

# Doctrine Class

*Core Class II at Leroy Community Chapel*

**Tom Chapman**

**“...Transforming Families, Community and World into  
Devoted Followers of Jesus Christ  
Through the Word of God.”**

## What are Core Classes?

Mission matters to us at Leroy Community Chapel. God's mission that is! Just what is God's mission? To make His name glorious as He declares His fame to the ends of the earth (Isaiah 43:7; 48:11; 66:18-19). How does He do that? He demonstrates what a great God He is through His plan to save sinners based only on the work of His son, Jesus! Simply put, God's mission is His glory. His glory is seen most radiantly in His work of redemption. That's where His mission touches us. Leroy Chapel is a group of people who have been redeemed and want others to find salvation in Jesus also.

So, our mission is "to completely transform our families, community, and world into devoted followers of Jesus Christ through the Word of God." We exist to further the work of God in the world, and we do that through joyfully embracing the Gospel and living in the grace God supplies. Our mission isn't clever, slick, or changing with each new year... our mission is to do what Jesus told all His followers to do – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19-20). That means that your mission as a part of Leroy Community Chapel is to walk with God and help others do the same. Every member has this mission, and our Core Classes are aimed at helping everyone understand *His* mission, *Our* mission, and *Your* mission.

In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus gave the greatest commandment – "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself." If you learn anything else at Leroy Chapel, we pray you learn to love God. So how, you ask, do I do that? It starts with loving His story, the story of His glory – the Gospel, and this is the foundation for our *Core Class I*, the **Gospel Class**. In this class we will lay the Biblical foundation for Gospel and work out the practical ramifications for your life and how we do church ministry. Next, loving God involves learning about and loving the character of God. We do this through a life-long journey of Bible study. The Word of God contains all we need to know about who He is, and what He has done. This forms *Core Class II*, our **Doctrine Class**. Finally, as you grow in your understanding of, and love for, Gospel-saturated living; and learn to walk in the God-revealed truths of the Scriptures; you will delight in the plan God has for your life. This plan is for you to be a devoted follower of Jesus, using your gifts to bless others, and pouring your life into the Kingdom mission of God here on earth. This is our *Core Class III*, the **Disciple Class**. The church exists because of the never-ending cycle of God's mission entrusted to faithful followers who entrust it to other faithful followers, who never stop loving God and loving others enough to make sure they don't miss out on the grace of God in the Gospel.

This great cycle is called Discipleship, or as we like to say around Leroy Chapel – transformation. And we want you to know that there is no greater joy than this Gospel life. There is no greater truth than the Bible truths. And there is no greater purpose than giving yourself to the cause of Christ in the world. We pray these *Core Classes* are used by God as an instrument of transformation in your life, and that you in turn will be used as an instrument of transformation in the lives of others... many others! Thanks for joining us in this mission.

**Doctrine Class**  
**Leroy Community Chapel**

- 1. Define Doctrine**
- 2. Doctrine of God**
- 3. Doctrine of Scriptures**
- 4. Doctrine of Man**
- 5. Doctrine of Trinity**
- 6. Doctrine of Christ**
- 7. Doctrine of the Holy Spirit**
- 8. Doctrine of the Church**
- 9. Doctrine of Satan**
- 10. Doctrine of Future Things (End Times)**

Just as a preface to this study, we want you to know that we at Leroy Community Chapel do not view ourselves in any way as being the final authority on Church doctrine. There are many things that are not fully expressed in Scripture, so there is room for differing views on several things, and we understand that. Even our Elders from time to time have differing views on subjects. Rather than letting those things divide us, we try to learn from one another. We also know that there are other doctrines in Scripture, these are just some of the major doctrines of the church.

There are some doctrines that for us at L.C.C. are non-negotiable. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God come in the flesh. That He died for our sin, not His own, because He was without sin. We believe that all men have sinned and fall short of God's glory. The penalty for sin is death and we believe in a literal Heaven and Hell. Eternal life, eternity spent with the Lord in Heaven, is possible only by the grace of God. Men and women, boys and girls are saved by faith in Christ, and Christ alone, and not by any good works of their own. We also believe that the Scriptures are God's inspired words to mankind, and in their original writings they are without error. And we believe in a Triune God consisting of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

## DOCTRINE

Doctrines are beliefs about God, man, Christ, the church, and other related concepts considered authoritative and therefore worthy of acceptance by all members of the community of faith.

The Bible not only speaks about doctrines that are true and authoritative, but it also speaks about doctrines that are taught by false teachers. Christ condemned the doctrine of the Pharisees because it was of human origin (**Matt 15:9**; Mark 7:7). By contrast, Jesus' teaching was not systematic and repetitious. It was fresh and new (**Matt 7:28, 29**; Mark 1:22,27; Luke 4:32).

After Pentecost, Christian doctrine began to be systematized (**Acts 2:42**). Doctrinal instruction was given by special teachers (**1 Cor 12:28-29**; Gal 6:6) to those who had responded to the gospel (Rom 6:17). The earliest doctrine of the Christian church declared: (1) that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ (Acts 3:18); (2) that God had raised Him from the dead (Acts 1:22; 2:24,32); and (3) that salvation was by faith in His name (Acts 2:38,16). These three truths were presented as a clear fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament. Paul taught that true doctrine is essential for Christian growth (**Eph 4:11-16**; 1 Tim 4:6; 6:3; Titus 1:9) and that false doctrine destroys the church (Eph 4:14; 2 Tim 4:3). (1)

Christian doctrine should not be a result of man's thoughts, but rather statements of belief based on how God has chosen to reveal Himself to man. Tony Evans from Dallas Theological Seminary says, "The doctrine of God is not presented in Scripture as a set of well-organized theological tenets unrelated to the realities of everyday life. God has determined to reveal His character in the contexts of peace and pain, joy and sorrow, grace and wrath, birth and death, love and hate and countless other real life situations. We learn about God's law from a murderer named Moses. We learn about God's worship from an adulterer named David. We learn of God's sovereignty from a sufferer named Job. We learn about God's grace from a rebel named Peter. These and many others reflect the down-to-earth context in which God chose to reveal Himself to mankind." (2)

### Definition of Doctrine

The word "doctrine" comes from the Hebrew word "*leqach*" meaning "teaching" or "instruction". It is used 45 times in the New Testament and it comes from the word "*didache*" with similar meaning of "teaching, learning, instruction or doctrine"

Notes:

Theology is the "study of God."

True theology is both Historical and Biblical.

Systematic theology seeks to offer an ordered presentation of what the Bible teaches about God.

*As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;*

Eph 4:14 NASB

In the Old Testament the term doctrine is used in **Deuteronomy chapter 31:30-32:1-4**, where Moses is teaching Israel about the Lord.

It is used in the New Testament not only about sound doctrine as in Romans 6:17, but also in admonitions to stop, refute or correct false doctrine in passages like Romans 16:17, **I Tim. 1:3, 10**.

## Doctrine of God

If someone will not believe in the existence of God, it is difficult if not impossible to convince them of anything about God. I believe the verse in the Bible that speaks directly to those people can be found in Romans Chapter 1, verses 18 through 25.

Rom 1:18-25

*18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*

*20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.*

*24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*  
NASB

As this and other passages state, God has revealed Himself to everyone through His creation in a way that is impossible to ignore. To those of us who have believed that God is the Creator of the universe and maintains sovereign control over His creation, we have recognized certain characteristics or attributes about God.

Notes:

*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.*

Romans 6:17 NKJV

The Bible is not the story of man, it is the story of God; man only exists because of and for God's pleasure. (I Cor. 8:5,6) God reveals Himself to us so that we might know Him. He wants us to know Him, because without Him, nothing else matters. Without God life is meaningless. Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 2:24-25,

*"So I decided there is nothing better than to enjoy food and drink and to find satisfaction in work. Then I realized that this pleasure is from the hand of God.*

*For who can eat or enjoy anything apart from him? NLT*

The Bible says that God is immutable, which means He never changes, "*He is the same yesterday, and today, yes forever.*" Hebrews 13:8.

Some of the attributes of God are listed in the notes on the side. It would be good to look up each one of these verses and check them with other verses in a concordance to get an even better understanding of Who God is.

Now these things are revealed to us in Scripture. If the Scriptures are not authoritative, then we are really at a loss, however, man is still without excuse because of the way God has revealed Himself in His creation.

As Christians, we believe that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God, so next it is important that we look at the Doctrine of the Scriptures.

## **The Doctrine of Scripture**

Here again, we come face to face with the choice to believe or not to believe. Scripture has revealed so many things to us about God and His creation, but we have to come with the pre-supposition that the Scriptures are true and authoritative or they are just man's thoughts and reflections. The argument is circular in nature because your proof of Scripture being God's revelation to man comes from the Scriptures themselves.

We are going to look at some internal evidences that the Scriptures are indeed inspired and true, but we are also going to examine some external proofs as well. Prayerfully after this study, you too will believe that the Scriptures are the

Notes:

### **Some of God's Attributes:**

#### **He is all Sufficient**

Genesis 1:1

#### **He is the Creator**

Genesis 1:3

#### **He is Holy**

Isaiah 57:15

#### **He is Omniscience**

Isaiah 40:13-14

#### **He is Omnipresent**

I Kings 8:26, 27

#### **He is Omnipotent**

Jeremiah 32:17

#### **He is Wisdom**

Romans 11:33-36

#### **He is Good**

Exodus 34:5-7

#### **He is Wrath**

Nahum 1:2-8

#### **He is Love**

Ephesians 1:4-6

#### **He is the Savior**

Isaiah 43:10-13

An intelligent person seeking truth would certainly read and consider a book that has the historical qualifications of the Bible. Unique qualifications that set the Scriptures apart from every other book ever written. (3)

*Josh McDowell*

inspired Word of God.

When we speak of the Bible being inspired, we are referring to the fact that God divinely influenced the human authors of the Scriptures in such a way that what they wrote was the very Word of God. In the context of the Scriptures, the word inspiration simply means “God-breathed.” Inspiration means the Bible truly is the Word of God, and makes the Bible unique among all other books.

While there are different views as to what extent the Bible is inspired, there can be no doubt that the Bible itself claims that every word in every part of the Bible comes from God (1 Corinthians 2:12, 13; **2 Timothy 3:16, 17**). This view of the Scriptures is often referred to as “verbal plenary” inspiration. What that means is that the inspiration extends to the very words themselves—not just concepts or ideas—and that the inspiration extends to all parts of Scripture and all subject matters of Scripture (plenary inspiration). There are some people who believe the Bible is written by the thoughts of men or only parts of the Bible are inspired; these views of inspiration fall far short of what the Bible itself claims. Full verbal plenary inspiration is an essential characteristic of the Word of God.

**Archaeological** discoveries only confirm what many Believers have already known, that is the Scriptures are true. The Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1952 by a Bedouin shepherd chasing a stray were one of the greatest finds in centuries. The Scriptures found there were some of the oldest in existence and confirmed the writings were authentic. Parts of every book of the Old Testament with the exception of the Book of Esther were found in the Caves at Qumran near the Dead Sea.

**Flavius Josephus**, a first century priest and historian is also provides very good extra-Biblical evidence that the Scriptures are complete. He lists the Books of the Bible in groups that add up to (22) Old Testament Books that would have been in existence during the time of the Lord. Within those groups of Books are all (39) of Books in our Bible are listed. The reason there is only (22) rather than (39) is because for example, the (12) Minor Prophets are all included in (1) Group. I and II Samuel and I and II Kings are counted as (1) Book each. So in all, Josephus lists (5) Books of the Law; (4) Books of Former Prophets; (4) Books of Latter Prophets; (1) Book of Minor Prophets and (12) Books of Writings or Psalms; (22) in all

Notes:

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:21 NIV

“verbal plenary” inspiration means that the inspiration extends to the very words themselves.

which are equal to the (39) inspired Books of the Old Testament. (4)

Of all of the proofs that the Scriptures are true and authoritative, to me, the Lord's words themselves are all the proof I need to be convinced they are the Word of God. For example:

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

Matt 5:17-18 NIV

*He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."*

*Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.*

Luke 24:44-45 NIV

In conclusion, we believe that the Bible is God's revelation to man. The 66 Books of the Bible are the inspired, verbal plenary, Word of God. (2 Peter 1:20-21).

We believe the Lord used human writers to communicate His very words to us by inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

The Bible is without error in its original language and writings. Any discrepancies that may exist would have been made by scribal or translation because the original text are the infallible Word of God.

And even with all that said, we at L.C.C. do not worship the Bible, we worship the Savior. The Scriptures themselves speak to this in John 5:39, *"You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me;"* NASB

## Doctrine of Man

God created man in the image of God, which was different from all other of His creation. At the end of each day of creation God said it was “good”. At the end of the day when He created man, whom He said would rule over His creation, He said it was “very good”.

God placed Man, male and female, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He had a special relationship with them. He spoke to them and they had work to do; they took care of the garden. (Gen. 2:15)

All was well until sin entered the world through Satan’s deception of Eve. Eve then enticed Adam to sin as well. God’s creation would forever change. (Romans 8:20) says all of creation groans under the weight of sin.

We learn in Romans chapter 3-7, that because of sin, all men are condemned because of sin. Romans 3:23 states that all men fall short of God’s glory, in other words, no one on his own merit will ever enter God’s rest and peace in Heaven.

Through Adam, sin entered the world and man was hopelessly lost until Christ, “The Second Adam” rescued mankind.

## Doctrine of the Trinity

One of the most difficult concepts to understand is the Trinity. It is, however, very much a part of God’s revelation to man. It is revealed in the first verse in the Bible. Genesis 1:1 starts, “In the beginning, “Elohim”... (Elohim) is a Hebrew word which is the plural form of “El” or God. In Genesis 1:25, God says, “Let (Us) create man in (Our) image.”

We see several appearances of the Triune God in Scripture. In Mark 1:9-11, we see all Three Members of the Trinity, Jesus being baptized, the Holy Spirit like a Dove and God the Father speaking from Heaven. All Three are God; God the Father (John 6:27; Eph. 4:6); Jesus Christ is God (Heb. 1:8); and the Holy Spirit is God (**Acts 5:3-4**)

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus said we should, as Tony Evans says, make “Trinitarians” of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,  
Rom 3:23 NIV

26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,  
Gen 1:26 NIV

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## Doctrine of Christ

The Apostle John in the Gospel of John presents Jesus Christ as God come in the flesh. The Book starts very similarly to the way Genesis presents God the Father, that is as Creator. The first few verses of chapter one describe Jesus as the Living Word of God.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.*

*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

John 1:1-5 NIV

The Apostle Paul also referred to Jesus as the Son of God. In the Book of Colossians Paul wrote these words;

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.* Col 2:9-10 NIV

Christ was sent to earth to rescue mankind and His mission is best described in Philippians chapter 2.

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.* Phil 2:5-8 NASB

It is important to recognize that Jesus Christ is, was and continues to be God even though He came to earth as a man, in the flesh. He was tempted, just like you and me, however, He prevailed. (Heb. 2:18) Not only did He live, but He also died a real physical death, and was buried like other men who have died. (1 Cor. 15:3-4) Yet, it was obvious from the beginning of His ministry that He was from God. (John 3:2) The Disciples got caught in a storm and the Lord calmed the waters. The Disciples said, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!" (Mark 4:41) NIV

He can calm the storm in your lives as well!

## Doctrine of Christ, continued:

### Doctrine of Salvation

*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."*

Acts 4:12 NIV

We believe in two things for certain; first, man is lost because of sin and two, salvation is found nowhere else but in Christ.

So we learned earlier in our study that man was created in the image of God and had a relationship with Him, however, sin came between sinful man and Holy God. When God saw man's plight, He realized that man was without hope, so He sent His own Son. Isaiah 59:16 says, "*And He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede; then His own arm brought salvation to Him; and His righteousness upheld Him.*" NASB

So man can not help himself because salvation can not be purchased or earned. Even if it could, no man could afford it or no man could be good enough. So God sent the only One who could be good enough, and that was God Himself in the person of His Own Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus took our place and died for our sin. The Bible says, "*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*" (2 Cor. 5:21) NASB

One of the key words in that phenomenal verse is "might". Salvation is not for everyone. There is a real Heaven and a real Hell. (Luke 16:19-31) So if Christ died so that men might be saved, but not all will be saved, how do you get saved? The answer is by God's grace. "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.*" Ephesians 2:8, 9 KJV

Christ's forgiveness and His substitutionary death in your place are credited to you when you first believe in faith. What Ephesians 2:8 and 9 is saying is this; "*God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*"

NLT

Notes:

Ruth 4:1

*Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat there. When the kinsman-redeemer he had mentioned came along, Boaz said, "Come over here, my friend, and sit down." So he went over and sat down.* NIV

Kinsman-Redeemer:

1. Near relative
2. Ability to purchase
3. Willingness to purchase

Gal 4:3-5

*But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law...* NASB

## Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

The most common mistake we make about the Holy Spirit is thinking of the Spirit of God as “it”, rather than “He”.

*By this you know the **Spirit of God**: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is **He** who is in you than he who is in the world.*

1 John 4:2-4 NASB

The Bible refers to God the Spirit hundreds of times. When it is the Holy Spirit, He is referred to as the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of Jesus; all these mean the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said when He went away that He would not leave His followers as orphans, that He would send them a “Helper” or a “Counselor”. Before He was crucified said, “*Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*” NIV John 16:7 In the Greek, the “Helper” is a “Parakleetos” which mean Someone like the Lord Himself, only in the form of a Spirit Who will live within the heart of the Believer. And, just like Christ, He does not come on His own initiative or with His own agenda, but comes in the name of Christ Jesus and He will remind His Disciples of everything the Lord Himself taught them. (John 14:26)

The Holy Spirit has a purpose, not only to live within the heart of the Believer, but to convict the world of sin and lead His followers into all truth.

(John 16:8-9) *"And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin..."* (John 16:13) *"But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; NASB*

For us as Believers, we know from Romans chapter 8 that without the Holy Spirit we cannot please God; the good news is that with the Holy Spirit *we* have the power to be His witnesses throughout the world.

Acts 1:8

*"...You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." NASB*

## Doctrine of the Church

The Church is the Body of Christ. It is made up of all the true Believers in Christ. (1 Cor 12:27) *“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”* NIV

The Church was purchased by the blood of Christ. In (Acts 20:28) Paul told the elders at Ephesus to, *“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He bought with his own blood.”* NIV

The Believers were first called “Christians” in Antioch.

*Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*

Acts 11:25-26 NIV

Peter was the outspoken Disciple who often answered for the whole group of Disciples. He had a true heart for the Lord. This is a time when Peter got it exactly correct, as the Lord asked him Who Jesus really was.

*“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”*

*“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”*

*Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.*

*And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”*

Matt 16:13-18 NIV

I believe the true meaning of this passage is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God; this is the truth and upon this truth Christ will build His Church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it.

In (1 Cor.3:16-17), Paul states God’s view of the local church, made up of individual members of the Body of Christ.

*“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple.”* NIV

## Doctrine of Satan

Satan is a fallen angel named Lucifer (Isaiah 14) KJV. We get the best glimpses of what Satan is like from Isaiah and from John in the Book of the Revelation to John, chapter 12. He is called many things in the Bible, such as Satan, the Devil, Lucifer, the Serpent, the Adversary, the Evil One, Prince of the power of the air and several others depending upon translations.

The Bible describes Satan as a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies. Speaking to Jesus, the Pharisees claimed to be children of Abraham. Jesus said if you were true children of Abraham, you would do the deeds of Abraham. He said, *"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies."* John 8:44-45 NASB

One thing is for certain, he wants to destroy mankind. He has been trying to destroy us since the Garden of Eden when he deceived Eve. (Gen. 3) He is disguised as an "angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14) to deceive men. His goal is to destroy us, just like a roaring lion hunts down, overtakes and devours its prey, (1 Peter 5:8), he wants to do that to us spiritually.

We see how Satan works in the parable of the Sower; as the Word of God is spread, Satan is there to snatch it away. (Matt 13:19) He tempts us to lie. (Acts 5:3) And, we have already seen how he deceives. He is the ruler of this world, but he is limited in his power. He is a created being, cast out of heaven with his followers, a third of the angels (Rev. 12). His future is forever in the Lake of Fire.

I think the thing that is most encouraging to me is the fact that even though he wreaks havoc on earth and in people's lives, he answers to God. (Job 1:7 and 2:2) He does nothing without God's permission and his future demise is certain.

## Doctrine of Future Things (End Times)

The good part about this doctrine is that Jesus Christ promised that He is coming again and those who believe in Him will be saved. Possibly the best and clearest passage concerning the Lord's return, I think, that refers to the yet future events is found in (I Thessalonians 4:13-5:11).

So many things in the Bible are spoken of in metaphors and symbolic language concerning these times, there are many varied thoughts about how and what and when they will take place. That said there are many things that we do know. Some of them are as follows:

1. The Lord is coming again.
2. Those who have trusted in Him, both alive and dead will be saved and gathered together with Him forevermore.
3. There will be a period of time, probably (7 years), when the Anti-Christ will be in power in the world referred to as the Tribulation.
4. The wrath of God will be poured out onto the world.
5. The earth as we know it will be destroyed.
6. Everyone will appear before the Lord; Believers at the Judgement seat of Christ and unbelievers at the Great with Throne Judgement.
7. The wicked will be judged and thrown into the Lake of Fire.

The good news is that Christ wants all men to repent and come to Himself. (2 Peter 3:8,9) You can do that today if you have not done so already. I believe even those who are alive during the tribulation, those who have not been caught up in what we call the "Rapture" of the Church, will also have an opportunity to turn to the Lord for salvation.

For many the Book of Revelation is a frightening book, and for the wicked of this world it should be. But for those who believe it is a fulfillment of God's promises. In Revelation 19:11, John said, "I saw the heavens open up and "behold a white horse and He who sat upon it was called Faithful and True". He will come back to judge in righteousness and in truth.

The Bridegroom is coming back for His bride, the Church. You can be invited to the "Marriage Feast of the Lamb", but only dressed properly, in the righteousness of Christ. Trust Him today.

Notes:

1 Thess 4:13-18

*13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. 15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage each other with these words. NIV*

1 Thess 5:9-11

*For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. NIV*

**Acknowledgements:**

(1) (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

(2) *Our God is Awesome* by Anthony T. Evans 1994, Moody Press

(3) *The New Evidence that Requires a Verdict* by Josh McDowell

(4) *Panorama of the Old Testament* by Dr. Thomas Rodgers