

In These Times of Uncertainty, How Can I Be Saved?

As a pastor, I'm often asked, "How can I be saved?" The Romans Road to salvation has been very helpful during these types of conversations—it uses verses from the book of Romans to explain, not only why we need salvation, but also how a person is saved.

The first signpost on the Romans Road is Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10-11 adds, "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God." We all sin and fall short ... no one is innocent. Humility recognizes that we are fallible human beings who have sinned against God. His Word is a lifeline to our soul, an anchor for our lives; not something to be debated, altered, or misrepresented. We don't change truth—truth changes us.

The next signpost deals with the consequences of sin. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death ...". This verse is not popular in many churches, nor is it preached from many pulpits. Telling others that the punishment for sin is eternal death (separation from God) is not pleasant, marketable, or palatable, but it is powerful: "It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes ..." (Romans 1:16). "To convince the world of the truth of Christianity, it must first be convinced of sin. It is only sin that renders Christ intelligible" (Andrew Murray; 1828-1917).

In other words, Christ's shed blood on the cross only makes sense in light of the consequences of sin. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15), yet, many do

not want to mention sin, repentance, or judgment because it's not popular or marketable. They fail to realize that the Good News about Christ can only be understood with the bad news as the backdrop.

Our culture's false perception of God as a cosmic ball of love, or a doting grandfather desperately needs to be challenged. Unfortunately, difficult truths are often compromised, watered-down, or avoided altogether in the hope of "not offending."

As a result, the church is a mile wide but only an inch deep; judgment is never mentioned, repentance is never sought, sin is often excused, and lives are not radically changed. This leaves people confused and deceived because they believe in a crossless Christianity that bears no resemblance to Jesus' sobering call to repentance.

To truly be effective, preaching must often be centered around difficult truths. This is how people are truly saved, delivered, and set free from the bondage of sin and death. When we fail to proclaim God's Word faithfully, we run the risk of "encouraging sin" and "perverting the words of the living God" (cf. Jeremiah 23).

Be encouraged! Romans 6:23 doesn't end there. It adds, "... but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:8 declares, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He died for us, took our spot, and paid the price of our sin. Hebrews 9:22 says that "without the shedding of blood, there is no removal of sin." His blood was shed for our sins. We should be forever thankful. Jesus isn't an option. He's the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

The next signpost on the Romans Road can be found in Romans 10:9, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and

believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Because of Jesus’ death on the cross on our behalf, all we have to do is trust in His payment and believe that He is the Son of God, and we will be saved. Romans 10:13 adds, “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

We hear a great deal about God’s judgment and what can keep us from heaven, and rightly so, because “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Proverbs 1:7). But, we also need to reflect on God’s goodness, love, mercy, and grace. The important question to ask is what is the condition of your heart ... has true repentance and a belief in Christ as Lord and Savior taken place?

Jesus healed my brokenness and restored my life, and He can do the same for you. If you take only one thing from this article I hope that it is this: There is a deep longing inside all of us that cannot be satisfied until we recognize our need for a Savior, repent of our sin, and turn to Him.

Once this occurs, your past is forgiven, your present secure, and your future certain. Through Christ, you are a brand new person. If you truly grasp hold of this truth, it can motivate and encourage you beyond measure. Though the road ahead may be uncertain at times, the solid ground beneath will never shift.

It’s all about Who you know. {eo}

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