

I guess we should consider ourselves fortunate; in the 10+ years we have lived in North Carolina, my wife and I have only seen a couple of snakes. I don't like snakes. Few people do. Besides the danger that a poisonous snake presents, snakes are just plain creepy to me.

Walking through some tall grass on the way to church this morning, I was aware that there could certainly be a snake or two lurking in the weeds. That's the type of area that snakes tend to prefer - an area where they can remain hidden from view. I was glad when I finally got through the tall grass without seeing a snake!

When you think about it, it's perfectly natural that we as humans should feel a little uneasy around snakes. After all, it was the form of a snake that Satan chose when he tempted our forebears Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. And whenever we see a snake slithering we are reminded that they slither that way because God made it so after the fall into sin. Not surprising, then, that humans just naturally seem to not like snakes. We pay attention to where they might live and try to avoid them.

There are some "snakes," however, that we may not always be aware of. The apostle Paul warned the Corinthian congregation about them with these words: "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (II Corinthians 11:3).

Paul was inspired by the Spirit to warn his fellow believers against anyone who would lead them to compromise their faith in Christ. These snakes like to remain hidden from view, for the most part, but their message is all around us. "All roads lead to heaven." "God wouldn't really say or mean THAT." "Jesus wouldn't judge other people."

We will want to remember that all these snakes in the grass have the ancient serpent Satan as their father. Just as he is a liar, so they are liars. The truth of Scripture is clear: faith in Jesus as Savior is the ONLY way. But the lies of the snakes can sound so appealing, as Satan's lies appealed to Adam and Eve. How are we to really know what's true and what is a lie of Satan and his snakes?

Thankfully, God has made it easy for us. He has given us an absolute standard to measure any human thought or societal norm: his holy Word. If it agrees with Bible teaching, it's godly; if it's at odds with Scripture, it's of the devil. And not only has God made it easy FOR us, he's made it easy ON us: he sent his Son to defeat the original "snake in the grass" for us by crushing his head. He did just that by dying for our sins and removing any claim Satan ever had on us.

There is a product that you can buy at Lowe's called "Snake-B-Gon." Just as you'd suspect, it repels snakes. They hate the stuff. Keep the snakes away from your soul by using that which God gives you: his perfect Word, which tells you how all of these snakes have already been defeated by your Savior Jesus.

Prayer: Lord God, I cannot fight Satan on my own; he is too strong and too cunning for me. Thanks be to you that you sent your Son to defeat him for me. Shelter me from the lies that Satan and his allies in the world and our own sinful natures would tell me about you. Send the Holy Spirit to work through the Word to strengthen my faith in you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

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