

THE ROMAN ROAD

Question: If you died in the next few minutes, are you absolutely certain that you would go to Heaven? If you're not sure, read on.

The Roman Road consists of several key verses from Romans which then lead into additional verses and illustrations:

(1) **Romans 3:23**—Read this verse. Notice the word “all”—does that mean just some; does this include the Pope, the Rabbis, and all the other really good persons you know; does that include you? Notice the word “sin.” What is the definition of “sin.” The Greek definition of “sin” is essentially an archery term that was yelled back at the archer when he missed the target. If you have not already done so, fill out the above Spiritual Journey Chart and Change List. Identify the areas in which your life is lacking. By way of metaphor, if Jesus (or, a perfect person) were at one end of a room and Hitler at the other end, where would God judge you to be in relative moral terms? Would you put yourself in the middle, or perhaps close to Jesus? Read James 2:10. It is a shock to learn that if you commit one sin you are guilty of all sins (as if you had committed all). Look again at your Change List. Have you committed one sin? Have you “missed the mark” in any area of your life? In the Old Testament, God gave 10 commandments as well as hundreds of other laws. Nowhere is it indicated that God would permit the breaking of a single one. In the Old Testament, Isaiah 59:2 states that our sins separate us from God so that He cannot hear us. If true, in God’s perfect eyes, you and I are in a bear hug with Hitler no matter how “good” we are. By way of illustration, if there were a swimming contest to be held nationally for a \$10 Billion prize, many would enter. Some, no doubt, would be very good accomplished Olympic swimmers, and other would be fairly good swimmers, and others would be relatively bad swimmers. But, what if, right before the contest was to begin, it was announced that the prize would only go to the first person who could non-stop swim to Hawaii (3,000 miles). The good swimmers might swim hundreds of miles, the fair swimmers might swim 50 miles, the bad swimmers might swim 5 miles; but none would win; all would lose. It is impossible for a man/woman to swim 3,000 miles, no matter how “good” they are. None could win the contest based on their own abilities. The only possibility of getting to Hawaii in the ocean would be if someone were to come up along side in a boat and take one there. Are you beginning to see how God laid out the Messiah’s role to include “savior”—to take us where we could not go because we lacked the capacity.

(2) **Romans 6:23A (read first part of verse up to the comma)**—Read only the first five words of this verse, “The wages of sin is,” and stop there before reading the next word. What are “wages?” Have you ever heard the term “minimum wage?” A “wage” is what someone earns when they do a job. Anyone who has ever mowed a lawn or done any job for money has been paid a “wage” for that job. Thus, the “wage” for mowing a lawn might be \$20. The Bible says that we each get paid a “wage” for our sin. Do you know what the wages are for sin? Now read the next word of the verse: “death.” But what does “death” mean in this context? We’re all going to die someday, so what’s the big deal? Yes, we all die once a natural death, but the Bible talks of a “second death.” The Bible actually defines “death” for us. Read Revelation 20:14. The “second death” is defined there, and it’s not a pretty picture. It talks about a lake of fire. So far this has all been very bad news—my sin; bear hug with Hitler; lake of fire. The word “Gospel” literally means “good news,” and there has been no good news presented yet. Why? Because one must first understand the bad news before the good news makes any sense. It is only when one realizes that they are drowning that they will call out for a lifeguard to come save them. In such case, the lifeguard becomes that person’s “savior.” Likewise, it is only when you realize that you are drowning—in what the Bible calls “sin”—that you will call out for a Savior. Until you understand the bad news, you will never see the need for Jesus in your life.

(3) **Romans 6:23B (read second part of verse)**—Read, “but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Look at the words “free gift.” To illustrate what “gift” means, think of someone holding out to you in the palm of their hand a 30 carat diamond for you to take as a gift. As the diamond is being held out to you, do you possess this gift yet? No. What do you have to do to possess this gift? It is only when you reach out and take this gift that you possess it and it becomes yours. God is offering the gift of eternal life to everyone, but it is only the ones who take it who will possess it. The Bible outlines how we can each take and possess the “gift” of eternal life.

(4) **Mark 1:15/Acts 20:21**—The Bible speaks of a 3 step process. The first step is essential. Do you know what the first step is? I will give you a hint; it was the first substantive word that Jesus spoke when he started His preaching ministry. I will give you a second hint: it was the first word John the Baptist spoke when he began his preaching ministry. How about a third hint. It was the first substantive word the Apostle Peter spoke when he began his preaching ministry on the day of Pentecost when 3,000 people came to Christ and the Church began. With these hints, do you know? You would agree, wouldn’t you, that whatever this word is, it is central to all of Christianity? Turn to Matthew 3:1-2, Matthew 4:17, and Acts 2:38, and read each verse and underline “repent” in each instance. Do you really know what “repent” means? By way of illustration, if I sat in a chair in the middle of a room and began scooting it forward little by little in one direction and then abruptly jumped up, reversed the chair, and began scooting it forward in the opposite direction, this encompasses the meaning of repentance. It’s military word that

means “about face.” Look again at your Spiritual Chart and Change List. Is God showing you anything concerning sin in your life? Are you feeling any genuine sorrow about going your own way and not God’s way? Are you willing to repent and abruptly turn his life around from the direction that you have been going? If you can say “yes” to this, then continue on to the next 2 other steps.

(5) **Romans 10:9-10**—Read these verses. After repenting, the second step is to confess Jesus as Lord. The third step is to believe that God raised Him from the dead. In confessing Jesus as Lord, one cannot be a “closet Christian” but must “put their flag up” as being on Jesus’ side and unashamedly confessing Jesus as Lord in front of others. If you are serious about this, you need to find someone and tell them that “Jesus is Lord” and that “God raised Jesus from the dead,” if you really believe this. Praying is simply talking to God in an honest manner. Tell God about the sin in your life (confess it), ask forgiveness, and invite Jesus to come live in you. After prayer, if you sincerely repented, confessed Jesus as Lord, and believed that God raised Jesus from the dead, you have been saved and can know 100% that you have eternal life and are going to Heaven. Read Romans 5:8: “God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Let me ask you,, “Is Jesus now in you? How do you know?” You know because the Bible (Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth) says that it is so. Finally, read 2 Corinthians 5:17 (“Therefore if any man is in Christ he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”).

WHAT NOW: You now possess the gift; the gift of eternal life. For you, eternal life is not something in the future. It started just now. Now, go out and live it one day at a time seeking God in every step. What a fantastic journey lies ahead. Some suggestions: (1) Find a good Bible believing Church where you can learn His truth and get to know Him better; (2) Get publicly baptized (it is a demonstration of dying and being buried in the ground/water and then suddenly arising as a new life); (3) Read “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth (B.I.B.L.E.)” found on this website, print it out, and keep it in the front of your Bible as a reference/Bible-study aid to help you understand God’s view on various topics, and read the Bible often; (4). Spend time alone with God, get in His presence, and just absorb Him at the beginning and end of every day for it is only the presence of God that really changes us; (5) Make friend changes where necessary in light of 1 Corinthians 15:33 (Illustration: Picture yourself standing on a stool and trying to pull your friends up to your level; and then imagine one tug from one of your friends to pull you back down and how easily you tumble back to their level); (6) help others whenever you can, and share, very humbly, the good news of Jesus the Messiah.