

# FLY

Genesis 1:20

“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” ~ Isaiah 40:31

Nothing, I think, can frustrate one's time, indoors or out, like the common fly. In all of its varieties, the fly worries, attacks, infects, bothers.

Flies were one of the plagues sent on the nation of Egypt when Moses was getting ready to lead his people Israel out of bondage. Flies have been around since the beginning of creation. And they are still here.

The common housefly is so small, but can distract us from what we are doing with just a flyby, or landing where we would rather it not. I think it is a test of patience, for they bother some, others not so much. They are very quick, but the inventor of the flyswatter had a good idea.

We all need more patience, and perhaps we can learn it from the common fly. Perhaps not, but God can give us patience as a gift from heaven.

The horsefly must be sent from hell. It is huge, deadly, fast, and persistent. In the late summer, they can fly as fast as a car, hold to the windshield up to sixty miles per hour, and bite with a painful bite. Jeremiah compared a conquering and evil nation coming to attack Israel to a horsefly. "Egypt is a pretty heifer," says the Bible. "But a horsefly is coming from the north--it is coming!" Jeremiah 46:20

Somewhat like the devil, the horsefly can interrupt the most peaceful moment. Its warning buzz can come out of nowhere, and before you know it, you are a victim. I pray for the horses, and know they are thankful for their long tails to swat these sometimes huge examples of the fly family.

When we were in West Virginia this year on a mission trip, we discovered the biting fly down by the river. Rather, they discovered us! About the size of the common housefly, the only difference seemed to be that they would painfully bite bare arms or legs. No amount or brand of bug repellent seemed to work.

Thankfully they are not everywhere, but somehow we were able to get our work done.

Two wonderful examples of fly, not in that family, thankfully, are the dragonfly and the butterfly. They come in many colors and sizes, and elicit wonder and joy from those who see them. The dragonfly with its multiple sets of wings and many colors can fly slowly, hover, and fly quickly. The butterfly seems to fly more slowly, the more to admire its grace and beauty.

If we stretch the word “fly” toward other facets of its meaning, can indeed give thanks for it. We can give thanks for this life on earth, whatever its length. Eventually as the Psalmist puts it, we shall fly away, and the Christian aims to fly toward heaven. “The days of our years [are] threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength [they be] fourscore years, yet [is] their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” ~ Psalms 90:10

Some said the legendary basketball player Michael Jordan could fly. He could take off from well beyond the foul line, hang in the air for it seemed like minutes, and effortlessly drop the ball through the net. He said, “We all fly. Once you leave the ground, you fly. Some people fly longer than others.” Michael Jordan

We might do well to try flying in the Christian faith. Sometimes we stay too close to the ground, to the human, ordinary, sinful way of doing things. If we can see things the way God sees them, as he encourages us to find peace when others cannot, to see a way forward when the world offers none, and to rise to new ways of thinking which come from heaven, we will be flying.

We can find creativity in the way we arrange our schedules, our waking and sleeping times. Jerome Dickey says creativity is hard to describe. “It's impossible,” he says, “to explain creativity. It's like asking a bird, 'How do you fly?' You just do.”

Creativity is one of the lost gifts of the church. God gives us the ability to fly above the ordinary. Insanity, it has been said, is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results. We must discover new ways of doing things, grounded in the history of what God has been doing for centuries.

And finally, we must embrace discipline in a creative way. July Andrews, the flying nanny from Mary Poppins fame, says, “Some people regard discipline as a chore. For me, it is a kind of order that sets me free to fly.”

So, fly. On wings like eagles. With God.