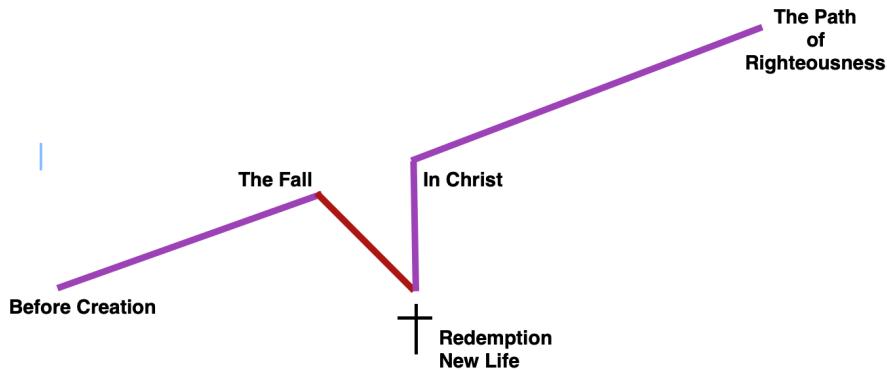


God gave us His Word for....

- a. Teaching— God's original path for us
- b. Reproof— Ways we got off the path
- c. Correction— Getting back on the path
- d. Instruction— Purpose of the path

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.



- Augustine was converted through the book—Romans
- It changed Luthers life...and started the Reformation
- John Bunyon was in jail reading Romans when he wrote Pilgrims Progress
- Wesley was "strangely warmed" hearing Luther's writing on Romans being read.

The Apostle Paul was in Corinth... He had planted many churches and had his eyes on Rome. The church in Rome was strong with no leader—Paul had never been there.

Those who struggle the most with real Christianity are those who have a background in religion. Romans speaks, in a unique way, to the perils of the well-adjusted—the religious. Paul struggled as he adjusted to Christianity due to his religious background. He begins by talking about the "world"... this "age"—the system we live in every day.

The world is in darkness because it's still in Adam. It led Calvin to make the point that darkness is "depravity" in this present evil age.

Outline for the book—

- 1-2 – 3:20 – Basically, what man is by nature
- 3:21 – 4-5 – God's plan to bring the lost to Himself
- 6-7-8 – Living the Christian life—being and doing
- 9-10-11 – Why Israel is set aside. Door for Gentiles
- 12-16 – Living the Christian life, service, government

Romans 1—This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News. 2 God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. 3 The Good News is about his Son. In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line.....

- Seed of Woman - To bruise Satan
- Seed of Abraham - To bring salvation by faith
- Seed of David - To fulfill the promise to Israel.

....4 and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord. 5 Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority as apostles to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name. 6 You are included among those Gentiles who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ: 7 I am writing to all of you in Rome who are loved by God called to be saints.

Not "to become" saints, but "to be" the saints, by divine calling. Not "self-made." or "man-made" saints.

Believers are saints! Paul's letters were to the saints.

8 Let me say first that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith in him is being talked about all over the world.

Their "faith" was being talked about...

- not the number of buses or members
- not the cost and size of their building
- not obedience to the religious rules....but their faith

9 God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to God, whom I serve with all my heart by spreading the Good News about his Son. 10 One of the things I always pray for is the opportunity, God willing, to come at last to see you. 11 For I long to visit you so I can bring you some spiritual gift that will help you grow strong in the Lord. 12 When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. 13 I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to visit you, but I was prevented until now. I want to work among you and see spiritual fruit, just as I have seen among other Gentiles. 14 For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike.

Paul felt God's burden for the human race to get the Gospel out. He had been "the chief of sinners." He never lost sight of what he had done in his life. Everything about him was changed—his heart, his spirit, his world view, his understanding, his truth, his temper, his compassion, his beliefs—they all worked into a constantly changing "renewal of his mind"—the very way he thought about life.

Romans 12:2 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.

15 So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News. 16 For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile.

He knew there was no other answer. He understood "power." Rome had a mighty military — a road system. It was made up of... Lawmakers, Literature and Art.... but ½ of the population were slaves. There was violence, corruption, and the suicide rate was high. They didn't know how to change "hearts."

17 This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

- Our battles are largely battles of faith • God gave us our faith to believe (Eph 2:8)
- God tests our faith, establishes our faith • God gives—our response is "to receive"

We are constantly learning (hearing) how to let God guide us, lead us, in living and decisions. Faith brings to light, what God offers, and gives us.

18 But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

We are learning to recognize an invisible force at work.

There is Sowing & Reaping everywhere. Immorality was, and is, the last sign of a dying nation—a lost world.

- We sow love, we reap love • We sow kindness, we reap kindness
- We sow anger, we reap anger

God gives us insight as to how he will ultimately judge those who reject and refuse an active relationship with Him.

He reminds us there are two ways that He has provided for everyone (that means all) to know He exists. First...

19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them (the lost), **for God has shown it to them.**

"in them" – he's referring to our **conscience**

"Since all nations come from one family all nations once had knowledge of the truth!" — C.S. Lewis

Romans 2:14-15 Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. **15 They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.**

The second way God will judge the lost is... His magnificent "creation."

20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

Psalm 19:1 The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship.

How can anyone look at space stations and airplanes built with wisdom, intelligence, and skill... see stars shine, hearts that beat, eyes that see color, ears that hear, babies that grow, and roses that smell... how can anyone believe it is all by "chance"...?

21 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. As a result, their minds became dark and confused.

There is now a conspiracy of silence about God. The Bible & God can't be mentioned in schools—although one or two states have approved it. Children can't sing Christmas carols in most schools. Their hearts continue in darkness.

John 3:19 And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.

There is nothing new under the sun. Atheists love the darkness and independence from a sovereign God. Philosophers & scholars love knowledge. Freud's answer to guilt & depression was to get rid of the law. He couldn't accept that the purpose of the law was to expose the self-centeredness of mankind.

Genesis 6:5 The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. 6 So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart.

The ancient book of 1 Enoch 6, gives us a clear example of those verses: "And it came to pass when the children of men had multiplied they had beautiful and comely daughters. The angels, the children of the heaven, lusted after them, and said to one another: 'Let us choose wives from among the children of men and beget us children.'"

The New American Bible commentary refers to the Nephilites as "heavenly beings who came to earth and had sexual intercourse with women." The footnotes of the Jerusalem Bible suggest that the biblical author intended the Nephilim to be an "anecdote (legend or myth) of a superhuman race". Some Christian commentators have argued against this view, citing Jesus' statement that angels do not marry. We know... because of their rebellion, these demonic angels have been kept in a special imprisonment to this day. There they await judgement and then the lake of fire.

The Apostle's Creed states in reference to Jesus: "...was crucified dead, and buried: He descended into hell." When the Creed took its English form in the sixteenth century, "hell" was corrected to "hades."

The Biblical Hades had two sides:

- one side—Paradise—for believers who died before Christ was born
- one side—for unbelievers awaiting judgement

When Christ descended into Hades it was for the purpose of getting his people and taking them to heaven to be with Him.

Ephesians 4:8 ...When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive.

In other words—He took all believers out of Hades and they are now in heaven with Him. When we die, like Paul...

2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Our next Musing will cover just two verse — **Romans 1:22-23**