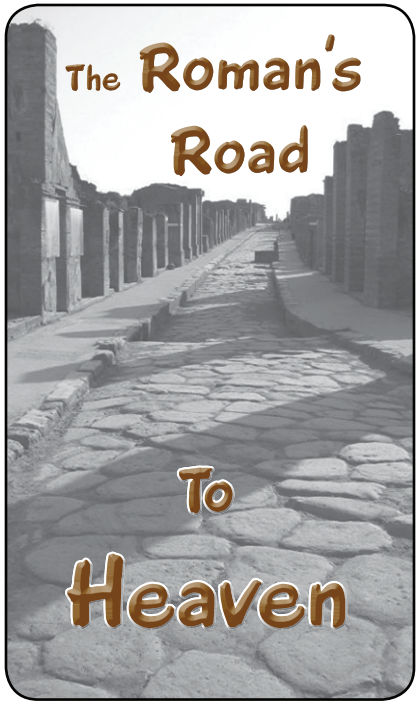

A key to the success and longevity of the Roman Empire was an expansive system of roads. The first proper Roman road, the Appian Way, was constructed in 312 BC to provide fast, reliable communications and supply links, in wars with the well armed Samnites.

Historian Logan Thompson states, "This route followed a remarkably straight, direct, well-drained 122 mile course, firmly topped with neatly fashioned blocks of volcanic lava. It is commendable that Roman engineers and surveyors managed, with their first-ever route, to incorporate most of the construction principles so closely followed during the next 700 years. Thereafter, route networks constantly expanded in every direction, like the spokes of a wheel, with Rome as a hub."

The phrase developed, *All roads lead to Rome*. Today it can mean that the route or method one takes to get somewhere isn't important, as long as the journey reaches the same destination.

Sadly, when it comes to the subject of making Heaven one's eternal home, this philosophy is not valid because God has specifically told us, in the Holy Bible, His guaranteed way or plan for us to get there.

Saul of Tarsus, later know as Paul the Apostle, wrote over half of the New Testament part of the Bible. He was a Roman citizen who had a personal, life changing encounter with God. Afterward, he was taught about heaven and the supernatural world by a divine revelation of Jesus Christ (see Galatians 1:12). By way of a vision, God took Paul to heaven while he was still alive (see 2 Corinthians 12:1-7). Paul had this to say about his writings:

...when you received His message from us, you didn't think of our words as mere human ideas. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it is.

– I Corinthians 14:37

Paul traveled to Rome by ship, and walking along the Appian Way. He wrote a letter to the people he planned on meeting there. By making a compilation of verses from that letter, a road map to Heaven is formed.

1. In God's system of justice, none of us, by human effort, can get to heaven because no one, on his own merit, is right with God.

No one is righteous—not even one.

– Romans 3:10

2. We have lost our ticket to Heaven because we sinned against God by breaking His Ten Commandments.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard.

– Romans 3:23

3. This disobedience to God has a present and eternal consequence– a broken relationship with God now, and being banished from God's home hereafter.

For the wages of sin is death,

– Romans 6:23a

4. There is a way out! God loves us so much, that He came to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus perfectly pleased His Heavenly Father. He became the only man who deserved to go to Heaven. He died on a cross in our place to pay the penalty (debt we each owe to God) for our sin, making heaven available to us.

But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. – Rom. 5:8

5. Now, complements of Jesus Christ, God offers us Heaven and eternal life as a free gift!

...but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

– Romans 6:23b

6. Reconnecting our relationship with God, and making a reservation for Heaven for eternity, isn't an automatic fix. God requires our response by doing two things.

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. – Romans 10:9,10

First, we must believe the historical facts about Jesus Christ found in God's Word, the Bible: Jesus died on the cross for our sins, and God raised Him from the dead, giving Him an immortal body, the kind He has promised to give us when He returns from heaven to rule the earth.

Secondly, God wants each of us to make a confession with our mouths (out loud) that Jesus Christ is our personal Lord and Savior, and one day He is taking us to Heaven.

This is accomplished by praying the following prayer:

Dear Jesus, come into my heart. Forgive all my sins. Wash me in your blood. Write my name in your *Book of Life*. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit, so I can serve and obey You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

7. Our assurance of making Heaven our eternal home is based on God's ability to keep His Word (His Bible promises).

Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. – Rom. 10:13

Also, when we prayed and asked Jesus to come into our hearts, God the Holy Spirit came to live in us as an inward witness that we are now a part of the family of God.

For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.

– Romans 8:16

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