

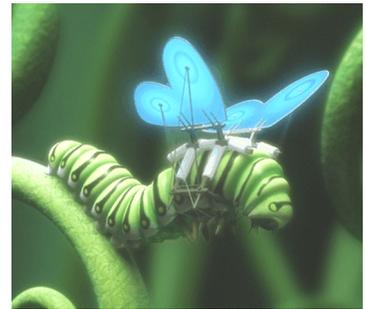
Renewal Ministries of Colorado Springs



Butterflies have captured the imaginations of children and adults for generations. They are illusive, graceful, beautiful, and free. Novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne expressed it well, "Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

Life is seldom full of butterflies. In reality, there are times when we face conflict, reproach and the ridicule of others. It is painful and detrimental to our self-esteem. Personal trauma can eat away at our confidence and self-respect leaving us with false impressions of ourselves and others, lasting for decades. The Psalmist experienced this emotional struggle. "But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people." (Psalm 22:6 NIV) Have you ever been there? In these distressing seasons of life, there is nothing in a caterpillar that says it is going to be a butterfly. I am a worm, I deserve to be a worm, and I will always be a worm! The hope of meaningful change is fading as the light of day is swallowed up by the darkness of night.

How do we break free from this stranglehold? How do we rebuild a healthy self-esteem? At the risk of sounding hyper-spiritual or simplistic, I submit the following for your consideration. Richard Bach wrote, "What the caterpillar calls the end of the world the master calls a butterfly." When all seems lost, we must remind ourselves that our hope is in the Lord and the transforming truth of His Word. The Apostle Paul wrote "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2) The Greek word for "transformed" is the root for the English word metamorphosis. The battle for establishing or regaining a healthy self-esteem is rooted in our thought process. An unknown author put it this way, "How does one become a butterfly?" she asked. "You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar."



Desire must be rekindled with hope, reinforced by faith, which is grounded in truth. (Romans 10:17) To shed the caterpillar mentality we must refuse to victimize our self worth repeatedly by dwelling on the past. Secondly, we must recognize that those caterpillar seasons of life do not accurately portray the truth of who we are. Our self-esteem must be rooted in the certainty that we are people of worth and value, precious and loved by God. As the butterfly struggles to get free from the restrictions of its cocoon, so we too will emerge with renewed life. This is God's promise! "We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose." Romans 8:28 (AMP) "None of this fazes us because Jesus loves us." Romans 8:37 (The Message)

My prayer is that God grant us all the faith to embrace His desired metamorphosis for our lives enabling us to rise in the beauty, grace, and freedom of healthy renewed self-esteem.

© 2008 George Stahnke