

Beware the Thief

Stephen Mesa, Chaplain, Post 475

In the book, *The Art of War*, Sun Tzu tells us to “Keep your friends close, and your enemies closer.” That’s good advice. If we are open with our friends, they begin to know us well. We often need their counsel because they get to know our strengths and weaknesses. They know when we are starting to wander off the best path. However, we cannot lose sight of our enemies because you never know when they can strike.

Many times, in the Bible we see selfishness on display. The Book of Psalms speaks of the hidden enemy offering soothing advice while plotting a person’s downfall from behind. Likewise, King David’s son, Absalom, devised a way that he could wear his father’s crown.

Where is the seed of deceit planted? I think it is often rooted in selfishness. That spirit of selfishness comes from today’s culture. We think that success must be measured by the amount and/or quality of things we gather, by obtaining a title, or in securing that corner office. We don’t think of them as enemies at all. We think of them as measurement of our success.

Recently, I heard a song by Luke Combs, entitled “Rich Man.” In the song, a man in overalls addresses a man in a three-piece suit. The man in the suit is upset that the stock market has taken a downturn. The man in overalls schools the man about where true success lies. He advises that all the money in the world isn’t what it’s cracked up to be.

“Cause it can't go with ya when you die,
Buy your time or hold your wife and kids' hands,
And that's what makes you rich, man."

While there is no problem in having money, we should be wary of making it our priority. **John 10:10** reads, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.” That is especially true if it takes us away from more important things like our family, our children, and our friends. Likewise, **1 Peter 5:8** reads, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

As you move forth this week, if your children ask for a bit of your time, think twice before offering an excuse as to why you can’t help them or spend time with them. Our children learn more from us by what they see or experience than by what we say. Keep a close eye on an enemy that whispers in your ear, “It’s not that important.”