

Embracing the Grace of Jesus



Gary Wilkerson February 22, 2021

There's a common misconception about Jesus' famous words in John about the sheep, the shepherd and the thief. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:1,7-10, ESV).

Now normally, if we consider the thief, we think that means he's going to tempt us, to fill our hearts with lust, greed, anger and strife. If we consider the context, though, that's not exactly what this passage is saying. In John chapter nine, Jesus had just healed a blind man in the temple, and the religious leaders — all of the people trying to come into the kingdom of heaven through a religious, rule-keeping way — were saying that Jesus' work was from the Devil and not of God. They really didn't like Christ saying that he was the way, the only way, to God.

There's a way to get back into abundant life. If you've wandered and you want to get back to the freedom you had in Christ, that's a dangerous thing in the Devil's mind.

You may be in confusion, guilt or condemnation and not living in the victory that Christ has given us. That's when the thief comes along and says, "You want to go back? I'm going to help you return, and here's how. We'll find another way in. We'll find some religious system, some law-keeping, some works of the flesh so you can come back in your own strength."

That will kill and steal from us and destroy us. Christ is the only way, our only saving grace and we must embrace that powerful truth.

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