



BEWARE!

John was a farmer. One hot day, he was disking—going back and forth across the field in his big tractor, turning over the soil so that it would be loose and fine and ready for planting.

That day, at break time, John went over to watch his farming partner digging a ditch with a backhoe. The big machine dug into the ground, scooping out huge piles of soil. As John watched, he spotted a couple of snakes. **He was curious to find out what kind of snakes they were, so he picked them up and put them inside the toolbox on his tractor.** Then he went back to work.

John kept working for several hours. Meanwhile, unknown to him, inside the closed tool box, which was near to the tractor's warm, noisy engine,

the snakes were becoming *extremely* unhappy.

At supper time, John parked his tractor in the shop. Then he called to the other workers to come see the snakes he had caught. As he lifted the lid of the toolbox, immediately the snakes shot up out of the box, hissing angrily. John jumped down from the tractor, his heart beating wildly. He knew to get away as quickly as possible from snakes that were so angry!

Children, what would you think of someone playing with a dangerous snake? I'm sure you would say that is *not* a smart thing to do, but that **it is smart to stay as far away from dangerous snakes as you can!** The Bible teaches us that Satan is dangerous, and it calls him a serpent, which is a snake (Revelation 12:9). Just as it isn't smart to play with a dangerous snake, it isn't smart to play around with sin, which Satan wants you to do and tries

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Messages
of God's Love

“Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”
Psalm 34:14



A Verse to Memorize

to get you to do. If you think that you can “try out” sin just a little bit, to see what it is like, you will quickly find that it is far too powerful and dangerous for you. God’s Word, the Bible, always teaches us to “*depart from evil*” (Proverbs 3:7), not to play around with it. It makes this even more clear in Proverbs 4:14-15, where it teaches us to do everything we can to stay away from evil—to “enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. **Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.**”

John found out that one of the snakes he had caught was a very

dangerous and poisonous water moccasin! He and his friends killed the snake, and they were thankful that none of them had been bitten by it.

All of us want to have a happy life. The Bible tells us in Psalm 34:12-14 that if we want a happy life, we should first “depart from evil.” Then it tells us positive things we can do. **“Do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”** God doesn’t leave us without knowing how to spend our time, and how to spend it very happily! There are good things He has planned for us to do. And there are ways even for children to seek peace and do things that help bring peace. One of those ways is to get along with your brothers and sisters if you have any. Another way is to share the good news about salvation through the Lord Jesus with your friends.

JOY

In our last story, we talked about how we can spend our time happily. On the lines below, list some ways you can be sure you will have a joyful life, found in Psalm 34:11-15. Then pick one or two of them and ask the Lord to help you to practice them this week.



THE BEST SECRET

Gretchen was eight years old. She was the daughter of a printer who was printing the German Bible translated by the famous Christian named Martin Luther. She spent a lot of time in the shop and was beginning to learn to read.

One day while in the shop, she picked up a little piece of paper which had these words on it: "For God so loved the world, that He gave..." These were the only words on the paper, but they were happy words to her. She had been taught that God was a great and fearful judge. This thought scared her. But here on this paper it said that **"God so loved the world, that He gave..."** What a wonderful thing! She had never heard anything like that before. To think that God loved the world was something quite new to her. She had only thought of Him as being very angry with the people of this world and of wanting to judge them and send them to hell.

She tucked the piece of paper in her dress, and during the days that followed she read it again and again. "God so loved the world, that He gave..." She wondered what it was that He

gave. She didn't realize it, but just the thought that God *loved* changed her whole life.

One day her mother said to her, "Gretchen, what has happened to you? **What makes you so happy, child? You are so happy and cheerful lately.**"

Gretchen took out her little piece of paper and showed it to her mother. "It's the words on this scrap of paper that have made me so happy," she said.

Her mother read it and then said to Gretchen, "I don't understand. Gave what? What did God give? Where did you get this scrap of paper?"

"It's from God's book," explained Gretchen.

"I still don't understand," said her mother. "I don't see how you can be so happy with what's written on that paper. You don't know what God gave."

"Oh, Mother," said Gretchen, her face filled with joy even more than before. "I don't know what He gave, but if God so loved the world that He gave *anything*, I will never be afraid of Him again!"

Gretchen had discovered the most important "secret" there is, although she only knew about half of the story. I hope she soon learned to know what we know: that it was His Son that He gave. God *so loved* that He gave His only Son, whom He loved very much, to take the punishment for all our sins. This is the way God loves *you*. Does it make you glad?

Here is the whole verse that Gretchen only saw part of: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

What Happens When We Eat?

Part 1

“He [satisfies] the longing soul, and [fills] the hungry soul with goodness.” Psalm 107:9

The body requires essential elements to keep it alive. Food, which comes through the basic elements of sunshine, rain and soil, is the only source of sustaining life (together with water) and God has given the body an ability to take the food we eat and change it into a usable form.

All food, to do us good, must find its way into our bloodstream, which then carries it to all the cells in our bodies. (You have more than 30 trillion of these cells.) But blood cannot carry and use large particles of food, so the all-wise Creator has provided a means of breaking food

down into a liquid form which has microscopic particles. For this job He has given us a very efficient *digestive system*. Let's look at the first part of it.

When food is not already liquid, it must become liquid, and this starts with the action of our *teeth*, especially designed to cut, tear and grind all solid food that comes into our mouths. The chewing process not only grinds the food into small particles, but it also mixes in special juices (called *saliva*) from the mouth. The *tongue* helps in this mixing process by keeping the food from being swallowed too quickly and by mov-

ing the food around and bringing it in contact with the teeth again and again. The tongue also senses the texture and taste of the food so that we can enjoy what we eat.

Chewing, with food broken up into very small bits and mixed with saliva, represents the first stage of the digestive system. At this stage, chemicals in the saliva called *enzymes* have already started to break down the starches in our food to simple sugars which the blood can use. It has also prepared the food for the next stage of digestion which takes place in the stomach.

If man were to try to make a system to digest food, he would need complicated machinery, chemicals and acids, but still could never do anywhere near the job carried on by our wonderful bodies, designed with utmost wisdom by God—another evidence of the wonders of His creation.

Knowing these amazing facts, we should be careful about the food we eat. Still, how much

more should we be careful about what

we feed our minds and hearts. Jesus said, “My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. . . . I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst” (John 6:32-33,35). May God give each of us a fresh appetite for the One who is the true bread from heaven!

(to be continued)

Did You Know?

The human body has more than 30 trillion cells.

