

## What About... Thieves?

By Steve Sebastian



Jesus said: ***Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*** (Matthew 6:19-21).

At some point, all of us have had things stolen, and it has changed us in some way. Personally speaking, at times I have been able to accept the loss and move on, but at other times I have allowed it to fester and develop into bitterness and paranoia. Regardless, God will allow people to steal from us, just as Jesus allowed Judas to steal from Him and the disciples (John 12:2-8). What should our response be? Given that each case is important and unique, our response should not be a quick, thoughtless reaction, but a well thought-out response, using the Word of God and the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

### Surrounded by Thieves

In this age of digital information, a thief living on the other side of the world can steal our money, home, and even our identity with a few clicks on a keyboard. Consequently, we are living in a society that purchases separate theft protection insurance for nearly every valuable possession, not to mention security cameras, tracking devices and other such products. And it's not just criminals who are looking for ways to strip people of their money and possessions.

In 2022, the World Economic Forum (WEF) announced that they are working with western nations to implement a global financial plan that would include what is called a "circular economy," whereby people would no longer buy and own things, but rent them as a service. [[weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/what-is-the-circular-economy/s](https://weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/what-is-the-circular-economy/s)] This was the idea behind the now infamous statement made by World Economic Forum member Ida Auken at a WEF meeting in 2016, "Welcome to 2030. I own nothing, have no privacy, and life has never been better."

Fortunately, God knows the sort of world we live in and His Word provides us with a valuable, eternal perspective.

### Real Treasure

We can spend a lot of time, money, and worry in fear that someone will steal from us, to the point of creating

paranoia and bitterness, yet Jesus allowed Judas to steal from them. Why? Because Judas, like all thieves, could really only steal the worldly things that in reality we do not actually own anyway. How is it that as Christians we are quick to say "everything I have belongs to God," yet as soon as someone steals one of these possessions, we take it personally. Which is it? Did the thief steal from God or me? The real question we must come to terms with is, "Has the loss of this money or possession altered God's plans for my life and future?" Did Judas disturb or destroy any of God's plans by selling Jesus out to the murderous Pharisees? No. In fact, God was glorified through Judas' sinful act. God used it to bring about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the offer of salvation to sinful mankind. God was not mocked by Judas' wicked betrayal (Galatians 6:7). What was intended for evil, God used for good. (Genesis 50:20). Real treasure is not in earthly possessions, but in knowing Christ (Philippians 3:7-8)

### God's Sovereign Plan

Jesus was not worried that Judas, the Pharisees, Pontius Pilate, nor any other evil actor could thwart the plans of God, nor should we. When we appear to lose out because of someone's evil plans, as God's servants we should do what we can to protect against loss, without carrying out retribution. Remember what Paul told Timothy concerning Alexander the coppersmith? *wAlexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds* (2 Timothy 4:14).

As difficult as it may be, we must learn to hold loosely the things of earth, recognizing that God allows evil people to touch our lives in order to bring about His plans and to also develop in us a mature faith that finds its joy in glorifying God and not these passing earthly possessions.