

## **SATAN'S PITCHFORK**

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Julie and I came home from church and pulled up our car into our driveway. We walked in through our front door.

Julie went to our bedroom. Julie noticed it was a bit messy. And that some small items of jewelry were missing and some scattered over the floor.

It was confronting.

I noticed that a back window had been forced open... We were shell shocked. Stunned.

It was in that moment that we came to realise that our home was now become a crime scene.

We had been burgled. We lost a laptop and a DVD player and a guitar... We had been robbed.

Thankfully our vicious guard dog had been home. He had been sleeping inside the bedroom and it looks like he had disturbed the thief. Yapping and nipping his heels. We can imagine. So he probably saved the day.

We're going to look at a villain this morning and his tactics... The world's most dangerous thief.

We're going to look at Satan's pitchfork.

Now a pitchfork has three prongs. I actually had to order a couple of new bins at home just last week, and they are supplied by a company called Trident - so

I actually copied this trident off the logo of that local company...

Here's what we read about what I like to call satan's pitchfork...

I've just heard in the News (Bible) that there's a killer on the loose in this neighbourhood.

He is "Australia's Most Wanted". He's been found guilty of larceny, robbery with violence, and vandalism on a massive scale. He is a mass murderer.

He's a thief.

And he's possibly sneaking around - tonight...

Hear - what the Lord says. In the context He's telling of how he is the good

shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep - and in contrast he tells of satan:

**John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.**

I tell you a positive fact... I alone, in contradistinction to all others, am the door.

He says, I am the door - the shepherd - to whom the sheep belong.

**John 10:8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.**

**Enter in,** He says (Go in) **By Me**

It is by Christ...

- By His merits,
- By His help.

False religion and false prophets are like thieves and robbers. They don't show people the true way to God.

But with the Lord Jesus it's completely different.

He says, if you enter in, by Him, you can be **Saved** - and that also means **safe**.

Admission is free.

It talks about going **In and out** = In for safety and rest; and out for pasture - he feeds us.

The Word says we can **Find pasture** = eat - our Lord is a giver - He will give to us green pastures where we can get food.

Our Lord warns of another who is the opposite.

He is a taker... Back to verse 10... the first part says:

**John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy**

I like to think of it as representing for us the devil and his three-pronged attack.

It says three things about him. Like a pitchfork has three prongs. It makes for a great three point sermon...

Firstly, we see he is a thief...

He wants to steal. To rob. To take from us.

The Bible talks about treasure and riches. Talking about things that really count, not really material wealth, but a kind of spiritual wealth.

Our Lord tells us:

**Matthew 6:19**

**Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For**

**where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

The Lord is talking about riches that we can have in our heart. Lasting riches. a true treasure.

Where is your treasure?

Thankfully, we CAN have a Fail-Safe Investment:

**Luke 12:33**

**Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.**

Real wealth is knowing a heavenly dimension in your life. We can actually

know our lives can be lived with an eternal meaning and purpose.

The devil doesn't want people to have that.

He is a sly, cunning thief - here's how a thief operates...

### **1 Thessalonians 5:2**

**For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.**

What it's saying is that a thief comes unexpectedly. He can sneak up and catch us by surprise. We can get robbed without even realising it.

For us it was a shock when we came home and were shocked to find we had been burgled.

### **We see the Thief's Purpose...**

is Stealing, Killing, Destroying... it's got an ongoing aspect. It's what he does, time and time again.

His aim is to rob, plunder, and oppress.

Sometimes the devil is pictured in a red tunic with a pointy tail, carrying a pitchfork; of course we know he doesn't look like this, but he does use a pitchfork...

In the sense that... He has a 3-pronged plan of attack.

Firstly, he wants to...

**(1) STEAL** - Take.

It's the opposite of give.

God gives, The devil takes.

He wants to take the Word of God away from people so they can't hear what God says to them.

**Matthew 13:19**

**When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.**

The devil sometimes takes by giving - in the Garden...

He tempted Eve and then Adam with the forbidden fruit.

And he has been robbing people blind ever since.

I wonder what it tasted like? Maybe it was sickly sweet.

But it has left a bitter after-taste ever since...

The devil wants to take from you.

To take - your...

- Sight - Vision (2 Cor 4:4 - minds were blinded (2 Cor 3:14); the blindness of their heart (Eph. 4:18).
- Sword - rob you of the Word of God - really all of the armour of God - he doesn't want you to be equipped for the fight
- Song - break your contact with God -closeness/intimacy with God.

- Strength - like with Samson who got fooled by sweet talking Delilah
- Spiritual Receptivity - your sense of conscience, and of God's Guidance & Leading for your life
- Time - Life - to sap your Energy - to take away and waste opportunities you have. Really, I think the devil takes sometimes by pilfering - small bits of time - lost forever - it is ultimately a wasted life.
- Liberty - wants to tie you up in knots (**Prov. 5:22 His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.**) He wants to bind you and captivate you - and sin will become for you like a spider's web that you can't break free from.
- Knowledge of God - He wants to keep you in ignorance and darkness
- Joy - make you dwell on the hard things of life instead of counting your blessings
- Purity of your mind - these days the devil is stealing the innocence and purity of our children
- He wants to steal your zeal - he wants you to chill out and get deathly cold about the things of God
- Your gifts from God - so what God has given you to share and use you hide away and they get covered in the dust of neglect
- Your riches in Christ - He wants you in spiritual Bankruptcy. **God offers for us "The unsearchable riches of Christ"; it tells how we can be "rich in faith", "rich towards God", It tells us of the "riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints".**

- Preciousness of Jesus (1 Peter 2:7- Unto you which believe He is Precious)
- He wants to steal your Peace and cause you confusion

He's an outlaw - he's committed robbery with violence - he's a pirate - a burglar - a robber - a hijacker - he comes to raid, ransack, and plunder.

He wants to diddle you, do you out of God's blessings.

The devil wants to steal your crown. There's going to be a crowning day. A coronation day. That is what happens when a believer dies and goes to be with the Lord.

The Bible tells of how believers have different crowns.

Our Lord says, **Revelation 3:11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.**

Sounds like some people are going to have stolen crowns?

The devil's a trickster. He will take from you. He uses distraction like a pickpocket.

He will look like he's giving you something but really he's taking from you. Like happened with David and Bathsheba.

David had some fun for a while, BUT his sin cost him dearly. The devil takes when you think he's giving you something that's sin. You're getting robbed when you are tempted and sin. Don't fall for it.

In Genesis 25, Esau sold his birthright. Esau agreed to give up his rights as the firstborn for just some mess of pottage - it was a dish of lentils - like some tasty soup or stew.

He was tired and hungry. Jacob was cooking some soup. Esau lost so much for the sake of this tasty meal. That's what the devil does - he cons people for some pleasures of sin - and it ends up that they miss out, big time, on God's blessings.

The devil wants to bring your spiritual life into a state of neglect. It's like happened with the prodigal son - he had a wild old time of it for a season, but it all caught up with him... And everything came crashing down.

He was a big spender, but time came when he had spent all..

**Luke 15:14**

**He began to be in want...**

That's what happens with sin and shame. You are getting robbed of the blessings of God every time you fall for it.

The devil is a thief.

On a positive note: If we're in the Father's hands then the devil can't pluck us out/take us out... This word pluck is the same word of taking away the seed that was sown.

**John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**

Another part of satan's pitchfork is that the thief satan is also come to...

**(2) KILL** - Put to death - slaughter - sometimes translated sacrifice

- The opposite is make alive

He is a mass murderer. A man-eater. He is lethal, fatal, poisonous. He's a dangerous killer, a butcher. He's in the business of death on a grand scale. He is about the destruction of life - murder, homicide, assassination.

He wants to take your life - and do you in.

He's a sniper - an assassin - and he likes to get his cross-hairs - he sets his target sights on you. He wants to take you out.

He wants to exterminate... slaughter, massacre, annihilate. The devil rubs his blood stained hands... He's heartless, ruthless, merciless... He wants to kill...

Of course he loves to see people spiritually dead. To kill any kind of faith.

He wants to kill any which way he can

- Abortion at the beginning and
- Euthanasia at the end.

It seems there's a push on for population control across governments and nations.

The devil wants to kill...

He loves character assassination. To attack people through gossip and personal attacks.

What does satan want to kill?

- Your devotion to God
- Your spiritual life & spiritual growth
- Prayer life
- He wants to poison your Thought life (**Romans 8:6**) - every day you are making a choice - a conscious decision - by what you think about
- Bible life - he doesn't want you to have a commitment to reading God's truth
- He wants to kill the effectiveness of testimony - he hates you doing any kind of soulwinning - because that's about sharing the life of God.
- The devil is obsessed with death and wants you to spiritually die- He wants to snuff out the light of your witness.
- The devil wants to kill your courage - to immobilise you and give you fear
- He wants to dullen your conscience.

Thank God we can have a spiritual bodyguard who can keep us from satan's lethal power.

**Psalms 91:1 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**

That Psalm goes on to say how God will cover us and deliver us... How God is our refuge and fortress. He is our shield. It says thou shalt not be afraid.

We have 24 X 7 security. The eagle eyes of the Lord are watching over us. So we can be assured of His keeping - even though the devil wants to take us out. Just dwell in the secret place of the most High. Set yourself there.

So the devil is a thief, and a killer. He wants to steal, kill, and also...

**(3) DESTROY** - it speaks of mar, loss

To destroy is the opposite of save/preserve/construct. That's what God wants for us - to save preserve and build us up..

The devil wants your destruction.

He's a terrorist, a ravager, a wrecker. He wants to destroy; ravage, spoil, devastate, make havoc, demolish, undo, and vandalise.

He wants to sabotage, wreck, ruin, bull-doze, overwhelm, tear down, disrupt, dismantle, smash, shatter, and harm.

He wants to inflict pain, tear you apart - tear you to bits - beat you down. He wants to cause mischief, catastrophe, and desolation.

Sometimes destruction can come by neglect - like old wineskins that perish with time and decay... Matthew 9:17 talks about them breaking up.

Sometimes destruction comes by man's wilful actions - like with the prodigal son again...

**Luke 15:17**

**And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!**

Satan's destruction is like a perishing with hunger - he wants to starve you of spiritual truth.

**James 1:11**

**For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.**

He wants to wipe you out... Stunt your growth - and destroy your fruitfulness -

It's like the seed that fell among thorns...

**Luke 8:14 ...they ...are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.**

The devil doesn't want your life to bear fruit, but he wants to destroy your life in every dimension...

He wants to destroy...

- Love/Relationships - Family
- Peace
- Purity - clean heart and mind; he wants to pollute ; slow and steady - smog; disintegration: acropolis. Works, as a cancer; as a termite, as acid, water drops - slow and steady
- He wants to destroy your Testimony - to make you look a fool - like happened with Noah when he shamed himself with his sinful actions whilst drunk
- Righteousness (Titus 2:12)
- Discernment - He replaces truth with deception

He attacks churches, because he wants to stifle you from... what will build you up spiritually... He wants to destroy all of this...

- Worship
- Fellowship
- Ministries; Work - Spiritual service  
(Be not weary in well-doing)

We are witnessing the destruction of a nation - even in our own land...

The moral fabric of our nation is in tatters... **Proverbs 14:34**

**Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.**

We see this destruction going on all around us - the destruction of what is right and wrong. **Isaiah 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light,**

**and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!**

It's been true in the records of many nations and civilizations that when they turned from God and truth that the moral slide and decay and rot set in and it was the end of those civilizations. The moral breakdown leads to societal breakdown.

We see a moral bankruptcy - look at what's happening - the latest news about Disney...

Disney recently announced that their new and openly stated goal is to indoctrinate your children into an LGBTQ lifestyle and by the end of 2022, at least 50 percent of Disney characters will represent the LGBTQ or racial minority communities.

Destruction can happen slowly. Like termites eating away, sometimes over long stretches of time.

Sometimes it's the little things we allow that can cause such damage. A little leaven in the lump. The little foxes spoil the vines.

Like fatigue in an aircraft component. Destruction is inevitable. It might not be evident for some while.

Destruction happens by association also.

**1 Corinthians 15:33 Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.**

The devil is a monster. The devil is on the warpath. He's on the loose.

He wants to destroy lives, destroy relationships, destroy churches.

He wants to create havoc and cause mayhem and do damage.

He will use any means he can - drugs, drink, negativity...

One of the big causes of destruction is man's pride: **Proverbs 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.**

Don't fall for the devil's tricks and lies. Be on the alert. Wake up!

Be careful as you reap what you sow. **Galatians 6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the**

**Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.**

Thankfully, even when we may mess up, the master potter sees the clay, marred in his hands and he can remake us.

**Jeremiah 18:6 ...Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand...**

Even when the devil has messed us up so bad and it seems like everything is lost and destroyed, God can remake the vessel.

In contrast to the thief... we see...

**The Lord Jesus' Purpose...**

**I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more**

**abundantly.**

**MORE ABUNDANTLY** = superabundant (talking of quantity) or superior (talking of quality); exceeding abundantly above, more abundantly, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more.

Have life and have it to the fill. Not just life - mere existence. Life in abundance - till it overflows.

Might have abundance - that which abounds. An abundant degree - overflowing - plenteous - in superabundance.

Eternal joy, peace, the company of the blessed, and glory to come.

**Ephesians 3:19**

**And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church...**

What do we choose?

The fulness of God - or the emptiness of the world, the flesh and the devil?

Look at what God abounds our lives with...

Abundant:

Grace.

**Romans 5:15**

**...the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many... 20 But where sin**

**abounded, grace did much more abound:**

**(1 Timothy 1:14**

**And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.)**

Love.

**1 Thessalonians 3:12**

**And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you...**

Hope.

**Romans 15:13**

**Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

Work.

**2 Corinthians 9:8**

**And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:**

The work He gives us to do is not a burdensome yoke. It is a meaningful purpose. To serve God is a joyful thing.

**(1 Corinthians 15:58**

**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.)**

Peace.

**Psalms 37:11**

**But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.**

Pardon.

**Isaiah 55:7**

**Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.**

Don't you just love that - God will abundantly pardon! 1 Peter 1:3 says it's according to his abundant mercy that we are born again.

Our Lord promises us Abundant Life.

He has an abundance for us. And He wants us to have it.

**Philippians 4:19**

**But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**

Really, as we see Satan's pitchfork...

The Lord wants to give us the opposite of what Satan wants to take away...

God is a giver - the opposite of:  
Satan - who wants to  
Steal - Kill - Destroy:

He gives  
He gives life, new birth  
He gives restoration

The Bible says He is the giver of every good and perfect gift.