

Welcome To
THE COEUR d'ALENE BIBLE CONFERENCE
of BARAH MINISTRIES
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Good Evening!

Welcome to the Coeur d'Alene Bible Conference of Barah Ministries...a worldwide Christian Church based in Mesa, Arizona...my name is Pastor Rory Clark.

TONIGHT'S BIBLE LESSON If You Don't Go to Church, You Don't Know What You're Missing

For most of my life I have hated going to church. It all started when I became a Roman Catholic on my thirteenth birthday, April 13, 1968.

I had become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ at least five years before, when an ice cream truck came through my neighborhood handing out free ice cream and teaching the gospel by mail. It was a clever way to get to children. Well they got me. I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and I was saved.

Four years later I found myself in eighth grade at a Catholic School. I was running from the street gangs of the Chicago Public School who had threatened my life. Luckily their desire to kill me was not as fervent as my mom's desire to keep me alive. Catholic School was my safe haven.

Soon after enrolling, I found myself in mandatory CCD Classes... Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Classes, a formal religious education program for children that used the Catechism of the Catholic Church as a text book, and that prepared children to receive the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, of which baptism was one.

On my thirteenth birthday I was baptized and confirmed. Even though I hated going to church, I was in the church every time the doors opened. An alter boy at 7:30 mass...a commentator at 9:00 mass...a Guitarist at 10:30 mass...an alter boy at 12:00 mass. I loved serving, but I hated everything about the church...the begging...the phony people...the confession of my sins...the drab and dreary atmosphere...the feeling that God was a tyrant who was always looking to come down on me...the statues...the candles...the rituals...the confusion...the Latin language... *dominus vobiscum...et cum spiritu tuo...oremus*...the begging for money...oh wait...did I say that already?

I hated going to church but I loved God and I wanted to get to know Him. Little did I know that I had selected the wrong forum to get to know Him.

The hatred for church continued into high school run by an order of Roman Catholic priests called the Jesuits. They were the Marines of priests, and if you didn't want to learn...if you weren't into the development of critical thinking skills...if you weren't into the classics...Latin...Greek...the History of Romans Civilization...they would kill you...with learning. Even though I hated their dogmatic approach, I vowed to become a Jesuit priest. Maybe I could change them and church from the inside. Ambitious for a teen-ager, wasn't I?

Twenty-one years of Roman Catholicism later, I stopped going to church.

I have a question for you...

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Why don't you go to church?

If you do go to church, what is your attitude toward church?

The one thing I have heard from people more than anything else, when talking to people about their spiritual life, is a simple thought...I don't think you have to go to church to be a spiritual person.

True.

What usually follows is a guilt filled justification to defend their decision. Well why the guilt? If you make a decision, be comfortable with it! Most aren't.

Well I say, if you don't go to church, you don't know what you're missing. What you're missing is a classroom that teaches unconditional love, among other things. I'd like the things that are presented in this lesson to be the subject of our Discussion in the Park tomorrow. And it my sincere hope that you'll see what you're missing by not going to church and that you'll want to do something about it.

So welcome to the sixth annual Coeur d'Alene Bible Conference of Barah Ministries. I'm glad to have you here and I'm pleased to be able to share the Word of God with you.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ
Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

BORN AGAIN
June Murphy

Let's begin our reflection with a song...

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

We're grateful, Heavenly Father, for the privilege of studying Your absolute truth...the Word of God...

Father, we know it is You and not church that is really important...yet You gave us churches to fulfill a purpose...and You encourage us not to forsake the gathering of ourselves together...well we have forsaken it...we've become very individualistic in our approach to life and to relationships... thank you for calling these things to mind for us here tonight so we can examine, in a guilt free environment, what changes we might make in the spiritual realm of our lives that would be beneficial to our souls...

Help us to be clear...connect Your Word to our experiences...give us the courage to change our lives in ways that make us closer to you while simultaneously edifying us in a way that takes our lives to new levels of depth and intimacy with You...

We ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit in Christ's name...Amen.

TONIGHT'S BIBLE LESSON If You Don't Go to Church, You Don't Know What You're Missing

Thanks to my dear friends John and Monica Miller for making this evening possible. One of my favorite singing groups as a child was a group called the Stylistics...if you're a bit older you've heard of them...if not, "You Tube" them...Betcha By Golly Wow...You are Everything (And Everything is You)...You Make Me Feel Brand New...well one of their lesser known songs was "People Make the World Go 'Round." Most of us know that is not quite true. People are a pain in the butt. In fact, most often when we think of

people we wish voodoo was real so that we could have a little doll of them and stick the pins in all the right places.

Well John and Monica are two people that make MY world go 'round...and I want to thank you both for your friendship. This is our sixth conference together and they get better every year, mostly just because I get to spend time with you two face-to-face. And every year I say the same thing...you know I should really spend a week here when I come...and it has been steadily creeping toward a week long event...so next year, that's what I'll do...and it is because of the two of you.

Pastors face a lot of hardships that we can't make public...but God always provides people in the background that give their unconditional support. John and Monica have been those kind of friends to me and that is more valuable than you could ever imagine. So thank you, John and Monica, for being my friends, and thank you for thinking enough of your Lord and Savior to provide His Word to the people in your circle and in your geographic area. I look forward to many more of these and to spending all eternity in heaven enjoying the chance to see the fruit of our labor in the lives of those we served together.

A warm welcome also to those of you who are part of the Barah Ministries resident congregation who made the trip north to support your Pastor and to socialize with your non-resident friends...welcome to those members of the Barah Ministries non-resident congregation who either live here in the Pacific Northwest or who live in other places...people who enjoy our bible lessons on the internet, and who thirst for face-to-face time...welcome to those of you who have attended this conference in the past and are back for more spiritual nourishment...and welcome to those of you who were invited here for the first time and who decided to come. Thanks to all of you for being here when you could be someplace else spending your time another way. May grace, and unconditional love, and peace, and forgiveness be with you, of God the Father, and of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Sovereign God of the Universe, be yours in fullest measure, both now and always.

My specialty as a Pastor is teaching the Word of God from God's point of view. That should not make me special, but it does. Most people teach what they think God is saying, but it ends up being their interpretation of the truth. I have no desire to do that. The Word of God is truth, and it doesn't need my interpretation. I don't care what I think about what the Word of God has to say...I don't care what you think of what the Word of God has to say... except to the extent that what we both think is an exact match with what God thinks.

There are things I believe about the bible...and they are valuable only to the extent that they match what God has to say in His Word. I can tell you that there are things that I have believed that are not the truth. In the fifty years that I languished in a religion that teaches an over focus on sin, and as I suffered through a discipline that taught a legalistic approach to the spiritual life, I learned that I sin and that I could not follow the law. And it's a good thing I could not follow the law because in Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 20, the Lord tells us...

ROMANS 5:20 *The Law came in so that the transgression (sins) would increase...*

When we learn the law, we want to break the law...we want to sin. I believed I could stop sinning...I believed I could follow the law...and what I believed turned out not to be true. Today, I am only interested in what is true so that I can align my beliefs with what is true. Trying to follow God's laws to the letter of the law made me sin more. Well now, after the fifty-year trip through hell on earth...through a lascivious life of sin, and through a legalistic, self-righteous life of trying to follow the law and breaking it every time, I am free. If only I had studied Paul's letter to the Romans sooner, and learned this about me as a believer in Christ... Romans, Chapter 6, Verse 14...

ROMANS 6:14 *For sin shall not be master over you (believers in Christ), for you are not under law but you are under the sphere of grace.*

My sin and your sin were paid for in Christ's blood on the Cross. Our sins were paid for in the past, and

they stand paid for forever. Therefore you never have to ask God to forgive you for anything. You are forgiven. And if you already have something, you don't have to ask for it. And each of you, whether you are a believer in Christ or not, are completely forgiven by God.

I was talking to a young man yesterday, and I asked him if he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. His countenance shrunk...and he said, "Yes I am, but..." What came next was predictable...self-castigation. He is a believer in Christ but he is not impressed with himself because he knows he still sins as a Christian. Can you relate? Can I get an amen?! Well the omniscient Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth and the entire Universe, and all things in it including you...according to John, Chapter 1, Verse 3...

JOHN 1:3 All things came into being through God the Son (the Lord), and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

...this Lord knew all the "bad" things you would do in your life...all the sins you would commit...all the mistakes you would make...and yet He created you anyway. This is just one of the many demonstrations of the fact that He loves you unconditionally. Today, your person and your name are personally in His mind, just as they have been in His mind for all of eternity...just as you will always be in His mind, personally and by name for all eternity...and what is not in His mind is one sin of yours...Psalm, 103, Verse 12...

PSALM 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, as far as that He has removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah, Chapter 43, Verse 25...

ISAIAH 43:25 "I, even I (the Lord), am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."

So let tonight be a night when you place the burdens of your faults and your mistakes and your imperfection on the Lord...a night when you set aside your self-castigation and your guilt trips and your regrets...a night when you slam your problems squarely on the back of the One who handled all of your problems for you once and for all time at the Cross...place them on the back of the Lord Jesus Christ. First Peter, Chapter 5, Verses 6 and 7 say...

FIRST PETER 5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time...

FIRST PETER 5:7 ...casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

God considers your problems to be His responsibility, and this is a good time to just give everything over to Him. He's much better at handling your problems than you are. He's just waiting for your permission to handle your problems. Tonight is not the night to be worried...tonight is the night to be free!

Some of you have manufactured a lifestyle that is strangling you. There's a burden sometimes when you get what you want. Some of you clearly know that you are in the winter of your years and it won't be long before you are meeting the Lord face-to-face...and while that is a cause for joyous thoughts, it is a reason for a bit of sadness as well. Some of you have lost your way. You have had events in your life that have caused you to lose your compass and you don't know which way to go next. Some of you have relationships that have "gone south" and you don't know how to fix them even though you want to. Some of you are experiencing distresses you have never experienced before, and they are unmatched in intensity...in other words, it's never been quite this bad for you and there doesn't seem to be an end to the pain. Some of you are out of work and you actually feel "un-employed" ...so often our self-esteem is so connected to having a job that when we don't have a job we feel worthless. Some of you don't have the job

you want. Some of you are young, and making the next step in life, and you're wondering if it is the right step. Some of you are overworked and underpaid, and you are so counted on at work that the job has you trapped in a prison... and you can't see your way out. The nest has closed in and is blotting out the sky. Some of you are underappreciated. Some of you have the burden of raising kids and you are finding out that for every wonderful warm parent moment there are a thousand shit diapers to change, metaphorically speaking...and sometimes you get peed on to add insult to injury. Some of you are mad at God because you don't understand why He doesn't do everything you want done exactly when you want it done...and you have never considered that by not responding to your requests God is doing you a favor. Some of you live a principled life consistent with the Word of God that illuminates all the people around you who aren't living such a life...and most of them are the people closest to you. Some of you are trying to get new businesses off the ground and the beginning is a sputter and stop experience. Situation normal but you think it is situation all fouled up. Some of you are starting a new chapter in your lives and you didn't realize that new chapters always start with chaos and with a tearing down of the old. Some of you are battling health issues and you don't know how to make them go away. Some of you are caring for your aging parents and never saw that challenge coming. Some of you are disillusioned by your illusions and you're mad at Aesop because his fairy tales seem to be how he wished life would be as opposed to how life is really. And God considers your problems to be His responsibility.

PRAYER

God take our burdens...heal our pain...make our dreams come true.

All of the things I just described are my experience of this life...they are your experience of this life...these things make up our lives...and when we leave here tonight that will continue to be our experience, only at a more furious pace.

If you don't go to church, you don't know what you're missing! In this lesson, I'd like to suggest some of the things I think you may be missing by not going to church, so that you can choose to add the spiritual component into your life and to watch it work its magic. The problems won't go away, but your perspective on the problems and the changes you make as a result of the perspective, may make life worth living again. In other words...you can be happy...really happy...while all the things in your life seem to be falling apart.

But Pastor...I don't think you have to go to church to be spiritual.

True. But let's get to the bottom of it. Why don't you go to church really? Here is one person's take on it...

WHY I DON'T GO TO CHURCH (Let each one reveal one at a time)

I grew up going to church

I was "forced" to go to church

I had a crisis of faith

Well duh! You just described my last week! ☺ All of us go through this. When we are kids, our well meaning parents want to impart a set of values, and whatever church they are in, they take you to it hoping that ANYTHING positive will rub off on you. Unfortunately many of our parents have been involved in religion. Of course religion is Satan's counterfeited system of thought that is designed to make you indifferent or antagonistic to God. And it works! And since your negative experiences occurred at church...rather than crediting them to Satan, the enemy of God...you charge them to the institution...church. Or maybe even to your parents. At any rate, you think it is church that turns you off. Partly you are right about that, because institutions and parents CAN be evil. But mostly, maybe

you just had to do what your parents suggested. But what's your excuse now that you can make your own decisions? Would your excuse fly with God?

The assessment continues...

WHY I DON'T GO TO CHURCH (Let each one reveal one at a time)

I had a crisis of faith

But I haven't given up on church

I just don't get anything out of it

Well unfortunately, going to church is not a consumer experience. You don't look for the perfect church any more than you search for the perfect department store. You don't expect church to give you something without putting something into it, any more than you expect to be able to take clothing home from a department store without paying. Finally, you don't expect not to have problems at church any more than you expect that department stores won't make mistakes. A department store was fixing a pair of my shoes and ruined them. Yikes! One of my favorite pairs of shoes was now gone! Gadzooks! That's life.

Secondly, going to church is not about SELF. The smart phone has ruined us. We can customize our experience of the technology any way we want and many of us are wondering why people don't work that way...or why institutions don't work that way...why can't we just download an APP in life and get people and institutions to operate as we want them to, when we want them to?

Finally, church is messy. Sometimes it's joyful. Sometimes it's just horrible. And often people make it that way. But more often it is you. We have a ministry to the Vets back home in Arizona. We visit them every other month. We serve them ice cream and we sing to them and we give a brief spiritual talk. All in all, it's about an hour and a half experience. I dreaded it. I love vets. And I love serving. But the meeting comes right after teaching three lessons on a day when I get up at three in the morning. And after about twelve straight hours of serving, I'm ready for a nap.

Well one time I didn't make it. The next time I came back, one of the vets read me the riot act. He told me not to miss ever again. It shifted my attitude. You see for these guys, this was their church. And they liked us, and they looked forward to it. All of a sudden they were people to me, not just things...he weren't just a ministry. And the deeper I began to think about them, the deeper I began to feel the experience of visiting them...so much so that I can't get enough of it.

If you don't go to church, you don't know what you're missing. So why don't you go to church? Let's pause for a quick break. Then we'll hear June Murphy sing a couple of songs. Then we'll see what we're missing by missing church.

BREAK

Enjoy a few moments to think about what you're hearing

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ
Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

HERO
June Murphy

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ
Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

I AM BEAUTIFUL

June Murphy

TONIGHT'S BIBLE LESSON If You Don't Go to Church, You Don't Know What You're Missing

What are you missing?

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#1

A deep, intimate, and personal relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

Whenever I sin...whenever I make a mistake, I make it a mental practice to go directly to God immediately, just to be in His presence at the time when I have made a mistake. What I have experienced by doing that is His acceptance. I KNOW He loves me unconditionally. It feels great to be with Him when I am at my worst. You don't have to go to church to do that, but tell yourself the truth...when do you ever do that? Most of the time we move away from Him when we make mistakes. Look at how the Lord treats the worst of in us and the worst in us...John, Chapter 4, Verses 7 to 19...

JOHN 4:7 *There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."*

JOHN 4:8 *For the Lord's disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.*

JOHN 4:9 *Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)*

JOHN 4:10 *Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the free gift of God the Father, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him (Me), and He (I) would have given you living water."*

JOHN 4:11 *She said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?"*

JOHN 4:12 *"You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?"*

Abraham...Isaac...Jacob...the Lord must have reflected on His creation of all of them.

JOHN 4:13 *Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again..."*

JOHN 4:14 *"...but whoever drinks of the water that I (the Lord Jesus Christ) will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."*

JOHN 4:15 *The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw."*

That's how easy it is to express the desire to be saved.

JOHN 4:16 *He said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here."*

JOHN 4:17 *The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have correctly said, I have no husband..."*

JOHN 4:18 *"...for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband...this you have said truly."*

JOHN 4:19 *The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet."*

No judging from the Lord...He extends His kindness to the worst of us and to the worst in us. We might not like a woman who has been divorced five times, but the Lord does. That's why he picked the apostle Paul to write two thirds of the New Testament, it was a testimony to how the Lord feels about us when we are at our worst. The best description of how He feels toward us...Unconditional in His love.

What you're missing when you don't come to church is a relationship with the only Person in your life who really accepts you and loves you like you want to be loved. "Yeah, but I don't have to go to church...I mean I talk to God in the shower." Okay. Well that's too much information. And if you really think about it, that might be a bit cruel. But okay. So point two...

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#2

The chance to replace your thoughts with the exact thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The way we look at things is skewed. In Isaiah, Chapter 55, Verse 9, the Lord says...

ISAIAH 55:9 *"For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts higher than your thoughts."*

Missing church is missing the chance to change your thoughts...from thoughts that are inculcated by Satan's word system, exchanging them for the mind of Christ. How would you handle this situation? John, Chapter 8, Verses 3 to 11...

JOHN 8:3 *The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court...*

JOHN 8:4 *...they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act."*

JOHN 8:5 *"Now in the Mosaic Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"*

They're talking to the person who gave Moses the Mosaic Law. Hello!

JOHN 8:6 *They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.*

JOHN 8:7 *But when they persisted in asking Him, Jesus straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."*

JOHN 8:8 *Again Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground.*

JOHN 8:9 *When the scribes and the Pharisees heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone, and the woman was left where she was, in the center of the court.*

JOHN 8:10 *Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"*

JOHN 8:11 *The woman said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."*

How do you handle situations when the people in your life make mistakes? If you listen to the wisdom of the world that you hear outside of church, you condemn them. Yet the Lord Jesus Christ does not condemn us when we make mistakes. One of the things that I have noticed in the bible, is that when the Lord is coming down on a group of people, it's always unbelievers. It is virtually never believers in Christ. Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 1...

ROMANS 8:1 *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in union with Christ Jesus.*

I'd venture to say that you condemn yourself more in a day than the Lord condemns you in a lifetime. Where are you going to learn that other than church?

"Yeah but the people in church condemn..." Yes. You have an amazing grasp of the obvious! So point three...

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#3

The chance to experience fellowship with a community of people

Going to church is the chance to develop a family of your choosing. It's a chance to share your life with others. It's a place to experience the feeling of belonging. It's a chance to be around people who are like-minded. Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verses 24 and 25...

HEBREWS 10:24 *...let us consider how to stimulate one another to unconditional love and good deeds...*

HEBREWS 10:25 *...not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another...and all the more as you see the day (of the second coming of Christ) drawing near.*

The writer of Hebrews was making a commentary about what happens when you defect from church...you start forgetting the things that give you hope...like the fact that the Lord is coming again...like the fact that God works all things together for good...like the confident expectation of a brilliant and victorious future...because you spend all your time around the doomsayers who are constantly talking about how the world is going to hell in a hand basket and who think that political leaders are somehow going to lead us out of the mess our country is in. They won't. They'll only make it worse. But Jesus Christ still controls the universe.

Church is a support structure when things in your life aren't working out as you would like them to. There are people in my church who I can tell anything to...John and Monica are among them...people I can lean on when I am down. Yes they know I'm a Pastor and they respect me as a Pastor, but they also know I'm human. So if I tell them the worst of myself, I am sure it is safe with them.

"Yeah but some people in church are jerks...they turn me off!"

Welcome to my world. Yet I don't get to leave when I am treated poorly, or else the church would fall apart. So I just have to hang in there. In church, you learn to hang in there. Here is Paul illuminating the situation in the church at Corinth...his worst church...First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verses 17 to 22...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:17 *But in giving this instruction (in the preceding verses), I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse.*

Your coming together at church is doing more harm than good. That happens in some churches.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:18 *For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it.*

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:19

For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.

Division shows who is committed to the Lord and who is not. Those who are not committed move away from church.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:20 *Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper...*

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:21 *...for in your eating each one takes his own supper first (selfishness); and (ignores the) one (who) is hungry and another of you is drunk (lasciviousness).*

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:22 *What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink (can't you do that stuff at home!)? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing (those in need)? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.*

Church is a relationship. Because it is a relationship, and not a building, it is a place where you can be hurt. But will you throw out the possibilities of fellowship on account of those who try to ruin it? May it never be! I'll take two of John and Monica over a hundred of the defectors. Being alone in your home is never as good as being in a church getting hurt.

"Yeah but all they do at church is ask for money!" So point four...

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#4

The chance to give

Do you ever get tired of taking? Do you ever get tired of self? Want to stop worry about your problems? Give! Matthew, Chapter 19, Verses 16 to 24, the Lord gives a lesson about giving...

MATTHEW 19:16 *And someone came to Jesus and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?"*

The man was asking what work would ensure him a place in heaven.

MATTHEW 19:17 *And Jesus said to him, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? There is only One who is good (the Only righteous One...the Lord Jesus Christ); but if you wish to enter into the resurrection life, keep the commandments."*

The good work required to ensure salvation is to respond to the free grace gift of eternal life through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you want to have the righteousness from God that ensures your entrance to heaven, you have to accept a free gift through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone...nothing more.

MATTHEW 19:18 *Then the man said to Jesus, "Which commandments?" And Jesus said, "You shall not commit murder...you shall not commit adultery...you shall not steal...you shall not bear false witness..."*

MATTHEW 19:19 *“...honor your father and mother...and you shall love your neighbor as you love yourself...unconditionally.”*

The man was wondering if it was the commandments in the bible or the interpretations of men (the Pharisees) about the bible that must be followed.

MATTHEW 19:20 *The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?”*

MATTHEW 19:21 *Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”*

MATTHEW 19:22 *But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.*

This horrified the apostles, for many of them were rich.

MATTHEW 19:23 *And Jesus said to His disciples, “Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

MATTHEW 19:24 *“Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”*

This isn't a condemnation of rich people. It's a question for all of us. Who is your God? For this young man, his god was money. Church is an opportunity for you to give of yourselves to others...your time...your talent...and even your treasure...especially to those in need. Church is the way you operationalize what you are learning...it is a classroom where you get to test the gift of unconditional love. With the exception of marriage, there is no relationship as trying as the church.

“Yeah but I'm too busy for church...I've got a life.” Okay so the final point...point five...

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#5

The divine solution to all your human problems

God...what should I do...should I marry this woman? Second Corinthians, Chapter 6, Verse 14...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 6:14 *Do not be bound together with (married to) unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?*

The world may not have the solutions to your problem, but God does. The New Testament contains 27 books that have all the truth, and all the answers you could ever want. So when you think about all the problems we opened with, God has a divine solution for every one of them.

When a friend calls you and tells you they have cancer, what can you say? In the last year, fifteen different friends have made that call to me, and I say, “Don't worry about it...I'll pray for you. And every one of them is cancer free or in remission today...through the power of prayer. Where in the world is the cure for cancer? It sure isn't chemotherapy. It is in prayer. In John, Chapter 16, Verse 23, here is a promise to you directly from God...

JOHN 16:23 *Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name (in prayer), He will give it to you.*

And again in Matthew, Chapter 21, Verse 22...

MATTHEW 21:22 *“And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”*

Do you believe? Do you ask? If you're not in church, you'll probably forget to ask...James, Chapter 4, Verses 1 to 4...

JAMES 4:1 *What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures (SELF) that wage war in your members?*

JAMES 4:2 *You lust and do not have (SELF); so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain (SELF); so you fight and quarrel. YOU DO NOT HAVE BECAUSE YOU DO NOT ASK.*

JAMES 4:3 *You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

JAMES 4:4 *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Well let these five things be the subject matter of our conversation in the park tomorrow...or anything else for that matter.

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#1

A deep, intimate, and personal relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

#2

The chance to replace your thoughts with the exact thoughts of the Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT YOU'RE MISSING BY MISSING CHURCH

#3

The chance to experience fellowship with a community of people

#4

The chance to give

#5

The divine solution to all your human problems

Church is place you can receive. It's a time set aside just for God and just for others (remember when we used to do that?). And this few hours makes the rest of your 168 hours per week worth living. So don't miss it. Change that in your life today!

Of course I would love it if you would study with me. You can move to Phoenix or you can listen on the internet.

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GOD WANTS YOU!

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

ACTS 16:30 *"...the jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"*

ACTS 16:31 *"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes."*

ACTS 4:12 *"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given to mankind by which we must be saved (except the name of the Lord Jesus Christ)."*

JOHN 14:6 *Jesus said to the apostle Thomas, the doubting one, "I am the way (to salvation), and (I am) the truth (the Word of God), and the (resurrection) life; no one comes to the Father but through believing in Me."*

ACTS 2:21 *'And it shall be that everyone who calls on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation will be saved.'*

CLOSING SONG

YOU RAN AFTER ME

June Murphy

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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**THE COEUR d'ALENE BIBLE CONFERENCE
of BARAH MINISTRIES**

Join us tomorrow at 10AM for Discussion in the Park

Rory Clark - Pastor-Teacher

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