

When The Thief be Found

Small Group Discussion Guide

"When The Thief Be Found" -- Pastor Willie Russell

1. SERMON RECAP

Pastor Willie Russell opened with personal stories of being robbed -- first in his home as a newlywed, then at the church building -- to illustrate how a thief studies routines and strikes when vulnerability is highest. He drew a direct parallel between a natural thief and the devil, unpacking John 10:10 to show that the enemy's ultimate goal is not simply to inconvenience believers but to steal, kill, and destroy everything God has placed in their lives. He challenged the congregation to stop tolerating the devil's activity, expose him for who he is, and stand boldly on the promise that when the thief is found, full restoration -- sevenfold -- belongs to the people of God.

2. KEY SCRIPTURE

John 10:10 (NKJV)

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

3. ICE BREAKER

Have you ever realized something important was missing long after it actually disappeared -- a set of keys, a wallet, or something else -- and only noticed when you needed it most? Share what that experience was like.

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor Willie described the devil as a thief rather than a robber -- someone who works quietly and subtly rather than through open force. In your own life, what does that subtle kind of stealing tend to look like? Has the enemy ever taken something from you slowly enough that you barely noticed until it was gone?

This question invites honest personal reflection. Encourage the group to think beyond finances to include

peace, joy, purpose, relationships, and confidence in God's Word.

2. Pastor Willie said the primary thing the devil wants to steal from every believer is the Word of God -- because without it, we fight spiritual battles with only natural weapons. How much does the Word of God actually function as a real defense in your daily life, and where do you feel that defense is thinnest right now?

Give space for honest answers here. Some group members may realize they have not been in the Word consistently. This is a safe place for that admission.

3. He pointed to John 8:12, where Jesus calls himself the light of the world, and connected it to a natural truth: thieves work in darkness and are deterred by light. What does it practically mean for a believer to keep the lights on spiritually? What habits or choices function as light in your life, and which ones might be inviting darkness in?

Encourage the group to be specific rather than general. The goal is honest self-examination, not condemnation.

4. Pastor Willie referenced Ezekiel 12:28, where God declares that none of His words will be postponed any longer. He spoke directly to the weapon of delay -- how the enemy uses unanswered prayers and unfulfilled promises to make believers question whether God is faithful. Has delay ever caused you to doubt a promise God gave you? How did you -- or how are you -- working through that?

This question may surface real pain. Lead with empathy. Remind the group that naming the struggle is not the same as giving up on the promise.

5. Pastor Willie made the point that when a believer gets saved, everything they carry enters into a covenant with God -- meaning the devil has not stolen from us alone but from the One who gave us those things. How does it change the way you approach spiritual warfare when you remember that the battle ultimately belongs to the Lord and not to you?

Encourage the group to discuss the difference between passivity and trust, and between striving and standing.

6. Proverbs 6:31 says the thief, when found, must restore sevenfold. Pastor Willie declared that restoration is owed to the people of God. What area of your life most needs that restoration right now, and what would it look like for you to actually receive it rather than simply hope for it from a distance?

This is the most personal question of the guide. Allow silence. Not everyone will share, and that is acceptable.

5. APPLICATION CHALLENGE

This week, identify one specific thing the enemy has stolen from you -- whether that is peace, consistency in prayer, confidence in a promise God gave you, or the simple discipline of spending time in the Word. Write it down on paper, speak Proverbs 6:31 aloud over it by name, and then take one concrete step toward recovering it. That step might be returning to a prayer habit, having a conversation you have been avoiding, opening a Bible plan you abandoned, or simply declaring out loud each morning that the thief has been found and restoration belongs to you. Bring what you did back to the group next week.

6. PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that every person in the group would develop a sensitivity in their spirit to recognize the enemy's activity early, before loss becomes deep.
 - Pray specifically for anyone carrying the weight of delay -- that God would renew their confidence in His promises and remind them that His Word does not return void.
 - Pray for full restoration over the areas the enemy has stolen from each member of the group, claiming the sevenfold return that Scripture declares belongs to the believer when the thief is exposed.
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7. MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 6:31 (NKJV)

"Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; he may have to give up all the substance of his house."

Leader Note: This guide is designed for approximately 60 to 75 minutes of discussion. Feel free to select the questions that best fit where your group is spiritually. Not every question needs to be covered -- depth matters more than completion.