

Romans Road Pt.2:

Romans 3:23 *“since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

Let's take a trip down the Romans Road. At the first bend is that sign saying *you are here*. There you stand looking at the arrow. Ok, where are you really? In Christian terms you are standing at the crossroads of being lost or found. Yet, usually someone finds you. If you're lost in the forest you don't find yourself. At a mall you don't begin where you're heading. Each of us must begin at Romans 1:20 *“For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.”* The answer to being found is within you. Do you want to remain lost?

Yes, there is no excuse. You either reject Genesis 1:1 (*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*) or you don't. Let's assume you're open to the possibility that God exists. We get back on the Romans road and come to a wide sin chasm (the sin gap) that can't be crossed. Is that it? End of story? What is the sin gap? Paul wrote in Romans 3:10 *“As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one.”* First you ask me to believe in God and then you say that I am a sinner too! The thing is this, to be saved means you have to be saved from something. In reality, this gap is a chasm between God's holiness and our sin. The two cannot meet. We need His help to get across the sin gap. All is not lost. There is a way over! We can cross this insurmountable sin chasm on the Romans road.

Psalm 14:1 *“The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt; their acts are vile. There is no one who does good.”*

It's like this, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Then creation was pushed into motion by God. With that said God is also holy. This God has an overarching kingdom that must remain constant to remain holy. At all costs He will protect holiness. God had a simple rule for Adam and Eve: don't eat of the tree (the knowledge of good and evil). Don't you wish that it was that simple and we did not know evil? Life would be so much better if only good existed. Adam and Eve broke the rule and were cast out of Eden. They had become unholy in God's kingdom. They had to go. Since that time humans have been on the Romans road to redemption. Each person has come to the chasm of sin. The question is: if, I too, am I a sinner like Adam and Eve, can I get back to God?

Why does it matter if you're a sinner? Why does it matter if all have fallen short of the Glory (holiness) of God? If something is messed up it's entirely possible that you might start over. Just delete it all and begin again. God realized that Adam and Eve and their offspring must make a better choice. To reject evil and choose goodness. A goodness that only comes from God. To begin that journey is to realize that your no different than anyone else. We are all sinners. Nobody is good enough to enter holy heaven.

Then why are people still here? It's because God chose to lead us back to Eden so to speak. Ephesians 2:8-9 "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*" In Gods loving grace (His favor) He has provided a way back. I love the set of verses above because they complement the statement "all have fallen short." No one can boast, pay for, or steal their way into heaven. It's by invitation only. How do we get that invitation? It's by staying on the Romans road.

At the edge of the sin chasm is another choice. Are you a sinner? It does not take a rocket scientist to see evil in the world. How often have you wondered where all the goodness is? The road to goodness is found in God. Like I said it's not rocket science: holiness! On earth, we are stuck between heaven and hell. It's coming all the way back to the tree in the garden: the knowledge of good and evil. Did we really want to know that badly?

Once you admit your one of the fallen (like Adam and Eve) then life in God's kingdom will begin. To admit you're not perfect is being humble. To admit your equal with all humans is also humbling. A person who can see their shortcomings will realize pretty quick that they could use help to be better. That we all could use help. Could a loving, powerful, grace filled God help? People say that their own goodness will allow them to enter God's kingdom. That it's not God's choice to let them in. The road past the chasm of sin is humbleness. It's realizing that God can deliver you from evil unto goodness in his kingdom.

If we get in the car to cross the chasm, technically we should fall in. There is no bridge. The Bible says that not one of us is good enough. So, what is a poor sinner to do? The best part is the next stop in the road. Throughout the Old Testament is a concept of payment for sin. God set up a system of sacrificing your best as a penalty for sin. Next week we will cross the bridge to God. It will be through the one payment that covered all our sins and returned us to God's kingdom.