterflies right away, but it doesn't work like that. They must eat and grow and molt several times before they begin metamorphosis. Most caterpillars molt five times before they can begin changing into a butterfly. We are like this too! Learning to repent and change, and shedding our sin and growing and becoming more like Jesus Christ takes time. We can't do it all at once. We will spend our whole lives trying to grow more like the Lord. We will grow a little and then recognize another sin in our life, and then shed it and repent and then grow again, and then we'll realize there is another sin we struggle with. So we will repent and shed that sin, and grow some more, and then we will do it all over again. We will "eat," or be nourished and fed by scripture, continue to grow, and always need to shed and get rid of more sin.

Every time we repent and let go of another sin, we will grow closer to the Lord Jesus Christ, and He will help us become more like Him. With His help, we can be transformed from caterpillars into butterflies. We can become more than we ever thought possible, or more than we could be on our own,

as we experience the changing power of Jesus Christ.

Bearing testimony

Testify of the joy and beauty of repentance and shedding sin from our lives. Bear witness that slow and gradual change is possible because of Jesus Christ, and helps us become more like Him.

Application through play

Have your child put on several layers of sweaters or jackets. Have fun taking off each layer of clothing and talking together about what sin is being shed. Let go of lying, speaking unkindly, hitting, etc. Do you feel lighter with all of those layers gone? Do we feel lighter when we let go of sin?

Lesson 2

Caterpillars go through an amazing transformation, don't they? They start out as one thing, and then become a completely new thing—a butterfly! Today we are going to talk about how we can transform and become new and different.

Spending time in scripture

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Discussion

Did you hear what this verse said? It said that if we are in Christ, we become a new creature. Old things are gone, and all things become new. When we become followers of Christ, we change. We should be different than we were before. Like a caterpillar that changes into a butterfly, trying to follow Jesus with

our whole hearts should change us into a new creature.

Let's talk about some of the ways that a caterpillar becomes a completely new creature. Think about the way a caterpillar looks—it looks so different from a butterfly, doesn't it? While a caterpillar is in a chrysalis, almost all of its body changes into something new! Its legs change, its eyes change, its mouth changes—and now it can fly! We are going to talk about a few of these changes a little more deeply.

First, let's talk about a caterpillar's mouth. A caterpillar has a chewing mouthpart. It chews and eats leaves and plants. How does a butterfly eat? Yes, it sips nectar with a proboscis. When a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly, its mouth completely changes! It cannot even eat the same food anymore. When we choose to become followers of Christ, our mouth should change too! Let's read a Bible verse about this.

Spending time in scripture

Ephesians 4:29

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying,

that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Discussion

This verse is teaching us to not let anything come out of our mouths that is dishonest or unkind. As disciples of Christ, we should have a different mouth – we should only speak words that lift and bless other people. We should never lie, or use our words to gossip or hurt others. We should use our mouths and words to testify of Christ and share our beliefs with others. We want to be like a butterfly! We want a new, different mouth that follows the teachings of Jesus Christ and speaks of Him.

Can you think of a time when you had good, Christ-like words coming out of your mouth? How did it make you feel to try and use your words in a kind way?

What are some ways you think we could work on what comes out of our mouths?

When caterpillars become butterflies, and their mouths change, what they bring into their bodies also changes. They don't eat leaves anymore - they drink sweet

nectar. As followers of the Lord, we should try to bring sweeter things into our lives and minds. There are a lot of fun shows and movies and books in the world, but we should try and make sure that we are bringing the sweetest and best things into our lives. We should only read and watch things that invite the Holy Spirit, and we should spend time feeding our spirit through reading scripture and praying.

Do you think there is any way we could get better at bringing beautiful, good things into our home? Is there anything we could do to be better at focusing on Jesus Christ?

Caterpillars' mouths change when they become butterflies, and when we are followers of Jesus Christ, our mouths should change too! We need to be careful what comes out of our mouths, and what we bring into our bodies and minds.

Tomorrow we will learn more about how caterpillars change when they become butterflies, and how we can become new creatures in Christ too.

Lesson 3

Do you remember what we talked about yesterday? Yes, becoming a new creature in Christ! Today we are going to finish that discussion. We will be using the same scripture we used yesterday. Let's read it again.

Spending time in scripture

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Discussion

Yesterday we talked about how a caterpillar's mouth changes when it becomes a butterfly. Now let's talk about a few more ways that we can change like caterpillars.

Caterpillars only worry about what *they* need. Caterpillars eat and eat

and grow and molt, but that's pretty much it. They don't do anything that helps anyone else. But butterflies do lots of things for others! They lay eggs to make more butterflies, and they do everything they can to help their babies get a good start in the world. Butterflies also pollinate flowers, which helps the flowers *and* us. Caterpillars worry only about themselves, but after they change into butterflies they do more to help others, and we should be like that too! When we are disciples of Christ, we should not only worry about ourselves - we should try to do things that bless and help and lift other people. If we are really trying to follow Christ, we will not lead selfish lives. We will try to change and transform, and become new creatures in Christ. We will try to become people that serve and sacrifice for others, like the Lord did.

What are some ways you try to serve others? Is there anything you think we can do to improve?

Now we are going to talk about another part of a caterpillar's body that completely changes. When a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, its eyes change! Caterpillars have simple eyes that can see light and dark, but they cannot see clear images or shapes. A butterfly has compound eyes and can see many colors - even more colors than we

can see! Butterflies can also see a special kind of light called ultraviolet light, which we cannot see. Once a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, it is able to see much better and much farther.

As followers of Christ, we can expand, or grow, our vision and what we see. We can see that this world is not our permanent home and we should be living our lives not just to have fun and enjoy ourselves here, but to prepare to live with God. We need to see farther ahead, like butterflies, and open our eyes to the real purpose of life. When we shift our vision, and change our eyes like butterflies, we recognize what is most important in our life and we work hard to do all that Christ has asked so we can live with Him in a state of never ending glory. Caterpillars only see what is in front of them, but we need to be butterflies, we need to see farther than now.

What are some things that feel really important now, but maybe aren't that important eternally?

What can we do to open our eyes and see more like butterflies? (Or, how can we put life in better perspective?)

Striving to be better, together

Discuss ways that you might expand your vision and open your eyes to the importance of eternal things. Is there anything that needs to change in your home? In yourself?

Lesson 4

We have had a lovely week learning about caterpillars and butterflies, haven't we? Today is our last day basing our scripture study on caterpillars and butterflies, and today we will talk about how a butterfly is patient.

Spending time in scripture

Luke 21:19

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

Discussion

This is a short verse, isn't it? This is something that Jesus said to His disciples while He was on the earth. He was speaking to them about the difficulty that would come to the earth before His Second Coming, and was teaching them that patience was an important thing to have.

Butterflies are patient, aren't they? We talked about that earlier this

week. How are butterflies and moths patient? Yes, it takes time to transform from a caterpillar into a butterfly or moth, and during that long waiting period, they need to be patient. What does it mean to be patient? Being patient means you are able to wait or accept problems without getting upset or angry. Butterflies are very patient. They don't get angry or upset about how long it takes them to change inside their chrysalis, do they? They are fine with how long it takes for them to change, and they wait patiently while they transform.

In the same way, we as followers of Christ need to learn to be patient. What kinds of things do we need to be patient about? *(Feel free to let your child lead this discussion. If desired, you could bring in the need to be patient with each other or other family members/siblings.)*

Today we are going to talk about needing to be patient with the Lord and His timing. Jesus Christ loves us so much, doesn't He? But does He always give us exactly what we want right when we ask for it? No, He doesn't, does He? Why do you think that is? Sometimes He knows it is better for us to wait. Are there times that you ask me for things and I tell you that you need to wait? The Lord is the same way. He knows what is best for us, and He is always working for our good. There will be

times in your life when you are praying and asking for something and you will need to be patient. Sometimes the Lord asks us to have faith in His timing, and we have to wait. We will be happier if we can learn to trust the Lord and wait patiently, without getting angry or upset. Let's read a Bible verse that talks about this!

Spending time in scripture

Psalm 130:5

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

Discussion

This verse says that we wait for the Lord and while we wait, we have hope in His word. What does it mean to have hope in His word?

How will the words of Christ comfort us and help us when we are waiting for our prayers to be answered?

There are going to be times in our lives when we will need to wait for the Lord to bless us or answer our prayers. We will need to wait to see His will revealed in our lives. We will be blessed if we can learn to wait patiently, like a butterfly. The Lord will always hear us and answer our prayers, but sometimes it takes time. In these times of waiting, the Lord will transform us and help us become more like Him as we wait with faith and patience.

Bearing testimony

Bear testimony that waiting patiently upon the Lord blesses us and helps refine us. Feel free to share a time in your life when you had to wait upon the Lord's timing. What did this experience teach you? Can you see now that it was better that you were made to wait?

