

The Roman Road To Salvation

When one reads the Bible, he is reading God's provisions to save mankind. Paul explained to Timothy, "For this {is} good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:3-4). Paul declares the theme of the book of Romans: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. (Rom.1:16). Thus, in the book of Romans, Paul is declaring God's power to save.

Having stated his theme, Paul points out the necessity for salvation! In the first three chapters of Romans, Paul explains to the Jews and Gentiles their need for salvation. Paul sets for very plainly WHY man needs salvation, i.e., because of the guilt of sin, as he states in Romans 3:19,23, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," The reason one obeys the gospel is to be saved from the guilt of sin. One must realize his guilt and obey. If one chooses to overlook the danger, then he is in trouble. Many fail to realize their need for Christ and remain lost as a result.

Having proved that all were guilty of sin and in need of salvation, Paul reminds the Roman brethren what they had done in order to be saved. In Romans 10:17 he declares, "So then faith {comes} by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If one never hears the gospel of Christ, he cannot be saved! Ignorance is no excuse, never has been and never will be! The Romans had been told of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 6:3-4). Apparently they believed. That had the faith that the Gospel produced through their hearing. Thus Paul explained this was the means by which they had: 1) been justified, (Romans 5:1) 2) peace with God, (ibid), and 3) had access to the grace of God (Rom. 5:2). It isn't any wonder the Hebrew writer says: "But without faith {it is} impossible to please {Him}, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and {that} He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Heb. 11:6). Was this faith alone, as some contend? Just read on! The Romans had a working faith! This faith led them to repentance (Romans 2:4; 6:2). Their faith influenced them to make confession of their faith in Christ (Romans 10:9,10). By faith, they were buried with Christ in baptism (Romans 6:3,4). The Romans "obeyed from the heart" (Rom. 6:17). Thus, they were justified by faith in Christ Jesus. For this reason, Paul said, "among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called {to be} saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 1:6-7). So many times denominational preacher will take the book of Romans and try to prove that one can be saved by "faith alone." This is impossible to do without twisting and perverting the whole book itself. Paul shows us very plainly that the Romans worked out their own salvation by obeying the word of God (Phil. 2:12; Rom. 6:17). If people are to be saved today, they will have to do the very same things the Romans did.

Having obeyed the Gospel, Paul points out the results, "And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." (Rom. 6:18). These people were righteous. The next step in salvation was to maintain this righteousness. Paul began by showing their responsibility to God. (Rom. 12:1). The Romans were now saints. they were set apart from the world, so Paul teaches them to be a "living sacrifice" by being "transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2). He taught them their responsibility to the church, (Rom. 12:3-16, to their enemies, 12:17-20. to their government, 13:1-7, to their neighbors, 13:8-14, and to the weak brethren, 14,15. Is there anything less to be done for one to maintain his righteousness today? Jesus explains how one maintains discipleship, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed." (Jn. 8:31).

Kind reader, if you are not a Christian, you need to obey the gospel. It is the only way God offers to save. If you obey, you will be set free from the guilt of sin; you will be a Christian. Then as a Christian, maintain the righteousness of God in your life by abiding in His will. This is exactly what the Romans did, and it is what you must do!

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