

## Use Your Faith to Overcome the Opposition ©

By Pastor Asa Dockery

I want to begin in 2 Thessalonians, chapter two and verse one. Paul is exhorting the believers at Thessalonica and he is correcting them regarding bad doctrine that is being spread throughout the church. Someone has told them a lie, and he is correcting the matter as a good apostle should. So let's look at verse one.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 (NKJV): 1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.**

So some people had said that the day of Christ had already come, that He had come and gone, and it was over for them.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3 (NKJV): 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,***

The word perdition means lawless, so the son of lawlessness; he does not honor the laws of God. So the son of perdition – lawlessness - has to be revealed first before the Day of Christ has come.

**2 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV): 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God**

I want you to allow this to enter into your spirit, into your inner-man, this he is saying in verse four.

**2 Thessalonians 2:4 (NKJV): 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.**

So Satan has an agenda in the earth, does he not? And he needs a body to work through. He finds people with an evil heart to work through to accomplish his agenda in the earth. His agenda is to oppose God and anything that is associated with God. Remember in Isaiah, chapter 14, Lucifer is cast out of heaven. The Arch Angel, who is now called Satan, who said in his heart, 'I will be like the most high God, and I will exalt my throne above God's throne.' So Satan's mission in the earth is to oppose God and we read about his agenda here in this letter to Thessalonica.

Now Satan's aim is to pull you away from faith in God, or from His Son Jesus, by distracting you from the truth. He is big at diversions and distractions. The reason behind this is he wants to show himself as God when he can pull your attention away from truth; when he can pull you away from truth and get you to believe something other than truth. He will establish himself as the god of this world over you if he can, to show himself as god over your life.

We have learned that he does this through doubt. Satan gets you to doubt God, and the moment you doubt God, you will take your eyes off of God. He uses circumstances, situations, adversity, death, loss of a loved one, the

loss of a job, he will use loss period to cause doubt to arise in your heart and to pull you away from your steadfast faith in God and to keep you from abiding in the word of God.

After God created man and woman, and after He had placed them in the garden to fulfill their God-given purpose in the earth, we read where Satan came and offered to Eve another alternative to God's will for them. Satan was very effective with his plan, but he wasn't completely successful in it. He was effective in that he got them kicked out of the Garden of Eden, out of the garden of provision, and he was effective in separating man from God through sin, right? But although he was effective, he was not totally successful.

Satan managed there in the garden to turn the hearts of the very man and woman God had created to birth and to father the entire human race. Please allow that to enter into your spirit. (The word father means to be the founder, the beginning of something, which is why we call God Father. God is the originator of us for we came from Him.) If Adam and Eve being the first man and woman, created in God's image and likeness, were the ones that God had ordained to father the human race; and if Satan was able to spoil man and woman and taint their hearts with sin before the human race could even get started, then it seems like he would be effective at destroying the entire human race. Bad root, bad fruit.

However, let's see what he did there in the garden which effected man in Noah's day. This is very eye-opening. Sin spreads. Jesus said a little leaven, (sin), leavens the whole lump. It doesn't take much sin to spread out and defile a whole bunch, right? Let's look at what Satan did there in the garden which spread into Noah's day.

**Genesis 6:1-3 (NKJV): 1 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose. 3 And the LORD said,**

Listen to what the Lord said about mankind during Noah's day.

**Genesis 6:3 (NKJV): 3 And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh;**

He is indeed flesh, in other words he has a will and he is choosing to do the wrong thing with that will. He is indeed flesh; he is weak in and of himself.

**Genesis 6:3 (NKJV): 3 And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."**

Now up to this point it was possible for a person to live up to almost 1,000 years. Methuselah was nine hundred and sixty-nine years old when he died. So when God saw that He was giving the inhabitants of earth that long to repent, and they were using that time, instead of repenting and turning away from sin, to get themselves entangled into more sin, God said I am going to cut them back to 120 years. And after this amount of time He cut us back to 70 years, and 80 years, if we do well. The reason for that is we are spending our time, instead of

repenting and turning to God and living for God, we are becoming more corrupt. Therefore, He shortened our days.

**Genesis 6:4-5 (NKJV): 4 There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those *were* the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown. 5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent**

Not some, but every intent of man's heart was only evil continually, continually.

**Genesis 6:5-6 (NKJV): 5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.**

We see here how Satan was effective at opposing God's will. He had opposed God's will in the garden with Adam and Eve effectively, and now he is once again opposing God through all of mankind in Noah's generation, approximately 1,000 years after Adam's fall. Men have multiplied on the earth since the fall, and now the thoughts of their hearts are only evil continually. This is how effective Satan has been at opposing God's will and in causing men to sin against God. After sin entered, through rebellion, through doubt and through fear, Satan was able to harden man's heart against God. Satan's goal was to separate us from God, and to harden our hearts against God, and Satan was effective at doing that.

Now once Adam and Eve sinned, they introduced to all mankind that sin nature. We have all had to deal with the sin nature, have we not? It did not take many years after the fall for all of mankind to become corrupt and for their hearts to be taken over by sin, so that all they thought and imagined was sin and how to do more evil in the earth. And once again it seems Satan has been effective in Noah's generation in his mission to oppose God in the earth but again he was not successful because God kept for Himself a remnant. One family, out of all the people in the earth, God was able to spare one family; Noah's family. Isn't that something?

Repeatedly God's Spirit had dealt with man. He says that in chapter six, does He not? My Spirit shall not always strive with man. As used here, the word strive means to rule as a judge. My Spirit will not always rule over man as a judge or as an umpire. You say, what does that mean? My Spirit, the Holy Spirit, will not always strive with man means that the Holy Spirit was always striving with man pleading the case to live righteously so that God could bless them.

Is He not doing the same thing in our generations? Yes. He is constantly pleading the case of righteousness to the billions of people living on the earth. This is the reason for the preaching of the gospel. Isn't it to declare the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to the lost and to the hurting? The good news that through Jesus Christ there is no wrath, there is only salvation. That is the good news, isn't it? The Holy Spirit was pleading with them and pleading with them. They resisted the voice of the Holy Spirit in their own life and repeatedly they ignored Him and turned a deaf ear to Him therefore God was not able to save them. So God said My Spirit is not always going to strive with men.

When you were young your parents would keep telling you to clean up your room. Clean up your room. Pick up your stuff. And constantly they would hear, I forgot, I got distracted; but the parents knew you just didn't want to do it. Is this not the same way the Spirit of God deals with us? Yes, it is. Change your ways. Stop doing that. That way is the way to corruption. Then you get in trouble because you won't change your ways, and God says, I warned you. I warned you over and over. Now that was a whipping because I love you. You will receive recompense for the deeds you have done. You would rather He whip you than to receive His wrath. His chastening leads to and yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness, not wrath. It trains us because it is done from love and in love. (See Hebrews 12:5-11.)

The Holy Spirit kept striving with them but they would not heed, so God said I cannot save this generation from their own sin for they will not heed My word nor My Spirit. They have cut themselves off. God didn't do this, they did it to themselves. They did it to themselves because they kept hardening their hearts to the Spirit of God and therefore God said I cannot strive with you always because what you are doing in the earth is destroying yourselves. I am a preserver of life. It is my responsibility to preserve life. I am the Giver and the Sustainer of life. God does not want to release His wrath but He will when sin is destroying mankind, destroying the innocent. Isaiah speaks of this.

As is my method of teaching, we are identifying the problem first then we will talk about the solution.

**Matthew 13:10 (NKJV): 10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"**

Jesus had been speaking to the Jews. He was speaking to them but they didn't understand what He was saying, so there was a reason He was speaking to them in parables. And here is the reason He gives to the disciples. He says it is given to the disciples to understand, but to the Jews it has not been given.

**Matthew 13:11 (NKJV): 11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given."**

Now wait a minute, my Bible says God is no respecter of person. It would appear we have a little issue here. Why has it been given to the disciples to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven but to the Jews, God's chosen people, it has not been given?

When Jesus went to the disciples He said, Simon, Andrew, come with Me. What did they do? They forsook all and they went with Him. What about James and John, the sons of thunder? He told them, come follow me. What did they do? They forsook their nets, their father, their boat and their livelihood and they follow Him. What happened when the other men said we want to come and follow you? Jesus said come on, but the other men told Him to wait; one had to go bury his father and the other had to return home first and bid those in his house farewell. It was inconvenient to go right then and they hardened their hearts to the calling, so they did not receive the understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom. But to those who answered the call He gave them the understanding and thus He did not have to speak to them in parables.

**Matthew 13:12 (NKJV): 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given**

So if you humble yourselves, you do what God asks of you or requires of you, then He is going to give you even more understanding.

**Matthew 13:12 (NKJV): 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have,**

To him that is called but is not willing to humble himself and to put their faith in Christ as God's Son, but goes about in their own way grouping in spiritual darkness, then even what they have will be taken away from them.

**Matthew 13:12 (NKJV): 12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.**

It may appear as a little cruel but that is what happens when you give yourself over to Satan.

**Matthew 13:13 (NKJV): 13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.**

Therefore I speak to them, the Jews, God's chosen people, the ones Jesus, their Messiah, has come to save, I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Why is that? It is because sin has hardened their hearts.

**Matthew 13:14-15 (NKJV): 14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: *'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'***

They have, they have closed their ears and they have closed their eyes. They chose this. Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them. Doesn't that sound as if God doesn't want to heal them? No, it is just the opposite. They won't turn to God and allow Him to break that unbelief off of them and remove that hardness from them through belief in Jesus Christ so that Christ can then heal them. He said their hearts have grown dull.

Satan comes into our lives and uses these adverse situations, these negative situations, these war-fares, these battles and the losses we encounter to get us to harden our hearts to the voice of God. And when we harden our hearts, we are hardening our hearts to the blessings of God. It is like insult to injury.

When something bad happens and it wants to make you get hard, bitter and angry and to cause you to lash out, watch it. This is when the enemy uses a situation to set you off to where you will harden yourself against God's voice so that you will not hear Him and therefore you cannot get blessed. The spirit of offense is at work. But let's look at verse sixteen.

**Matthew 13:16-17 (NKJV): 16 "But blessed *are* your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; 17 for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous *men* desired to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*.**

Isn't that amazing? Now let's break this down and see what the Spirit of the Lord is saying to us.

Andrew Womack does an excellent job on this scripture right here. He says when Jesus said this people's heart is waxed gross, (KJV), when their hearts had become dull, Andrew Womack said He is talking about the old way they used to make candles. They take a wick and they dip it in the hot wax; and once they dip it in, they quickly pull it out, then allow the wax that has adhered to the wick harden. Once the wax has hardened around the wick they dip it again into the hot wax and allow it to coat over the last amount. And they keep repeating this process over and over until the new candle has reached a desired thickness. And he said in the same way that a candle waxed gross, increased in dimension, these people, the Jews have turned a deaf ear repeatedly to the voice of God. Just as in Adam's day, just as in Noah's day, and now it was happening in Jesus' day. They have hardened and hardened their hearts until now they cannot understand the truth that He, Jesus, is speaking it to them plainly. Isn't that something?

Satan, the god of this world, had blinded them so that they could not see Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, and believe upon Him and be saved even though they were God's chosen people. So when we hear God's Spirit, or when we listen to the preaching of God's word, and then we rise up and go back out into the world to our old ways, after we have heard the sermon, after we have heard the teaching, we are hardening our hearts toward God.

I have had individuals come up to me after a service and say that sermon was just for me. You spoke straight to me. It wasn't me, it was the Spirit of God dealing with them and then I watch them go out of the church and go right back into their old ways. Do you know what they did? They hardened their heart to the Spirit of God; they hardened their heart to His word; and their heart became more calloused than it was before they heard the word. Every time God deals with their heart, and they become broken and they go through a trauma, or they go through a hardship and they feel like they have to come in for a tune-up, the Spirit of God will deal with them again. But they go right back out to their old lifestyle, unrepentant and unchanged, with their heart hardened even more and eventually they will be able to come into a service and not even feel the Spirit of God. Then they will complain, that is the deadest church I have ever been in, but people around them are being delivered, healed and saved. Their heart has waxed gross. This is what Jesus was speaking about.

He was alluding to the Jews who had repeatedly hardened their hearts to the Holy Spirit, to God, and to the voice of the prophets and to the law; and now they have separated themselves from the blessings of God which was their inheritance. Jesus told the disciples, their hearts are hardened against God, therefore they cannot see, they cannot hear and they cannot understand the things that He, Jesus, God in the flesh, was speaking in their hearing. God Himself came down and talked to them and they could not perceive what He was saying because they were in spiritual darkness. They would not use faith to open up their eyes. When we let faith arise it will open our eyes and the Spirit will bring the revelation to our spirit.

Once again Satan's plans were effective but they were not successful. The Jews were not able to understand the truth when it was spoken by Jesus in the flesh because they had hardened their hearts continually to God, against God's law and against God's prophets.

Now here is the sad thing that the Spirit of God showed me about the Jews. Just as the Jews under Moses hardened their hearts in the wilderness and couldn't enter into the Promised Land, the Jews in Jesus' day hardened their hearts and couldn't receive Him as their Messiah and they perished just as those did in the wilderness. It was the exact same scenario. The Jews, under Moses, hardened their hearts when the Holy Spirit spoke and instructed them through Moses, and Hebrews chapter three, verses seven through ten says, they hardened their hearts repeatedly.

**Hebrews 3:7-10 (NKJV):** **7** Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: *"Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, 9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty years. 10 Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.'*

God was longsuffering for forty years with them. They saw His acts but they refused to know His ways. They saw His miracles on their behalf but they refused to know His ways, His heart. They always went astray in their hearts. And when Jesus came it was the same, they would not receive the Messiah. This is serious. This is salvation we are speaking of. God may have lost a few generations but He has always won the war against Satan. Satan may have been effective but he has not been successful.

Now here is the solution. I said I would show you the problem but I would also cover the solution. Now we are going to see the hope. This is so wonderful. This is where the power comes in. This is where the grace is released.

**Ezekiel 11:15-17 (NKJV):** **15** "Son of man, your brethren, your relatives, your countrymen, and all the house of Israel in its entirety, *are* those about whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Get far away from the LORD; this land has been given to us as a possession.' **16** Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone." ' **17** Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel." ' "

We know this is an end-time prophecy regarding Israelites coming back into the nation. We are seeing that fulfilled right now through ministries such as 'Wings of Eagles' and others, right? Jews are returning to their homeland with the assistance of such ministries who are trying to help fulfill this scripture.

**Ezekiel 11:18 (NKJV):** **18** And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there.

So they will cleanse the land when they come back.

**Ezekiel 11:19 (NKJV): 19 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them,**

One heart, there will be unity in the Jews again. I will put a new spirit within them, who is doing this? God is. I will, I will do this.

**Ezekiel 11:19 (NKJV): 19 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh,**

I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out. The stony heart, that is what He dealt with in the garden, that is what He dealt with in Noah's day, and it is what He dealt with in Jesus' day and now He is dealing with it in our day because Jesus said as it was in the days of Lot and Noah so shall it be in the day of the coming of the Son of man.

**Ezekiel 11:19 (NKJV): 19 Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. 21 But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads," says the Lord GOD.**

They shall be My people, and I will be their God, He has a covenant with them. We have seen it throughout scripture and throughout time, God has always kept for Himself a remnant of people. He is still doing it now, even under the grace period, the day of grace, the church; He has kept for Himself a remnant. This remnant will refuse to bow their knee to any idol; or to allow their selves to be pulled away from God to serve any false gods.

How would God take a person, or in this case in Ezekiel take a nation, whose heart is hardened by the deceitfulness of sin and cause them then to see, to hear, and to understand that they might be saved from their sin? How is He going to do that?

He allows us to live with the wages of sin for awhile, or for a season. Okay, you want to go prodigal, you desire to live your own lifestyle in the world and you want your portion of the inheritance that belongs to you to spend on your fleshly desires, go ahead. And the father waits. And he waits. And he waits. And he waits. What is he waiting for? He is waiting until that prodigal comes to his senses. God is long-long-long-suffering and not willing that any should perish, but that all should come, come to repentance. The word says in Luke chapter 15, the prodigal came to his senses and said the servants in my father's house have it better than this. I will go back and tell him I am not worthy to be called a son but let me be a servant. Now the father was still waiting and watching; and when the father saw him afar off, it says he ran to the prodigal son and hugged and kissed him, right?

So God says, you want it your way; you want to take My word out of school, you want to take the Bible out of church and out of every other venue, go ahead, I will wait right here, but when you cry out to Me I will not hear you until you repent. You must repent first. God we are praying to you but you are not answering us. He says

when you repent then I will hear you. Where is that in scripture? It is in Isaiah, chapter 59, verses one and two. God said My ear is not too heavy that I cannot hear, nor arm too short that I cannot save, but your iniquities or sins have separated you from Me. But if you will repent, if you will come to your senses, I will bring you back into the household as a son. So God waits for us while we deal with the desires and wages of sin. I personally think America is there and we will stay there until the prodigals wake up.

How is God going to save a bunch of hard-hearted people? Let's look at Romans chapter ten.

**Romans 10:4 (NKJV): 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who works? No, to everyone who believes. This is it. This is the basis for all of salvation. For God sent His Son into the world for whosoever does what? For whosoever believes in Him that they might not perish but have everlasting life. It all begins how? It begins by believing.

**Romans 10:4 (NKJV): 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes, period; you must believe in Him. The Jews when Jesus spoke did not believe, but to the ones who believed, John says, He gave them the power to become the sons of God. Belief in Christ takes that stony heart out.

You will know when someone has a stony heart when you preach or teach a message like this one and they say they can't get it, and this is very basic. This is about as basic as you can get yet some do not understand it. Their heart is hard. Why? *They are not mixing what they are hearing with faith.* The Jews did that in Hebrews, remember? The gospel preached to them did not profit them for they did not mix it with faith. I don't believe this word is going to help me. I have reached out to God. I have called on God; He didn't help me. God says repent and believe what you hear that is true and you shall be saved. *It will save you when you believe and accept it in faith.*

**Romans 10:5-9 (NKJV): 5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." 6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**

You will be what? You will be saved. This is how God is going to resolve this situation, this problem of people with a hard heart. You are going to confess your faults to Him; He is going to be faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you of all your unrighteousness; and He is going to put in a heart of flesh and you are

going to be saved! The people who have looked down their nose and pointed their fingers at you and have said you will never amount to anything, you will never be anything, will hear God say you are the very one I am going to use to turn this world upside down for Jesus.

**Romans 10:10 (NKJV): 10 For with the heart one believes**

For with the heart one believes. Wait a minute. For with the heart one believes but he just said you have a stony heart! But now he is saying if you will take that stony heart and believe you will come into righteousness, into right standing with God!

**Romans 10:10 (NKJV): 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

Remember the candle I spoke of earlier? Dip it in there repeatedly; the candle gets thicker and thicker and harder and harder. God says, all right you are saved; and now that you are saved, I am going to take you from faith to faith, and from glory to glory. Why does He do that? He is stripping off each layer that you have hardened yourself with. He has to renew your mind. *Your heart has been changed but the mind has to be peeled.* This is why we go through what we go through. It is like we get through with one birth pain and here comes another. He is taking you from one level of faith to another level of faith; from one level of glory to another level of glory.

How many have watched musicians on the stage on television? And when you see them you say wow! They are so talented, so polished. They are so good. Then you hear someone on one of these talent reality shows attempt to get up and try to sound just like one of those who have been polished; but when you hear them they squeak and they crash and burn, and you think but what is the difference? Both of them say they are talented, but one has been developed. The other one is still in the rough. The singer that is developed has gone through the fire. They have been critiqued, they have been judged and they have been criticized. If you can perform while you are being critiqued and judged then you can be promoted. Your critics will help refine you to get you to where you are a polished product. So God takes us from faith to faith and from glory to glory.

So you can be one of the Christians that sit on the side line and watches David get into the battle with Goliath, or we can step out in faith and become the David who faces the Goliath. See you have to use your faith. You have to be active, not passive but active. Faith is the substance, now faith. You have to make that faith work and it will change you. So God uses that faith to change our hearts and to change who we are.

**Romans 10:13 (NKJV): 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."**

For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be what? They shall be saved. Whoever calls, it does not give an ethnicity, it doesn't give a gender, it doesn't give a social background, it doesn't give your pedigree, it doesn't give your classification, your financial status, or your standing in the community, does it? It says whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

**Romans 10:14-16 (NKJV): 14** How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? **15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? . . . **16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel.

Not all have obeyed the gospel. Not all that have been called have obeyed.

**Romans 10:16-17 (NKJV): 16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "*Lord, who has believed our report?*" **17** So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Now break that down. Faith comes by how? By hearing, but how does hearing come? It comes by the word of God. I can't get hearing then unless I listen to the Bible. Once *I give heed to the Bible as it is being taught then faith is able to come into my heart.* If someone is preaching and I say all they want is my money, then I am not hearing. I am not hearing. Faith comes by hearing, and if I am not hearing then faith cannot come. But if I sit there and I get past my criticism of this minister, and I start hearing the truth then faith can come up in my spirit because now, I am not hearing the minister, I am hearing the truth that is coming through him. *When truth comes out faith will hear it.* When faith hears it and faith connects with the truth conception is made or occurs. There is a new believer inside of you at the moment of conception. The new man is born. The old man is dead. Isn't that right? There it is. This is how God is going to redeem, to set free, a generation. This is how He is going to get us ready.

Even though we were born in sin, and though many are Gentiles according to the flesh, if we will only believe the truth in God's word and begin to stand on His promises, then our faith will be able to save us from our sins. We had two strikes against us. We were sinners, and we were Gentiles, (or most of our church congregation is Gentiles). Neither one of those were allowed in the old Covenant, (except as defined in special conditions in the Old Testament.) You had to be a natural Jew, a descendent of Abraham; you had to believe according to the traditions. But God said if you will believe the truth when you hear it, although you are a sinner and although you are a Gentile, I will accept you.

If the hardness of Adam's and Eve's hearts to God's word caused them to sin and to become separated from God, then shouldn't we be saved from our sin if we will only hear God's word and then do it? Yes.

If they hardened their hearts to the voice of God and to the commandments of God and that separated them from God, then shouldn't the opposite bring us back to God? Yes.

**Romans 12:1 (NKJV): I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present**

Paul has given you all these things in Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11, and then you get to chapter 12, he says, I beseech you therefore, brethren, (he calls you brethren because now you have been saved, you have called upon the name of the Jesus and made Him Lord of your life,) now that I have told you all these things, do this.

**Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV): 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.*  
2 And do not be conformed**

Don't be like those candles, (which were dipped in and out,) hardening your hearts to the voice of God. Don't be conformed to this world.

**Romans 12:2-3 (NKJV): 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of *himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.**

So before the fall of man God had given to every person that came into the earth, every man or woman, a measure of faith, did you know that? The Bible tells us that. He has dealt to every man, woman and child a measure of faith. He gave them that before the fall. With that measure of faith every person has had the option to either choose to believe or to harden their heart toward God. To those who believe salvation; to those who harden perish. Faith gives us the ability to see the invisible realm of the spirit.

They diagnosis you, you are terminal, but in your spirit you are hearing you are healed. Faith gives us the ability to see into the invisible realm. Now when the Jews hardened their hearts they could not hear that. They couldn't see themselves saved, delivered, and healed. Why? Because their hearts were hardened and they couldn't hear the voice of God; but when you submit to God, and you hear the truth, and you believe and receive that truth, then you can hear the Spirit of God. So now that you hear the Spirit of God when you hear something that contradicts your destiny in Christ, God will give you a word through the Spirit and you will hear something that will change and alter what would have really happened in the natural realm, and it will not happen. Why? Because God through Christ has reversed the curse and what was intended for you in the natural realm is now going to be aborted. Now you are going to do all things through Christ. So faith gives us the ability to see into the invisible realm of the Spirit.

Faith also gives us the power to overcome the distractions, the temptations, the doubt and the fear that Satan will try to use against us in order to pull us away from believing the truth. Faith will give you the victory over this world. Faith will give you the victory over the distractions that come and tries to pull you out of your purpose in God, out of your service in the church, or from whatever God has told you to put your hands to; faith will give you the victory over any distraction, any temptation so that you do not have to succumb to it.

Therefore, this is our responsibility: We must guard our hearts so that we do not receive an accusation or an evil report against our God that would cause us to harden our hearts against His voice. I cannot over emphasize that statement. ***We have to guard our hearts, not harden our hearts, but guard our hearts against any false accusation or any lie that Satan would try to make us believe against our God, which would show Him in a negative light.***

You have to talk your way through this. You have to get your understanding so you go into this head first. God is taking us from this level of understanding, and through teaching us His word, He is building us up into a greater understanding of the things we have been robbed of, things which have been taken from us. The Lord is methodically working to get every bit of the negativity of this world out of us; to separate us from the world. If we believe anything negative about who God is, and who God is in us through Christ, then it will separate us from Him. It will disconnect us from the power to become what He has ordained for us and given to us, and Satan knows that.

**Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV): 1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,**

So when you have faith in God, when you have faith in His word and in His promises, in His Son as your Savior, then faith is going to give you the substance of things hoped for. Where is that substance going to be? It is going to be in your knower, your spirit. Have you ever had a 'knowing' from God and it didn't matter what it looked like in the natural, you knew you were going to come out of it? That is faith. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.

**Hebrews 11:1 (NKJV): 1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**

I can see things in the spirit and not see it in the natural; but if I will believe what I see in the spirit, it will *become* it in the natural. I have to *choose* what I see in my spirit *over* what I see in the natural. Faith does that. So if you have chosen to place your faith in Jesus as God's Son, God has given you now the Holy Spirit.

See now I am talking about the solution to the problem that we talked about with the sin and hardness. When you come to faith in Christ Jesus as the Son of God, God now sends to you the Holy Spirit who will be with you and in you, right? The Holy Spirit will open our hearts to give us revelation, wisdom and understanding that we couldn't have before we had faith in Christ. Now we have the Holy Spirit, God Himself, dwelling in us and He is going to show us things that our eyes cannot see, our ears cannot hear and our mind cannot grasp. God is going to do that through His Spirit that is in us.

Now we through the Holy Spirit can overcome this world by our faith in Christ. When Satan, or this world tells us no, we can go to God and hear yes. God can now make a way for us in this wilderness called the world. We have faith and faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. God will say yes.

So I don't have to be born with a certain talent or trait? All I need is a willing heart to seek God when the flesh falls short of the cut, and He will make a way for what He has placed in my heart? No weapon formed against me then shall be able to prosper; every time someone rises up against me in judgment I will condemn them? How? By your lifestyle in Christ; He will give you the strength to become what He says.

In conclusion, we are living in the day of testing. There was a day of testing with Adam, with Noah, and even with Jesus. When Jesus went into the wilderness, Satan tempted Him. If You be the Son of God, turn these stones into bread. What was he trying to get Jesus to do? Alter the plan of God; to do something other than the

plan of God is sin. For him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin. So Satan was trying to get Jesus to alter the plan of God and to sin. He was challenging Jesus. The enemy is working overtime now to turn us, God's people, against the word of God that he might rob us of our inheritance in Christ.

You had the Jews under Moses who hardened their hearts against the voice of God and could not therefore enter into the Promised Land; and then you had the Jews in Jesus' day who hardened their hearts against the voice of God, against the prophets of God, and against the law of God, and they could not receive Christ as their Messiah. Now we are the church and we are in the last day and we have a promise from Him. As He promised the church in Philadelphia, He says if you keep yourself from the world and if you will keep My word in perseverance, I will keep you from the hour of temptation or testing that is going to come upon the whole world.

So if we harden our voice against the voice of God and we call ourselves Christians, then we will not escape because we have neglected so great a salvation like the Jews under Moses, like the Jews under Jesus, and now us under Christ. We cannot receive the inheritance; and to think that we can sin and throw our sin in the face of God, and say You still have to bless me and let me inherit the Promised Land, you are fooling yourself. If He didn't do it for them He isn't going to do it for us. It will not happen.

We are living in the day of testing. Satan is working overtime to turn God's people's heart against the word. But to those who endure this season, to those who remain faithful to God and His calling upon their life, they shall overcome this world and receive the victor's crown that is laid up for all those who love Him.

We are going to let God arise and His enemies be scattered.

**1 Corinthians 2:4 (NKJV): 4 And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom,**

See he is not trying to dazzle you with men's wisdom but he came with demonstration of the Spirit and power.

**1 Corinthians 2:4-7 (NKJV): 4 And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. 6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,**

That is what Jesus did, is it not? He spoke to them in parables.

**1 Corinthians 2:6-10 (NKJV): 6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written: "*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*" 10 But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit.**

But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. He has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For you who choose to use the measure of faith and place it in Jesus as your Savior, God will give you the Holy Spirit. When you begin to receive Him into your heart, He will give you spiritual ears to hear, spiritual eyes to see, and a new heart to understand the ways of God; but you must remain humble and pliable and not harden your heart along the way, no matter what may come into your life. Now as we continue to walk humbly before God He will peel away, like I said, each layer of hardness until, until what? Until Christ is revealed in us; we will see Him as He is and we will allow His mind to be in us, and we will begin to conform to His likeness.

We are walking on the journey and we are having adversity, we are having a lot of setbacks, a lot of problems, and a lot of persecution, but if we will keep our hearts right before God, God will take what was meant for evil and turn it around for our good and peel another layer off of us until finally Christ is revealed in us. Beloved, it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know this, that when He shall appear we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3:2)