

BIBLE STUDY SERIES:

TRUSTING THE FATHER

THE THIEF (DISCERNMENT & BATTLE)

Chris Badenhorst

THE THIEF (DISCERNMENT & BATTLE)

INTENTION:

We live in a world where there are many things we have or desire that others want to steal from us or keep us from having. Some, because they are jealous and want what you have; others because of their own lack; and some because they just don't want you to have it. We call these people thieves.

It is the "thief that comes to steal, kill, and destroy" anything the Lord has Life in for you. This thief does not want you to succeed in the Lord of what He has planned for you. But the thief may not be who you think it is.

THE THIEF (DISCERNMENT & BATTLE)

Bible Study: Lesson 029

I. TOPIC:

We want to look at The Thief (Discernment & Battle).

When we look at the verse about it being “a thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” ([John 10:10](#)), we can easily say that this is talking about Satan. It can be—but more specifically, it is not just him, but anything that opposes the Lord (or us with the Lord). The Thief ([G2812](#)) translates as: *an embezzler, pilferer*.

This is what we want to study out. What is the “thief” that is taking away from you a relationship with the Lord, your healing, or the doing of His Will as our own? How do we discern the “thief”? And what is our battle against the “thief”?

Since we know that Christ Jesus destroyed (disarmed) the power of Satan ([Luke 10:17-20](#) and [Colossians 2:15](#)), we can acknowledge that he is not the greatest enemy to the Lord—he never was a threat to God, only a threat to humanity. And Jesus, as a human, defeated Satan for us—claiming back humanities authority over Satan!

- Refer also: Bible Study Lesson 010 – Satan Defeated! We Have Authority (CEB)

So, although Satan may still oppose us, we are also opposed by other things often credited to Satan (or the Devil). But the Devil ([G1228](#)) is simply: *a calumniator (to utter maliciously false statements, charges, or imputations about; to injure the reputation of by ‘misrepresentation’), false accuser, slanderer*. So, anything that does those things against God or whom you are in Christ is what you must discern and battle. This includes:

- Our own flesh.
- Our unrenewed mind (strongholds).
- Our filtered (veiled) or hardened heart.
- The Law.
- Fear.
- Other spirits.
- False teachings / teachers.
- Unbelief.

For me, I have had to overcome each of these in my Christian life—from false beliefs to my own flesh. The flesh being the biggest obstacle against whom we are in Christ; for it is our own flesh (learned nurture/nature from this world) that is our worst enemy. Even for Jesus, it wasn’t Satan keeping Him from the Cross, but His own flesh.

It’s an opportunity to come to an understanding that just because it feels right, does not mean it’s from God. Test the spirits and what your flesh is trying to do: their motives, adversary, tradition, want, emotions, feelings, character, nature, habits, influence, pressure, etc). Look how often Jesus corrected His Disciples on what they thought was the right thing to do in the moment—like call down fire from heaven to punish a city, or keep Jesus from getting arrested and crucified. Even the Pharisees felt they were doing right by objecting to how Jesus ministered and healed people.

What you submit yourselves to (the flesh or the Lord), you become slaves to—so choose the Lord ([Romans 6:16](#)).

II. READING: [Romans 8:1-39](#) (CSB)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, 2 because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering, 4 in order that the law’s requirement would be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit have their minds set on the things of the Spirit. 6 Now the mindset of the flesh is death, but the mindset of the Spirit is life and peace. 7 The mindset of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit to God’s law. Indeed, it is unable to do so. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him. 10 Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through his Spirit who lives in you.

12 So then, brothers and sisters, we are not obligated to the flesh to live according to the flesh, 13 because if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

14 For all those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. 15 For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" 16 The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, 17 and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation eagerly waits with anticipation for God's sons to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly, but because of him who subjected it—in the hope 21 that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage to decay into the glorious freedom of God's children. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together with labour pains until now. 23 Not only that, but we ourselves who have the Spirit as the firstfruits—we also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 Now in this hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? 25 Now if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patience.

26 In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28 We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, he also glorified.

31 What, then, are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He did not even spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. How will he not also with him grant us everything? 33 Who can bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. 34 Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is the one who died, but even more, has been raised; he also is at the right hand of God and intercedes for us. 35 Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Can affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 As it is written:

Because of you we are being put to death all day long; we are counted as sheep to be slaughtered.

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

III. RELATED VERSES AND QUESTIONS:

- A. Our flesh is always at war with our Born-Again Spirit! And we can easily discern some of what is the flesh and what is the Spirit through the passage below. But sometimes we get deceived by the flesh in the things not listed—ways we grew up and learned about discrimination, prejudices, xenophobia, racism, gender inequality, or even our own personality types that go against the Spirit.

[Galatians 5:13-26](#) (CSB) {PoG}

For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbour as yourself. 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another.

16 I say, then, walk by the Spirit and you will certainly not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

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19 Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, 21 envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar. I am warning you about these things—as I warned you before—that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, {faith}, 23 gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Question: Can the Lord help us reveal our Spirit-self, to comparatively expose the flesh and overcome it?

Response:

- B. Our minds are often trained in this world on the negative (just be aware of your thoughts against yourself). When we think in opposition to the Spirit, we can hinder the Will of the Lord through our lives as “vessels of the Holy Spirit”. Our mind can even deceive us into thinking that sins make us enemies to God when they are not ([Colossians 1:21-22](#)). This is why it is so important to renew our minds to be moulded in the correct knowledge of the Lord, and allowing Him (through the Spirit) to be the “Stronger man” that overpowers your strongholds!

[Luke 11:21-22](#) (CSB) {PoG}

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his estate, his possessions are secure. 22 But when one stronger *{the Holy Spirit}* than he attacks and overpowers him, he takes from him all his weapons *{strongholds}* he trusted in *{his flesh}*, and divides up his plunder *{strips away his weapons and valuables which he relied on}*.

[Romans 12:2](#) (CSB)

Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

[2 Corinthians 10:3-6](#) (CSB) {PoG}

For although we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh, 4 since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments 5 and every proud thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we *{lead away}* every thought captive to obey Christ. 6 And we are ready to punish any disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

[2 Peter 1:2](#) (CSB) {PoG}

May grace and peace be multiplied to you through the *{correct}* knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Question: What are some of the things the Lord has renewed in your mind and thinking (healing parts of you)?

Response:

- C. Our hardened hearts also disrupt our walk with the Lord. The hardened heart of an unbeliever does not let the Lord in; while the hardened heart of a believer does not let the Lord out from in them. We essentially block Heaven from coming down and manifesting in this world and a person ([Matthew 16:19](#)).

[2 Corinthians 3:14-16](#) (CSB)

but their minds were hardened. For to this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains; it is not lifted, because it is set aside only in Christ. 15 Yet still today, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts, 16 but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.

[Hebrews 3:12-15](#) (CSB)

Watch out, brothers and sisters, so that there won't be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage each other daily, while it is still called today, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception. 14 For we have become participants in Christ if we hold firmly until the end the reality that we had at the start. 15 As it is said: Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.

Question: Have you ever hardened your heart to something the Lord is speaking to you about?

Response:

- D. The Law will always bring death, because it appeals to the flesh for the flesh to seek its own self-righteousness and reward. For us to submit to the Law, we are removing ourselves from the Grace of the Lord into self-works!

[1 Corinthians 15:56-57](#) (CSB)

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

[2 Corinthians 3:6-9](#) (CSB)

He has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7 Now if the ministry that brought death, chiselled in letters on stones, came with glory, so that the Israelites were not able to gaze steadily at Moses's face because of its glory, which was set aside, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry that brought condemnation had glory, the ministry that brings righteousness overflows with even more glory.

[Galatians 3:10-14](#) (CSB)

For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, Everyone who does not do everything written in the book of the law is cursed. 11 Now it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law, because the righteous will live by faith. 12 But the law is not based on faith; instead, the one who does these things will live by them. 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree. 14 The purpose was that the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, so that we could receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Question: Have you ever tried to live up to the impossibility of the Law (even if just the 10 Commandments)? Did you ever rely on your ability 'not to sin' as to gauge the closeness of your relationship to God (as a Father)?

Response:

- E. Fear opposes the Lord—for the Lord specifically says He does not give us a “spirit of fear” ([2 Timothy 1:7](#)). Since fear is not from Him, then it becomes a hindrance in our lives. Instead, His Spirit gives us Boldness!

[Philippians 1:12-14](#) (CSB)

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually advanced the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is because I am in Christ. 14 Most of the brothers have gained confidence in the Lord from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the word fearlessly.

[1 John 4:18a](#) (CSB)

There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment.

Question: Has fear ever kept you from ministering to other people as directed by the Holy Spirit? Have you ever feared God was going to punish you? Have you feared trying something new (that maybe brings up anxiety)?

Response:

- F. “Test the spirits to see if they are from God” ([1 John 4:1](#)). There are differing spiritual forces at work in our lives. We have our own spirit we are born with, then Born-Again Spirit, Holy Spirit, the spirit of this world, and the spirit of our minds. All have something to say, but it is the Spirit of the Lord that we must discern and follow; knowing that the Spiritual realm of God is not the same as (nor in cooperation with) the spiritual realm of Satan.

[Matthew 12:25-28](#) (CSB)

Knowing their thoughts, he told them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is headed for destruction, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. 26 If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons drive them out? For this reason they will be your judges. 28 If I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

[Ephesians 2:1-2](#) (CSB)

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins 2 in which you previously walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient.

[Ephesians 4:22-24](#) (CSB)

to take off your former way of life, the old self that is corrupted by deceitful desires, 23 to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, the one created according to God’s likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.

[Ephesians 6:10-18](#) (CSB)

Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. 11 Put on the full armour of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. 13 For this reason take up the full armour of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand. 14 Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armour on your chest, 15 and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. 16 In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God. 18 Pray at all times in the Spirit with every prayer and request, and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.

Question: Have you ever pondered the different spiritual realms and the affects they can have on you?

Response:

- G. We are instructed to beware of false teachings (as of the Pharisees and Sadducees), or the mixing of the Law and Grace [Old Covenant / New Covenant ([Mark 2:22](#))]. Paul got quite upset with the Galatians and others for this.

[Mark 7:6-8;13](#) (CSB)

He answered them, “Isaiah prophesied correctly about you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 They worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines human commands.

8 Abandoning the command of God, you hold on to human tradition.”

13 You nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many other similar things.”

[Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1-5](#) (CSB)

I am amazed that you are so quickly turning away from him who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— 7 not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are troubling you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, a curse be on him! 9 As we have said before, I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, a curse be on him!

1 You foolish Galatians! Who has cast a spell on you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? 2 I only want to learn this from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by the Spirit, are you now finishing by the flesh? 4 Did you experience so much for nothing—if in fact it was for nothing? 5 So then, does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law? Or is it by believing what you heard.

[Colossians 2:4-10](#) (CSB)

I am saying this so that no one will deceive you with arguments that sound reasonable. 5 For I may be absent in body, but I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see how well ordered you are and the strength of your faith in Christ.

6 So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him, 7 being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.

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8 Be careful that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit based on human tradition, based on the elements of the world, rather than Christ. 9 For the entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ, 10 and you have been filled by him, who is the head over every ruler and authority.

Question: Have you ever shared something about the Lord that turned out to be not from or of Him?

Response:

- H. "Help me in my unbelief" ([Mark 9:14-29](#)). Unbelief is simply believing in something that is opposite of God. It's not about how much you believe God, but the part of you that also believes contrary to a true belief in Him.

[Matthew 13:57-58](#) (CSB)

And they were offended by him. Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his hometown and in his household." 58 And he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

[Mark 16:14-18](#) (CSB)

Later he appeared to the Eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table. He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who saw him after he had risen. 15 Then he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes; if they should drink anything deadly, it will not harm them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will get well."

Question: What have you come to believe about the Lord that you didn't believe before (removing unbelief)?

Response:

IV. FURTHER THOUGHT:

- A. Recognize those things which are Good (of God) and those things which are Evil (not of God).

[Philippians 1:9-10](#) {PoG}

And this I pray, that your [Agape] Love may abundantly exceed, even more by far, in [correct] knowledge and all cognition [through thought, experience, and the senses]; that you may recognize as genuine (after examination / testing) the things that are different and of importance (to distinguish between good and evil); that you may be sincere and without offence (not stumbling or being caused to stumble, nor troubled by a consciousness of sin) till the day of Christ.

Thoughts: For me, I'm tired of God getting blamed for something He had nothing to do with! I am tired of religion and doctrines to make God out to be something He is not. I desire the Truth to be known about who Jesus Christ showed God to be: an Agape Loving Father to us all. Not only striving so for myself, but wanting for others too.

This is my “Righteous Indignation”! And I have this because I was tricked and lied to so much in my 40+ years of life by Christians and Christianity. I was trained in a “God” who doesn't really exist; as compared to the Loving Father I now know. These lies came in my life through people in authority, family, churches, and horrible Bible translations. It is those wrongs that I want to bring into the Light so that others do not have to travel that same path of being the helpless confused Christian I was; which even I had preached to others that false Christianity.

But Jesus Christ, God the Father, and the Holy Ghost did not accomplish all they did for me to be helpless—a messed up life where I was just waiting to die or the Lord to show up again. NO! He came to give me LIFE in the here and now. His authority. His Hope. His breakthrough. His Health. His confidence. His healing of my inner self. His stronghold breaking. I never knew that was even possible growing up. And it took the Truth to set me free.

Now is a time in my life that I can actually Rest in the Sabbath of His Work (not my work). Now is the time I am seeing Him as an Agape Loving Father. Now is the time I have His Faith in and through me. Now is a time I have no fear of Him. Now is a time I am more aware of what is Him and what is not, because I recognise the spirits and programming working against my life. Now I can sit in His throne room without hindrance or judgement.

We are to test if something is of the Lord (Love) or not of the Lord (not love); recognising the difference between the Goodness of God the Father and that which is not of Him. When we don't know the Truth of His Nature and Character (as defined by everything Jesus Christ demonstrated), then we are deceived. Likewise, if we believe God controls everything (that nothing can happen outside His Will), then we deceive ourselves too.

How often do we change the True Nature and Character of God the Father to fit doctrines and religious piety—through manipulating scriptures out of context, changing Bible translations to fit denominational “beliefs”, and altering the Bible to add in “religion” and “works” into it (taking away the very Love-Nature of God).

We must never diminish the completeness of Christ's accomplishments of complete forgiveness, power, authority, active Spiritual Gifts, and the demonstrations of God's Unconditional Love. When the Gospel just becomes words and placid comfort, without Power, it's no longer the Gospel (no longer Alive and Active). Test what the preacher, article, or Bible translation says. Test what you are told! *Test what I even write or say.*

This “spirit of our mind” is our mental way of thinking (our thoughts and imaginations). When our thinking is wrong, it creates all kinds of false doctrines and forced false-beliefs in who God is. This is what to get free from.

To say that God is the one causing calamity or sickness / disease in a person's life is to not test the spirits. To say that God violates our free will to believe by pre-selecting some, and rejecting others, is not truly knowing Him! And to not believe in the Gifts and Miracle workings of the Holy Spirit now, is to reject your authority in Christ.

So this is what I am highly passionate about through these Lessons—to break through the lies, falsities, deception, and discouragement of false doctrines that can plague Christianity and Bible interpretations / translations. I want you to experience the freedom I am experiencing! Christ came to set us free for the sake of being free. This is what I strive for; this is what I long for. So I pray you can be free too!

And, for me, this freedom is more than just a freedom from religion (Christian religion specifically), but a freedom to discover who I am under all that this world encrusted me with—a freedom from: guilt, shame, past traumas (Complex / Childhood PTSD / PTSD), abuse, people-pleasing, fawning, co-dependency, abandonment, rejection, distrust, self-sabotage, deleterious thoughts, financial constraints (poverty-mindset), poor coping mechanisms, narcissistic tendencies, emotional unawareness, imposter syndrome, all the emotional hurts and pains, and so much more.

To share this journey with you through both [Provisions of Grace](#) and [cBadenhorst Missions](#) is a blessing. For, the more I experience these freedoms in my life, the more I desire you to have and experience them too.

- www.instagram.com/ProvisionsOfGrace
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