

THE ROMANS ROAD FOR CHILDREN

Session 2: Truths to Share about God

Carl Barth, famed theologian, was once asked, “*What is the greatest thought you ever had?*” His answer? “*Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*” If you grew up going to Sunday School, chances are the song “*Jesu loves me*” is probably the first song you’ve ever memorized. Look at any preschool curriculum and you’ll find a strong emphasis on the children learning about God, His love, His creation, and Jesus’ miracles. Understanding who God is, is foundational in sharing the Gospel that is where we will begin.

In the last session we looked at what anyone must understand and believe about the Gospel message in order to be saved. In this session we want to think about how we can teach the message of salvation in terms a child can understand. Although the truths of the Gospel message are always the same, the tools used to share the message may vary. In the next few class sessions I would like to teach you how to use a tool that could be used in your classroom, or one on one with the children. It will incorporate the truths that we have looked at in detail into child size nuggets.

The tool that we will use is called, “*The Romans Road for Children.*” As you begin using this tool you will want to have an interesting introduction that captivates the children’s attention. If the attention of the children is not gained at the very beginning, you will have a very hard time gaining their interest later. The introduction could be a question, a short story, or a short illustration. It should be brief and child related, once the introduction has been given you will want to use a connecting thought, or a link that could take you into the first point of the presentation. For instance, you could use something like this, “If you were going to take a trip with your family to a place you have never been before, what do you think your parents would need to do in order to find the best way to get there? Well maybe they would go online to find the best way to go, they might print off a map with the directions, or maybe they have a GPS and they can program the destination into that in order to find the best way to get there. There may be lots of ways to get to your vacation spot, but there will be one way that’s best for your family. Using a good map or a guide will get you there easily. Did you know that God’s book the Bible is the most important guide book in the world? It is because it shows us how to get to God, the one way to God. There are many places in the Bible that tell us the way to get to God and His eternal home called Heaven, but we are going to go to the book of Romans, just one book, and we are going to follow the Romans Road so you can easily find the way. Let’s look at the first stop on the Romans Road.”

This brief introduction will help you to get started with the rest of your Gospel presentation. The first thing you want your children to learn on the Romans Road is about God, who He is, and what He is like. In your notes you’ll find a list of truths you will teach the children, these can come in any order as long as the message flows smoothly. The first stop on the Romans Road is Romans 5:8a, and you will have a flashcard that you can show to the children. You will also want to mark our Bible at Romans 5:8. You can use a post it flag to do it or a piece of paper, or maybe you could even use some colored ribbons that will help you to be able to find the location quickly while you are teaching this to the children.

Use only the first part of that verse right now, and we will look at the rest later. One thing you’ll want to teach the children about God is God’s love. The verse Romans 5:8 will help the children understand God’s love for them. Although you will tell the child God loves him, it is more important that he hears what God says in His word. Also, be sure to use the word “**you**” to make it more personal. Teachers often use words like we, us and our, that includes everyone. Each child needs to know that God loves him or her as an individual. Sometimes children in your class may think, “*Well you don’t know me and*

you don't know the bad stuff I've done, there's no way God could love me so you must be talking to someone else."

Children need to understand just how much God loves them; you will want to explain the verse. You don't need to talk about how God demonstrated His love at this point; we will look at that later. You will also want the children to understand that God made all things, and that He made them. Children need to understand that God is different from humans and He is the creator God. You might tell the children things God has made, or let them tell you things God has made so it allows them to participate. Be sure the children understand just how special they are to God. He made them different from any other person on earth with their own looks, personalities, and abilities. Some children may only hear how stupid they are, or that it would have been better if they had never been born. They need to understand how valuable God says they are.

Allen George, former President of Child Evangelism Fellowship, has often been heard to say, *"God never says, oops! He had a plan and a purpose for every person on earth and He didn't say oops."* Children need to know this truth. You can also teach children that God wants them to live with Him in His home in Heaven someday. Help the children understand a little bit about Heaven. **What is it like? What's not in Heaven? When do people go to Heaven?** Children need to know that God wants them to be with Him someday. Once while I was sharing the message of salvation with a girl who was about six years, she didn't want to receive Christ as Savior because she thought she had to leave her mom right then and go to Jesus' home, she wasn't ready to do that. So be clear that one day, someday they will go to live with God in His heavenly home.

A very important principle to teach is that God is perfect, He is completely without sin. Teaching about God's holiness in terms a child can understand is of utmost importance. The child needs to see that God is different from him or her. As you begin to establish what God is like, it will help the children understand their own sinfulness. You might share with them that God's home is perfect as well, because God is the creator and He is completely perfect, He gets to make the rules. He cannot allow sin to be in Heaven. Once you've shared the truth about God and His love, you will want to move smoothly to the next truth found on the Romans Road. Using a link will help you to do this. You could use a link like this, "God is different from you and me. He is perfect. Let's see how God's word describes us." Your link might be different from this one, but you'll want to use something that will take you smoothly to the next verse found in Romans 5:12. Teaching children who God is will help them to understand how different He is from them. As they recognize this, it will help them to see their sinfulness and realize only God has power to change them.

Now that's you've learned the truths a child should be taught about God, I'd like to demonstrate how this might sound when talking to children. You may want to have a piece of paper nearby so you can jot down truths that you hear. Listen with a child's ear, and write with a Teachers eye. First of all, **what does the child learn about God?** Second, notice, **how is the teaching about God made personal to the child?** You will want to listen to see how it is personally applied to him or her. Taking note of these things while you're listening will help you to remember what you should teach the children. We'll begin the demonstration with the introduction to the Romans Road, and then end with a link that will take us to the next verse to be discussed. Right now I want you to listen with those "children's ears".

Demonstration:

“If you were going to take a trip with your family to a place you’ve never been, what do you think your parents might do in order to find the best way to get there? You’re right! They might go online to find a map to chart out the best way to get to the location. Or perhaps your parents have a GPS and they use that to program in where they want to go, and find out the best way to get there. There could be lots of ways to get to your vacation location, but there is going to be one way that is best for your family, and using a good guide will help you get there easily. Did you know that God’s true book the Bible is the most important guide book in the world? Oh, you won’t get from it how to get to your vacation spot, but it will show you the way, the one way to God. It will show you how you can have a special friendship with Him now, and live with Him in His home called Heaven, someday.

There are many places in the Bible that tell us the one way to have a friendship with God, but we can go to the book of Romans found in the New Testament and follow the Romans Road so that you can easily find the way. Let’s look at the first stop on the Romans Road, by following what God says in Romans you will be able to find the way to God and life with Him forever. Perhaps you’ve heard about God. Did you know that God is the maker of everything? He made the sun, and the moon and stars. He made Heaven His home, and earth, our home. He made the trees to bloom in the spring and to change to beautiful colors in the fall. He made the oceans, and rivers and lakes you like to swim in in the summertime. He made the birds and worms, your dogs and cats and every living thing.

Yet as wonderful as all those things are, you are His best creation. Did you know that God made you special? If you look all over the world you will not find a person who is exactly like you. They don’t have the exact abilities and talents that you have. There’s no one with your exact voice or finger prints. When God made you He was pleased with His work. Did you know that God loves you? The Bible tells us in Romans 5:8 that He does, it says, “*but God commendeth His love toward us*”. The word “commendeth” means to demonstrate, or to show.

In a few minutes you’ll see just how much God loves you, but you can know that He made you and He loves you with a love that will never ever end. God is different from you and me, he is perfect. To be perfect means that He never does anything wrong, God is 100 percent good. He cannot think, or say, or do anything wrong or He wouldn’t be perfect. Because God is perfect His home Heaven is perfect too, He wants you to live with Him someday in His home, but we have a problem because we aren’t like Him. God is different from you and me, He is perfect. Let’s see how God’s word describes us...”

(This ends the demonstration.)

Observations:

As you listened to the demonstration I hope you heard the different truths about God given in language a child could easily understand. That is what you want to do when you share with children in your class, beginning your teaching with truths about God is most logical, because He is the origin of all things. Carl Barth had it right when he replied what the greatest truth he ever had was, “*Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so.*” You and I understand this statement, but so can the little children if we teach it clearly.