

Snakes Alive!

Contributed by Sally Bair
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By the time I remembered to bring in my standing-bear welcome sign, the bottom had become a mess of leaves, snow and ice. As it thawed, a snake slithered along the floor heading for cover. Imagine my surprise!

I like snakes, always happy to see one in my garden. They help keep it free of bugs and other pests. The snake has developed a bad reputation, however, ever since its appearance in the Garden of Eden. The bad rep of poisonous snakes is well-deserved, though they do help keep our environment free of unwanted critters.

Throughout history, the snake has been perceived as deceitful, dangerous, and destructive. It's lightning-fast in striking. It hides in corners and under cover of shadows. Its stealth causes prey to be unaware of its presence until it's too late.

The Bible portrays the snake as the devil. He, too, is deceitful, dangerous and destructive. He hides in the corners and shadows of our mind, ready to strike when we're unaware. Our mind is the very garden of Satan. It's our mind that opens just a crack, just enough for him to tell us that we're worthless … or we're too good for those people … or we don't need God because we can solve our own problems. It's our mind that opens to the desire for that next drink … that expensive doodad … that illicit sexual encounter.

God knows how powerful our mind-thoughts can be. That's why He has provided a way out — an escape from the devil's intent to imprison us with thoughts of wrongdoing. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7) A sound mind possesses self-control. When we realize ours is on the wrong track, we need to ask for God's power and love to give us self-control against wrong thoughts, wrong words or wrongdoing. Paul also speaks of God's “armor” in Ephesians 6:10-18. “Finally … be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” You will find much more help in the verses that follow. In fact, it's a good passage to recite every morning.

Lord, we don't want snakes to dwell in the shadows of our minds. We ask for the truth and love of Jesus to free us from deceitful, dangerous, and destructive thoughts. In His name we pray, amen.

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