



## Butterflies

I would like to tell you a butterfly story. It's about a young teacher and a class of eager third graders. One day the children found a cocoon on the branch of a tree outside their classroom. They asked the teacher if they could take it inside to study it and watch the butterfly emerge. Each day they watched the cocoon for signs of life. After several weeks, one of the children noticed a small hole in the cocoon. The hole became larger. Soon they could see the head of the creature inside. The children became very excited. They saw the creature struggling to free itself and they wanted to help. So did the teacher. Very carefully she cut away the gray flaky material and soon the butterfly was free. But something was wrong. The butterfly's wings were misshapen and could not fly.

The children went home thinking that when they returned the next day the butterfly would look more like a butterfly. It would be beautiful and it would fly. Instead, when they got to their classroom, they found the creature dead in the bottom of the cage. The teacher explained that butterflies, if they are not fully formed, must struggle out of their cocoons. There is a fluid in their bodies, she explained, that must get into the tiny tubes that make up the wings. The only way for the fluid to get into the tubes is for the creature to struggle. Struggling to get through the small hole in the end of the cocoon distributes the fluid to the wings which make it possible for the butterfly to fly.

The teacher was very upset. Through an act of what she and the children thought was love and kindness, they had actually prevented the butterfly from becoming the beautiful creature God had created it to be. The butterfly was meant to struggle. It could not reach its full potential any other way.