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Roman Road

The Roman Road is a collection of verses in Paul's epistle to the Romans that offers a clear and structured path to salvation through Jesus Christ. Although many people believe they will go to heaven because they have lived a good life, done charity work, been baptized at an early age, attend church, or treated others fairly, the Bible declares that none of us can live up to God's standards of righteousness. Therefore, we need a road to God that does not rely on anything we do, but rather, relies on the gift of His grace alone. The Roman Road provides a detailed map for salvation and eternal fellowship with God.

Romans 1:20-21 We must acknowledge God as the Creator of everything, accepting our humble position in God's created order and purpose.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but because futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Romans 3:23 We must realize that we are sinners and that we need forgiveness. None of us are worthy under God's standards.

For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 5:8 God gave us the way to be forgiven of our sins. He showed us His love by giving us the potential for life through the death of His Son, Jesus.

But God demonstrates His love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6:23 If we remain sinners, we will die. However, if we repent of our sins, and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we will have eternal life.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

Romans

On his third missionary journey, while spending three months in Corinth, Paul found himself at an important crossroads. It was a good time to go to Rome and visit the church there, a church he did not plant and had never visited. But he had a more immediate responsibility, to safely ferry the financial contributions made by the Macedonian Christians to the suffering church in Jerusalem. In God's providence, Paul's decision to send a letter to the Roman church resulted in one of the most magnificent books of the New Testament. The letter he wrote has served for almost two millennia as a benchmark for Christian theology, and a guide for all who would be grounded in the truth as they go forth with the gospel. (David Jeremiah Study Bible)

Paul wrote to the Roman Christians believing that Christ had called the church to be a unified body. The Book of Romans tells us about God, who He is and what He has done. It tells us of Jesus Christ, what His death accomplished. It tells us about ourselves, what we were like without Christ and who we are after trusting in Christ. Romans tells that a man is justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law. Righteousness is by Christ alone, and when a man believes in Christ, he becomes dead to sin and the law and alive in Christ.

Romans is an important follow-up to the multitude of historical facts presented in the four Gospels and the Acts of the apostles, offering a sweeping presentation of the gospel message. **The gospel centers on the lordship of Jesus Christ established by His life, death, and resurrection.** The good news centers on the reality that **God took on human flesh, entered the world, conquered sin and death, and declared Himself King.** Paul's primary concern for the church at Rome was that they would believe this gospel. **Gospel** is the translation of *euangelion* (Grk.), which combines *angelina* ("message") and the prefix *eu* ("well" or "good"). It is a **"good message" for whoever believes.**

Romans is the first doctrinal book in the New Testament. It reads like a first-century course in biblical theology. **Doctrine** – is a set of beliefs held and taught by a church. Doctrine is from Latin *doctrina*, meaning **teaching or instruction of a set of beliefs.** **Theology** - is a Greek word that means **"Study of God" or "Words about God"**. Almost every chapter in Romans has a doctrinal theme. Chapter One includes the doctrines of; the **Resurrection** (1:4), of **Christ's deity** (1:3; 9-5), **Christ's humanity** (1:3; 8:3), of **faith** (1:17) and the doctrine of **judgement** (1:18, 24). (DJSB)

Chapter 1:1-17

*Greeting – Paul identified himself as the writer and used three phrases to describe his credentials. First, he was a **bondservant of Christ Jesus**. The word used here is the same word used for slave. Paul was completely surrendered to the will of His Master. This image would have made an impact on his readers, since a large portion of Rome's population was made up of slaves. His relationship is equivalent to the "servant of the Lord" relationship experienced by Moses, Joshua and David. Then, Paul identified himself as an **apostle**. The word

Romans 10:9-10 Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead and you are saved.

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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:13. There are no other religious formulas or rituals. Just call on the name of the Lord and you will be saved.

For whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Romans 11:36 Determine in your heart to make Jesus Christ The Lord of your life today.

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

apostle means **one who is sent**. Apostleship was not a product of Paul's ambition but of God's grace operating through him. It carried a sense of authority, while highlighting God's mission for Paul. Finally, Paul wrote that he was **set apart for the gospel of God**. Paul recognized that God had selected him to share the message of hope and salvation around the world. God has set apart every believer to represent Him in the world, not just those who are called to "vocational ministry."

Paul's message had been **promised before through His prophets**. The gospel is deeply rooted in the Old Testament. The first promise of the Messiah was given by God immediately after Adam and Eve's fall in Eden (Gen.3:15). The apostle Paul wrote that God planned to send Jesus before the foundation of the world (Pet. 1:20). The original promises came through the words of the ancient prophets in the Holy Scriptures (see Pet. 1:16-21). Long before the birth of Jesus, God's messengers told His people that the Messiah was coming. Paul continued that long line of faithful proclamation, and we are heirs of his legacy.

The gospel finds its power in Jesus. Jesus alone holds the two main qualities that give anyone the right to be called followers of Christ. First, **He is God's Son**. Jesus was God in flesh. This allowed Him to live a perfect, spotless life, which allowed Him to become the perfect, sinless sacrifice. Second, Jesus was a physical **descendant of David**. God had promised David that the Messiah would come from his offspring. Jesus was both completely God and completely human at the same time. The entire OT looks forward to and prepares for the coming of Jesus.

Believers experience two things as the resurrection power of Christ begins to transform our lives. We receive His **grace, God's undeserved favor**. And we receive **apostleship**. While grace has to do with our redemption, apostleship has to do with responsibility. An apostle is one who is sent on a mission. Our relationship with Christ calls us to share His message with those around us. The result of God's grace should be seeing others become obedient to the faith. People do not obey to be saved, they obey because they have been saved.

Paul reminded the Romans that they were among **the Gentiles** who had been called by Jesus because redemption was not and is not limited to a particular group. His offer is universal. **Called** means those who have heard the call of Christ, obeyed, and been saved. He reminded them that they were **loved by God and called to be saints**, a term that emphasized a call to holiness.

Finally, Paul used a common formula as an initial blessing for the Romans, **grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. This blessing appears in almost all of Paul's letters. Genuine grace and peace are available only through a relationship with the Father through the Son.

*Desire to Visit Rome – Paul expressed his desire to go to Rome. His passion to visit Rome was rooted in his desire for fellowship and ministry. Paul had friends who live in Rome, but He had never spent time with the Roman church. Despite never seeing them face to face, he felt a special bond that led him to pray for them regularly and to plan a visit with them. The passage

does not indicate what prevented Paul from coming. He mentioned in a letter to the Corinthians other demands on his life. Paul believed he would **have a fruitful ministry** with them with God's help. God called Paul to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Paul mentioned two groups to demonstrate his willingness to preach to anyone who would listen. First were the **Greeks**, which aligns with **the wise**. The term refers to individuals with education and pedigree. Paul also reached out to the **barbarians**, who would be synonymous with the **foolish**. While we tend to think of barbarians as uncivilized, in Paul's day the term applied to anyone who was not educated or cultured. These commoners often felt the disdain of the elite. Paul cared about getting the gospel to as many people as possible, every person is a sinner and in need of a Savior. He was **eager to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome**.

***The Just Live by Faith – For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.** Paul knew that the gospel changes lives. His conversion demonstrated that power, it transforms every area of one's life. It is God's power! Jesus ministered primarily to the Jews, and the early church focused initially on Jerusalem and other Jewish population centers. Paul and others took the gospel to Greeks, especially after many Jews had ejected the message.

Paul learned, **"The just shall live by faith"** from Habakkuk 2:4. This verse contrasts the proud Babylonians with their all-consuming desires, and the **just**, those people of God who continue to trust in God and not themselves despite their troubling circumstances. **Salvation** only works by faith, which is itself a gift from God. Rightly understood, the truths in Romans can revive right thinking and result in right living.

Theologians typically recognize two main forms of divine revelation. The first is **general revelation**, which allows anyone to see God, particularly through the created world. The second is called **special revelation**. This involves God making Himself known in specific ways, primarily through the person of Jesus and the message of Scripture. The gospel falls under special revelation. Holding up human unrighteousness to the light of **God's righteousness**, we see our own sinfulness and our need for a Savior. The phrase **from faith to faith** emphasizes that the **process of being declared righteous by God is by faith from start to finish**.

How did Paul introduce himself? What does his introduction tell us about him?

How does Paul describe the Gospel?

What did the grace of God and Apostleship Paul received motivate him to do?

What should God's grace motivate us to do?

Why was the gospel going to the Gentiles and Paul's commitment to ministering to the Gentiles such a big deal? What is the takeaway for us?

What was Paul's desire for the people of the church at Rome? What can we learn from this about our relationships with one another?

Why might a person be ashamed of the gospel? Why wasn't Paul ashamed?

What does verse 17 say is revealed in the gospel? What kind of lifestyle does this revelation produce in those who receive it?

What is the message about Jesus good news? Make a list.

How is the good news shaping and changing you?

What is one way you might follow Paul's example of spreading the good news about Jesus? At school? At practice? At home?

How might we encourage each other as we seek to live out and share the gospel?

How would you define justice?

Why has God revealed His wrath against sin?

What has God made obvious to all people? What have all people done with this knowledge?

What is the result of all of mankind's broken thinking and motive?

What are some examples of how people today practice the sins Paul laid out and even "applaud others who practice them"?

How should we respond to Paul's description of people apart from Christ?

Why is it good news that our God is righteous?

How does the gospel give us hope in the midst of our sinfulness and in the midst of the broken world we live in? How can we help one another center our lives?

To be **saved** means to be set free from the greatest evil, sin, the consequences of the Fall, and placed in possession of the greatest good, the blessing of salvation – past, present, and future. The past, **Justification**, frees the believer from the penalty of sin. The present, **Sanctification**, frees the believer from the power of sin. The future, **Glorification**, frees the believer from the presence of sin. (DJSB) Romans 1:16-17 serves as a theme for the Book of Romans. Romans 1:18-8:39 unpacks how the gospel is God's power unto salvation and how it reveals God's righteousness.

***God's Wrath on Unrighteousness** - God cannot ignore our ungodliness and unrighteousness. While we may not like to talk about God's anger against sin, we must. The Bible, particularly Romans, has a great deal to say about this subject. Knowing God's wrath is revealed against human sin confirms that He is good. What would our world be like if no one was ever punished for wrongdoing? God is going to restore goodness and order to our sinful, broken world. And we must talk about God's anger against sin because we are sinners and, apart from Christ, we are under His wrath.

We are made to know, love, and serve God (Isa. 43:7). God has made Himself known to us. Paul told the Romans that everything we know, and can know, about God is possible because **God has shown** it to us. His existence and power are evident through the created world. As David wrote, nature itself proclaims God's glory. **The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork** (Ps. 19:1). God is seen through what He has made, His highest creation, humanity, will be held accountable for its rebellion. Those who refuse to acknowledge God are **without excuse**.

Paul explained that **knowing about Him is not enough**. Even though **they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God**. This was an intellectual knowledge, not a saving knowledge. Instead, people valued the creation more than the Creator. Because they rejected truth, their **thinking became worthless** and their **hearts were darkened**. Rebelling against God, humans claimed superior wisdom. This attitude reflected the nature of Satan. Satan knows God. The **devil had** fallen from God's presence because of his own arrogance. He had promised Adam and Eve **that** the forbidden fruit would make them wise like God (Gen. 3:5). In this context, **fool** means someone who has heard the truth about God and deliberately rejected it.

Worshipping the created, not the Creator, is idolatry. The people worshiped images of **humans**, then **birds**, and **four-footed animals**, and ultimately **creeping things**. As spiritual beings, **we** naturally worship something or someone. If we do not allow God to fill that role, our **darkened** hearts will find something else.

It would be easy for us to look down on the people Paul mentions in verse 23 because **we** would never worship statues of people, birds, reptiles and animals but we must **guard against** our temptations. Money, sex, power, popularity, acceptance, and so on. Jesus said, **I have come**

that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly (John 10:10). God wants us to live and enjoy our lives but always look to Him. A good question to ask ourselves is, what am I willing to sin to get? What would I be willing to sin to keep? As Christians we need to keep a good balance in our lives but **God always comes first**.

When ungodly people constantly reject God. He ultimately rejects them, **God gave them up to uncleanness**. . . . When His correction is ignored, God allows humans to follow their path and experience the consequences of their choices. This does not mean that He will not take them back or that they have crossed into some kind of unforgivable sin. But it does mean that God lets them feel the full weight of their foolishness.

Paul noted that sinful humanity's rebellion takes over more and more of their lives. What started as darkness in their hearts has a corrupting influence on their physical bodies as well – especially through **sexual impurity**. He used the word **degraded** to describe the systematic decline into ungodly behavior. The implication is that the cancer of sin moves swiftly throughout the body, poisoning everything as it goes. Sex is a gift of God but it is intended to be within the sanctity of marriage. Marriage between a man and a woman. It is a sin against God but it is also a sin against one's self. Most sins hurt others but this sin hurts one's self.

Paul pointed out, again, the godless people have **exchanged the truth of God for a lie**. Their minds have grown so dark that they cannot discern the difference between right and wrong. Even worse, they begin to square wrong with right in their minds. God does not cause anyone's demise, the natural law of consequences does. He cannot abide in the presence of sin, which is why He abandoned His own Son at Calvary as Christ bore the sins of the world. Paul's doxology reminds readers that dishonorable acts do not detract from the **Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. v.25** (doxology – a short hymn of praises to God used in worship)

Not only did people exchange a false God for the true Lord, these individuals rejected their God-designed sexually morality. Women suffered from relationships that were against nature. Men had **left natural relations with women** and burned in lust toward one another.

The Roman world generally accepted homosexuality and other forms of sexual immorality. Paul clearly labeled homosexuality a sin because it reverses God's intended order and design. We live in a world where people prey on the weak and needy, where all kinds of sexual sin is not only overlooked but even applauded. If someone we know is living in sin and it doesn't bother them, we need to pray that their hearts would be opened to God's truth. Homosexuality is not an "unforgivable sin." God's grace can cover every confessed sin.

Rejecting God and His standards ultimately leads to inverting and reversing His created order. Paul emphasized how the darkened mind of humanity is blinded to God's perfect plan. The idea that humans **did not think it worthwhile to acknowledge God** points to arrogance and ignorance. Paul noted that God delivered them over to a **reprobate mind**. With words that can be categorized by character, conduct, conversation, concepts, and companionship, Paul describes the shameful human behavior that causes God to give people over to their sinfulness.

Romans Chapter 2

*God's Righteous Judgement – In the beginning of chapter 2 Paul uses a favorite practice in his writing. Paul is “speaking” to an imaginary Jewish scholar who appreciated the indictment against the Gentiles in chapter 1. Religious moralists are indignant at and critical of other people's shortcomings and indulgent of their own. People fall short when they invent a standard they apply to themselves. God's righteous standard of integrity and truth is the only standard for judgement. When people measure their own Christ-likeness against others, they use the wrong standard.

God's good goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering give all the opportunity to repent. When people hypocritically and selfishly seek their own justification, the results are **wrath**, the response of God to unrighteousness. God's righteous judgement **will render to each in accordance to his deeds**. To those who do not obey the truth, **indignation**, anger that rushes along vehemently, **tribulation**, extreme pressure, and **anguish**, a narrow place, confinement and constriction.

God judges Jews and Gentiles alike, impartially and righteously. **For there is no partiality with God**. The Day of Judgement will be **in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel** (Acts 17:31).

*The Jews Guilty as the Gentiles - The Jews were privileged to possess **the law**, all of God's revelation in the OT. The Jews had the truth, the problem was what they did or didn't do with it. God intended the Jews to be a people set apart for His glory and purpose. But Paul points out that Israel has not consistently lived up to the calling God placed on them. They were taking undue pride in their status as God's chosen people and they were relying on the law instead of the Lawgiver. The Jews were to be spiritual guides to the nations. Most Gentiles were ignorant of God's work in the world. It was the responsibility of the Jews to help them know God. But they had either assimilated to the pagan practices of their neighbors or completely withdrew into a spiritual cocoon that protected their rituals. Neither approach fulfilled God's plan. Instead of leading the **blind**, they had become stumbling blocks. Their teaching fell flat because **they did not apply it to their own lives**.

Paul points out the Israelites' hypocrisy by showing that they did not practice what they preached. The advantages of being a Jew actually become disadvantages if they live hypocritical or self-righteous lives. The value of having the Law is found in keeping it. After calling out specific examples, **stealing, adultery and idolatry**, Paul makes a general statement about the Jews' spiritual state. By violating even one of the commands God provided, they were guilty of violating the entire Law. The Jews were no better than the Gentiles they judged. Both were guilty and **needed a Savior**. Their lack of integrity and sincerity lead the Gentiles to **blaspheme** God. **Blasphemed** means “evil spoken of, railed at.” Seeing the hypocrisy in the legalistic yet evil ways of the Jews, the Gentiles reviled God and His Word.

*Circumcision of No Avail – The Jews were confident they were right with God because they practiced the rituals or liturgies (a rite or body of rites prescribed for public worship). Using the OT, Paul showed them that rituals are no longer sufficient. Outward ceremonial acts only have value if they are indicative of a dynamic, personally transformative, scriptural, spiritual experience. Only if one is committed to Christ.

Romans Chapter 3

*God's Judgment Defended – God blessed the Jews by making them the custodians of His special revelation, a privilege that had been given to no other nation. The religious Jews had been entrusted with the truth but refused to be transformed by it. Paul uses David's words to let them know that God is faithful both when He rewards people and when He judges them. He has not abandoned them, only condemning their sin.

*All Have Sinned – These OT words, from Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Isaiah, destroy any hope people might have apart from God. **Not even one** person can earn righteous standing in God's eyes. God seeks to save us. But the Holy Spirit's omnipotence means that no work of His may be thwarted, so those He stirs to seek, He will save (8:30). When people **turn aside** to go their own way instead of repenting, they went further astray in the process. People can only act within the confines of their character, and without the regeneration of the Spirit, it is not possible for them to live without sin (Gal.2:16).

*God's Righteousness Through Faith – **But know: Now the righteousness of God...is revealed... through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe** (Acts 13:39). **V.23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.** Grace is one of God's expressions of love for us. It is the greatest gift, unmediated, that overruled our transgressions. God stepped into human history and offered a solution that would both show us grace and uphold His justice. God has revealed His plan for salvation outside the law.

But now in verse 21 is such good news. This verse is a turning point in Romans. Paul has been telling us since Romans 1:18 that we all sin and that no one can fix their own sin. **But now** is used to prepare readers for a coming contrast. God had a solution for everyone. The one right way to a relationship with God is **through faith in Jesus Christ**.

God saw no distinction between Jews and Gentiles. They all have the same need. They all receive the same benefit. They all receive it the same way. **Faith in Jesus** does not require perfection, it only requires **God's grace**. Because of Christ's sacrifice, we can have a relationship with God we don't deserve, and avoid His wrath we do deserve. **This is grace**.

Anyone who places his or her trust in Christ can be saved. Jesus was the **propitiation** or atoning sacrifice that makes all other sacrifices obsolete. **Making atonement** means paying the penalty that restores a relationship. This incredible act demonstrates God's righteousness and grace. **Through accepting His free gift through faith, we are made right with God.**