



Nuggets 33: A Serpent Tale

Carl Ketcherside told this story to illustrate a point: A boy was walking down a dusty country road. A snake slithered onto the road from the weeds on one side. At the same time another snake slithered from the weeds on the opposite side. The two snakes met in the center of the road. One snake attacked the other, grabbing its tail in its mouth and starting to swallow it. The other snake, not to be outdone, grabbed its attacker's tail in its mouth and also started swallowing. Each snake continued to swallow the other until both disappeared!

I don't think that can literally happen, but then I have never understood why it couldn't. It does happen in families and churches who quarrel continually. Paul warned the Galatian churches, "If you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!"*

A hateful, fault-finding atmosphere not only destroys relationships; it destroys the combatants spiritually. We do not have to go on living that way. Christ has taught us ways to break the cycle and find peace. He has also offered us his Spirit to soften our hearts and enable us to love and forgive. Yet people often cherish and enjoy resentment too much to give it up. They have only one earthly life to live and their bitterness ruins it. If we cherish hatred here, we will also get to spend eternity in a place full of hatred.

*Galatians 5:15, New King James Version. See also Matthew 18:15-17; 5:23,24; 6:12-15; 7:1-5; Ephesians 4:26,27,32; 5:1,2, 21; Galatians 5:19-23; 6:1,2; James 2:13

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