

The Roman Road to Salvation

Type in the phrase “Roman Road to Salvation” in your favorite online search engine, and you will come up with multitudes of results (36 found using mamma [mother of all search engines]). There are many variations of this “Roman Road” on the net. Here is one example I found at www.faithbc.net/salvation.html

- All sin (Rom. 3:23)
- The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23)
- Christ died for sinners (Rom. 5:8)
- Whoever calls on the name of Jesus will be saved (Rom. 10:13)
- Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and you will be saved (Rom. 10:9)
- Pray the sinner’s prayer: “Dear God, I know I am a sinner, and I repent of my sins, Thank you for taking my sins upon yourself and dying on the cross for me. Lord Jesus come into my heart and change me. Be my Lord and Savior. Fill me with your spirit and your love. Thank you for saving me from an eternity in hell. Amen”
- “Friend, if you just prayed this prayer, I welcome you into the kingdom of God. You need to tell someone that you are now a Christian.”

Where this “Roman Road” started and by whom is unknown to this author. Any map, however, that does not give accurate directions is truly useless and will only cause one to be lost. The “Roman Road to Salvation” is designed to take one through the book of Romans and help man see the path to salvation. The Road, however, takes its readers on many spiritual wrong turns and deadly detours. Let us examine the “Roman Road to Salvation” from a Biblical perspective.

While it is true that the book of Romans instructs one to “*call upon the name of Jesus*” (Rom. 10:13) and “*confess that Jesus is Lord unto Salvation*” (Rom. 10:9), it is equally true that other acts of obedience are involved. The apostle Paul calls upon the Romans to consider the “*goodness of God that leads to repentance*” (Rom. 2:4). Without **repentance** there is the wrath of God (Rom. 2:5ff). I would say, therefore, that repentance must be a part of the salvation equation found in the book of Romans. Furthermore, consider the fact that Paul identifies **baptism** with doing away with the “*body of sin*” (Rom. 6:1-6). If I have not done away with the body of sin through baptism, how then can I be saved? God’s “*free gift*” (Rom. 5:16; 6:23) of “*justification*” (forgiveness of sins or the doing away with the body of sin) (Rom. 3:24) belongs to those who obey (6:16).

What is the true “Roman Road to Salvation?” The true is revealed in the book itself. The unbiased mind will find the following map:

- All sin (Rom. 3:23)
- The wages of sin are death (Rom. 6:23).
- Jesus died and was resurrected that He may serve as a sacrifice for our sins (Rom. 3:24-26).
- To know the above facts I must **hear** the gospel message (Rom. 10:14, 17).
- I must **believe** that Jesus is the Son of God and that He has been raised from the dead to be a propitiation for our sins (Rom. 3:24-26; 10:9).
- I must **confess** that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Him from the dead (Rom. 10:9-10).
- Said knowledge will leave me with the understanding of my undone condition without Christ’s sacrifice. I will thereby **repent** of my sins committed against the Lord (Rom. 2:4).

- Jesus' sacrifice provides the "*free gift*" of salvation to those who have an obedient faith (cf. Rom. 5:16; 6:23). The apostle Paul thereby calls upon men to be **baptized** to put away the body of sin (Rom. 6:1-6).
- Lastly, we are told to "*call upon the name of the Lord*" to be saved. After Saul (later the apostle Paul) was baptized for the remission of his sins Ananias told him to "call upon the name of the Lord." This calling is an invoking or an appeal to the name of Christ for everything one does in life (cf. Col. 3:17). The request is, therefore, **authoritative living!**

Hearing the word of God does three beneficial spiritual things for me. First, the word of God **convicts** me of sin (Rom. 3:23; 4:15). Secondly, I am given **hope** of being forgiven of my sins through Christ's sacrifice (Rom. 3:23-26). Thirdly, I am **instructed** as to what to do to be forgiven of my sins. The state of forgiveness is termed "*justification*" and "*righteousness*" in Romans (cf. 3:24; 4:5; 5:1-2; 6:19 etc.). Paul meticulously connects justification to God's free grace (Rom. 3:24; 5:1-2) and obedience (Rom. 4 all and 6:16ff). The obedience required is spelled out in Romans; i.e., hear, believe, confess, repent, be baptized, and live in faithful obedience.