

"I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).

The Mouse Trap

We received this story by email from a friend (click [here](#) to skip to Paul's answer):

Subject: A Great Little Story

Just a little something to keep in mind...

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package.

"What food might this contain?" The mouse wondered - he was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow and said "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The cow said, "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose."

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house -- like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught.

The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient.

But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig.

The farmer's wife did not get well; she died. So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember -- when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

We're in this **TOGETHER!!!**

Paul's response:

As with other sappy stories, this one tries to present a beneficial lesson, which it may succeed in doing when the moral is applied with the right motive and wisdom. We *are* all connected. By shutting our ears selfishly to the plight of others or turning a blind eye to the danger facing our fellow man, we surely bring evil onto ourselves. If you take that simple message away from this little story, excellent! We are pleased to leave well enough alone, and you can stop reading now.

For any who feel unsettled by this story because of its unstable premises, however, we will show you how its message is confounded by absurdities, and you can see the better way of God. May the simple be made wise to walk in what is right toward his Maker and fellow man.

At the end, I share a well-known short poem, which more directly and successfully conveys the moral of the mouse story.

The story starts out by shooting itself in the foot by having the mouse lament the introduction of a mousetrap in the house of the farmer and his wife. Why should a mouse fear a trap it readily recognizes, since it could simply avoid its deadly consequences? Isn't that what the Word of God declares, alerting us to the sure value of knowing and spotting whatever traps are laid for us?:

“Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird” (Proverbs 1:17 MKJV).

The next absurdity is why the animals would take the side of a disease-spreading rodent against the interest of their providers. The farm is a perfect example of “we're all in it together,” which certainly includes the humans. They're the overseers, on whom the whole operation depends. So why aren't the animals thinking of them?

Should all humans be in league together, conspiring to defraud their Overseer, God, as these animals did towards their overseers, the humans? Isn't that evil nature and prevailing mentality the reason the world is so troubled? Doesn't this allegory defend and promote that mentality, even if unintentionally?

Another point: What were the domestic animals supposed to do about a mouse trap in the house? As reasoning beasts (representing people), they could have had a chat with the farmer. But what would they say? “Don't put out a trap. Be kind to the little fellow and let him ruin your foodstuffs and poop in your cupboards. It's only natural. And don't worry about hantavirus, we think this one's clean.”

Obviously the mouse didn't belong in the house, and a free ride for the mouse shouldn't have been any of the other animals' agenda or priority. Yes, shame on them that they didn't

care about their fellow animal, but greater shame on them that they didn't care about their human providers. And shame on man that he doesn't care about his Provider and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

Had the animals cared, they could have served both mouse and man. Here's what they should have told the mouse: "You don't have to stay in the house. You're a field mouse, not a pet! Go outside where you belong, and take your chances with the rest of the mice. Don't expect special attention from us, if it's against the interest of those who care for us."

So how do we keep an eye out for one another? Here's what you need to know when someone comes to you with a concern:

Is their concern legitimate? With the mouse, the answer was "no." But that doesn't mean you can't help out if you have a good answer to give. A friend tells the truth; he doesn't just go along with evil plans and say what the other person wants to hear.

If the concern is legitimate, the next questions would be:

Is it your business? And what can you do about it? We depend on the Lord to give us wisdom to know these things and the will, ability, faith, and courage to do our part as dictated by His wisdom.

Unlike in this story, looking out for one another often requires speaking up where those under threat are unaware of the evil facing them. For example, we farm organically and sell organic produce and foods, none of which allows for the use of genetically-modified organisms. When GMOs started being used, many people had no idea they were consuming them, or how bad they were for their health and the environment (many still don't know). We began to sound the alarm, alerting people to the danger and folly of this greedy, heinous practice.

The lesson I have to share about this story is that no amount of trying to pull together can have any lasting and meaningful impact if we serve only ourselves and have forgotten our Creator. When it's every man for himself, all necks end up on the chopping block. But when we love the Lord our God, looking to and obeying Him, then we can love our neighbor as ourselves, and we'll see good results. God will provide the wisdom to do well and to prosper in whatever we put our hand to do. This is impossible for man, which is why we need God our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God hasn't left us helpless, but has made the first and decisive move in Jesus Christ, Who laid down His life for us to turn us from our selfish ways. Coming to Him, He sets us and all things in order. Then we can help one another aright, doing as He commands for our good:

"These are the things that you shall do. Let each man speak the truth with his neighbor. Judge with truth and justice for peace in your gates, and let each devise no evil in your heart against his neighbor, and do not love a false oath. For all these I hate, says the LORD" (Zechariah 8:16-17).

Without Christ, the world is an animal farm, full of chaos and tragedy, because men love themselves more than God.

Sounding the warning and doing the right thing for all by His grace,

Paul Cohen

And here is Martin Niemöller's poignant poem:

*When the Nazis came for the communists,
I remained silent;
I was not a communist.*

*When they locked up the social democrats,
I remained silent;
I was not a social democrat.*

*When they came for the trade unionists,
I did not speak out;
I was not a trade unionist.*

*When they came for the Jews,
I remained silent;
I wasn't a Jew.*

*When they came for me,
there was no one left to speak out.*

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