

## The Romans Road

### Romans

#### SCRIPTURE READING: **Romans 8:33-39**

#### INTRODUCTION:

Last week at annual meeting you heard me speak about the preparation season that I felt God was moving us out of and into a season of action and growth.

You have also heard me speak about the sharing the Gospel and our responsibly to do, so for years at this point.

But if I asked how many “Evangelists” are in here --- I bet not many hands would go up. Most of us think the word “evangelist” always comes after “TV” or “Radio” or “Crusade.” Evangelist conjures up ideas of anything from a gifted orator to an obnoxious know-it-all.

The word Evangel means “The Gospel.” So an Evangelist is really just someone who presents “The Gospel.”

All Christians SHOULD be Evangelists. Most of us WANT to be Evangelists. But few of us know HOW to be Evangelists.

This past week in bible study we started to touch upon a concept known as the Romans Road for Salvation.

Maybe you’ve heard the saying, All roads lead to Rome. It comes from the fact that Rome built straight, durable roads connecting most of Europe and parts of Asia.

The Romans Road we’re talking about today is a simple way to present the Gospel, using scriptures only from the book of ROMANS.

In the book of ROMANS, Paul gave us a great road map that leads to salvation.

We'll start down the Roman Road by looking at 2 verses in chapter 3.

## **1. Our Condition**

**Romans 3:10** It is written, "*There is none righteous, not even one.*"

**Romans 3:23** *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ....*

We don't tend to use words like righteous and sin in everyday conversation --- so they may need some explanation. Righteous means being right with God.

Sin means falling short of perfection.

A lot of people don't think of themselves as sinners. People tend to think of a sinner as someone who is morally depraved, dangerous and violent, or just plain-old disgusting.

They figure they are not that bad....But nobody in their right mind thinks they're perfect.

And if you are not perfect ... in every action, word, and thought ... then the Bible describes you as a sinner.

Jesus said, "*Be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.*" But is perfection a realistic goal?

Think of it this way: If you shoot an arrow at a target, the bulls-eye is your goal.

You might feel pretty good about yourself if you just hit the TARGET (I know I would!) But in Archery, the only PERFECT shot is a BULLS EYE.

You are either PERFECT with every shot, or you are FLAWED. And according to scripture, everyone --- without exception --- falls short of the mark.

Show me the basketball player who never fouls and makes every free throw.

Show me the baseball player who hits a homerun every time he comes up to bat.

Show me the football player who makes a touchdown every time he gets the ball.

Show me the golfer who makes a hole- in-one every time he tees off. Not even Tiger Woods can make that claim.

There is none perfect, no not one. Everyone is flawed. Everyone is a sinner.

Look at what **Romans 6:23** says about the consequence of sin: *The wages of sin is death...*

The deadliest killer in this world isn't heart disease or cancer or AIDS or War.

SIN is the epidemic that no one can avoid --- and sin sickness is always TERMINAL ... there are no exceptions.

## **2. God's Solution**

If we stopped there, the Roman Road would be a DEAD END --- literally. But **Romans 6:23** immediately takes a life-saving turn. *The wages of sin is death ... BUT the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23*

**Romans 5:8** explains: *God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us!*

Now, I want you to put yourself in the middle of a Disaster Movie. Pretend you've just learned that a giant meteor will destroy the Continental United States next week. All transportation is out of

commission. The government can't help. The military can't help. It's every man for himself. And there is only one way to be saved: swim to Hawaii.

Everyone lines up on the coast. Olympic swimmers stand next to people from the Seaside Retirement Home.

Some start out strong. Others can barely totter into the surf before going under. But no one is going to make the 2,500 mile swim on their own.

In the end the strongest will be just as dead in the water as the weakest.

In the same way, none of us are going to make it to Heaven on our own.

That's why Jesus came to Save us.

When Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He built the BRIDGE that can get us there.

This BRIDGE is available for anyone and everyone --- free of charge. But it does no good unless you choose to walk across it.

### **3. Our Response**

In the same way, Jesus offers Salvation as a free gift. But it does no good unless you choose to accept the gift.

A response is required --- which brings us back to our Roman Road.

**Romans 5:1** *Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- *FAITH: Putting trust in God*

People have all kinds of fuzzy definitions for the word faith.

For some, it is a vague kind of positive thinking. "My faith will get me through."

The question is, “Your faith in what?”

To stick with the analogy of the BRIDGE, it would be like someone saying “My faith will get me through.” while they ignore the BRIDGE and keep on treading water.

For some, Faith is more specific. They may say, “I believe in God.” They may even say, “I believe Jesus is the Son of God.”

But they are like the swimmer who says, “Yes, I BELIEVE there’s a great big impressive bridge over there.” Then they just keep struggling to swim on by.

Saving Faith means getting out of the water and walking on the bridge. It is the kind of trust that leads to action.

Saving faith will always lead to change.

**Romans 2:4** gives this warning: *Do you show contempt for the riches of God’s kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that his kindness leads you toward repentance?*

- *REPENTANCE: Turning away from sin*

Saving faith leads to repentance. Repentance simply means turning AWAY from our sins --- and turning TOWARD our Savior.

It’s a conscious decision to trust and obey. Just like the old Hymn says, “Trust and obey...For there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.”

- *CONFESSION: Calling out to God*

**Romans 10:9-10** *If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*

**Romans 10:13** *"Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved!"*

Confession turns thought into action.

Confession lets others know what has been happening inside our minds and hearts.

Confession is a public commitment.

Have you ever been to a Wedding where the Minister said, "Will you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?" And naturally the Groom answered... "Hey, that's none of your business. This is a private thing between me and her."

That would never do. No VOWS, no Wedding.

Confession is to salvation what Vows are to a wedding.

When you take Christ as Savior, you can't keep it a secret.

With your heart you believe, and with your mouth you confess, resulting in salvation.

- *BAPTISM: Identifying with Christ*

**Romans 6:3-5** gives a wonderful description of another action associated with saving Faith. *Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. We have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in His resurrection.*

In Baptism, we identify with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Baptism is a picture of the salvation story. Going under the water represents the death of our Old Life, and --- just as Christ was raised from the dead --- we come up out of the water to live a New Life.

Baptism marks the line of demarcation between our old life and our new life.

Look at what the book of Romans tells us about the old and new life:

Location in Romans Former Life New Life in Christ

Ch. 5 Child of Adam's race Member of God's family

Ch. 6 Slave of sin Servant of Christ

Ch. 7 Married to the law Part of the Bride of Christ

Ch. 8 The mind on the flesh The mind on the Spirit

I remember shortly after the baptism of a young man he approached me and asked if I could do it again because his family wasn't there to see. I smiled at him and told him the first time "took."

The truth is, even though we don't need to be baptized over and over --- in a way, we WILL do it again every day.

You see, Baptism is not the end, it is a beginning. We are not just BELIEVERS in Christ. We are His FOLLOWERS.

• *Following Jesus: Living the New Life*

**Romans 12:1** says, *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God --- which is your spiritual worship.*

Baptism is a beautiful way to offer your body as a living sacrifice. You BELIEVE with your heart. You CONFESS with your mouth. In baptism

you offer ALL of yourself to God --- spirit, soul, and body. And then you keep on offering yourself to God every day from that point on.

**Romans 12:2** says, *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is --- his good and pleasing and perfect will.*

Our life of faith involves renewal of our minds back to God by offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices.

We do this DAILY so that our connection with God will remain fresh and new all through our lives.

Our final stop on the Roman Road tells us about the Promises of God for everyone who will accept his offer of Salvation.

#### **4. God's Promise**

**Romans 8:1** *"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

There is no condemnation left for you once you accept Jesus as your Savior.

None of us Follow Jesus perfectly ... even after He saves us. But you don't need to wonder if you really belong to God, because it's not up to you.

We don't put trust in OURSELVES, we place all our trust in HIM.

We depend on HIM --- And He is FOR us:

Look at **Romans 8:31** *If God is for us who can be against us. He who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all. Will He not also with him freely give us all things?*

I no longer have to wonder if God is on my side. He is always on my side.

Next time you feel anxious, hopeless, or defeated, remember that God is on your side. God is FOR you.

Romans chapter 8 is so full of encouragement that it is well worth reading and memorizing. In fact, I want to challenge all of you to read **Romans 8** every day this week. (If you start today and read it again next Sunday morning, you can read **Romans 8** 8 times before we get back together.)

### **CONCLUSION:**

I also want to challenge you to become an Evangelist. Take these Roman Road notes home. Use them to plan your own way of presenting the Gospel.

You don't need to say everything I said this morning. Choose the illustrations you want to use. Mark the scriptures in your Bible ... or write them on a piece of paper that you can carry with you. You never know when an opportunity to present the Gospel may come your way.

Dear friends, I hope all of you are traveling the Roman Road.

- Have you realized that you are a sinner who needs to be made right with God?
- Do you understand that God is offering you salvation ... freely through Faith in Jesus Christ?

Maybe you are at the crossroads today. If that is the case, don't miss your chance to respond to the Gospel Message.