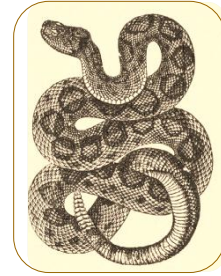


THE NATURE OF RATTLESNAKES

Presented by Mary Lowman



Fairy Tale

A young girl was walking through the woods one day when she almost stepped on a snake. When she saw the snake, she pulled back in horror, but to her amazement, the snake cried out to her, "Oh, I'm so glad you came along. I'm so cold and need a friend. Will you please pick me up and put me under your coat so I can get warm, and will you be my friend?"

In fear, the girl replied, "Oh, no, I can't possibly do that. You're a rattlesnake and you will bite me. I can't pick you up."

"No," the rattlesnake answered, "that's not true. I promise I won't bite you. I really want to be your friend, and after all, am I not a creature of God's, just like you? I'm so cold; please pick me up."

She began to feel sorry for the snake, and sat down to think it over. As she looked at the snake, it became more beautiful to her with its many colors. She noticed its graceful lines and movement, and gradually it began to look harmless to her.

She thought, "Well, he's right after all. God created him. And just because most rattlesnakes bite doesn't mean this one will. It seems like a very nice snake, and shouldn't I be willing to be a friend when someone asks me?"

So she said, "Yes, I will be your friend," and she picked up the snake and put it under her warm coat. Immediately the snake bit her, and the pain and poison flooded her body. She cried out in pain, "Why did you do that? Why did you bite me? You said you wanted to be my friend."

As the snake wiggled away from her, it turned and with a smirk, said, "**Hey, you knew what I was when you picked me up.**"

Lessons from the Fairy Tale

1. Don't talk to rattlesnakes!

When you are tempted, if you avoid the first step in the wrong direction, you will avoid the temptation. Don't open the door to temptation, even a tiny bit. Do whatever you have to do to avoid the first step into temptation.

Proverbs 4:25-27

Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.

Mark 9:43-47

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell.

2. Don't listen to the lies of rattlesnakes!

Satan, the rattlesnake of your soul, is a masterful liar. He knows how to make his lies sound like truth.

John 8:44

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Proverbs 3:21-23

My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble.

3. Don't ignore the laws and principles that are always true about rattlesnakes!

If it looks like a rattlesnake, acts like a rattlesnake, talks like a rattlesnake, you can count on it, it will bite like a rattlesnake, with no respect for persons, no exceptions.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to man but in the end it leads to death.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.



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