

Facilitator Notes for *Set Free!* – A Study in Romans
Lesson 9 ~ The Romans Road - Various verses from Romans

This lesson will be a little different from the other lessons in this study of **Romans**. It is interactive, designed to acquaint you with **The Roman Road** and encourage you to prepare and be ready to share your faith as God gives you opportunity. As a result, this won't be as an extensive Facilitator's Guide as with other lessons, but I will comment on some the questions.

Questions

1. If you were to share the *gospel* with someone, you would need to present it in a orderly, logical way so that it could be easily understood. Sometimes, however, it is hard to know where to begin and what to include! Below are seven verses from **Romans**, in random order, each containing an essential truth about the *gospel*. Carefully read each verse and then number the verses **1 through 7**, putting them into what you think is a logical order that would help someone understand the *good news* of Jesus Christ.

No "right" answer, but below is one logical way it could be presented. This is also the order that the verses are found in Romans

Number	Verse
6	Romans 10:13 - Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.
2	Romans 3:23 For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard.
5	Romans 10:9-10 - For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.
1	Romans 1:20-21 - From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused.
3	Romans 5:8 - But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.
7	Romans 12:1-2 - And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is.
4	Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

- ♥ Explain to your small group why the order you chose seems logical to you. Discuss other possibilities with your group and come to a group consensus as to a good order to present these truths.

If you did not want to use ALL these verses, which ones could you "cut out" without losing the essential message?

- ♥ Discuss with your small group why each of the truths presented is an important part of the gospel message. In other words, what would be lost if any of the verses were left out?
 - ♥ How confident are you about sharing with someone about how they can be saved. What fears and anxieties do you have? Why?
2. If we want to effectively share the good news with someone, it is important that we understand what we are talking about and not just parroting words and phrases we have heard or memorized. Write a short phrase or sentence beside each Scripture that captures or summarizes the essential truth presented in the verse(s) that a seeker would need to see and understand.

Below are suggestions as to how these truths can be summarized. No "right" answers!

Romans 1:20-21 Everyone has a knowledge of God (We all have a knowledge of God)

- ♥ What, exactly, does everyone automatically know about God? Why do we know these things? How should a person respond to this knowledge?
- ♥ What are the consequences of our ignoring what we intuitively know about God? We begin to think of foolish ideas about what God is like and our thinking becomes dark and confused.

How might this explain the suffering we see in our world? God did not create suffering. Suffering is the consequence sin (living life our way instead of God's) and sin has caused all of creation to be in bondage and frustrated – in other words, to not operate the way God created it to (Romans 8:20-21). If there had been not sin and disobedience, there would be no suffering.

- ♥ What might you say to the person who says they don't believe in God or that God is who we each make him to be? It is usually not wise to "argue" with someone. But if there is open dialogue, you could challenge a person on the intellectual honesty of taking the position that there is no God or God is who we make him up to be. Can we really believe that the creation we see and experience "just happened" anymore than we can believe that the cell phone or coffee cup we are holding "just happened." Believing that there is no God takes more of a leap of faith than believing in God!

Romans 3:23 Everyone is a sinner (We all are sinners)

- ♥ Why does everyone need a Savior? We need to be "saved" (rescued) from the consequences of sin. How does this verse explain what sin is? "Fall short of the glory of God" or "fall short of God's glorious standard" means that the life we live now falls far short of life as God planned and created it to be. We were created in the image and glory of God – but sin prevents us from "living up to" that image. Before sin, humans had the glory of God's presence and the privilege of direct communication with God.
- ♥ What might you say to the person who claims not to be a sinner or not as bad as other people? Certainly, one person may sin more or to a different degree than another, but no one comes even close to living up to the God's standard of what he created humans to be. **The person who says they are not as bad as someone else is comparing themselves to the wrong standard.** When we consider our sin, we can't compare ourselves to any other human. We have to compare ourselves to God's standard – and we will always fall way short!
- ♥ What can you share from your own story that would help someone understand the truth of this verse?

Romans 5:8 Jesus died for everyone while they were still sinners (Jesus died for us while we...)

- ♥ How does this verse demonstrate that God loves people because of who God is, not because of who we are? Jesus died for us when we did not deserve it. His love for us is in no way dependent on us or how good or bad we are. He is totally dependent on his character – and not only is God love, but he never changes. Why is this important? We don't earn salvation – it is a gift.
- ♥ Why do you think Jesus died for us *while we were still sinners*?
- ♥ What can you share from your own story that would help someone understand the truth of this verse?

Romans 6:23 - The paycheck for sin is death – eternal separation from God

- ♥ What does everyone earn as payment for their sins? Death – separation from God. What three kinds of death does the Bible mention

Philippians 1:21 and Hebrews 9:27 – physical death – bodies die

Ephesians 2:1-5 – spiritual death – dead in our sins – physically alive, but spiritually separated from God

Revelation 20:14, 6 and 21:8? - the second death – separated from God for eternity. (We never cease to exist; we either exist with God or apart from him.

Which of these deaths comes as a result of sin? All of them – all death is the consequence of sin

- ♥ What does salvation cost God (5:8)? What does salvation cost us? Why do you think God made salvation a free gift? Is a gift given automatically a gift received? Why or why not?
- ♥ What is eternal life and when does it begin (**John 17:3**)?

Romans 10:9-10, 13 We only have to believe and ask to be saved (rescued).

- ♥ What are the simple instructions Paul gives regarding personal salvation? How do these instructions involve a decision?
- ♥ Why is both *confessing with the mouth* and *believing in the heart* important for salvation? **Accepting Jesus' sacrifice for our sins is both in inward and outward decision.** Who are you talking to when you *confess with the mouth*? **The word confess here means "declare."** We are not called to be **secret followers of Jesus.** We declare or acknowledge to others our loyalty to him (Matt. 10:32-33). When you *call upon the name of the Lord*? **We must also tell God of our decision, declaring our repentance and belief.** Why are both important?
- ♥ Many non-Christians may have heard the word "saved," but probably don't really understand what it means. Saved means "to be rescued." Read **Romans 10:9-10, 13**, substituting the word *rescued* for *saved*. Would this substitution better help you explain these verses to someone? Why or why not?

Romans 12:1-2 We learn to live life God's way and not our own

- ♥ What should follow the decision to accept the salvation found in Christ? **Give ourselves to him and make him Lord of our lives.** Why is this important? **We put him on the throne of our lives instead of ourselves.**
 - ♥ What can we do to develop a relationship with God? How is your relationship with God like your human relationships? How is it different?
3. A person who wants to accept God's free gift of salvation needs to "call upon the name of the Lord." In other words, a person needs to verbalize to God their decision to turn from sin and accept his gift. Review the main truths from each of the verses listed in question 2 and write a short, simple prayer that you could help someone pray confirming their decision to accept God's free gift of salvation.

This is a good exercise for everyone to do regardless of the prayer they may help someone pray. The prayer should be simple and should, at least, include:

- Admission that we are a sinner
- Acceptance that Jesus died in our place – ask for forgiveness
- Desire to repent from our sins and live life differently
- Welcoming of the Holy Spirit into our hearts to help us live a new life

- ♥ Could *The Roman Road* be used to lead a child to Christ? Discuss with your group how the truths of each verse in *The Roman Road* could be creatively explained in a way that a child could understand it. **If by some of your group members are Mom's a small children, you might want to take some time talking about this question. Actually, children understand salvation a lot easier than adults!**

4. **1 Peter 3:15** says, "*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect . . .*" **Preparing yourself** to be ready to give an answer is not only *obedience*, but it is also an exercise in *faith*. As you make yourself ready, you will begin to believe that God will give you opportunities to share – perhaps with someone who is close to you that you are concerned about. If you choose not to prepare yourself, there is no reason to assume that the Holy Spirit will open doors of opportunity for you!

The Roman Road is a way to share the path to salvation using only your Bible. There is **great value** in taking a person directly to Scripture to show them God's plan of salvation, reading the verses together. You may want to *write a map of this plan right in your Bible*. To do this, open your Bible to *Romans* and follow these simple steps: At the beginning of the book of Romans, write the first reference for the Roman Road – **Romans 1:20-21**. In the margin beside this reference (**1:20-21**), write the next reference – **Romans 3:23**, and beside **3:23**, write *Romans 5:8*, etc. until you get through all the references. Making a map by marking these verses will not only help you to be prepared to share your faith as God gives you opportunities, but it will also help you remember each verse!

- ♥ Can you think of some specific advantages for explaining salvation to someone using Scripture rather than using your own words?

If you read the verses together from a Bible, God's Word will do the talking and convincing instead of you. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God carries the power of God. When we read the Bible, it is never just words.

Also, if the person disagrees with something that is said, it is God's Word they are disagreeing with and not you. This will make you less defensive and more able to just share what God says. You will be more likely to leave the convincing and convicting to the Holy Spirit instead of your own words.

5. Read **1 Peter 3:15-16**. What are some specific things Christ-followers are commanded to do?

Make Jesus Lord of your life

Be prepared to give an answer or explain your faith to anyone who asks, with gentleness and respect

Keep a clear conscience (keep right with God)

- ♥ How are all these commands related to sharing your faith? What specific steps can you take to fulfill these commands?
- ♥ To whom are we to give an answer to for the reason of our faith? Does this mean we don't share unless asked? Why or why not?

6. Read **Mark 4:26-29** – *The Parable of the Growing Seed*. What is our role in sharing the good news? What is God's role?

Our role is to scatter or plant the seed which means be willing to explain our faith and tell our stories. After that, it is God's job to make the seed grow. We may or may not get the joy of helping in the harvest, but if God doesn't use us to bring in the harvest, he will use someone else. Statistics show that a person who comes to Jesus has at least 5 different people in their life who all, in some way, help plant the seed.

- ♥ How do we sometimes get our role and God's role confused? What is the result?
- ♥ Whose "rescue" or "salvation" are you praying for? What is **God's desire** for the ones you love but who have not accepted God's gift of salvation (**2 Peter 3:9**)? How does knowing this encourage you?

In Large Group we had everyone write the name of a person on an index card that they want to see come to Jesus—and then to commit to pray for this to happen. Prayer is the most important and powerful thing we can do in sharing our faith. To try and share without "tilling the soil" through prayer will probably lead you to do the right thing at the wrong time. Also, we pray that God will bring other Christ-followers into our loved one's life.

- ♥ If you have never accepted God's gift of salvation, would you like to? *Tell God what is on your heart* and then tell another Christ-follower about the decision you have made!

Have some fun doing some role playing!

Practice Makes Perfect – Using the "map" you made in your Bible, role-play sharing *The Roman Road* with someone in your small group. Assume that your "listener" is interested and has asked you about the hope you have in Christ.

Response

What is *your* story? The most powerful way to tell someone about Jesus is to share with them what Jesus has done for you. Write a one page "testimony" (the story of your faith journey). Share your stories with each other in your small group. Below are some questions that might help you get started:

- What does Jesus mean to you? What difference has he made in your life? How is your life different now from before the time you knew Jesus as your personal Savior from the consequences of sin?
- How and when did you become a child of God?
- What are some of the milestones in your faith journey? When have you been aware of God pursuing you? How did you respond to His advances? What were the results?

It would be great if several could share some of their own story. This is always encouraging to both the sharer and the listener.