



# The Serpent of Sin

I use the expression "the serpent of sin" because God called the devil a serpent, and the devil is the father of sin. Then we must conclude that sin belongs to the devil's family and has the characteristics of the serpent.

I am qualified to write on this subject because I have been bitten by the serpent of sin. I have also had the remedy applied, and I can recommend the remedy as being 100 percent efficient.

Sin charms. It has the same characteristics as a serpent. We are told of how a serpent charms a bird until it, in confusion, flies into the serpent's mouth. Sin charms. The gambler, charmed by the serpent of sin, will sit for hours at a time, forgetful of home, of business, hardly conscious of his surroundings—losing money. Why does he not leave the game? He is charmed by it. When away from the card game he promises his faithful wife that he will reform, but he seldom does. He is charmed by cards.

Why do people like to dance? Because the dance charms by its appeal to sexual instincts. In the days of King Herod at the celebration of his birthday, there was dancing. The daughter of Herod's wife, a dancing girl, light of feet, light of head, light of heart, danced as she had never danced before. While she danced, the king was charmed. The same serpent that charmed the king managed to strike off the head of John the Baptist. The very fact that the dance cost the head of that forerunner of Christ should put a ban on dancing so far as the Christian is concerned.

The reason why so many people are indulging in sin is that they are charmed by the serpent of sin. Some of the charms are drinking, card playing, dancing, petting, and smoking. Some people might think that these are little things, but an Indian once said about snakes, "No little, no big—all snakes."

The fact that people do things which are repulsive to all right-thinking people shows the charm of sin. Many girls who today are drinking, petting, and smoking would, a few months before, have been disgusted at the idea. But now they are charmed to

such an extent that they seem to enjoy the kind of life they are living.

When the literal serpent has one charmed, it bides its time. It will not stop at charming but will crush or strike. Some serpents crush. The black snake of the South and some snakes of the jungles kill their prey by crushing. It has been said that a serpent can charm and crush at the same time. When a boy, I heard one of our neighbors tell of watching a black snake charming a bird while coiled around and crushing the life from a rabbit. Whether or not this is true of a snake, it is certainly true that the serpent of sin can charm one person and crush the heart of another at the same time.

Take, for example, a young man who has been reared in a Christian home. Through much sacrifice the parents have made it possible for him to obtain an education. They have great hope for his future and look to him for comfort in their declining years. He has always been an obedient boy. But a change comes over him; he becomes disobedient and begins to go into forbidden paths. He has never acted like this before. Why does he now disregard his parents' advice and go with the wrong crowd? It is because he is charmed by the serpent of sin. The same serpent that has him charmed is at the same time crushing the comfort out of the father's and mother's hearts. Thus the serpent charms and crushes at the same time.

The serpent of sin crushes many a home. In a certain home all has been peaceful—a contented husband, a happy wife. Both have been faithful to their marriage vows. Then while at his work the husband is charmed by the sin of flirtation. While so charmed he neglects home and soon begins going out with other women, and the same serpent that has him charmed is crushing the home.

A young lady from a good home goes to the city and in the course of time begins keeping company with a fast young man, and like thousands of young ladies in this age, she allows him privileges that no young lady should allow outside of wedlock. She had been taught differently; her better judgment warns her. Why does she permit this? Because she is charmed by the serpent of sin. Perhaps in a short time this couple is married. From outward appearances it seemed to turn out all right. But does the marriage last? Her

happiness at first is complete. But one day in a fit of anger her husband speaks cruel words in regard to her past conduct with him, and the serpent of sin that charmed her before their marriage and caused her to do wrong now coils itself and crushes all the joy out of her heart and destroys their home.

The safeguard for the young lady is that old-fashioned attitude of "hands off." For the serpent of sin will charm the young lady, unless she is on guard, and will crush the virtue from her life and ruin that pure character which God has placed in her keeping.

A young man is often charmed by the sin of adultery. Later he reforms. The years pass by and he meets the girl of his choice and they are married. The young lady had kept herself pure and has no idea but that the young man is of good character. Later a baby comes into the home. Their happiness knows no bounds, but alas, the child is blind or otherwise afflicted. The same serpent that charmed the young man and caused him to sell his child's birthright to a normal body for a few fleeting moments in sin crushed all his plans for the future of his child.

The story is told of a happening in a theater in London. The stage was set to represent a jungle scene. A man dressed as a Hindu came out on the stage. With a motion of his hand, a large serpent crawled out from the scenery and coiled himself around the Hindu. This scene was repeated for several days. At the last scheduled performance the serpent at the bidding of the Hindu, completely enfolded the man in its coils and lifted its head on a level with the man's eyes. Suddenly there was the crushing of bones. A cry of horror came from the audience as they realized the tragedy that was taking place. The rest of the story is this: The man had captured the snake when it was very small and thought he was its master, but the serpent had conquered at the last, proving himself never mastered, but only biding his time. It is so with the serpent of sin. You may take him into your bosom when he is small. You may pet him and think you are his master, but in the end he will crush you.

The serpent strikes; so does the serpent of sin. The serpent is coiled, ready to strike. It strikes unexpectedly, it strikes hard, and its fangs contain poison. According to a newspaper report in North Carolina, a hunter went out hunting with three dogs. The dogs ran upon a coiled copperhead snake. The snake struck once, twice, three times in rapid succession. The three dogs received enough poison into their systems to kill them before they could be taken out of the woods. In the same way the serpent of sin strikes unexpectedly,

strikes hard, and is poison to the soul.

The literal serpent kills; so does the serpent of sin. Sometimes the bite of a poisonous snake does not kill outright. Sometimes a dog bitten by a poisonous snake will seem to recover, and the wound will heal. But a few years later at the place of the bite a sore will appear, which terminates in the death of the dog. So it is with the serpent bite of sin. Some seem to recover, but eventually the serpent bite of sin will prove fatal.

The great danger from snake bites is that of dying before one can receive treatment from a doctor. So with the sinner bitten by the serpent of sin. The grave danger is of dying before the remedy is applied—being so far away on the mountain of sin.

What is the remedy for the serpent bite of sin? When the children of Israel were bitten by the fiery serpents, God commanded Moses to lift up a brazen serpent, and all the victims of the bite of the fiery serpents who looked upon the brazen serpent was healed. This serpent was a type of Christ being lifted up on the Cross. And all who have been bitten by the serpent of sin who will look to him will be healed. For "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin." "If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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**Printed by:**

**Church of God, God's Acres  
675 N. Cedar Street  
Newark, OH 43055**

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