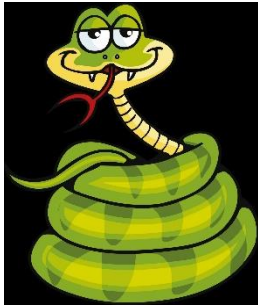


05-10-2024 Lessons From the Berry Patch #3 - Enemies

So, I was in the berry patch yesterday, when a 4' long water moccasin slithered up to me and said "Hey dude, watch out for truck drivers, this place is crawling with them..."



How is it that we have such an uncanny ability to NOT recognize the "enemy?" OK, so those truck drivers were not enemies---they were my friends and coworkers. But, at the minute, they were distractions to my main goal, which was to get a bucket of berries before the sun went down. If I hadn't had to stop and talk to eight different truck drivers, I would have had an extra quart of berries!

We seem to let spiritual "enemies" sneak up on us and get access to our lives without even noticing them. A half-truth told, an unloving attitude displayed... We relish the latest gossip, and though we would never repeat such things, we replay it in our minds and sit in judgment of others based on things we have heard that may be completely untrue.

How many enemies will I let into the core of my being today? How will my defenses be weakened by those spies that have crept in while I was not on the alert?

In 1 Peter 5:8-9, the Bible says it this way:

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith.^{NLT}

Did you get that? Devour... Not nip or scratch, not nibble on, but devour.

Lord, please help us to recognize the enemy in all areas of our lives. Jesus, You warned us that enemies come as “wolves in sheep’s clothing.” They seem harmless enough at first glance, but they can lead us down destructive paths if we don’t recognize them in time.

Lord, please make us ultra-sensitive to anything that has the slightest scent of unrighteousness. Give us strength to overcome temptation. Love others through us... And then do the mighty work of keeping us humble. It is but a short leap from righteousness to self-righteousness.

Lord, please keep us safe from our enemies in the Berry Patch.

We ask it in Jesus’ Name,

Amen