



Identifying The Thief

Jesus declared in **John 10:10** that *"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life"* NLT.

I was deeply impressed to add this section on *'How To Keep What You Received'*. We have a spiritual opponent who has the desire to steal, kill and destroy from our lives. The Lord Jesus has already defeated him on our behalf. Satan has no power over the informed Christian. What he desires to do is to use your God-given power against you. He does that by using his only remaining weapons which are **Lies** and **Deception**. If we buy into them he will be able to steal from us what we have received from the Lord! It is the purpose of this section to teach you how to stop that from happening!

I recall a particular Tuesday back in 2010 when my wife and son headed home after going to dinner together at a local eatery near our church. I had a music rehearsal to attend so they went home. It was after 5PM and when they arrived home they saw that our front door had been kicked in. She immediately called me and I told her to call the police which she did. Thankfully nothing had been stolen and the reason was our alarm system had gone off and frightened the would be criminals away!

There is a similar comparison to the internal alarm that all believer's in Christ have inside of them. The thief, who is the Devil or Satan, tries to pillage our lives with his lies and deceptions. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, lives inside of us and alerts us to the attempts of the enemy to steal from us. Satan is an outlaw who gained access to this earth by using lies and deceptions against the first couple, Adam and Eve. I would like to share something with you that will clearly show you that God is not a thief. I

want to apply the following verses to the story of creation related to Adam and Eve.

Jesus said in **John 10:1-2**,

1 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. NKJV

When Jesus spoke these words He was actually telling us something that some may have missed. The "*Sheepfold*" represents the "*Earth and it's people*". The "*Door*" speaks of the "*womb of woman*". Jesus, just like us, came through the door or the womb of a woman. The one who "*...climbs up some other way...*" is the devil or Satan. He gained access to the earth through deceiving and stealing a place in the earth from Adam and Eve.

Notice **verse 2** says, "*...he who enters by the door(womb) is the shepherd(or, Jesus) of the sheep(or, people of the earth).*" God could have sent Jesus to the earth as a fully grown and developed man. Instead God sent Him to earth through the womb of Mary as a baby who grew into a man. If God had not done that then Satan could have accused Jesus of being the thief because he would have entered the earth some other way just like the devil did. This alone is a powerful proof that God is not the thief but Satan is the thief who steals, kills and destroys all because he climbed up into the earth some other way!

What is interesting in **verses 3 through 6** is that when Jesus enters the earth he calls to humanity to come out from under the thief and follow His voice as the true Shepherd. There are many voices vying for our attention including Satan's and God's voice. The best way to avoid the thief's voice is to focus on the truth of the written Word of God which, in essence, is God's voice speaking to us today. In **verses 7 through 9** Jesus reveals that He not only came through a door but he has become '***the door***' through which all of humanity can choose to enter into eternal life!

Satan's fall from heaven, which looked like a lightning strike from the sky, was the result of his own rebellion against God's supreme authority. He was dissatisfied as the lead worshiper in heaven and wanted to usurp

God's place as the one and only God! The result of which caused a rebellion in heaven and scripture reveals that one third of the angels, who aligned themselves wrongfully, were cast out with Satan. What the devil forfeited in heaven, as a covering cherubim, has so consumed him that he is bent on stealing any good thing from you and me.

When Jesus was entering His earthly assignment and was baptized by John the Baptist, the Spirit of God descended upon him like a dove. The Holy Spirit led him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Three times Satan tried to get Jesus to yield as Adam did but Jesus knew how to defeat him each time. He said to the temptations, which were really nothing more than deceptions, **"...It Is Written..."** in **Luke 4:3, 8 and 10**.

Jesus was not going to fail this test, like Adam and Eve did, because He was armed with the truth of God's Word. The Apostle Paul likened the Word of God unto a **'Sword'** in **Ephesians 6:17b** as part of the Armor of God that each Christian should be utilizing. **Truth is the only antidote for error!** Satan's focus is to get you to be moved by what you see, hear and feel or to move you by what you DO NOT see, hear or feel.

The term **'Contradiction'** means, *'the act of saying something that is opposite or very different in meaning to something else: a difference or disagreement between two things which means that both cannot be true'* (New Oxford American Dictionary). The devil is always saying the opposite or something very different from what God says in His Word. So if you look at the difference and disagreement between what God says in the bible and what Satan is saying to your mind and through your feelings, you know that they both cannot be true. One is true and the other is false.

How do you determine which is true and which is false? You have to go to the source of who said it. Let's look at who Jesus described the devil as being. In **John 8**, Jesus is being challenged by the religious leaders of that area. They try to justify themselves and accuse Jesus of being a liar. Now get ready to hear what Jesus says about these people in **verse 44**;

*"You are of your father, **the DEVIL**, and it is your will to practice the lusts and gratify the desires [which are characteristic] of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the*

*truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a falsehood, he speaks what is natural to him, **for he is a liar [himself] and the father of lies and of all that is false**" AMP.*

You cannot get any more clearer on the nature of Satan right from the lips of the Master. Jesus said that **the devil is a liar himself and the father of lies and of all that is false!** For years I have taken the position in my heart and mind that if I am feeling the pressure of negative or contrary circumstances bombarding my thoughts I begin to rejoice. Why? Because I know that my Heavenly Father will never torment me with such things. It must be coming from my adversary the devil. ***The good news is that since he is a liar and purveyor of all that is false, then whatever he is telling me I know that the opposite must be true!***

For those of you battling a life threatening disease like cancer and are believing that "...by His stripes you **were** healed..." and the thoughts keep coming at you saying you're NOT healed but you are getting worse, what are you going to do? Start rejoicing and praising God NOW! Why? **Because the devil cannot tell the truth!** That's why! When you know the opposite of what he says must be the truthful outcome then it's easy for you to stay in faith and praise God like you already got it because you do!

The most easily deceived amongst us are the people that are ignorant of God's Holy Written Word! You cannot afford to be ignorant or misinformed when it comes to the bible. The ability to distinguish between truth and error is a critical key to keeping what you received from the miraculous God. What happened at the end of this testing of Jesus by the devil is important for you to know.

In **Luke 4:13**, "*And when the devil had ended every [the complete cycle of] temptation, **he [temporarily] left Him [that is, stood off from Him] until another more opportune and favorable time***" AMP.

Notice that when the forty day fast and temptation of Jesus had ended that the devil, '**...temporarily left Jesus until another more opportune and favorable time...**'. The devil cannot just barge in on your life. He is an opportunist and awaits your vulnerability to pounce on you. The things he uses are cares, worries, concerns and anxieties. This is why **1 Peter 5:7**

tells us; *"Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully" AMP.*

Notice that **1 Peter 5:8** says, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"* NKJV. The devil is NOT a roaring lion! He is 'as' or 'like' a roaring lion. We are told to *'Be sober...'* or, in other words, ***don't be drunk or intoxicated on our troubles***. Have you ever met a person drunk on their problems? All they talk about is what they are facing in life and they worry, worry, worry all the time. You almost need to shake them to break them out of that mental funk! This is the devil's ploy to keep you bound or to steal what you have received from the Lord. So don't fall for his trickery and allow the wisdom of God's Word to arm you with what you need to keep what you have received from the Lord.

Remember the story Jesus told of the wheat and the tares in **Matthew 12:36-43**? He was giving the interpretation to His disciples. The story tells us that a good man planted some wheat in his field but an enemy came in the night and planted some tares or weeds trying to destroy the wheat. Now this story that Jesus told in context, is referencing end time events surrounding the harvest of souls. To me there is also a lesson for our day to day lives to be learned.

Whenever we sow or plant God's Word in our hearts, the enemy, Satan or the Devil, will attempt to sow his lies, deceptions and contradictions at the most inopportune time when we feel most vulnerable. The good news is that you are now aware of who the thief is and his strategies to discourage you. His attempts will fail every time because you know that ***'...IT IS WRITTEN'*** in God's Word and you wield it like a sword and cut the devil's lies down to size. You really are more than a conqueror and will not only keep what you received from the Lord but you will help others to do the same!

**This is an excerpt from my soon to be released book on divine healing. While there are many books written on this subject I believe that there is a need for the specific content I have included. The least of which is the fact that I have been healed of 7 Strokes in 3 Parts of My Brain! If you would like to help with a gift, large or small simply visit our Giving page at www.mjbministries.org/giving. Be sure and use the drop down Fund menu to select 'God's Healing Word - Book Publishing Fund'.