

# **If Satan Can't Steal Your Joy...**

*by*  
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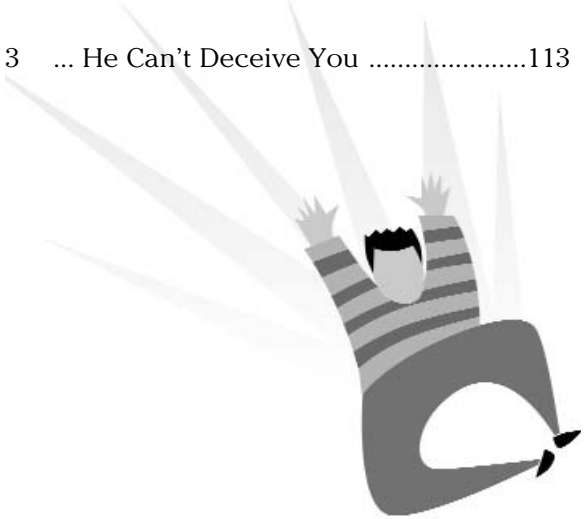
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# 1

## **... He Can't Keep Your Goods**

Have you ever had anything stolen from you by the devil? Well, if you've ever had any contact with him, then he has undoubtedly stolen something from you at one time or another.

In the tenth chapter of John, Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (v. 10). We know that the

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thief He is referring to is Satan. Since Satan is a thief by nature, he steals. That is the nature of a thief.

Jesus says that Satan is a thief, so it shouldn't be uncommon for him to go around trying to steal things, nor should it be surprising to us that he does. He is after something. The Bible says he is after the Word in your heart. (Mark 4:15.) He is after your joy, your power, your peace, your courage, your faith, and your comfort. But not only that, he is after your goods.

One way Satan discourages many of God's people is through affliction and persecution. If that doesn't work, he attacks their material and physical possessions. He will attack their car, their finances, or their physical bodies.

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We need to realize something about healing and divine health. Many people are struggling with healing because they see healing as something to be attained, something “out there somewhere” which they are trying to get. But, in reality, healing is not “out there somewhere.” As far as God is concerned, we already have healing. It was given to us through the work of the Cross.

Divine health is something we already possess. When symptoms occur, it is nothing more than the thief trying to steal the health that is already ours.

In other words, divine health is not something we are trying to get from God; it is something the devil is trying to take away from us!

As long as people are trying to get health, they can't see themselves with it; and until

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they see themselves with it, they won't experience it.

Let me explain it this way. When the devil tries to put a symptom of sickness or disease on my body, I absolutely refuse to accept it.

A short time ago he tried to put symptoms of the flu on me. My nose and eyes started to run. I began to sneeze and ache all over. I haven't had the flu since 1969, and I'm not going to have it now. I'm redeemed from the flu!

Immediately I began to confess God's Word that I'm healed by the stripes of Jesus. I rebuked Satan and refused his lying symptoms. I wasn't trying to *get* something I didn't have; I was *keeping* something I already have. I *am* healed.

Those symptoms were an intimidation of the adversary. The thief was trying to steal

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one of my possessions—my health. I have health and I stand protective over what is already mine.

Let me give you an example to illustrate my meaning. Suppose a stranger walked into your kitchen, loaded your refrigerator on a dolly, and started wheeling it out the door. What would you do? You would probably stop him.

You wouldn't start saying, "It certainly would be nice to have a refrigerator. One of these days, in the sweet by and by, I'm going to have a refrigerator." No, you already have a refrigerator, but somebody is trying to steal it.

No one in his right mind would open the door for a thief, stand there and watch his refrigerator being rolled away, then say, "You know, I remember when we used to have a



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refrigerator. One of these days, we'll have another one."

He is going to step in front of that thief and say, in no uncertain terms, "Where do you think you're going with my refrigerator? Get your hands off my property and get out of here!" He wouldn't be trying to *get* a refrigerator; he would be *keeping* the one he has.

So it is with healing. I am healed. When symptoms come, I just brace myself and tell the devil, "Hold it right there, bud! In the name of Jesus Christ, that's as far as you go. You're not getting my health. I'm healed, and you're not going to steal my health! Get out of here—*now!*"

I've learned to do this where my money is concerned, too. Have you ever believed God for a



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hundred dollars to pay off a note? Then when you got it, the car broke down. You had to spend the hundred dollars to get it fixed—and you still didn't pay off the note.

Do you know why that sort of thing happens? Because the devil is trying to steal our money. He's a thief. As Jesus said, "he comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy." If he is a thief, we shouldn't be surprised that he tries to steal from us.

In this study I don't want to major on stealing. The message I have to share with you is not negative; it is positive. The only reason I mention Satan's stealing is to make us aware of his devices so we can recognize them and overcome them instead of letting them keep us from victory and success.

To defeat the devil and live the abundant life, you need to know how Satan operates.

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The Apostle Paul said, “We’re not ignorant of his devices, lest he get the advantage over us” (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan has the advantage over people who don’t understand how he operates. Once we are aware of his intentions and his methods we should not major on the devil or demons. Let’s major on the victory that is ours in Christ Jesus.

## **SATAN STEALS THE WORD**

*But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;*

*Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.*

*For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.*

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*Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

*Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Hebrews 10:32-39

Notice verse 32 once again: “But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated (or enlightened NAS), ye endured a great fight of afflictions.” When you receive the Word, you are illuminated or enlightened. Psalm 119:130 says, “The entrance of thy words giveth light.” When the Word enters your heart, it gives light; you are illuminated and enlightened.

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Did you notice that once you receive the Word, the war is on? People have told me, “Dear God, I was doing all right until I got turned on to the Word.” No, they weren’t doing all right. They just thought they were.

Did you notice that after you got some Word in you, you had to stand in faith for that Word? Remember what Jesus said in Mark 4:15? He said that once the Word is sown in a man’s heart, Satan comes immediately to take it away. Satan is a thief; he takes things away. Once the Word is sown, Satan “cometh immediately” to take it away.

The writer of Hebrews reminds them that “after ye were illuminated (by the Word), ye endured a great fight of afflictions” (Heb. 10:32). In Mark 4:17 Jesus spoke of those who “have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or

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persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.”

Why did the affliction or persecution arise? *For the Word's sake!*

Satan is after the Word in your heart. You are no threat to him until you get God's Word in your heart. Then you become dangerous to him. Why? Because the Word of God is the power of God. The Apostle Paul said, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation...” (Rom. 1:16). *When you get God's Word in your heart, you get God's power in your life.* It's the power of God that stops Satan's operation, and he's clever enough to realize that.

The devil didn't bother me much before I got saved. Sure, he controlled my life, but he didn't have to worry about me getting healed

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or about me speaking in tongues. I hadn't heard about those things.

Before I found out what God's Word said about prosperity, I just figured, "You win a few; you lose a few. What will be, will be. If you're broke, you're broke; if you're not, you're not. The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. That's just the way the cookie crumbles."

One day I discovered 3 John 2: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." The day I learned that, the light was turned on inside me. I was illuminated or enlightened. I had discovered that it was God's will that I prosper. So I prepared to prosper. Then it seemed that my finances were attacked harder than ever before. All I had done was to find one verse!



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When I found out I had a right to prosper, what happened? My car blew up! That old clunker I was driving had over 100,000 miles on it. It was a total wreck. Before I went into the ministry, I was an auto body repairman. I had never owned a car that had not been “totaled out” first. Every car I had driven in my life had been wrecked and rebuilt.

My dad gave me the first car I owned. It was a 1929 Model A coupe that had been wrecked and reworked. I went from a '29 model to a '32 model to a '49 model, and so on. All of them had been wrecked.

When I graduated from high school, I didn't want to be an accountant, a businessman, or a lawyer. I wanted to be a “fender bender.” My whole life was automobiles, and that was the career I wanted.



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I was a hot-rodder. I love fast cars. Even when Carolyn and I married, I still drove clunkers. I put Carolyn in a '55 Chevy with a hot engine when she only knew how to drive a 6-cylinder. There were times that I would find her out on the road somewhere with the hood up, looking. She had no idea what to do to fix it. She would just stand and look at the motor. Then she started carrying a hammer around with her. When the car would break down, she would just start beating on the engine. But what should I have expected?

When I left the automotive business in 1969 and started preparing for the ministry, I was driving a '64 Oldsmobile 98 that was a wreck. I had paid \$187.50 for it and rebuilt it. You couldn't tell by looking that it had been wrecked, but it had 100,000 miles on it when I bought it. The transmission slipped and the

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engine clattered. But it sure was pretty! After all, I was a body man, not a mechanic.

Then one night I found out that, as a child of God, I had a right to prosper. When that truth was revealed in my heart, Carolyn and I joined hands and prayed for abundance. We prayed: "Father, in the name of Jesus, Your Word says You desire that we prosper. Your Word says You open up Your hand and fulfill the desire of every living thing, that You supply all our need. We have need of a better automobile, so we believe we receive it."

Immediately after we prayed that prayer, our faith was tested.

A former employer called and asked me to come see him, so I drove my car to his place of business. As I was sharing my testimony with him, it was like the words of King Agrippa

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to Paul: “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian” (Acts 26:28). That’s how it was with this man. Though I had captured him with my testimony, he wasn’t quite ready to make a commitment. But he was pleased with all the good things God was doing for me.

As we left his office together, he followed me to my car, and I sat in it telling him about the abundant life in Christ Jesus. Then I cranked it up and started to back out. Before I could get out of the driveway, the thing blew up and caught on fire! What a wonderful testimony of the abundant life!

Satan came immediately to steal the Word. The first thought I had was exactly what the devil wanted me to think, *This stuff doesn't work!* Then I thought, *If I was Oral Roberts, it would work, but I'm Jerry Savelle. It works for Kenneth Copeland, but I'm not Kenneth Copeland.*

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There I was, minding my own business, when my car blew up. Why? All I did was find out I had a right to prosper. You know, it seemed to me that Satan should have blown up God's chariot instead of my car. But the devil blew up my car and put me out of commission. They towed the thing to my house and set it in the carport. That was it; that was all I had to drive.

Now in a situation like that, what do you do? I wanted to take my Bible, throw it out the window—along with all those Kenneth Copeland tapes—and go back to beating fenders, drinking beer, smoking cigarettes, and going to hell!

Then I thought, *Now, wait a minute. I've missed it somewhere.* That's when I found out in Mark chapter 4, that Satan comes *immediately* to steal the Word. I discovered that

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“affliction or persecution ariseth for the word’s sake” (v. 17).

I thought it was a personal thing Satan had against me. It wasn’t. He doesn’t care anything about you or me. It’s the Word in us that he hates and fears.

I heard Kenneth Copeland make a statement years ago and it went off in my heart. He said, “The devil doesn’t care whether you live or die. In fact, it would please him if you would just die right now and go on to heaven. Then you would be out of his way.”



That’s right. You’re not much of a threat to Satan in heaven. You’re out of the way then. It’s while you’re here on earth with the Word churning in your heart that you give the devil fits.

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You see, we've always had an image of the devil going around giving *us* fits. He *is* a worthy opponent, and he *does* come to steal, to kill, and to destroy; but it's time the Body of Christ started giving *him* fits! It's time we rise up and take our rightful place. It's time we determine in our hearts that the devil isn't going to steal the Word out of us, but every time he intimidates us, we are going to intimidate him.

I found out that Satan will come to get the Word. He will try to steal the Word out of my heart. I learned that affliction and persecution arise for the Word's sake. I discovered that I had received a revelation from God, and that revelation made me dangerous. You can see that it was to Satan's advantage to attack me immediately, to do anything he could to cripple me financially so I would begin to think, *This just doesn't work.*

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It was Satan's idea that I throw my Bible out the window. It was his suggestion that I go back to being just one of those "normal" Christians, careful not to get too far off into this "faith stuff."

## **FOR THE WORD'S SAKE**

Let's look at what Paul says again: "After ye were illuminated (or enlightened), ye endured a great fight of afflictions" (Heb. 10:32). He is telling us here what Jesus said: "that afflictions come for the Word's sake." After you have received revelation from the Word of God, the fight is on. You are engaged in warfare.

I'm not saying this to frighten you. I'm not emphasizing this fact so you will walk around thinking, *Oh, my God, what am I going to do when the afflictions come?* I am simply making

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you aware that we have an enemy, an enemy that will oppose us.

God tells us in His Word that His people are destroyed because of a lack of knowledge. (Hos. 4:6.) If you don't know how the devil operates, then you'll be one of those who blame God for what the devil is doing. You need to know that God is not sending those trials to teach you a lesson. God is not killing your cattle, wrecking your vehicles, or striking your family with disease "to teach you something."

When the devil cut off my baby's fingers in 1969, Christians actually told me God did that to teach me something. I don't serve a God Who cuts off a baby's fingers to teach lessons. If He wanted to teach *me* something, why didn't He cut off *my* fingers? I used to serve a god like that—the devil—but I got delivered



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from his power. Now I serve a God of love. *My God is a deliverer, not a destroyer.*

Someone may ask, “Don’t you believe in the wrath of God?” I certainly do, but I’ll never experience it because I’m His child. If you are God’s child, you won’t experience His wrath either. His wrath is reserved for His enemies, not for His own children.

## **A PUBLIC SPECTACLE**

*. . . after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;*

*Partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.*

Hebrews 10:32,33

Do you know what a “gazingstock” is? *The Twentieth Century New Testament* translates it as “a public spectacle.”

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Since you made a decision to live by God's Word, have you ever felt like you suddenly became a public spectacle? Does it sometimes seem that everybody is watching you—that you're on trial and you'd better perform?

Many times a wife will get turned on to the Word before her husband. He just stands by scowling and thinking, *I don't know if this stuff works or not. We'll just see. If she gets that new refrigerator by faith, then I'll believe.* He has put his wife and God's Word on trial.

Before I got turned on to God, Carolyn would ask me to go to church with her. I didn't like church, I didn't like preachers, and I didn't care who knew it!

When Kenneth Copeland came to town for a series of meetings, she begged me to go with her. "Jerry, please go. I promise you, this man's not like all the rest."

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“Carolyn, you told me the same thing about the last 17 preachers, and you lied 17 times! I’m not going to hear this Copeland fellow.”

So she went by herself. When she came home from those meetings, I could tell something was different about her, but I wouldn’t let her know it. She would say, “Jerry, please, just come to one meeting and see for yourself.”

“Carolyn, I did that the last time. Every time I go, you have told the preacher about me, so he picks me out of the audience and tells me things I don’t want to hear.”



She said, “I’ve never told those preachers anything about you!”

“You had to. How else would they know those things?” (At that time, I had no knowl-

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edge of spiritual gifts, so all I could think was that Carolyn had told them about me.)

It never failed. It happened in every meeting I would go to. It was as if I were waving a red flag. As soon as the preacher finished his sermon, he would pick me out of the congregation, call me up front, and tell me what all the others had told me: "You're going to preach."

I was convinced that Carolyn was putting them up to it. I would storm out of that church, saying, "I'm never going back. Those guys are crazy. I'm not preaching, and you're not getting me in that church again!"

But during Copeland's meeting, she became a new woman. I knew something had happened to her. She had received the Word and been delivered of that religious spirit she had been bound up in. She begged me again,

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“Jerry, this is the last service. Please go with me.” Finally, she talked me into going.

I sat on the last row with my mind made up that I wasn't going to listen to anything this guy had to say. But for the first time, my wife had told the truth. Kenneth Copeland wasn't like the rest of them. I had never seen anyone like him. I thought he was a smart aleck at first.

The first thing he did shocked me. After the choir had sung for a while, he got up and said, “All those songs you people sang tonight were embalmed with unbelief.”

I thought to myself, *How can he say such a thing?* But he was right!

The next thing he said was, “Where's Brother Herb?”

Someone answered, “He's at home.”

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Copeland boomed, "At home? I told you to have him in the service tonight! God's going to heal him. Go get him!"

About three guys jumped out of their seats and left. Then Copeland turned to the congregation and said, "Open your Bibles," and he started preaching.

Well, he got my attention. I didn't intend to listen, but I couldn't help it after that. I didn't know what the guy was going to do next.

Boy, could he preach! The title of the sermon was "The Word of Faith." I never will forget it. He preached about how David took faith in his covenant with God and slew Goliath. Just as he reached the part where Goliath is beheaded, in walk these three guys carrying some fellow like a baby. They put him down about three rows in front of me,

and I could see that he was paralyzed from the neck down.

As soon as they let go of the man, Brother Copeland jumped off the platform, ran up to him, pointed his finger at him, and said, "You devil, come out of him in the name of Jesus!" He grabbed him by the hand, jerked him off the pew, and ran around the church with him. That man took off and outran Brother Copeland!

Needless to say, from then on Kenneth Copeland had my undivided attention. What really got my attention was his honesty and boldness. For the first time in my life, I saw a preacher who made no apologies for being a Christian. He wasn't a smart aleck; he was just very bold in what he believed and dared to act on it.

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The message he preached changed my life. At three o'clock one morning, I made Jesus Christ the Lord of my life, got filled with the Holy Ghost, and accepted the call to ministry.

I started studying the Word and that's when the devil came at me from every angle. I felt like a public spectacle—like all the people who had been praying for me were standing back, hoping I'd fail.

Have you ever felt that way? Has it ever seemed to you that some of your closest friends, some of the people you grew up with in the Lord, were just standing back, thinking, *When he doesn't get the car he's believing for, then it'll prove that faith stuff doesn't work?*

Satan doesn't play fair. Paul says you are made a gazingstock—a public spectacle.