

Lessons from Nature

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A couple of nights ago, we were driving down a dirt road and saw a doe and a fawn standing in the road. We stopped to see what they would do. They wanted to go into a field but there was a fence in the way. The doe could easily jump over the fence and almost did, but stopped and looked back at the fawn and back at the fence again. This went on for a couple of minutes. It seemed that the mother knew her fawn couldn't jump over the tall fence, but did not want to leave her behind. Finally she found and went through a small hole in the fence, and her fawn followed.

For some reason this made me think of how we are told in Matthew 7:13-14 that we are to enter into life through the strait and narrow way.

I saw four important lessons:

1. The doe could have run down the road or the other way and would have lost the safety and food that the field provided. She also would have

lost the fellowship of the other deer.

2. She could have jumped the fence and lost part of her family. The fawn would have probably run down beside the fence into the dangers of the nearby highway.

3. The doe only entered through the "strait and narrow way" after she found the hole. Even after she found it, she didn't walk or run through it, she crawled through it! It reminded me of the importance of being humble. The doe went in a way the fawn could follow. She didn't find the hole right away. It took some searching.

4. When we look at a hole this small as a gateway into a place of security and where we and our families are fed, this hole in the fence which can only be found by someone with humility is like a filter. This filter will keep others out that may harm us.

God will NOT ALLOW ungodliness into the Kingdom of Heaven. He will not allow them to find the entrance!

Even if they could find it, ungodliness will not humble itself enough to enter. The proud, standing fully upright, with head held pridefully high, cannot enter the strait and narrow way.

The Kingdom of Heaven is a place where God sits down and dwells with His obedient children. Matthew 18: 1-4 tells us that Jesus told His apostles, "except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble themselves as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven."

The kingdom of Heaven is a place of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17). It is a place of protection! We can be sure of that because of the kind of people God allows inside.

Isn't it amazing how God shows us His hand in nature, and teaches us things that harmonize so beautifully with His Holy word?!

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United In The Truth

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1). One of the greatest blessings we have as The Church is for the body to be functioning in harmony under the leadership of our Head, Jesus Christ. It is rare to see a body of people united in the truth! Most Churches have departed from truth in order to have unity. There are many pastors and Churches today who would rather offend God than to offend people. They are willing to ignore parts of God’s word rather than to declare the whole counsel of God. It is a beautiful bride that adorns herself with the doctrine of God, walking in the truth, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints. In order for this to continue, there must always be at least three necessary ingredients: love, forgiveness, and all the members trying to follow the word of God.

LOVE! The desire of the Church must be for “brotherly love” to continue (Hebrews 12:1). Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). Manifesting love one to another is far more than simply saying, “I love you.” We are taught that we are NOT to just love in word or in tongue, “but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18). If we are not loving the brethren, then we are not a true Christian. “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also” (1 John 4:20-21).

FORGIVE! Even with everyone in the Church trying to love one another,

occasionally somebody is going to be offended. If Satan has his way, the offended brother will talk with other people, but will never talk with the person that offended him. What does Jesus say a child of God should do when he is offended by a brother in Christ? “Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” (Matthew 18:15). “Jesus also said, “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23-24). We should never go to bed mad at anyone in our house, or anyone else. “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath!” (Ephesians 4:26). We are to communicate the problem with the offender or offended person, forgive one another, and be reconciled! (Ephesians 4:31-32; Matthew 18:21-35).

FOLLOW THE WORD OF GOD! The Bible should be our only rule of faith and practice. Whatever we believe must be based on a “Thus saith the Lord!” Church doctrine, Church membership, Church discipline, Church government, Church worship, Church practices and actions, qualifications for pastors and deacons, and everything else pertaining to the Church and family must be based on the word of God. Otherwise, the Church will be divided and the family will be divided. “A house divided against itself shall not stand” (Matthew 12:25).

As a young teenager, I often prayed for God’s people to be united. Unity and harmony, oneness, was very im-

portant to me. However, as I grew older, I began to understand that unity without the truth is of the devil. Satan desires that we seek unity at the cost of the truth. He desires that we compromise on truth in order to have unity. That is NOT God’s way. We must be united in the truth if we are going to maintain unity with God and unity with each other. The early Church understood this truth, as they “continued in the apostle’s doctrine” (Acts 2:42). The Apostle Paul warned that we are not to tolerate false doctrine or false teachers! He said, “A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject” (Titus 3:10). He also said in 1 Timothy 3:14-15, “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. When we sacrifice or compromise on truth in order to keep unity, we cease to be His Church! By definition, the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. Jesus said, “They that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Matthew 7:24-25).

May God help us to love, to forgive, and to be united in the truth!

W.M.M.



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