



Discovery Afternoon

“One foot, then another, then another,” a child described what he was seeing while looking at a bug closely, using a magnifying glass.

“Oh, look at all those neat patterns!” said another, who was examining the wings of a butterfly.

It was “Discovery Afternoon” and Discovery Bear had a team of children in his science room to get a close look at bugs and creatures of the small kind.

“Discovery Bear, why does the ant like to live in the dirt? Many times we don’t even know they are there—until some food is nearby.”

Discovery Bear liked answering the interesting questions he was asked—it was a great way to learn and to be able to teach.

“I used to wonder that myself, so I did a bit of studying to find out just what their task in nature was. See, each part of nature—the bugs, the air and sun and water, the larger animals, the soil and plants, everything, all add to and all need each other.

“If it weren’t for the ants, doing their soil mixing job while digging about, it would be harder for plants to grow and spread their roots down.

“Also, one of their jobs is to clean things up—and so they can take food they clean up from on the surface of the ground, down inside the ground, and out of the way. Things are cleaner then, aren’t they?”

The next question came,

“Why don’t caterpillars just stay the way they are. Why do they have to change and get wings?”

Discovery Bear replied, “Well, not every wiggling creeping thing does grow wings—like worms in the soil, for example, they just stay wiggling, soft, creatures. But, I think pretty winged creatures were made for a purpose—just like every thing you see outside—to teach us something.

“Can you think of one thing you have learned from the life cycle of a butterfly?”

The children started giving some thoughts:

--That just because you are one way, you don't have to think you'll always be that way. God can help to change you.

--That even if it seems someone has died and passed away, and is in a coffin, kind of like the butterfly is all wrapped up, that they can live and fly, in Heaven, all beautiful and free.

--That if you eat and eat lots, you'll get big and fat like a fat caterpillar.

--That even small things, tiny things, like the little tiny eggs of the butterfly, have a plan to them; something that we don't have to make happen. Something we can just relax and watch happen. Something the creator invented.

--It shows us how clever the Creator of nature is, because we can't fully understand how it all happens. There is lots more for us to discover.

"Those are all good and interesting things," Discovery Bear answered, after hearing all that was said.

“And I think butterflies are something that little girls must like—a flower that can fly, with wings as delicate as the petals of a rose.

“There are so many big and strong creatures, like boys maybe enjoy learning about; or creatures that help the men do their work on the farm. But maybe it’s nice to have variety, something for the little delicate girls to admire and enjoy.

“Have you ever had a butterfly land on you? It’s pretty rare. You’d have to be real still.

“They like to feel safe, and usually won’t come too near if there is a big ruckus and commotions going on. So maybe they help little ones to learn to be calm and peaceful and quiet, then they get to see something really nice fluttering nearby.

“Of course they do other jobs in nature too, and have their part to make things work—like eating weeds, and pollinating flowers and so forth. There is so much to say about them, we could go on for quite a while, couldn’t we?”

The children nodded.

“Now it’s time for us to let these little creatures back outside. Who remembers where they each like to be?”

Discovery Bear asked, and the children each took a jar or container with a creature in it, and brought it back to where these ones would like to be outside.

“Thank you for joining me for ‘Discovery Afternoon’! It was a pleasure having you here. Next week we’re going to learn about all kinds of rocks and minerals, jewels and diamonds. Would you like that?”

“Yes!” they all chorused.

“Good, then you, together with your parents, can meet me at the quarry. It’ll be a little hike away, but we’ll have a great time. And remember to bring lots of drinking water, a hat, and a container for some special rock samples. Have a good evening!” Discovery Bear said.

“Good-bye! Thank you so much,” the children and parents said, while they left.

Discovery Bear then sat down with a big mug of blended fruits and veggies on the back porch to watch the sunset. This was one of his favourite times of day.

No two days were quite the same. Each day the sky was slightly different than the day before. Just like each day, itself was different.

There was always something new to discover and learn more about. What would tomorrow hold? He'd have to wait until then to find out.

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