***The Jews Rejected Jesus Christ
RO135-02***

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We are studying Romans 10:14-17. Our subject today is "The Heralds of Christ," and this is segment number two.

**Jesus Christ was Rejected**

I'm sure that you have heard, as I have often heard, that God has not been fair in communicating His words to the human race, and His will clearly, so that people understand what His commands are, and what He expects of them, so that they can respond with confidence. The same criticism that God has not communicated clearly was directed toward the person of the Lord Jesus when He was here on earth, and when He was claiming to speak for the living God. So, they attacked the message. This is demonstrated in Matthew 12:38-42, Mark 8:11-12, Acts 2:22, and Matthew 27:39-44. The claims of Jesus Christ to the Messiahship (to deity), and as the messenger of God, were clearly confirmed by Him indeed by His works of miracles. They were confirmed by His unchallenged sinlessness. And yet, people were not willing to accept Him.

So, the message from God to the Jews through Jesus Christ was a message which was clearly understood, and fully confirmed by the Lord Himself as authoritative. As the man who was born blind said: "No man can do these things that He's doing unless He be from God. You have clearly the stamp of divine authority upon you." But the Jews deliberately refused the evidence that was right there on the surface, easy to see, and the evidence of a sinless Person, and His miracle capacities, such that He was indeed speaking from God, and the fact that what he said was compatible with Old Testament Scripture. So, they rejected Him deliberately: signs; or, no signs.

**Raising Lazarus from the Dead**

One of the primary evidences of this, you remember, is on the occasion of the raising of Lazarus by Jesus, which is recorded in John 11:38-53. In that segment, we're told how Jesus pointed out that He was raising Lazarus under a certain condition, and He was doing it in order to make it clear that what He was doing was an act of God; that God was listening to Him; that God was responding; and, that He was speaking out loud so other people could hear and know that He was speaking to God, and that God was now going to demonstrate that He was responding to His prayer to raise this man.

However, while it was impressive to the people around him, the Jewish leaders got together and said, "We've got to stop this." Verse 47: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, "What shall we do? For this Man does many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation." So, what did they do, upon seeing the tremendous miracle that Jesus used to prove His claims that He was speaking the Word of God?

Verse 53: "Then from that day forth, they took counsel together to put Him to death." So, much for signs to prove that what we are hearing comes from God. Oh, God spoke clearly enough. Jesus spoke clearly enough. His life could not be questioned. He could not be indicted at any point. And they simply would not believe. That was their problem. And these people, in their unbelief, were so gross that every time they saw Lazarus walking around live, it really bugged them, because even if they killed Jesus, they said, "That's not going to do it. We can get rid of Him. But what are people going to say when they see Lazarus, who they know was stinking dead for several days? In John 12:10-11, here's the solution they came up with: "But the chief priest consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death, because, by reason of him, many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus."

So, the attack and the criticism that God does not communicate clearly to us is not well-founded at all. The message from God today concerning salvation is clear, and it's authoritative, just as it was in the days of Jesus and the apostles. It is clear and authoritative because it is delivered to us in Scripture. And it is delivered to us in language that we can understand. People claim that God has not spoken clearly and convincingly to them. But that's not true, because they have the inerrant Scriptures. And I can tell you that it is the attitude of Almighty God that if the Bible presents something, it is true. If the Bible declares something as being the mind and will and the plan of God, you better believe it. It is an inerrant Scripture, and it has the authority of God.

**Lazarus and the Rich Man**

This is clearly evidenced in Luke 16:27, where the rich man has died, and Lazarus has died. And they're both in Hades: one on the saved side; and, the other on the other side of the gulf in the unsaved portion. The rich man found that he could not get a drop of water from Lazarus for his tongue to cool him, because Lazarus couldn't cross over: "Then he said to Abraham, 'I pray thee therefore, father, that you would send him (Lazarus) to my father's house (cause him to be resurrected, and go back to my house). For I have five brothers, that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment." He says, "I have five brothers who are as much hell-raisers as I was, and who are as gross as I was. And they are people who are going to be in this same place here, in the same agony that I am, unless somebody goes back and says, "Your brother has sent a message from the dead. What you have been taught by the prophets of Scripture is true. If you do not turn for salvation to God, you will end up in the place of torment that he is in.'

"Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets (which is a biblical way of referring to the Old Testament – they have the Old Testament Scriptures). Let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham. But if one went up to them from the dead, they will repent.' And he said to him, if they hear not Moses (if they won't listen to Scripture – Moses and the prophets), neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.'" And we have just seen that the case of Lazarus in the New Testament proved what this Lazarus incident was declaring to be the case. That's exactly it. Even though they had the evidence of this miraculous condition before their very eyes, they still rejected what was there.

**The Inerrant Bible**

The truth of the matter is that God has spoken to us, and Hebrews 1 tells us that God has given us a final declaration through His Son. Hebrews 1:1-2: "God, Who, in sundry times and in diverse manners, spoke in times past sins unto the Fathers by the prophets, has, in these last days, spoken unto us by His Son." And what He spoke to us by His Son, we have recorded in the Bible, which God preserved, free of mistakes. The inerrant Bible protects us today from the false prophets who claim that they receive current messages from God, which they now present as the will of God. And we're having a great deal of that. And that's why I'm stressing today that the Jews made a terrible mistake of claiming what many in our day claim: "God has not communicated clearly. We don't understand Him. We're not sure we're hearing Him." But God says, "Yes, I have communicated clearly. I have given you a Bible, and I've given you a Bible that has been preserved from mistakes so that you *could* trust it, and to know that only God could have given you such a book. And I have explained to you exactly what is necessary and what is needed. Therefore, the truth is there.

**The Charismatic Movement**

What God has not said, however, is that: "I'll keep giving you information through various prophets and through various holy men, as I did in the Old Testament times." Now the Scriptures are complete. We have all the Bible, and no more is to be added to it. Yet today, in the charismatic movement, for example, we are constantly hearing about people who are receiving such new communications from God, and they call them prophecies, or they like to refer to them as "a word of knowledge." "A word of knowledge" is a favored expression. It used to be a spiritual gift that once existed before the Bible was written. But it's a favorite expression, which means: "God just gave me so many secret information about you."

**Oral Roberts**

We have a current example of such a false prophet who claims divine communication, and that is in the person of Oral Roberts. All of you have been hearing a great deal about it. It's on all the nightly television news now. As you know, Roberts has announced that he has received another one of his special communications from God. God has told him that he must raise $4.5 million by the end of March, or God is going to take his life. The Associated Press article out of Tulsa, Oklahoma, reads, "'Oral Roberts needs about four-and-a-half million in quick money from followers, or God won't let him live past March,' the evangelist told his television audience Sunday. 'I'm asking you to help me extend my life,' Roberts, 68, said. 'We're at the point where God could call Oral Roberts home.' Speaking from the clinic laboratory at his City of Faith Medical and Research Center, Roberts asked viewers to send $100 immediately, and to pledge additional amounts for February and March. Roberts said he needed the money to finance scholarships for medical students at Oral Roberts University.

"I and a letter mailed to his prayer partners last week, Oral Roberts asked supporters to sign a prayer of agreement which began: 'Oral, I want to extend your life for the gospel's sake, and I want my needs to be met in 1987.' Roberts said God told him that raising the possibility of his death was necessary to get the attention of his followers. Roberts will be 69 on January 24th: 'I'm young and vigorous, and I have my life ahead of me,' he said. In a prayer at the conclusion of the program, Roberts said, 'Extend my life. Let me live beyond March.'"

Well, Oral Roberts has indeed said this. I've listened to him, on TV, declare that he has received this message from God. I've heard his son, Richard Roberts, follow-up on TV, and say, "It's true." His father hears God speaking to him.

I cannot call Oral Roberts a liar about hearing somebody telling him to make this pitch. But I can assure you that if he is hearing somebody, it is the god of this world, Satan, and not the God of the Bible, because what he is proposing is totally out of keeping with the character of the God of Scripture. It's an insult to Him, and it's an outright act of blasphemy. Oral Roberts is a false prophet. The God of the Bible very clearly provides his servants, out of the riches of His grace, with the money they need to do the work to which He calls them. He does not pick hostages. Now we have a God who is pulling hostages out from among the Christian community, and telling the rest of the Christians, "If you don't fork over, I'm going to send him back to you in a suitcase."

Now if you don't think that's an insult and blasphemy, it's arrogance. I wouldn't dare do this. If I tried this, they'd buy the suitcase. That's all the response I'd get from the people I deal with. But Oral Robert is pretty sure of himself: "Oh, if we lose him, we lose our direct communication with God." That is not the way our God works.

**God is a God of Grace**

Here is the way He works. Philippians 419 says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to the riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Now that's a precious God. That's a God of integrity. That is a God who has communicated very clearly and understandably to us how we're going to get His work done. He's going to supply individual believers with the money, and then we're going to happily turn it over to His work in appropriate amounts, without any hostages being taken in order to force the money out of us. He is a God of grace giving. He is not a God of tithing anymore, and that sort of thing. In the age of grace, He is a God of grace.

2 Corinthians 9:8 puts it this way: "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." I wonder if Roberts has ever read that Scripture. This is a terrible travesty. The God of the Bible has been insulted. He does not hold hostages at the threat of their lives to raise funds to do His work of proclaiming the gospel and preaching the full counsel of the Word of God.

Well, the carnival conman of Tulsa has finally demonstrated his true colors with this insult and this blasphemy of the God of creation. He has revealed his true colors to all those who have eyes to see, and discerning mentalities to understand. Only the most spiritually ignorant will continue to have any dealings with Roberts or his self-glorifying religious operations. Any godly, self-respecting person who is genuinely born again, and who understands the nature of the God of the Bible, will immediately detach himself from Oral Roberts; would never send him any money; would never go to his school; would never send him a letter; would never watch a television program he puts on, except as an educational experience in spiritual degeneracy; would not listen to his programs; and, simply would cut off all contact with this really serious false prophet that has injured millions of human beings who will have all eternity to regret what has been done to them. Those who are caught by the Word of God cannot be deceived by Oral Roberts or the rest of his ilk in the charismatic movement which is conducted by Satan, and make no mistake about it.

**God has Clearly Communicated to Us**

So, with an inerrant Bible, I come back again to my basic point. No one can say that God has not communicated His plan of salvation clearly enough to mankind through Jesus Christ. And I can assure you God is going to hold people accountable for rejecting Jesus Christ on the basis of the fact that they had the Bible. He is going to hold them accountable on the fact that the Scriptures were available. This is clearly indicated by John 12:44 where, we read, "Jesus cried out, and said, 'He that believes on Me, believes not on Me, but on Him Who sent Me (on God the Father who sent Him). And he that sees me sees Him that sent Me. (If you see Me, you're seeing God.) I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believes on Me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear My words (which are now recorded in Scripture), and believe not, I judge him not. For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My Words (recorded in Scripture with inerrancy) has One that judges him. The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge Him in the last day. For I have not spoken for Myself, but the Father who sent Me. He gave Me a commandment – what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that this commandment is life everlasting. Whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father says unto Me, so I speak."

If you reject this Word, you may rest assured that you have rejected the God of creation, and you will be judged by Him. On what basis? On the basis that you did not receive His Word. The Lord Jesus says, "It's not true that God is not communicating clearly. It is not true that people cannot understand what He is saying."

**The Jews**

The apostle Paul, here in Romans 10, that we have been studying, points out that God has provided his Jewish people with what they need to be able to call upon Jesus Christ for salvation. We have this in Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."

In Romans 10:14-15, the apostle Paul explains the steps that God has taken to enable the Jews to be saved, because, naturally, somebody could raise the question: has God communicated clearly to us? Has God given the Jews the message they need so that they know what to do in order to get into heaven? The answer is "yes." And Paul pauses to make that clear in verses 14-15, because he says, "God has instituted a cause which can result in the effect of calling on the name of the Lord." And he lists the steps of the cause: Number one: God sends a messenger to the lost Jew. Number two: the messenger from God explains the gospel of grace salvation through the God-Man Jesus Christ. Step number three in the cause: the lost Jew believes the message about the provision of Jesus Christ for salvation. And then the effect can take place. The lost Jew calls upon Jesus Christ to save him by trusting in Him and His sacrifice on the cross for sin. The believing Jew is then born again spiritually, and forever possesses eternal life in heaven.

It's a chain reaction. God has provided the cause to bring about the effect of calling on the Son. It's all clear. It's all understandable. There is no excuse for the tragedy of the Jews dooming themselves to the lake of fire. They have the means to come to Jesus Christ. And verses 14-15 have made that very clear.

The Jews, to this day, however, have badly miscalculated the importance of Jesus Christ to them. While the Jewish people today believe that their New Testament rabbis did not make a mistake, they're very wrong. They made a terrible mistake, and the Jews have followed them in that error.

However, have the Jews ever welcomed and believed the message of the beautiful people who brought them the gospel of Jesus Christ? That is the question. And Paul poses that now in verse 16. He begins verse 16 by saying, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel." The word "but" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the Greek conjunction, "alla." This is the strongest word for presenting a contrast. This word, right off the bat, "but," indicates there's a contrast here between what the response should have been from the Jews to the gospel about Jesus Christ, and what they *did* do. Instead of faith in Jesus Christ, the Jews exercised unbelief. And that's what's on each side of this "but." But instead of what we would have expected (that they would have rushed to welcome the Messiah), they did something totally different. The heralds of the gospel should have been welcomed as beautiful people, but instead they were persecuted by the Jews.

"They did not respond." And the word "not" in the Greek language is "ou," which is the strongest negative, indicating very determined Jewish opposition. He says, "They did not all." The word "all" is the Greek word "pos." This refers to the totality of the Jews who hear the gospel. Of the total number, "not all" refers to those who did not believe the gospel and trust in Jesus Christ. And, of course, the "not all" was most of them. Most of the Jewish race has not believed in Jesus Christ.

**Obedience**

However, some do believe in Jesus Christ. In John 12:42-43, you have an incident where some listen to Jesus, even some leaders. And they did believe. They wanted to keep it secret, because they were afraid of the authorities. But some heard Him and said, "Yes, you cannot deny that He speaks the Word of God. He is speaking the truth. He is what He claims to be. He is our Messiah:" "But not all (meaning 'most') have not obeyed. The word "obeyed" is the Greek word "hupakouo." This word means "to listen to a message." And it refers to listening to a message in the sense of obeying. This is like you say to your child, "I want you to listen to me," meaning I want you to do what I tell you. I want you to obey me. So, that's what you have here.

**Positive Volition**

This refers to positive volition by the Jews to the gospel. It's in the aorist tense in the Greek, which means that, at some point in time, the Jew gets the gospel. It is active. He has to make a personal choice to believe it. It's indicative mood. It's a statement of a fact. This is the same idea that, up in Romans 10:3, was expressed in the words "have not submitted themselves." It's the same idea that he was speaking about in verse 3. They just did not listen in terms of believing the gospel.

**The Gospel**

The gospel is the Greek word "euaggelion." This first part of the word "eu" means "good." The last part here comes from "aggelos," which is the word for "messenger." So, the word means "good messenger" or "good message." It is the source of our English word "evangel." We get that from this Greek word. And the evangel simply refers to the good news in the Bible about salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ – the same thing that is spoken of in Ephesians 2:8-9.

**Justification and Eternal Life in Heaven**

Now it is interesting that the gospel is treated by God as something that you are expected to believe. It is an invitation, but it is an invitation you are expected to respond to. In Acts 16:31, that all of you are well acquainted with, Paul's response to the Philippian jailer, as to how to be saved, was: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved." And in the Greek language, that word "believe" is a command. It is not an invitation. It is: "You better do it, buddy, or else." And it is a forthright command. Now when God gives a command, to refuse it is disobedience. And you should understand that the Jews were disobeying God's command to obey the gospel by believing it. They refused to obey God by believing the gospel. Not to trust in Jesus Christ is a direct act of disobedience to God. Rejection of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the rejection of God's offer of the gift of absolute righteousness unto justification. No justification: no eternal life in heaven.

The Jews, as a whole, since New Testament times, have refused to believe the gospel, which God has commanded all of us to believe. So, they are doomed to the suffering of the lake of fire for all eternity. And they can't say, "You didn't make it clear." They cannot say, "God is not communicating in a way we can understand what He wants us to do." We have seen in our study of the book of Romans repeatedly that God has been very clear on what it takes to get absolute righteousness, and thus to be justified, and thus to be qualified for eternal life in heaven.

In Romans 10:16, Paul goes on to say something else that is rather startling. Paul, in the last part of verse 16, says, "For Isaiah said, 'Lord, who has believed our report?" Paul is saying, "But what the Jews have done is not surprising. We may have expected them to do exactly that. The word "for" is this Greek word "gar." It's a conjunction, and it introduces evidence that the unbelief toward Jesus Christ was expected from the Jews: "Most of them have not obeyed the gospel for." And Paul says, "I'll tell you why."

Isaiah is one of the Old Testament major prophets. "Specifically, Paul is quoting Isaiah 53:1. That's where Isaiah says this. He says, "Who, of all the Jews, has believed ("pisteuo")? That's the standard word for "faith." "Pisteuo" means "to accept as true." It’s in the aorist tense – at the point that you hear it in time (at the point that the Jews heard this message). It is active, their personal response. It is a statement of fact here. Isaiah is asking about the response of the Jews to his message.

Paul is quoting Isaiah, who is asking: "Who of the Jews believed something?" This is something that he calls his "report," which is the Greek word "akoe." "Akoe" means a hearing. Thus, it is a message. It is very simple. He says, "Who of the Jews has believed our message?" He is referring to what the Jews heard from Isaiah about the coming Messiah Savior, Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 53:1, we find the prediction that the Jews, when the Messiah came, would not listen to Him: "Who has believed our report?" Isaiah says, "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" He predicted that the Jews would not obey God. They would not believe the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ. Isaiah 53 describes the Jews' future treatment and response of Jesus Christ, their Messiah when He finally arrives on earth. Mind you, Isaiah is speaking about something 700 to 800 years down the road. He's saying, "Now when the Messiah comes, here's how the Jews are going to treat Him." Now the Jews who read this said, "Oh, man. You're crazy. We're not going to do that." And yet, this was the Word of God. Isaiah was a true prophet. He had never been faulted as being disqualified as a prophet. And all he had to do was say one thing that could be proven that was not from God, and he was through.

Yet, they read, "Who has believed our message of salvation (the gospel)? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed (the power of God revealed)? Isaiah 53 describes the consequent suffering and humiliation of the Messiah Jesus Christ, because the Jews would not receive this message. Just as Isaiah had predicted that the Jews would not treat the message of Jesus Christ with respect, so, indeed, they disobeyed God when the Lord Jesus arrived, to their personal and national ruin. And that's what anybody can expect who rejects the gospel message? A nation that rejects it will come to national ruin. An individual who rejects it will come to personal ruin.

In the tribulation era described in 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9, this is clearly portrayed – the destruction that will await those who reject the Word of God: "In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Isaiah says, "O God, who of the Jewish people has believed our message of the gospel? 2 Thessalonians 1:9 says, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." Those who reject the message of the gospel bring upon themselves national and personal ruin. The Lord Jesus Christ indeed came down to his own people, the Jews, and offered Himself to them. They should have been so eager to receive Him, and so glad that He was finally on the scene of human history. But what was their response?

John 1:11-13 says, "He came onto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believed on His Name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Yes, he came to the Jews, and Paul says, "Not all (meaning most all of them) did not receive Christ." But God says, "OK, I'll turn to the gentiles." And out of that mass of humanity who were second in line have come most of the people who are going to be in heaven. God's cause-to-effect chain, that Paul described for us, was not effective with the Jews.

The Jews were actually, however, interestingly enough, rejecting the God whom they respectfully knew by His most sacred name, "Yahweh." This was a name which was so sacred that they read the Bible, and they would come to this Hebrew word "Yahweh," translated often as "Jehovah" in English. "Yahweh" is more correct in English. When they came to this name, they wouldn't even say it. As they were reading the Scriptures out loud in their home, they would not say it. They substituted another name, "Lord" ("Adonai") for it, and they would not pronounce this sacred name, because it was the most holy expression of what God was. They stood in great awe of this name. This was the name of the Lord God Almighty. In our English Bibles, we have this indicated by the word "LORD," all in capital letters. Every time that, you know that it is that sacred name in the Hebrews.

Well, now here is something interesting. The Jews were, in fact, in Jesus Christ, rejecting "Yahweh." John 12:37-38 say, "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believe not on Him." This is speaking of the Jews: "That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" Here John is applying this same passage, Isaiah 53:1, to Jesus Christ, as Paul did. He's applying this passage in Isaiah to Jesus Christ. It is the report about Jesus Christ that they're not believing.

Notice John 12:39-40, which now proceed to quote Isaiah 6:10. When the Jewish people (in the future) refuse to accept their Messiah Savior Jesus Christ (refuse to believe upon Him), God's going to create an inversion in their capacity of their mind. He is going to drop a curtain so that they cannot receive Him. Isn't that a chilling factor? Isaiah 6:10: "Make the heart of this people fat; make their ears heavy; and, shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart (with their mind), and be converted, and be healed." Now that's shocking information.

Then John comes along here, in John 12, and he has pointed out that the message about Jesus Christ, Isaiah said, would not be received when He finally does come to this earth. Now notice what, we read in John 12:39: "Therefore, they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, 'He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart (that is, their minds) and be converted, and I should heal them." So, John says that the willful rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews resulted in a judicial blindness being imposed upon them by God, the judge of the universe, so that they could not believe Jesus Christ.

**Repeatedly Resisting the Truth**

So, the Bible has made it clear many times to us that God historically punishes negative volition toward Bible doctrine truth with a hardening of the mind toward that truth, so that you can't believe it. You can press toward a truth of Scripture in such resistance that, after a while, it will be meaningless to you. Every now and then, you hear about some famous person who is on the totally opposite side of what the Bible stands for, but who began as someone who was a believer in the Bible.

**Charles Darwin**

For example, Charles Darwin was a man of complete faith in Christianity, and a man of complete faith in the integrity of the Bible, and who, at certain points, began to question, and to wonder, and to question, and to wonder, and to decide he didn't like what he was hearing, and what he was finding up, and who began resisting a truth of Scripture that he had once accepted, and continued to resist it, until he finally came to the other side, where he was a total, determined antagonist of everything that the Bible said, and a total opponent of the God of the Bible.

There are scads of examples of that in human history – of people who are in public prominence, who will come and say, "Once I was a devout believer of Scripture. Now I reject it entirely." And they've come to a totally contrary position. Men who produce great literary works, and who are very influential, are awesome examples of those who are now teaching something in the way of Eastern mysticism (complete delusion from the truth), who once grew up in the surroundings of the truth of Christianity. How does that happen?

Well, once you start going negative (and it's true for us Christians too), you're playing a very dangerous game. If God has spoken to you through the Word of God, through the pastor-teacher gift, and you turn your back upon it, and you dig in your heels and say, "I don't want to listen to that, I don't want to hear that. And I'm not going to subject myself to that. I'm not going to follow those rules." In time, you'll find that God says, "OK, forget it. As a matter of fact, I'm not going to let you follow those rules. I'm not going to let you obey that. I'm going to let you now flow into the consequence of your self-hardening.

**Pharaoh**

In Exodus 9:12, this happened to Pharaoh: "And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them as the Lord had spoken to Moses." After Pharaoh did his hardening of his heart enough times, then the Bible says, "God came in and said, 'OK, that's it. From now on, you're going to be committed to the consequences of your choice. Your heart is hardened. It's like concrete. You won't change it now.'"

One of the most terrible examples of this is in Romans 1:24, which is very current with the sympathy toward lesbianism and homosexuality today, because Romans 1 tells us how that problem became a hardening resistance toward the commands of God and the consequences, when God said, "OK, homosexuals and lesbians, I'm going to turn you over to that, and you won't be able to turn yourself around. But you will bear the consequences of that act. Romans 1:24: "Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lust of their own minds, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves."

Verse 26: "For this cause, God gave them up unto vile affections. For even their women did exchange the natural use for that which is against nature."

Verse 27: "And likewise also, the men – leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was fitting." They receive the consequences. What are you seeing in AIDS? You're seeing the consequence of a divine provision (a divine judgment) against that particular sexual immorality. All disease is the consequence of sin, and this specifically against that particular sin.

Verse 28: "An even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not seemly.

**Homosexuality**

The Bible says that if you persist in that violation of God's Word, you will find yourself hardened in it, and you will bear the consequences of that act. That's why the "American Opinion" magazine article . . . is so important, because (and you better be ready for the shock), it will tell you what homosexuals do. People don't understand this. People had their minds blown when I explained it to you in church about a year ago. And people were really shattered. They just thought that this was just people winking at each other, and smiling, and nudging one another. In this article, you'll see exactly the details of what goes on in a bathhouse, and then you'll understand how gross is the evil and why God says, "Don't do this. It'll destroy your society as well as yourself."

We have one more in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12: "Then show that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." This is the antichrist in the Tribulation: "Even Him Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders (deceptive miracles), and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause (because they would not receive the doctrine of salvation for this cause), God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe the lie, that they all might be judged who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

**The New Age Movement**

I think that the lie that they're going to believe is the lie that is being promoted under the New Age movement today – the lie of Hinduism: that there is within all of us potential deity, and that we are the gods who need to release that deity. That is the lie, because that is what Satan is going to be promoting through the antichrist. That's the lie about Shirley MacLaine's odyssey, Out on a Limb, as she, at 40 years of age, began wondering what life is all about: "Who am I? Where am I? How does all this fit together?" And instead of going to the place that God gave those answers, which is the Scripture, she reached out there to Hinduism. And now she has degenerated to the reincarnation stage; to the karma; and, to all these self-arrogant exaltation that: "I am God, and I'm making my way toward my own deity."

Well, indeed, Isaiah says, "If you reject the message of Jesus Christ, the result is going to be that God is going to harden your heart so that you cannot return (you can't turn it around)." And here's my connection: Isaiah 6:3 indicates that Isaiah is talking about "Yahweh," the God whom the Jews worship. Isaiah 6:3: "And one cried unto another, and said, 'Holy, holy, holy is 'Yahweh' of Hosts (the Lord God of Hosts – the Lord of the armies (the angelic armies of heaven)). The whole earth is full of His glory." He is talking about "Yahweh," the God Whom the Jews worshiped.

In John 12:41, John says, "And these things said Isaiah when he saw His glory and spoke of Him." And John here is speaking about Jesus Christ. He says, "When Isaiah said 'Holy, holy, holy, I see 'Yahweh' of Hosts,'" post, he was talking about Jesus Christ. So, the Jews are rejecting their own God in their blindness. Now that's a victory for Satan, and if you don't think that's a tremendous power on the part of the devil to bring about that kind of deception – that the Jews would reject the very God that they're supposedly standing true to?

John says, "When Isaiah says, 'I saw His glory (the glory of 'Yahweh' of hosts), he was referring to Jesus Christ, the One who has blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, because they would not accept Him and receive the gospel truth. So, Jesus Christ, in his divine essence, is "Yahweh," while, of course, in His person (in His office in the Godhead), He is the Son." John 10:30 and Colossians 2:9 tell us that He is total deity.

So, negative volition to the Bible, the Word of God, is the kiss of death for Jews or gentiles alike. Paul's point here in Romans 10 is that the Jews had the report (they had the message), but they did not believe it.

Now to see how gross is the disbelief of the Jews, we have to go back to Isaiah 53, and we have to go through that whole chapter, and see exactly what, 700 to 800 years before Christ came, the Jews were told was going to happen. They were told of what they were potentially going to do, and they were warned: "Be prepared. Don't fall into this trap. Don't let this happen." So, they had it in generation-after-generation-after-generation, and they had it in Jesus' day. And yet they did exactly what they were warned not to do. Next time, we shall look at Isaiah 53 and that connection.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1988

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