

The Roman Road to Salvation

The book of Romans was written by a saved man (the Apostle Paul) to a saved people (the Romans) about how it was they came into contact with the saving power of Christ and how it would be that they might stay saved for all eternity.

The letter has 16 chapters. However, there is a journey laid out in the first 8 of those chapters that captures our attention in this study. The Roman Road, this 8 mile journey, leads us to Christ now and forever. The rest of the Romans letter offers powerful truths for saved people. And that is who we will be, if we follow the pathway laid out for us in the first half of this great letter.

This road has a start and a finish. It starts with an idea: *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..."* **Romans 1:16**. This is our starting point: the idea that the gospel is powerful enough to save anyone, anywhere, anytime.

The road ends with an assurance: *"...we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us"* **Romans 8:37**. We can be in a relationship with God so strong, that the love of God will forever protect and save us, now and into eternity.

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Comparing Conversion Stories

Warm Up: Examines Paul's conversion and your own.

Paul is the author of the Romans letter. He was saved by Jesus Christ and then devoted the rest of his life to helping others be saved as well. Let's take a look at how he found himself in God's grace.

Read Acts 22:1-16 – This is the third time Acts records Paul's conversion (**Acts 9, Acts 22**).

- 1) Note how he was a sinner and stood against the cause of Christ (**22:4-5**).
- 2) Observe how Christ intervened in his life to guide him in the right direction (**22:6-8**).
- 3) See that Paul believed in Jesus on the road and asked what to do (**22:9-10**).
- 4) Notice how Paul did exactly what the Lord told him to do (**22:10-11**).
- 5) Read how God sent a prophet to teach Paul how to be saved (**22:12-16**).
- 6) Consider how Paul was immediately baptized to "wash away" his sins (**22:16**).
- 7) Going back to Acts 9, see that Paul began serving Jesus and never turned back (**9:18-20**).

For the next 30 years, Paul traveled to cities converting people to Christ. He wrote at least 13 of your New Testament letters, all designed to encourage Christians in their faith.

Romans includes information on how they became Christians and how to live as a Christian. We will devote our time to it, but first, please answer the following questions about your life:

- 1) Are you willing to discuss the dangers of sin and the pain that sin causes God?
- 2) Do you believe Christ wants to save you and may be guiding Truth into your life?
- 3) Will you explore the difference between belief of Jesus and true belief in Him?
- 4) Is your love for Christ so deep that you would do whatever He commanded you?
- 5) Have you considered that God may send teachers to help you understand Truth?
- 6) Are you willing to discuss the "one Baptism" and what it means to die with Christ?
- 7) Do you desire to commit to a life of service to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?

Our 8 Mile walk through Romans 1-8 is designed to help us accomplish all the things above. We will be challenged and tested, but always with the hope that if we trust and obey God, He will bless us.

If at any point in the study, you feel convicted to be saved – to be saved according to the will of God – just look at the person you are with and say: "I want to die with Christ." **Romans 6:1-7**

Seeing Paul's Letter in Context

Setting: Capturing Paul's intent in addressing the Jewish Nation

Before we walk through Romans in search of our own journey to Christ, let's first consider some of the bigger picture things that are happening with reference to the Jewish nation and their faith.

The Roman letter was written around 55 AD, as many Jewish saints are returning to Rome.

They had been forced out by the emperor Claudius, but after his death they were allowed to return home.

Paul's letter aims to prevent a difficult relationship between Gentile and Jewish saints in the city.

The letter seeks to establish:

-- That Gentiles belong among God's people just as much as the Jews do (Romans 1:16-17; 3:27-30)

Q1 – What do the above verses say about who can be saved? _____

-- That God has not tossed aside His previous promises with Abraham (Romans 4:1-5, 13-16; Galatians 3:16-22)

Q2 – Is Abraham still important to the salvation message for us all? _____ Explain - _____

The inclusion of Gentiles does not mean God has abandoned Israel (Romans 10:1-4, 8-13; 11:1-6)

Q3 – Are the Jews still special to God? _____ If so, in what new way in Christ? _____

-- Jews and Gentiles alike would stand or fall based on their faith in Jesus (Romans 1:16-17; 11:17-23)

Q4 – Righteousness to God is not based on heritage or lack thereof. To whom is God's kindness now extended? _____

God's promise to bless all nations through his seed is fulfilled by God's plan through Christ!
God's justice and faithfulness to all men, Jew or Gentile, is revealed through the Gospel of Christ.

The main focus of this letter is to reveal God's plan of righteousness through the Gospel. This has specific application to showing the Jews that this plan includes Gentiles. And there are sections where Paul has to show Gentiles that this plan still includes Jews as well. In fact, the point is we can all live in Christ together! The power of God's plan to make man righteous through the Gospel has the power to save all men who believe!

This page in our material may not seem crucial now, but it will help in certain sections in Romans. There are times where you might wonder: "now how does that verse apply to my individual walk in Christ?" And the answer might be – "this passage is addressing the nation of Israel and the issues they were facing." The ability to make that distinction and interpret the passage in that light can keep us on the author's intended track.

But again, within this narrative about these two peoples becoming one, is the central theme of the salvation of anyone who trusts and obeys Jesus Christ. This is the direction we will be going in this study.

The World Sins Before God

Mile 1: Observe sin in the world, knowing there is no excuse.

Read *Romans 1:18-32*.

Q1 - Does God Exist? _____ How would you go about proving your answer? _____

Confidence in God's existence and presence is fundamental to standing for the standard of Truth revealed in the Bible. He made us and all things and the Word: we must trust and follow Him.

Q2 - What do the following passages add to the argument for God's Existence? _____
(*Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 19:1-10, Acts 17:24-28*) _____

From Genesis throughout all history, God's presence and His right to rule people's lives has been the dominant theme of life. To balk at that is against all design and nature and our very purpose.

Q3 – What happens when men “suppress the truth” about God? _____

Increasingly, our culture has rejected the presence and rights of God. This leads to every form of sin possible. And it is sin, because God's law stands and sin is violation of God's law (*1 John 3:4*).

Q4 – Why do they have no excuse for this behavior? _____

Not accepting God does not mean He goes away. God built within us all an eternal spirit in His image, and the choice to reject that does not make it go away either. There is no excuse.

Q5 – And what will happen if people continue living in sin? _____
(*see Romans 2:5-8, II Thessalonians 1:5-10*) _____

The Lord wants everyone to be saved through Jesus: everyone (*1 Timothy 2:3-4*). But He cannot save those who do not acknowledge their sin, nor seek to know the God who made them.

The Religious Also Sin

Mile 2: Acknowledge you also sin and likewise have no excuse.

Read *Romans 2:1-8, 17-24*

Paul now addresses the spiritual people in his audience. Specifically, the Jews, perhaps even Christian Jews, who looked with judgment against the culture, but needed to face something important.

Q1 - Were these religious Jews (even Christians) sinning also? And if so, what kinds of sins were they committing? _____

Q2 – Would God overlook their sin, since they believe in God? How do you know? _____

Notice **2:12-16** – Jews who lived under the law, didn't keep the law perfectly. They were sinners. Gentiles who followed a law of conscience also were accused, as they too were sinners. And the Gospel, as great as the news of it is, will also judge men, all men, even spiritual men, and show us all to be sinners in need.

Q3 – These people judged the world as sinful and foolish and subject to God's wrath (all true). But they somehow felt like God would not judge them, being protected by the Law. Why would they think that?

If you and I are to truly come to Jesus; I mean fully and humbly come to beg for the mercy of our gracious King, we must first see ourselves as just like everyone else: sinners. We are no more worthy to be saved than the vilest offender in the world. Sometimes spiritual people think there is some magic scale weighing our good and bad, and since ours looks better than others, we'll be saved. Such a scale does not exist.

Q4 – If you were judged eternally based on your deeds in the flesh, even now, how would that go? (Notice Romans 2:5-8 and II Corinthians 5:10) If this judgment is coming, how can we ever truly prepare for it? _____

We must come broken to Christ. Not elevating ourselves above the world, or feeling confidence because we know the New Testament books by heart. We have to come admitting that we commit sins just like every other person, and some of the same things, and our worthiness of heaven level is ... 0.

Q5 – If we find ourselves empty of pride and doomed on our own, what should that make us do? _____

None Of Us Is Righteous

Mile 3: Understand no one is worthy of salvation or earns it.

Read *Romans 3:9-18, 21-27*

We are unworthy to live. The Jews wondered if this meant they were unimportant. Religious people may wonder if this means their choices don't matter. That's not at all Paul's point. Instead, he just needs every Jew, every Christian, every one, to see that we are nothing without the power of Jesus in our lives.

Q1 – What does it mean to say “both Jews and Gentiles are under sin” (3:9), and what do the Old Testament quotes in verses 10-18 add to the conversation? _____

Q2 – Look at Romans 3:23. Is there a certain amount of good works you can do so that this verse no longer applies to you? Explain. _____

Q3 – Look at Romans 3:27. Who can boast in their works? Who can say, “well, I’ve done enough good and I’m a good enough person that I’m pretty sure God will save me for that”? Explain your answers. _____

So, at this point, no one can boast. No amount of Law keeping (Old Law or New) can validate anyone before the Lord. In fact, these first three chapters strip us of every ounce of personal pride. But this is a very good thing, even though it may hurt. This prepares us to look up to Someone who can save us!

We are not righteous, but God is. And His plan to reckon us as righteous is amazing. He can make us righteous. Read again **Romans 3:21-26** and answer the questions below.

Q4 – How does God’s righteous plan save sinners like you and me? Be specific. _____

Q5 – As seen in this section, what is the first thing we are told to do to enjoy this immense grace? _____

Believing in Jesus is not a one dimensional acknowledgement of His existence, or just a verbal statement of who He is. Belief in Jesus includes an understanding of who we are: lost sinners. And who He is: the justifier of those who cannot be justified on their own. Belief and Faith is a complete giving over of ourselves to God’s plan and Jesus’ rule. If there is something we must do to access salvation, it will only matter once we have given ourselves to complete trust in God.

We Need Abrahamic Faith

Mile 4: See one man find righteousness by total trust in God.

Read *Romans 4:1-8, 16-25*

Before we can talk about repentance, or baptism, or faithful living, there must first be true belief. Not passing words or thoughts about Jesus: absolute dependency and trust. To see what that looks like, our focus is drawn to Abraham. He was a sinner like us who found righteousness through great faith.

Q1 – Was Abraham a good man? _____ So then was he justified by works? _____

Q2 – So how then was Abraham credited by God and to God as righteous? Explain. _____

Note, vs. 4-5 are not telling us that God will never require works of faith. In fact, the Roman letter opens and closes with a call to “the obedience of faith” (1:5; 16:25). However, works in the world are labors completed that require a payment of favor. But with God, no amount of works could ever earn payment of redemption or heaven. Not even Abraham’s! But by faith, our total trust in God, we can be blessed.

Q3 – Verse 16 is an important passage to connect Abraham’s example to our lives. Why? _____

Q4 – Please read again verses 17-22. What things did Abraham do in this text to demonstrate his faith toward God? Be Specific. _____

Q5 – Why is there no mention of the physical things Abraham did, like leaving his home town or offering his son Isaac to God? I mean Hebrews 11:8-19 and James 2:14-26 talk about that. Why not here? _____

Listen, we can teach the need to turn from sin, but if we do not trust like Abraham trusted, it will not hold. We can teach about baptism for the remission of sins, but that act is only as valuable as the faith behind it and the faith that lives after it. Abraham did great things, but that was not his faith. His faith was the full assurance of the promises of God and a life dependent on God. Works of faith, godly works, grow out of and are motivated by that kind of trust in our Lord and His will for our lives. (See **Hebrews 11:1-2,6**)

Q6 – In what ways are you committed to believing like Abraham believed? Is there anything God could ask you to do that you would deny Him? _____

We Need Faith In Jesus

Mile 5: Believe that you can be made righteous by Christ alone.

Read *Romans 5:1-11, 18-21*

Having Abraham-like trust in God is crucial to being in fellowship with God. However, it is more than some generic belief that God loves me. Saving faith is focused on Jesus, inspired by Jesus, fed and nourished by Jesus, and lives to love and serve Jesus. He is our all in all, “first place in everything” (*Colossians 1:18*).

Q1 – Firstly, look at the verse 1-5 and describe what life is like for someone who is “justified by faith.”

Q2 – Secondly, in verses 6-11 explain the role Jesus has played to make justification possible for us.

You can see in verses 12-17 that Adam’s sin introduced sin and death to us all, since we all followed in his footsteps of sin (Rom. 3:23). But Christ’s righteousness came to introduce the free gift of righteousness (justification by God) to those who follow in the footsteps of Christ! It is important to know that we may be asked to do things to follow Jesus (required by God), but it is by grace that Jesus came and provided life and hope and justification for us. We are saved by grace, and we must also follow Him (*Titus 2:11-14*).

Q3 – Verse 18 sounds like Adam’s sin condemned all and Jesus’ righteousness saves all. But we know that is not the case. The idea here is that Adam’s sin made condemnation “available to” all men, and Christ’s righteousness made justification to life “available to” all men.” So what does that mean for you?

Q4 – The same thing with verse 19 – Adam’s sin did not make all men sinners, it introduced sin to all men, who might follow it. Jesus doesn’t make all righteous across the board, but introduces it, so that the opportunity to be made righteous exists for us all. So how do we make sure we are made righteous?

Q5 – What can the grace of God do for those who live by total faith in Jesus? And is there an amount of sins or past mistakes that grace cannot overcome?

We Must Die With Christ

Mile 6: Die with Him in baptism, and live enslaved to Him as King.

Read **Romans 6:1-23**

So Mile 6 is extreme! We must die with Christ and live enslaved to Him! Some might not be comfortable with that. But if we know that we are sinners and lost without Jesus, and we know that Abraham-like faith in Jesus is the only way to be saved forever... How far are we willing to go to honor and follow Christ?

Note, Paul is writing to Christians who have already died with Christ and are living for Him. Paul goes back through their process. If you are already a Christian, this text will remind you of your previous decision to give your entire life to Jesus. If you are not a Christian, pay careful attention to how they lived by faith in Jesus and prepare to answer this question: Will you die with Christ today?

Q1 – Once we are saved by Jesus, can we continue sinning and let grace handle the rest? Why not?

Q2 – What happens when a lost person is baptized in water? Explain the spiritual process in that moment? Can someone be saved by Jesus without this baptism? _____

Q3 – Read vs. 4-7 - Does this look like an act by someone who is already saved or someone who seeks salvation in Jesus Christ? _____ Are we freed from sin before baptism or after? _____

Note: this text clearly teaches that baptism in water is the moment when someone comes into contact with the power of Jesus' death. This is essential for salvation for all who seek to be forgiven. Here are other passages that verify this: **Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:27; I Peter 3:21.**

Q4 – Now read vs. 6 and 11-13. Being baptized is about more than just having sins washed away, it is a proclamation of a new life! What commitment do we make to Jesus when we are baptized? _____

Okay, so now let's address this "enslaved" idea. Some may not like the idea of being a slave to anyone, even God. But look at **Romans 6:16-23** and answer the following questions:

Q5 – Slaves of sin are subject to spiritual death, but what about those who are slaves of righteousness?

Q6 – When slaves of sin we were free to do what we wanted, but what was the outcome?

Q7 – If we are enslaved to God, what are the benefits?

Q8 – Do you want to die to sin and be made alive in Christ? _____

Life Without Christ Is No Life At All

Mile 7: Find peace in your life by finding peace through Jesus.

Read **Romans 7:9-11, 14-25**

The 7th mile in our journey is designed to affect people in different ways. If you have not yet died with Christ, you need to see what life was like for Paul (a religious person) before he found the blessings in Jesus. If you have died with Christ, you need to see that there was a lot of turmoil and anger within you that should now be released, so you can enjoy the peace that comes in Christ's kingdom!

Context: Some Jews still did not want to follow Jesus. They were already religious and didn't want to change their beliefs to accept the will of Christ. So, in the first 6 verses of chapter 7, Paul establishes how the death of Christ severed them from the Old Law so that they would change and follow the New Law.

Commentators differ on how they interpret Paul's thoughts from this chapter. To help understand the flow, follow along with these questions and answer them from the text.

Q1 – (v.7-13) – When Paul was old enough to be accountable to the Old Law, what happened to him?

Q2 – If the Law of Moses was good, then how/why did it kill Paul? _____

Q3 – Even though the Old Law was God's will for Paul's life, the problem was... Sin. Read vs. 14-20 – what was life like for a good man like Paul, trying to follow a good Law, but failing in sin? _____

Now read **Romans 7:21-24** – Wouldn't it be awful to want to do well, but know you can't ever be good enough, and feel wretched and scared about your soul?! Well, that's what life was like for Paul before he found the freedom that comes through Jesus!

Q4 – Is verse 25 justifying sin once you have been saved by Jesus? _____ So if not, then what is this verse teaching? _____

There will always be sin in your life. Our imperfection continues, whether we have died to Christ or not. The difference is in the word "wretched." If we believe in God, but don't have the power of Christ in our lives, our sins only make us feel wretched and lost. But if we believe in God and serve Jesus with all our hearts, His grace reaches us and we can feel secure in Him, even though we sin.

In the questions below, let's look at what we do about our sin when we are in the body of Christ:

Q5 – What did we learn about sin and how to handle sin back in Romans 6:1-7? _____

Q6 – And how does I John 1:5-10 help us find peace in Christ when sin shows up in our lives? _____

The Holy Spirit Sustains Us

Mile 8: Set daily your mind and life on the Holy Spirit's will.

Read *Romans 8:1-8, 12-14, 24-28, 31, 38-39*

Our 8th mile in this journey is for those who have believed in Jesus and have put on a relationship with Him through baptism. We acknowledge that sin is still a fight in our lives, but we know that Jesus is the answer. We have to make sure, no matter what, that we always have salvation in Him.

Q1 – Read 8:1-2 – What assurances do we have in a relationship with Christ and where do we find those assurances? _____

Q2 – Read 8:5-8 – Every day we each have a choice to make. What is that choice? What happens if we make the wrong one? _____

Q3 – Read 8:12-14 – Once again, what is the daily choice we must make? And what are the outcomes for each of the two choices listed here in this read? _____

Q4 – So if thinking and living in the flesh displeases God and leads to death, is it possible for a Christian to lose salvation if he chooses to do those things and does not repent? (see Rom. 11:22) _____

Note how I John 1:5-10 should affect us every single day - _____

Okay, so we have daily duties in Christ. But here's the great news: if we apply ourselves to the Law of the Spirit, a mind on Christ (Colossians 4:1-2), a life according to the Spirit, then we have AMAZING ASSURANCES! Below, just write in the blessings for us from God if we follow His will and seek the Spirit's guidance:

8:22-23 – _____

8:26-27 – _____

8:28-30 – _____

8:31-34 – _____

8:35-39 – _____

Isn't it amazing, the blessings we have in Jesus?! It is no wonder this chapter opens with, "there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Each of us must make sure we have found Christ Jesus through belief, penitence and baptism, and then we must seek Him in mind and life, every day. If we do so, and ask for strength when we fail, we will never, not ever, be separated from the blessed love of God!

“The Obedience Of Faith”

Victory Lap: Lead a life of victorious faith in great Christian service.

Our study has covered Romans chapters 1-8. Over that span, the Apostle Paul has covered the condition of sin amongst us, the faith in Jesus needed to be saved, the importance of baptism into Christ, and the life we now live as children of the Creator. And that’s just half of the letter!

Chapters 9-11 have a heavier focus on the relationship between Jews and Gentiles in Christ. While chapters 12-16 focus more on everyday Christian living for all of God’s children. To wrap up our study, in our victory lap of sorts, let’s just note one abiding idea from each chapter.

Below you are provided select readings from each chapter. For each, please answer the accompanied question. The answer to each question should be found in the verses.

Romans 9:6-8, 30-33 – What did both Jews and Gentiles have to accept about how to be saved?

Romans 10:8-17 – What does it mean to “call on the name of the Lord”?

Romans 11:17-24 – Who can be lost, even after being saved by Jesus?

Romans 12:1-8 – What do we do daily to live the life God has planned for us?

Romans 13:1-10 – How do we handle poor governments and even ungodly neighbors?

Romans 14:1-4, 10-19 – How do we handle non-doctrinal differences with Christian brethren?

Romans 15:1-7 – What do all Christians pursue with one another, no matter what we have to face?

Romans 16:1-16, 25-27 – What are some notable things about the people named in this chapter?

Lastly, read **Romans 1:1-5** and **16:25-27**, what important short phrase is in both?
