

Satan's Pitchfork

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[0:00] One time we came home from church. We pulled up the car in the driveway and walked through the front door and! Julie went into our bedroom and she noticed it was a bit messy. Now as I said before Julie's a neat freak so if something's messy it's not Julie who made it messy.

She probably blamed me but no there's something messy about the place. And then she noticed some small items of jewellery were missing. Some things were scattered on the floor. It was confronting. And I noticed then that a back window had been forced open. We were shell shocked, stunned. It was in that moment that we realised our home had become a crime scene.

And not long after they were checking the windows for fingerprints and such we had been burgled. We lost a laptop and a DVD player and a guitar. We'd been robbed.

Now, thankfully our vicious guard dog was on the premises at the time. Here's Rusty. He'd been sleeping inside the bedroom.

And it looks like he had suddenly disturbed the thief. I can imagine what might have happened as he was yapping and biting, nipping at the heels of this thief.

[1:21] We can imagine. It would have been pretty scary for that thief. With this horrible dog. His teeth bared. You can imagine the fangs.

And Rusty probably saved the day that day. But friends, we're going to look at a villain this morning. A villain. And his tactics. The world's most dangerous thief.

I'm talking today about Satan's pitchfork. Now, a pitchfork has three prongs. I actually had to order a couple of new bins at home just this week.

And they were supplied by a company called Trident. And this is actually their logo. So it was kind of a confirmation that I was talking about this subject. So this is a copy of the logo of this local company called Trident. And here's what we read about what I like to call Satan's pitchfork.

I've just heard in the news, the good news, the Bible, that there's a killer on the loose in this neighbourhood. He's actually Australia's most wanted.

[2:34] Well, really, we don't want him. But he's wanted. He's been found guilty of larceny and robbery with violence, vandalism on a massive scale. He is a mass murderer. He's a thief. And he's possibly sneaking around right now.

Now, hear what the Lord says about Satan's pitchfork. Now, in the context, we're going to go to John 10. And the context here is how our Lord's telling about how he is the good shepherd.

He lays down his life for the sheep. And he contrasts himself with Satan, the good shepherd. And then he talks about a thief. So we're going to concentrate more about the thief.

But just to lead in what it reads here, John 10, verse 7, then said Jesus unto them, verily, verily, this is the truth. He says, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

He's saying here, I tell you a positive fact. It's really reinforced here with the wording. He says, I alone, in contradistinction to all others, he says, I am the door.

[3:47] He says, I am the door. In other words, in the context, he's talking about the door of the sheepfold. He is the shepherd, the one to whom the sheep belong. And he says, verse 8, all that ever came before me are thieves and robbers. But the sheep did not hear them.

I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture.

He's saying that we are to enter in, go in by me, he says. He says, I am the door. Go in by me. It's by Christ. It's but for his grace, like we heard the song in message form there.

It's by his merits. It's by his help. False religions and false prophets are thieves and robbers compared to this one. They don't show the people the way to know the true God, the true way to

God.

But with the Lord Jesus, it's completely different. He says, if you enter in by me, he says, you can be saved. And that also means you're safe. It's admission free.

[5:00] He says, he talks about here going in and out and finding pasture. So we can go in to Christ for safety and rest. We can go out for pasture. He feeds us.

Of course, we know Psalm 23. The Lord provides the green pastures. He's the Lord our shepherd. The word says we can find pasture. We're going to get fed.

He's a giver of those green pastures that we can feed. Now, the Lord warns, in contrast to himself, the good shepherd, he warns now of a thief.

Says John 10 verse 10. Then the thief cometh not but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

I'm just going to focus on the first part there. About these three words. Satan's three-pronged attack, I put to you. Satan's pitchfork.

[5:57] It says three things about this thief. It's like a pitchfork with three prongs. Makes for a great three-point sermon. Now, first thing we see here, here's a thief.

He wants it. Here's a thief. He wants to steal. He wants to rob. He wants to take from you. In contradistinction to the shepherd who wants to give, he wants to take.

Right? And the Bible talks about treasures and riches, about true wealth, about what really counts. Not material wealth. Material things. But a kind of spiritual wealth.

As our Lord says in Matthew 6. He talks about how we should lay not up for ourselves treasures upon earth. Where moth and rust are corrupt. Where thieves break through and steal.

You know, you've seen them. The moths. We've got some big ones lately. I don't know if you get them at your place. But they're like little birds banging into our fly screen at the moment. There's some moths.

[6:57] You know, I've got to watch my wardrobe at home. And flutter them out every so often. They start eating my clothes and such. I see some jumpers with holes in them sometimes.

You know, the moths are there. They're going to eat and take. Destroy. And rust does corrupt. And where thieves break through and steal. He says, don't lay up for yourselves there.

But lay up for yourselves rather in heaven. Treasures in heaven. Where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt. And where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

So the Lord's talking about riches that count. Riches that we can have in our heart. Lasting riches. A true treasure. The wealth that we have is that knowledge of him. Of eternal life.

Nothing beats that. Where is your treasure? Thankfully we can have a fail safe investment. Luke 12.33. Sell that you have and give arms.

[7:56] Provide yourselves bags which wax not old. A treasure in the heavens that faileth not. Where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. And when our treasure is in heaven, there's no need to worry about thieves.

Or moths or rust. And where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. This is an unfailing treasure. A fail safe investment. So real wealth I put to you is truly to know him.

To know that heavenly dimension in your life. We can actually know our lives live with purpose.

With eternal meaning. The devil doesn't want that. He wants to take that away from you. He doesn't want you to get it.

He doesn't want you to have it. He's a sly, cunning thief. So let's hear about the thief. And what the thief gets up to. Now of course we know thieves come kind of unexpectedly.

As our Lord says of his own coming. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 2. He says, For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. What it's saying there is that a thief comes unexpectedly.

[8:58] He can sneak up on us and catch us by surprise. We can get robbed without even realising it. Now I hope you don't get that shock when you go home today. That shock when you go home and you've been burgled.

It's a shocking thing. The thief's come without us even realising it. And the devil's like that too. He robs from people without them even realising it. We see that this purpose is, as we read there, to steal, kill and destroy.

And it's got an ongoing aspect that he wants to do it and do it time and time again. Now sometimes people falsely picture the devil like this picture here.

A red tunic or a pointy tail, a pitchfork. Of course we know the devil doesn't look like this. He's actually quite a masquerading, angelic.

He's a wonderfully handsome, beautiful creature. But there's a sense where there's this three-pronged attack that I put to you. Firstly, he wants to steal. It's the opposite of giving, isn't it? [10:04] To steal, the devil takes. God gives, the devil takes. Especially so. We see, for example, of the account of the sowing of the gospel seed in Matthew 13.

It talks about how the devil wants to take the word of God away from people. So they can't hear what God says to them. So it says, Matthew 13, verse 19, in part, When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, Then cometh the wicked one and catcheth the way, that which was sown in the heart.

This is he which receives seed by the wayside. So this picture of the gospel seed that's sown by the preacher, that's given, the devil is like this bird that comes and takes it away.

He doesn't want you to hear the word of God. He wants to take every opportunity to stop you hearing the word of God. Sometimes the devil takes by giving. In the garden, for example, He tempted Eve, then Adam.

They took of that forbidden fruit. In the garden of Eden, right at the beginning of time. And he's been robbing people blind ever since, hasn't he? He still is. I wonder what it tasted like.

[11:19] Was it worth it? Maybe it was sickly sweet. But since that time, Adam and Eve took that forbidden fruit.

It's left a bitter aftertaste ever afterwards, hasn't it? Ever since. The devil wants to take from you.

Think of some of the things. I put to you, some of the things the devil wants to steal from you.

He wants to take your sight. He wants to take your vision away. The Bible talks about minds blinded. It talks about the blindness of people's hearts. He wants to take his sword away from you.

He doesn't want you to have a Bible. He doesn't want you to care about this book, much less carry it, much less read it. He wants to steal you, rob you of the word of God, which is your sword.

It's the sword of the Spirit. Really, he wants to take all the armour of God away from you. He doesn't want you to be equipped for the fight. The devil wants to take your song. He wants to take the song away from you.

[12:21] He doesn't want you to be rejoicing in the Lord always. He doesn't want you to be speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. He wants you to be downhearted.

He wants to take away the melody that you should have in your heart. He wants to take your song. In other words, break your contact with God. That closeness, that intimacy with God. Thank God Paul and Silas still had their song.

They'd be beaten in the prison, in the stocks, confined, suffering. The prisoners heard them singing. Amen.

Sing. Now get in the car and sing to your heart's content. Amen. Sing a song unto him. That closeness. The devil wants to break that. The devil wants to take your strength.

Like Samson. As he was filled there by the sweet-talking Delilah. Oh, I'm sure she was caressing his head. Maybe she was singing him a little lullaby.

[13:24] Maybe she was rocking him in her lap. The devil will give you some things. He might give you a Delilah. The devil wants to take your strength.

Think about how maybe the devil gave Jonah a ship to Tarshish. Now the devil has providence too. The devil provided Jonah a pillow, I'd imagine.

He gives you things, but really is taking away. So wise up to that. Like the apple. Well, not an apple necessarily. But the fruit. The forbidden fruit.

The devil wants to take your spiritual receptivity away. Your conscience. Your sense of conscience. Your sense of right and wrong. Your sense of God's guidance. God's leading. For your life.

God's will. The devil wants to take that spiritual receptivity. Steal it away. The devil wants to take your time. Life. To sap your energy. To take away those wasted opportunities that you could have had.

[14:29] Really, I think the devil steals by pilfering. He's a pilferer. You know, you get that in, I suppose, a shop where, oh, I have a little sweet for myself. A little lolly.

You know, the shop assistant kind of pilfers. Steals little things. Bit by bit. Oh, the boss won't notice this pen or this whatever it be. It's pilfering.

The devil does that with your time. Small bits here and there. Just a little bit of time. Lost forever. Wasted. He loves that. He loves taking your time.

Ultimately, those little moments of time add up to a wasted life, don't they? The devil wants to take. The devil wants to take your liberty. Your liberty to tie you up in knots.

So that you never feel like you've got victory. That you never feel like you're walking with God. Because you're so consumed. It says that his own iniquity shall take the wicked himself and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

[15:28] Proverbs 5.22. He wants to bind you, the devil, to captivate you. Like the little fly in a spider's web that they cannot break free from. You know, sin can be just little spider webs.

It can be like cords that hold you, captivate you. The devil wants to take the knowledge of God away from you. He wants to keep you in ignorance and darkness. He doesn't want you to study your Bible.

So that you can grow in your faith. The devil wants to take the joy away from you. Make you dwell on the hard things of life. Make you consumed with the negative things.

The bad things that are going on in your life. Instead of counting your blessings. The devil wants to take your joy. The devil wants to take the purity of your mind away. He's doing that well, isn't he? He's doing a good job of that one. The devil's stealing the innocence and purity of our children. Friends, that's happening all around us. And we can be barraged with all sorts of crud, can't we?

[16:29] It goes in the ear gate, the eye gate. And it takes the purity away. God wants our mind to be thinking clean and clear and right and pure.

The devil wants to steal your zeal. He doesn't want you to get fired up and actually get enthusiastic about God and the things of God. About fellowship. About what matters.

He doesn't want you to get zealous. He wants you to chill out. Just keep cool. Cool. So cool that's a deathly cold. A deathly cold.

That creeps up on you. A coldness about the things of God. The devil wants to take your gifts from you. The gifts that God has given you. What God has given you to share, to be, to use.

He wants you to hide them away. So they get covered in the dust of neglect. Your gifts from God. The devil doesn't want you to even think that you've got one.

[17:30] The devil wants to take away your riches in Christ. You're actually really wealthy people here. You that know the saviour, you are wealthy. More wealthy than Bill Gates if he doesn't know the saviour.

Honestly. Than Elon Musk. He's got nothing if he doesn't have Christ. Amen. And think of what God has given you. The Bible talks about all sorts of riches.

We are so wealthy. We that know the saviour. It talks about the unsearchable riches of Christ. They're just so vast. Unsearchable. That we can be rich in faith.

That we can be rich toward God. It talks about the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Wow. Think of those. How wealthy you are as a believer. Truly. And the devil wants to take all of that away from you.

He wants to take the preciousness of Jesus away from you. It says unto you that believe he is precious. 1 Peter 2 verse 7. Jesus is precious. Nothing beats the preciousness of Jesus.

[18:32] The devil wants to take that away from you. So you don't remember him. Like we were exhorted to before. That Christ is not in your thoughts. That God is not in all your thoughts.

The preciousness of Jesus. We shouldn't neglect that. Think of that. Sister. Brother. He wants to steal your peace. He doesn't want you to have peace. He wants to cause you confusion.

So you're diverted and distracted. And life becomes chaotic. And you focus on that. Rather than the peace of God. It keeps your hearts and minds. Through Christ Jesus.

The devil doesn't want you to have that. He wants you to stay in confusion. He's the author of it. He's an outlaw. Think of the devil today. And we don't want to give him credit. But we want to give warning about him.

He's an outlaw. He's committed robbery. With violence. He's a pirate. He's a burglar. He's a robber. He's a hijacker. He comes to raid, ransack and plunder. He wants to diddle you of God's blessings for your life.

[19:32] The devil wants to steal your crown. The Bible talks about at Christ's coming. He says, Behold, I come quickly. Revelation 3.11. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

There's going to be a crowning day. Really for a believer, our day of our death is our coronation day, isn't it? I know Julie's dad, John, we remembered his passing as a coronation day. In the sense that when a believer goes to be with the Lord, it talks about how there'll be a crowning. There'll be different crowns. It tells us of some five different crowns that are named.

Perhaps there's more. And the Bible warns us, don't neglect to hold fast what you have, that no man take thy crown.

One day there's a sense what would be crowned. I'm sure we'll be casting them at his feet. It'll all be to him. But it sounds like some people are going to lose some crowns.

[20:35] That'd be a shame, wouldn't it? That someone would steal your crown. Some people are going to have stolen crowns. The devil doesn't want you to have a crown. He doesn't want your life to be crowned. The devil's a trickster.

He wants to take. He wants to take from you. And he uses distraction like a pickpocket. He's seen those crafty pickpockets in a crowd and bumps into you and before you know it, you've lost this and that, your phone or whatever.

They're cunning pickpockets. The devil's like that. And really, as I said before, he will look like he's giving you something. But really he's taking from you.

Think about David and Bathsheba. David got his eyes taken aside and he thought he'd have some fun for a while. David with his sin with Bathsheba.

But his sin cost him dearly, didn't it? The devil takes from you when you think he's giving you something, that sin is actually stealing from you.

[21:35] You're getting robbed when you're tempted and sin. Don't fall for it. Another example, Genesis 25. Esau sold his birthright.

Esau had agreed to give up his rights as the firstborn for just some mess of pottage, which means a dish of lentils. It was just like some tasty stew or soup.

So here was Esau. He'd just come out, he'd gone out hunting and he was tired, he was hungry and Jacob was there cooking some soup and Esau, hmm, smells good.

Hmm, oh, I'm so hungry. And his tummy was rumbling and he lost everything for the sake of that tasty meal. The sense, the context, the meaning of it here is that Esau traded his birthright as the firstborn just for some quick, tasty morsel.

The devil does that. He gives you something. Hmm, smells nice. Oh, looks nice. Oh, I really want that. I'll give up this for that. What a trade.

[22:47] To trade off God's blessings for a little pleasure, a little enjoyment, just a taste. So costly. The devil wants to bring his spiritual life into a state of neglect.

Here's another Bible example. The prodigal son. He'd had a wild old time of it for a season, but it all caught up with him in the end.

Everything came crashing down. We see that he was given his father's inheritance in that early gift of the father and he went and splurged it, splashed it.

He was a big spender, but time came when he had spent all. He had spent all and there was a great famine. That's what happens with sin and shame. We spend and spend and then our pockets are empty.

The wallet's got no more jingling in it. And that's what sin does, isn't it? You're getting robbed. You're getting robbed. Every time you fall for that, the devil's a thief.

[23:53] Friends, the devil's a thief, isn't he? On a positive note, if we're in the father's hands, then the devil cannot pluck us out or take us out of his hand.

The word pluck is the same word taking away the seed that was sown. The seed was sown, the devil catcheth it away, takes it away. It says for us that believe, no man can pluck you, no man can take you out of my hand.

No man. Amen. The father's hands are the place to stay to be. Amen. Another part of Satan's pitchfork is the fact that Satan also has come to kill.

He's come to steal. He's come to kill. The word kill him, he's put to death, slaughtered. It's sometimes translated sacrifice. To kill is the opposite of make alive.

Friends, the devil is a killer. He's a mass murderer, a man eater. He's lethal, fatal, poisonous. He's a dangerous killer, a butcher. And he's into the business of killing on a grand scale.

[24:59] Look at the destruction of life. Look at what our governments are putting forward now. He wants murder, homicide, assassination. He wants to take you out. He's like this sniper that's hiding in the bushes and he's wanting to get those crosshairs on you.

He's setting his target sights on you. He wants to take you out, believer. He wants to kill. He wants to exterminate. He wants to slaughter, massacre, annihilate. The devil rubs his bloodstained hands. He wants more blood. He's heartless, ruthless, merciless. He wants to kill. Of course, he loves to see people spiritually dead. That really gives him a lot of pleasure to see people spiritually dead. That's what he wants. He doesn't want you to have any kind of faith to kill it. And he wants to kill in the same way as we see governments today.

They've got abortion at the beginning and euthanasia at the end. That's the devil. That's the devil. He's a killer. He wants to kill. And he loves character assassination too to attack people.

[26:03] Oh, did you hear the touch and touch about so-and-so? Listen to this hot goss. He loves character assassination to attack people through gossip, personal attacks.

What does Satan want to kill? Think of it, friends. Just think of it. And be mindful. This is what's happening. It's happening right now. He wants to kill your devotion to God.

He doesn't want you to get serious about your spiritual walk with God. He doesn't want that. He wants to kill your spiritual life, your spiritual growth. He wants to kill your prayer life.

He wants to poison your thought life as we talked about before, the thinking. To be carnally minded is death but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

So make that conscious choice to put your thoughts on things above. Make a conscious decision about what you're thinking about.

[27:00] The devil wants to kill your Bible life so the Bible doesn't get open through the week. It's just maybe a Sunday book. He wants to kill that commitment to reading God's truth.

He wants to kill the effectiveness of your testimony. He hates you doing any kind of witnessing. Just keep quiet. Just don't say boo. Don't step outside of the comfort zone because that's about sharing the life of God.

He doesn't want that. The devil's obsessed with death. He wants you to spiritually die. He wants to snuff out the light of your witness. He wants to make you foul up in front of people so you're a bad testimony, not a good one.

The devil wants to kill your courage, to immobilise you, give you fear. Thank God we've got a spiritual bodyguard. Amen. We've got a spiritual bodyguard.

The Bible says, He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. This spiritual bodyguard, our Saviour, is going to watch over us.

[28:01] He'll keep us from Satan's lethal power. Psalm 91, have a read for homework. It goes on to say how God will cover us. He will deliver us. How God is our refuge and our fortress.

He's our shield. And it says, Thou shalt not be afraid. Friends, when you think about it, we've got 24 by 7 security. We've got a full time. We've got security guards here.

But more than human security guards, we've got 24 by 7 security. It says his eyes are watching over us 24-7. And we can be assured of his keeping. But the devil wants to keep you out of the

secret place of the Most High.

He doesn't want you to go there. To actually go to God in prayer, to commune with him. So set yourself there in the secret place of the Most High. And the third thing, the third prong of the devil's pitchfork is that the thief, he's come to be a thief, a killer.

He wants to steal, to kill. And thirdly, he wants to destroy. To destroy is the opposite of construct, isn't it? To destroy. God wants to preserve, to save, to construct, to build people.

[29:06] The devil wants to tear things down, to destroy. He wants your destruction. Think of the devil. He's a terrorist. He's actually a terrorist. He's a wrecker. He wants to ravage, spoil, make havoc, vandalize.

He wants to sabotage and wreck and ruin everything that's of God and good. He wants to bulldoze it and tear it down, dismantle it, smash it, shatter and harm it.

He wants to inflict pain, to tear you apart. He wants to cause you mischief and desolation. Now, destruction can come by neglect. The Bible talks in Matthew 9, 17 about some old wineskins and it says they were perishing with time and decay.

Sometimes we can have destruction spiritually when we just neglect. Like an old wineskin getting hard and cracking and breaking. Sometimes destruction comes through willful actions like the prodigal son again where he says, he comes to his senses, he comes to himself and he says, how many of my father's hired servants have got bread enough to spare and I perish.

I'm getting destroyed here with my hunger. Satan wants you to perish with hunger. He wants to starve you from spiritual truth. James 1 talks about the burning heat of the sun, of the flower perishing in the heat of the sun.

[30:32] And he wants you to be like that. He wants you to fade. He wants you to fall. He wants to stunt your growth. He wants you to be like a dried up flower to destroy your fruitfulness. Again, it's like the seed.

Again, this time the seed falling amongst the thorns. Luke 8, 14 talks about the choking of the seed from the riches and the cares and pleasures of this life so that it brings no fruit to perfection.

Brother, sister, the devil doesn't want you fruitful. He doesn't want you to get to the place of fruitfulness. He wants you to stay in destruction and emptiness to destroy your life in every dimension.

Think of it, friends. What the devil wants to destroy? Love, relationship, family. The devil wants to destroy peace. He wants to destroy purity, that clean heart and mind.

He wants to pollute that. And sometimes it's slow and steady. That disintegration, like they say about the Acropolis. The Acropolis there in Greece is obviously many hundreds of years old and that Acropolis is crumbling.

[31:38] It's just starting to fall apart. And the devil is like that, working like a cancer. You know, we've got some concrete at home and it's got concrete cancer they call it, where it's actually starting to crumble.

Concrete cancer. The concrete has lost its strength and it's crumbling. It's like acid. Water drops. Slow and steady, like a termite.

The devil wants to destroy in all kinds of fashions like that. He wants to destroy your testimony to make you look like a fool. Look at what happened with Noah, this man of God, one of the, well, the best God had on the planet pretty much, wasn't it?

And here he was, he shamed himself with his sinful actions whilst drunk. The devil wants to destroy your testimony. The devil wants to destroy righteousness.

There's many things we could say. He wants to destroy churches. He loves it when churches close their doors. He wants to stifle you from going to church, from being the church.

[32:42] He wants to take and destroy your worship of God. Fellowship. He doesn't want you to fellowship. He doesn't want you to actually serve. Be not weary in well-doing.

We're witnessing the destruction of a nation, even our own land. The moral fabric of Australia is in tatters. Righteousness exalteth the nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Destruction is here and there. It's on the right hand and on the left. We see Isaiah 5 verse 20. Woe to them that call evil good and good evil. There's a destruction going on all around.

Australia is in a mode, in a pathway of destruction. And it's been true in the records of civilisations and nations through history as they turned from God and truth.

There's that moral slide and decay that was inevitable. And the rot sets in. You see that through the great civilisations when they had some kind of morality and then they just got corrupted and corrupted and that breakdown of society.

[33:46] In recent news, the moral bankruptcy of what's happening in Disney. I don't know if people have heard the latest about that but it's even on the front headlines of our news of late in recent days where Disney has announced they're openly stating this goal to indoctrinate your children with an LGBTQ lifestyle.

Their intent on it. They've actually come out and said it black and white. And they've set this goal that by the end of 2022, this year at least 50% of Disney characters will represent the LGBTQ or racial minority communities.

They're wanting to push this agenda, this foul, wicked agenda of Sodom on our children. Friends, this is Disney. We cannot trust them.

Destruction. Destruction. It can happen slowly. Like I said before about termites eating away, sometimes over long stretches of time. I've seen it, the damage they can do.

Just the little things. The Bible talks about a little leaven in the lump. Just a little, just an eensy-weensy bit of sin, just a little bit of compromise, just a little bit of error, of falseness, of stretching the truth.

[35:08] Just a little bit of leaven corrupts the whole lump of dough, the whole loaf. And we see little foxes spoil the vines, those little foxes running around and tearing it apart.

I was watching a program lately about an aircraft disaster and it all started with just a little crack, just a little fatigue in the metal, just a little fatigue in the aircraft component and destruction was inevitable.

It might not be evident for some while. Friends, destruction can creep up on us, that's the point as well. Sometimes we're not even aware that destruction is happening and we'll end up like these civilisations of old that have gone, they're destroyed.

The Bible talks about evil communications, corrupt, good manners. So destruction happens by association too. You hang around the devil's crowd and you start talking like the devil, thinking like the devil, laughing at the jokes of the devil, using the Lord's name in vain like the devil.

Friends, the devil is a monster and he's on the war path, he's on the loose, he wants to destroy lives, destroy churches, destroy relationships and he'll use whatever means he can.

[36:19] And you know, some might say drugs, drink, but it could be just negativity, could be just not thinking about God, just getting lazy, getting lax. One of the biggest causes of destruction is pride.

It says pride goes before a destruction, that haughty spirit before the fall. And when we get big shot kind of idea about ourselves, that's when danger comes. That's when we fall in a big pit, when we get proud, prideful.

So friends, don't settle for the devil and his tricks and lies. Don't fall for it. The Bible says, be careful what you sow because you're going to reap it.

And thankfully, the Bible talks about the potter, our Lord God, our master potter, our Lord, who sees the clay and it's marred in his hands. He sees when we fouled up, but he remakes us.

That's the good thing. Throws his back on that spinning wheel, the potter's wheel, and he remakes us. So even when we foul up, if we can just be clay in the potter's hands, that's what we need to be.

[37:21] Even when the devil's messed us up so bad, we've sinned, we've fouled up, we've blown our testimony, we've not been a good witness, we've not been a strong Christian, we can get God, put me back on that wheel, and get me right again.

Reshape me, let me be shaped by your fingers, by your hand. Make me what you want me to be.

God can remake the vessel, amen? So friends, I know I've laboured much about the devil and I've almost run out of time for the good part of my sermon, which is the opposite, that the devil's come to steal, kill, destroy, but I have come that you might have life.

The Lord Jesus says I have come. Think about his purpose. I have come. He says that you might have life and have it more abundantly. Think of the abundance that you have as a believer. Now we're not saying about prosperity and the health, wealth, gospel, that you become a Christian and your life's just going to suddenly be perfect and you're going to have all the money you could ever imagine and the best of everything you can drive or live in, but we're talking about the real abundance, the real abundance, abundance, that abundant life, the abundance of life, the gifts of God that he gives to us, that overflow of God, that plenty of God in the context of what matters, of peace, of joy, of all the opposite of what the devil wants to take from you, God wants to give to you. Amen? All of those things the devil wants to take, all of those things the devil wants to kill, all of those things the devil wants to destroy, God wants to give to you. He's the opposite.

[38:59] So we see Ephesians 3.19 about the fullness of God. It talks about how we can have an exceeding above. We can have the fullness of God, not the emptiness of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Just take these verses in, think about these words that I'm going to give to you today about what God wants you to have. He wants you to have abundant grace. We've heard about grace, but for grace we can't even get saved.

But for grace we're damned. But for grace we wouldn't have the cross, we wouldn't have his blood shed for us, we wouldn't have a salvation. And it says the gift by grace he's given.

It's abounded, it says, unto many. Romans 5.15 And it says where sin abounded, grace did much more, much more abound. Amen. So you might say look I'm too sinful, God's grace can't be enough for me.

That's a lie from the devil. You can't be too sinful that God's grace can't save you. That's not saying go and sin. Go and sin no more. But find the grace, that you can know the grace.

[40:07] In your sin you can know his grace, his saving. Because grace abounds where sin abounds. Grace abounds much more. Amen. Thank God for that. Paul says to Timothy 1 1 Timothy 1 14.

The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Think about the abounding of grace. We don't deserve it but he lavishes it upon us.

If we just receive it, simply receive it, we see the love that God wants for us. He talks about love that abounds, abounding in love, one toward another.

We see about hope, Romans 15.13. He's the God of hope and he wants us to abound in hope it says. You can have a hope, a hopefulness and that's got the sense of an assurance, of a promise that we can believe in, of God's word, of God's truth.

That hope that we have is not a hoping so, it's a knowing so that it's a sure and confident hope, it's a certain hope. That's the sense of it, that we can have an abounding in that hope of eternal life.

[41:14] We see also we can abound in work. Now people probably don't think, well work is maybe something you don't want to do, but actually the work of God is a good thing to do. The work of God is no burden, it's not some burdensome yoke.

The work that he gives to us to serve him, it's a meaningful purpose. To serve God is a joyful thing. And so he wants that all grace abound towards you, it says, that you have all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work.

He wants you to abound. He wants you to want to abound in serving him. Because serving God is a blessing, it's a joy. And of course we know the other scripture where he says, my beloved brethren be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

And we see that there's an abounding of peace. It tells how the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. God wants us to have peace that abounds.

A peace that's not based on this world, on happenstance, what's happening to us, but a peace that's rock solid, it's locked in, it's unmovable, it's a confident, absolute peace.

[42:26] Not based on what our life is like, but based on his promise of peace in the soul. And there's a pardon that's abundant too. It says, let the wicked forsake his way, the unrighteous man his thoughts, let him return unto the Lord and he'll have mercy upon him and to our God, for he will abundantly, abundantly, there's that word again, he will abundantly pardon.

Don't you just love that? God will abundantly pardon. If you're saved and you've got a dark past, well we all have, it's taken, it's gone, it's washed away, it's completely erased, it's under the blood, he's abundantly pardoned you that believe.

There's an abundance of pardon. And it says in 1 Peter 1.3, there's an abundant mercy by which we're born again. So friends, our Lord promises us an abundance, an abundant life, an abundant life.

And he's got an abundance for us and he wants us to have it. The devil wants to take it, right? God wants to give you abounding, eternal life. The devil wants you to have death and destruction.

But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus. Friends, think of the wealth, the abundance, the riches of Christ, the riches of God, the riches in glory.

[43:46] It's eternal life. That's true wealth. That's true abounding.

Really, friends, we've seen today the devil's pitchfork. We've seen Satan's pitchfork.

The Lord wants to give us the opposite of all that the devil wants to take, to steal, to kill, to destroy. God wants you to have abounding. God is the giver.

He's the opposite of Satan. So the choice is clear. Who are you going to follow? Friends, honestly, the one who gives you life, the one who saves you, he gives you new birth, he gives you restoration, he builds you, he abounds for you, or the devil.

He'll take it all away every chance he can. Friends, the Bible says that the Lord is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Let me close really with a challenge this morning.

Are you on the Lord's side? Will you stand with Christ? Or will you stay in the devil's camp? Do you want that pitchfork stabbing you every so often?

[44:54] I should have brought one. I thought I could bring like a... I've got like a pitchfork fork, but it's got four prongs, so it wouldn't work. I'd have had to cut one off.

But you imagine the devil's going to poke you and stab you with his pitchfork. Friends, rather come to Christ. Amen. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you're the good shepherd. You give your life for the sheep.

We know, Lord, you want us to have life and life more abundant. Without that, we've got death, destruction, we've got misery. Lord, in the devil's plan for us, we want your plan for our life.

We want your will. We want to see that, Lord. We pray each one might know that trust to know truly you've given everything, that abounding of grace, that abounding of love, that abounding of your hope and help, your mercy, your peace.

Lord God, we thank you for it. Help us not to neglect it. Help us always, Lord, to have that sense where we'll wise up to what the devil wants and know his fingerprints, as it were, when we see those things that he might subtly try to do to diddle us of your grace and goodness, Lord, when he tries to steal.

[46:06] Help us, Lord, to know and to resist the devil. As your word says, we should submit to God and resist the devil and he will flee from you. Thank you for that promise.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.