

# John

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     the word which I trust the Lord as I directed me to this morning you will find in the chapter that we read John the 10th chapter and the 10th verse John the 10th chapter and the 10th verse the thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly children I want to speak to you just for a few moments and I want to relate to you a dream which a Scottish minister had once when he fell asleep preparing a children's address when he intended to speak on

Noah's Ark he had felt directed to speak about Noah's Ark and as he was sitting down preparing his address he fell asleep and during his sleep he dreamed and his dream was about Noah's Ark and in that dream God gave him a number of things to say to the children now in his dream he saw Noah's Ark and Noah standing outside of the Ark and he saw the various animals coming along as we are told in the word of God Noah has been telling the people for a long long time what was to take place and in his dream the minister fancied that he heard Noah speak even to the animals you will remember that the Ark was a a great big boat which had one door so that

Noah and his family and the animals could go up into the Ark obviously that door would have been fairly high up in the side of the boat and there must have been some gangplank or some means of getting up into the door and in his dream this minister saw two elephants come along and Noah spoke to them and when they looked at the plank they were afraid to go up they thought that it wouldn't be strong enough to take the weight of an elephant they were fearful lest the way would be suitable and Noah said to them ah this is the way that God has provided this is the way that he has provided to enter the Ark it will be safe and so the elephants ventured and they went up into the Ark then he saw two lions come along and after he had spoken to them the lions said well do you not realize that we are the kings of the jungle the king and the queen of the jungle we should be treated in a special way there should be some special entrance for the king and the queen of the jungle and Noah said ah there is only one way into the Ark

God has only made one door there is only one way and so the lions went in and then the minister saw two serpents two snakes come along in his dream and they were rather shy creatures like you know they are slithering about in the grass and they said to Noah we we don't like to go up that plank is it not possible for us to get through a crack in the board somewhere or maybe a hole and Noah said no there is no other way this is the only way there is no other way into the Ark and then he saw two other animals leopards I think they were come along and he spoke to them and they decided that they ought to go and make some preparation to go into the Ark and Noah said no there is no need for preparation you must come just as you are into the Ark and then he saw some monkeys come along and you know what monkeys are like we sometimes call children little monkeys because they are mischievous and because they chatter and they play around well that's just what these monkeys were like and when

Noah spoke to them they decided that it was all just a story there was no truth in it it had never rained before why should it start raining now and so they ran off to play they ran off into the woods and there they played in the trees but after a little while they noticed the big drops of rain coming down they'd never seen anything like this before and then it began to rain harder and the minister saw them very worried and they started running back to the ark and they thought well perhaps Noah was right after all and they were so relieved to see the ark still standing there but they noticed that there was no plank to the door the door was shut and so they banged on the side of the door the minister saw all of this in his dream and a voice from inside the ark said who's there and the monkey said it's us we want to come in will you open the door and Noah said

[ 6 : 27 ] I cannot open the door I didn't shut it God shut the door and I cannot open it it is too late and so the minister then woke up now of course there is a great deal that he could say about what he had seen in his dream but you just remember those animals and what Noah said to them he said to the elephants this is the way that God has provided in the previous verse to our text Jesus says I am the door by me if any man enter in he shall be saved this is the way that God has provided the Lord Jesus Christ he is the door dear children you need have no fears about the way of salvation which God has provided you may feel well it is not sufficiently complicated or you may feel it is too difficult you may feel that it is not grand enough well it is the way that God has provided we need have no fears it's his provision the Lord

Jesus Christ and this is the only way into the eternal ark this is the only way in which or by which we can be saved and then you think of the lions and what Noah told them he thought or they thought that they were too good to go in by the ordinary door they thought there should be another way oh don't any of you think that you're too good don't any of you think that you don't need to enter the ark don't any of you think that you do not need to be saved because you do every one of you each one of us needs our sins to be forgiven we need the Lord Jesus Christ to save us from our sins and there is only one way as he told the serpents there's no back door entrance there's no other way there's no other way that you can contrive to get into heaven

Jesus is the only way he is the only door and then think of the leopards they wanted to go and prepare themselves oh you you must not try to prepare yourselves you must come just as you are as I quoted in prayer in that hymn just as I am oh do not tarry till you're better the hymn writer says or you will never come at all no it is no use trying or waiting to try and improve ourselves or to prepare ourselves we must come to Jesus just as we are we must enter by faith into this door there is no other come just as you are but then also remember this that one day the door will be shut do you remember the parable of the virgins and how the five foolish virgins went off to find oil for their lamps and when they came back with the oil and they came to the place where the marriage supper was being held the door was shut and when they tried to gain access to that door the bridegroom said

I never knew you he did not recognize them they were too late because the door was shut dear children and young people today the door is open Jesus Christ is still the friend and the savior of sinners he bids you welcome to himself he is still the door but one day that door will be shut and it will be too late how sad if you and I should be found on the outside but how good if we are on the inside Jesus is a door and its sides are too inside outside which side are you remember God has provided a way it is the only way there is no other way you must come just as you are and one day the door will be shut and if we are still outside it will be too late

God grant by his grace that you each may come ere the door is shut the thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy we notice in this verse that there are two great contrasts there is the thought of the thief that comes to kill to steal and to destroy and there is the thought of the Lord Jesus Christ and these are his own words he says I come that they might have life death on the one hand life on the other good on the one hand good things to be given on the other hand things stolen away now we have this great contrast then and I want you to remember particularly that these are the saviour's words and they are wonderfully accurate what the

[ 12 : 56 ] Lord Jesus Christ says here is no exaggeration this is true absolutely true the thief cometh for to steal to kill and to destroy but Jesus has come that we might have life that we might have it more abundantly here then is no exaggeration these words are absolutely accurate in every sense of them now who is the thief that is referred to in our text well the thief is Satan Satan Satan is the enemy of man he is the enemy of every man you may say oh but Satan has his servants and they serve him well they may do but he's still their enemy even those people that claim to have sold themselves to

Satan and there are a number of them even they Satan is their enemy they serve him they are slaves to him and the Bible tells us that they earn wages and the wages that they earn are death death Satan is the enemy of every man from the garden of Eden when it was God said that he would put enmity between the serpent and the seed of the woman from that day to this there has been a continual conflict between Satan and the seed of the woman men and particularly of course the Lord Jesus Christ and those that are his there is this enmity then

Satan is the enemy of man and he is the thief that is referred to in our text his whole intention his whole object is to steal to kill and to destroy now you may say to me how does he do it how does he do it well Satan steals from every person that has ever been born into the world first of all I would say he steals their money how does he steal their money does he come and take it out of their pocket well in one sense he does yes you think of the things that people waste their money on and as they waste their money Satan is stealing it from them and one desires to preach and to teach and to be practical in these things so

I will enumerate some of the things that people waste their money on many people waste their money on drink on strong drink and I don't mean simply just a drink occasionally but I mean on the excess of drink I'm afraid that where I normally preach in that area you see a great deal of this you still see a great deal of hardship caused in the home because a great deal of money is spent on drink and on smoking not just to take a drink to quench one's thirst but I was going to say gallons of it yes literally gallons of it consumed by people and money that they can ill afford wasted pounds that just go up in smoke that people can ill afford and let us remember all the while

Satan is stealing this money he's stealing it from them because not only is he stealing our money in unnecessary things but often these things are harmful to us the Bible tells us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost and therefore we should care for our bodies and we should not do with them those things that are harmful Satan then steals and then he not only steals their money but he steals their time you can see people queuing up and they were killed for a long long time to go to the cinema or these days it's more fashionable to go to the bingo hall but you just see queues ever so long people standing there waiting to go in and they'll sit inside and they will spend hour after hour just wasting their time and all of the while

[ 18 : 39 ] Satan is stealing that time and there are many other evil pursuits people that will go along every evening to the public house and there they will just sit and talk and drink and do all sorts of other things that are not beneficial at all and Satan is all the while stealing their time some people are absolutely addicted to their television set and they know sooner sit down then the television has to be switched on and they spend hour after hour watching whatever there is they're addicted to it and all the while Satan is stealing their time I shall never forget hearing Pastor David Obard preach at Cobra a number of years ago now and he preached from those words on a good

Friday Barabbas was a robber and after that when we were living at Maple Cottages I had a label it so impressed me that I wrote a label and I stuck it on the screen of the television set Barabbas was a robber just to remind me of how easily it was to force Satan to steal our time by sitting hour after hour glued to the television set Satan is come to steal he steals our money he steals our time I cannot take too long over these various aspects he also steals our happiness I've seen some of this homes broken up little children crying and not knowing what to do because they're not sure who's going to live in their house this next week mother gone off somewhere father gone off somewhere and little children just not wanting to go home and not wanting to go home sometimes because father gets drunk and comes in and he ill treats them and so on little children sitting on the door of the public house and so on and you may not see scenes as bad as that but there are other things

Satan steals our happiness because of the things that we do the evil things that are done he steals our happiness and then he steals our self respect I'm now speaking of course of the man in the street the man who is without God although sadly this sometimes happens to the people of God Satan will steal their self respect because they fall into some sin because of open sin that they commit and they have lost their self respect and who has taken it Satan has taken it he stolen it away from them and then sad to say Satan sometimes steals their reason he sometimes steals our reason being occupied more than something or we can be occupied in something and we're so taken up with it maybe or

Satan so steals away our reason at that particular time that we don't realize any particular harm but afterwards oh how ashamed we feel oh I felt like that sometimes been occupied in something and then afterwards oh I felt so ashamed and I felt so annoyed with myself and what has happened well momentarily Satan has stolen our reason so that we no longer have that correct reason to say no that's not for me that's not what the Lord expects of me and Satan steals our reason and you know I've seen Satan steal people's reason so that they do the most terrible things people that normally are quite self-respecting and very nice people and yet because of drink or some other reason

Satan possesses them he takes their reason and they are left to do all sorts of unhappy things oh dear friends this thief he really is a thief I cannot impress this upon you too strongly and you dear young people remember this Satan is a thief and he will steal from you all of those things that I have enumerated and more so and people not only are they the subjects of his stealing from them but they become addicted to them they become addicted to all kinds of things I haven't mentioned drugs for example they become the slaves of Satan and you may say to me ah but how about killing well Satan kills these people you can you don't have to look too far to find of of people that die through excess of drug taking at very early ages why Satan has stolen and he has killed them literally because they have become his slaves

[ 24 : 44 ] I heard on the news only this morning of two young men found hanged and the hangings have been attributed to hell's angels those people that have sold themselves to to Satan black magic and those hangings have been attributed to these people you see Satan comes to steal to kill and to destroy and the tragedy is that he has power not only as we read in Matthew in the 10th chapter not only to kill the body but to kill the soul oh this this dreadful thief he not only steals he kills and he destroys he kills naturally he kills spiritually think of the prodigal son just for a moment and here you have a biblical example of exactly what I've been saying this young man with such wonderful prospects you remember we thought about him

I believe the last time I was here with such wonderful prospects he goes from home with plenty of money and what happens Satan steals his money he wasted it in riotous living did it do him any good it didn't do him any good at all he wasted it in riotous living he stole his money he stole his time he stole his happiness he stole his self-respect and so you could go on and at last we know according to the parable by God's grace he came to himself and he returned to his home and he was restored to fellowship in his home but oh what a fool he was and all the while Satan was stealing from him I think of the two pictures that our late pastor used to speak about that hang side by side or hung should I say in a gallery and one of them

I believe was called Innocence and it was of a young boy in all his innocence a beautiful child and the other one was called Guilt and it was of an old man wrapped and torn by sin an obvious slave of Satan the one from whom Satan had stolen all of his life and someone found out that the pictures were of one and the same person the child in his innocence the old man wracked by sin torn and a slave of sin in his old age and yet he was the one that was at one time the young boy in the picture what had happened Satan had been a thief to him all of his life and this is what Satan is like oh my dear young friends especially if you feel that you want to serve

Satan oh you'll find him a hard master and apart from God's grace he'll ruin you at last he'll kill you and destroy you apart from the grace of God but then I must pass on quickly and I want to notice that Satan is not only a thief to the man in the street he is a thief to the child of God as well the child of God is not free from his thieving work the child of God is subject to the same subtle thieving ways as the man in the street or we know that God keeps him but let us just think of this a moment and try and analyze it as far as the child of God is concerned

Satan is a robber in many ways you see he is absolutely opposed to the child of God there is enmity between the serpent Satan and the seed of the woman by God's grace anyone who is a child of God he's been taken from Satan's grasp he was by nature and by birth a child of Satan and by God's grace he's been torn out of Satan's grasp and he's been made a child of God he has been born again of the spirit of God and a new principle has been put within him now Satan is absolutely opposed to that he is angry and he will do all in his power to try and get that person back into his own family again we know we know that he cannot we are clearly told that in this chapter we know that once we are in

[ 30 : 34 ] Christ we are in him forever but it does not mean that Satan won't try indeed he does try and oh he tries so hard he is absolutely opposed then to all that the child of God stands for and therefore he will do all in his power to bring the child of God down to snatch him again out of the grasp of almighty God and so what does he do well now the first of all we can say this that the probably the first way in which he attacks the child of God is to steal his peace and his happiness and his comfort heart you see the child of God because he is a child of God there are times when he knows wonderful peace of heart there are times when he knows joy and peace in believing he knows the happiness of being a child of God he knows the comfort of the forgiveness of sins he knows the comfort of the fact that God is not only his God but his father and the very thing that Satan will attack first and foremost is this his peace his happiness and his comfort and how does he do it well he does it by sowing seeds of doubt in our hearts and how is he able to do that well he does that chiefly by causing us to sin you see there is this conflict going on within our hearts there is the tug of war if you like between the old man of sin and the new man of grace

Paul speaks about it so clearly in Romans 7 he says that he is really two persons with his mind he serves the law of Christ but with his body the law of sin and death and so there is the conflict going on and Satan uses this he causes us to sin he says Paul in the closing part of that chapter that Satan brings him into captivity to the law of his members that is the carnal law of his body and when he is brought into captivity he sins and then Satan uses those sins against us and he argues like this he says if you were a child of God you wouldn't do that if you were a child of God you wouldn't think like that if you were a child of God you wouldn't say those things that you've said and the very sins that he's caused us to commit by his evil temptations he uses them as evidence against us and he says if you were a child of God you wouldn't do think and say those things and because we listen to him because we listen to his voice what happens we begin to sink in our feelings our comfort has gone our happiness has gone our peace of mind has gone

Satan robs us he robs us of these things isn't it true oh if I read my own heart rightly and my heart is anything like yours then you will know what I'm speaking about Satan comes and because of the wickedness of our own heart he robs us because of our sinfulness because of our wayward hearts and minds we have to hang our heads in shame and we have to beg the Lord to forgive us we have to confess our sins and sometimes Satan brings us so low that we can't seem to feel that our sins are forgiven and we're even brought so low sometimes that we begin to wonder can ever God dwell here can ever

God dwell here alas from such a heart as mine what can I bring thee forth my best is stained and died with sin my all is nothing worth and then my friend Satan will steal away sometimes our confidence and our faith our confidence and our faith he does it by again sowing seeds of doubt within our hearts be still my soul these anxious cares to thee are burdens thorns and snares they cast dishonor on thy Lord and contradict his gracious word and where do they come from they come from Satan Satan steals from us and he casts dishonor upon Christ and then my friends he steals from the child of God in some of the ways that

I've referred to the world in our money in our time he steals from us sometimes in keeping us from reading God's word it's amazing how Satan can arrange for some other book to be near at hand when we want to read so that we choose it rather than God's word or some other good book it's amazing how Satan can arrange things so that we are sidetracked into some other pathway and every time he does it he's stealing from us he will steal concerning our prayers do you not find sometimes that when you get down on your knees alone somewhere quiet to try and pray that often very quickly before you realize it Satan has carried your thoughts away to some other place even in your prayers and for that very reason it's a good thing to try and pray out loud even when you pray alone you can do it quietly so that you don't disturb other people but pray audibly so that you can hear your own voice it will try and break that snare so that

[ 37 : 54 ] Satan cannot get in and carry your thoughts away but he will he will try and rob your prayers and it's amazing how he will do it I know in my own experience not only in our thoughts but by other things just when you want to try and be quiet for a little while maybe the telephone will ring or somebody will call at the door or there will be some other thing that has to be attended to and I am sure and I'm sure and I'm sure that he'll rob us in our worship the time that we come to God's house maybe and we sit in the pew and we start out with very good intentions concentrating upon what the minister is saying but then maybe he digresses or becomes a little monotonous for a while and very quickly our attention's gone and we find that we're far off rather than being in the house of

God where are our thoughts well back at home maybe thinking of the work that we ought to be doing in the garden in the office at the kitchen sink or occupied with our problems and our difficulties and Satan he's come and robbed us he robs us even in the house of God as we try and worship the Lord this is his sole intention the thief cometh not this is the only reason why he comes he cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy he'll steal away our fellowship the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above and he's an heir of heaven who finds his bosom glow with love so what does Satan do he tries to break up that kindred fellowship he tries to do something to spoil that love because he does not like to see that kindred spirit he does not like to see that heir of heaven with his heart glowing with love to the people of

God and so he tries to destroy it and how does he do it oh in so many subtle ways often it is by that terrible enemy that we have our tongues that unruly member as James calls it something that is said that is taken the wrong way or something that may not be taken the wrong way something that is said unnecessarily and unkindly and how quickly friends are divided how quickly fellowship is broken and how often you find people that they have fallen out and they are too proud to say sorry to one another one says ah well it was his fault he can come and apologise to me I am not going to go and apologise to him how oft should we forgive our brother that was the question that Peter asked oh Satan robs us then in our fellowship he robs us in so many ways but the time is almost gone and I must just refer to the second half of the text the thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy and then Jesus says I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly oh how wonderful these words are just think of those first few words

I am come I am come what a wonderful thing that is it is that Jesus has come God sent him when the fullness of the time was come God sent him Jesus has come and why has he come just as Satan comes with the express purpose of stealing Jesus has come with the express purpose that they might have life Jesus has come to give life and how does he come to give that life oh it is freely given and as we referred earlier to verse 9 I am the door by me if any man enter in he shall be saved oh what a wonderful word that is Jesus has come to give life to give it freely to all who may who will come oh we know that they will only come as they are constrained by the father no man cometh unto me except the father draw him but whosoever cometh unto me

I will in no wise cast out oh we must have these things in balance but let us have them in balance Jesus has come to give life and to give freely to any man if any man enter in he shall be saved oh it is by God's grace but I am certain of this that no man will ever stand or be able to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and say ah but when I came I wasn't accepted I wasn't received any man that comes to Jesus Christ seeking life any man that comes to this door to enter in he will not find it closed not until it is at last shut by the hand of God himself oh my dear friend if you feel constrained to come even this sabbath morning to Jesus who is the door you'll find that that door is open the door of thy mercy stands open all day for the poor and the needy who knock by the way and none will ever be empty sent back who come seeking mercy for Jesus sake

[ 44 : 26 ] Jesus has come then that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly he comes to give this life freely freely to all who seek it and none will ever be sent back who come to seek it Jesus is the door I am the way he says the truth and the life if any man cometh he will be saved if any man enters in this is God's provision there is no other way there is no other door and how must we come we must come just as we are just as I am without one plea but that thy blood was shed for me and that thou bidst me come to thee O Lamb of God

I come but my friends just in closing remember this that although now the door is open one day it will be closed and if we are not on the inside it will be too late the door can never be opened again the door will be closed forever and those that are outside they are without God and without hope God grant that we each by his grace may come to this door and enter in as we sometimes sing there is a way back to God from the dark paths of sin there is a door that is open and you may go in at Calvary's cross is where you begin when you come as a sinner to Jesus may God add his blessing

Amen through no malady there me wrong name you I can't am I