**“Knowing the Enemy”**

**Intro**

**Colossians**

**Titus**

**Timothy**

**Thessalonians**

**Philippians**

**Ephesians**

**Galatians**

**Corinthians**

**Romans**

**Philemon**

**Hebrews**

**James**

**Jude**

**John**

**Peter**

Charades/ Taboo- What’s the goal of these games?

**Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12**

1. What does it seem that the Thessalonians were worried about?
2. How does Paul calm their fears?
3. Who is the “man of lawlessness”? God gives us qualifications and clues for who the man of Lawlessness is. Look through the following verses and list them.

* Vs. 3 (3)
* Vs. 4 (3)
* Vs. 6-7 (1)
* Vs. 8 (3)
* Vs. 9 (1)

1. Compare the “clues” that God gives us to…
   1. Adolf Hitler
   2. Islam
   3. Communism
   4. The Roman Papacy

***Takin’ it Home***

1. The devil wears many “masks”. Sometimes the devil uses a government, people, Hollywood, or even a religious institution to lead us astray. What do you feel is the most dangerous “mask” that the devil wears? Why?
2. How will knowing the identification of the “Man of Lawlessness” affect our attitude…
   1. Towards mission work.
   2. Towards how we raise and educate our children.
   3. Towards the Word of God.
   4. Towards how Crown of Life moves forward as a congregation.
3. In vs. 10-12 of our reading for today God says that he allows the “man of lawlessness” to be “a powerful delusion” because people have rejected God and his Word to the point that God finally gives people over to their hard hearts. How will that affect our attitude towards each of things listed above?
4. For what reasons is the doctrine of the “antichrist” important for us to know? For what reasons is it a good news doctrine?

“**The Man of Lawlessness**”

1. The “man of lawlessness” will oppose God. (vs.4)

“If anyone says that by faith alone the impious is justified, in such wise as to mean that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to obtain the grace of justification, …: let him be damned.” (Trent 6, 9)

“Whoever teaches as if indeed the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of observing the commandments: let him be damned.” (Trent, Session 6 Canon 20)

1. The “man of lawlessness” will exalt himself over everything that is called God; proclaims himself to be God. (vs.4)

Furthermore we declare, say, define and pronounce that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human being should be subject to the Roman pope.” (Boniface VIII, Nov 18, 1302)

The council of Trent declared that the Pope is “the actual substitute of God on the earth.” (6,1)

1. The “man of lawlessness” sets himself up in God’s temple. (vs.4)

“And so if any one says that the Roman pontiff has only the office of inspection or direction, but not the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole Church, not only in matters that pertain to faith and morals, but also in matters that pertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the whole world, or if anyone says that he has only a more important part and not the complete fullness of this supreme power; or if anyone says that this power is not ordinary and immediate either over each and every Church or over each and every one of the pastors and the faithful: let him be damned.” (Vatican 1)

1. The “man of lawlessness” is already at work in Paul’s time yet not fully revealed. (vs.7)
   * Papacy: “If anyone says that by faith alone the impious is justified, in such wise as to mean that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to obtain the grace of justification, …: let him be damned.” (Trent 6, 9)
   * Paul says to the Judaizers (they believed you were saved ***not only*** by faith in Jesus but that you had to be circumcised to get into heaven as well), “ *You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?*” (Galatians 3:1-3)
2. The “man of lawlessness” will come in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders. (vs.9)

Think of all of the visions of Mary and other things, the stigmata, etc.