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***More Reflections on Caterpillars and Butterflies
from Carol***

Watching caterpillars go through their cycles of eating, resting, shedding, and then beginning again helps me recognize the importance of taking time for contemplation and rest so I have energy for the letting go processes that are good for me. Sometimes as I begin watching them hang in their J and work on shedding their skin to prepare for their next stage, I feel impatient and want them to hurry along so I can see them become a chrysalis. They teach me to be patient as life processes unfold in due time.

When I see a chrysalis hang silently for a week or more, it looks like nothing is going on, but I know that this is a busy time as the caterpillar metamorphosizes to prepare for butterfly-hood. Although I can't see any differences, I know that it is totally changing its physical characteristics and developing its butterfly body and wings. I imagine that it must be thinking a lot about the challenge of going out in the world and being vulnerable, maybe even a little scared or reluctant. On the other hand, I figure that it is excited about its future as it will fly, find friends and mates, and pollinate flowers. I think about the spiritual growth I try to do inside where nobody sees it and how I prepare to be out in the world doing good deeds and relating to others.

When I watch a butterfly slowly emerge and shed its thin outer shell, I think about its courage to graduate from the ground to the air and fulfill its purpose as a butterfly. It has done a lot of changing and now it is ready for a new phase of life. It knows that people will smile and feel happy when they see it and they will have good thoughts. It has jobs to do to keep our earth healthy and to keep the life cycles going. I think about how I can be out in the world spreading kindness. I think about the disciples as Jesus sent them out to spread God's word by demonstrating how to LOVE EVERYONE – NO EXCEPTIONS!