

PASTOR FARLEY MESSAGE

March 21, 2013

/WELCOME TO BIBLE STUDY

Good Evening!

**Let's Make a Mental Shift **

Good Evening! First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 10 says...

/1PE 5:10

After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in (union with the Lord Jesus) Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

Lighthouse Bible Church...your God knew that the situation you are now facing would happen, and in eternity past, before any of us were created, He made perfect provision for it. Blessed be the name of our magnificent Lord for bringing us a circumstance that He would use to perfect, to confirm, to strengthen and to establish us.

<WHERE IS YOUR SOUL TUNED?>

God the Holy Spirit is the agent of your perfecting. He is looking forward to filling up your deficiency of thought with this lesson by RENEWING you. He will lead you to reflect on the truths of the Word of God. He will provide you with enabling power so that you can know your Lord and Savior, so you can know the Plan of God the Father for your life, and so you can see God's hand in the circumstances that surround you right now.

Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2 says...

ROM 12:2

...(keep on) be(ing) transformed by (God in) the RENEWING of your mind...

As we prepare for the study of the Word of God, we shift our minds to this RENEWING.

Now is the time to let your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through the power of God the Holy Spirit, prepare you "in humility (to) receive the Word implanted, which is able to save your souls."

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/OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...(0:30)

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

Help us to see your guiding hand in this and every circumstance...

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

/WELCOME TO BIBLE STUDY

Rory Clark

Pastor-Teacher\

Thank you for coming tonight, and for welcoming me by your presence to Lighthouse Bible Church. My name is Rory Clark. My spiritual gift is Pastor-Teacher, a gift given to me by God for the benefit of all those who want to hear the truth of the Word of God. This is Pastor John Farley's pulpit, and no one can fill his shoes. The fact that he is not here makes this pulpit less than it would be with his presence. But Pastor John Farley trusts, as do I, that God the Holy Spirit guides the voices that come from this place...and it is my pleasure to be standing in as that voice, for your benefit, this evening. To the resident members of Lighthouse Bible Church, and to its members outside of the local assembly all over the world who are very much a part of this church, grace and peace to you from God our Father, from God the Son, from God the Holy Spirit, and from the physical manifestation of the Godhead, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...the uniquely born one...who obliterated the line between God and Man, and who is seated at the right hand of God the Father as our mediator and our advocate.

/TODAY'S STUDY

Can You See the Hand of God in This Circumstance?

Turn in your bibles to First John, Chapter 4, Verse 7...located here is all anyone would ever need to know about Lighthouse Bible Church...

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/1JO 4:7

Beloved (divinely loved ones), let us love one another (unconditionally), for (unconditional) love is from (the source of) God; and everyone who loves (unconditionally) is born of God and knows God.

/1JO 4:8

The one who does not love (unconditionally) does not know God, for God is (unconditional) love.

/1JO 4:9

By this (unconditional love) the (unconditional) love of God was manifested in us, that God (the Father) has sent His only begotten (uniquely born) Son (the Lord Jesus Christ) into the world so that we might live (the resurrection life...the Zoe Life) through Him.

/1JO 4:10

In this (sending of His Son) is (unconditional) love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

/1JO 4:11

Beloved (divinely loved ones), if (1) God so loved us (unconditionally, and He did), we also ought to love one another (unconditionally).

/1JO 4:12

No one has seen God at any time; if (3) we love one another (unconditionally...maybe we will and maybe we won't, we have a choice), God abides in(dwelling) us, and His (unconditional) love is perfected in us.

/1JO 4:13

By this we know that we abide in (union with) Him and He in(dwelling) us, because He has given us (the indwelling) of His (Holy) Spirit.

/1JO 4:14

We have seen and testify that (God) the Father has sent (God) the Son (manifest as the Lord Jesus Christ) to be the Savior of the world.

Just as surely as this is all anyone could ever want to know about Lighthouse Bible Church, it is also all anyone could ever want to know about Pastor John Farley. For as long as I have known him, I have seen manifest in

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Pastor John an intense love for God, even during his religious days, as well as an intense love for his fellow man.

I am here today for at least two reasons.

First of all, because those of you who call Lighthouse Bible Church your home are my family...my Royal Family. We will live together for all eternity. When a crisis happens, real families come together. When a comrade falls, often it is not enough just to get on the phone and to send good wishes. It is not enough simply to pray, although they both help. Sometimes there is no louder statement of unconditional love in a situation than our presence, and I believe it is the truest reflection of the Christian Way of Life when we are present for those we love. In those situations, often words are not necessary.

I think we have forgotten how powerful our presence is during times like this.

The second reason I am here is because crisis illuminates real friendships. Pastor John Farley is my lifelong friend and my soul mate. I am only sorry I could not be here sooner. Last week, I was in Taiwan on vacation when this happened, and this week was the soonest I could make my presence felt. But I was here last week for Roberta and Hannah and Jack and the deacons of the church, by phone. But being present is much more gratifying. I saw Pastor John yesterday, and I was especially glad to be able to hug him and touch him and listen to him, to the thoughts and the voice of a man that I love deeply and respect on a level that can't be expressed by words. I want my presence to send a message to Pastor John, and to you, that I am his friend, so this will never be a question. As his friend you can count on me to step in when it's necessary any time it I necessary. I want Pastor John to know that I am his friend unconditionally. That is a friendship that comes directly from my relationship with God.

Tonight, I bring the prayers and good wishes of your family called Barah Ministries in Gilbert, Arizona. You are in our prayers our prayers now and always, as we go boldly before the throne of grace.

The journey to this pulpit tonight began about a decade and a half ago.

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Pastor John was working for a company called EPS Solutions in Excelsior, Minnesota. I am a consultant in customer development. They were a smaller company than I was used to working with...they definitely could not afford to pay me what I earn in the marketplace...yet it was apparent they needed the help, and I wanted to help them.

I had been in the classroom with Pastor John several times before the moment when our friendship would officially begin. The customer development system I teach invites people to look deeply into themselves and to align their real desires in life and in customer development with the way they are thinking and acting. Often, people don't like this form of introspection, so I become the brunt of their anger as their introspection progresses.

Quite a few times I invited John to think outside of the limits he had set for himself, and his anger at my methods often resulted in what I call the "quiver lip." In an attempt to control his rage, he would hold his feelings in, but his quivering lip gave away his anger.

Our friendship really started in a restaurant on Lake Minnetonka. We were exhausted from a long day of introspection on customer development, and we had settled in for dinner. Pastor John and I had enough conversations, by that time for me to know that he was a devout Roman Catholic and an avid reader. I had two glasses of rose wine on an empty stomach, and I used my beginning intoxication as an occasion to evangelize to a "died in the wool" Roman Catholic.

My method was less than tactful. "John...you're a Roman Catholic, right?" He said yes. I said, "I used to be a Roman Catholic. You know Roman Catholicism is bull-skubala, right?"

John got the double quiver lip. "It is not!" he said. "Is too!" I said. Yesterday I talked to Steve Bubb, the former president of EPS Solutions, who said he used to love watching the epic battle between the Roman Catholic and the Christian. I took advantage of Pastor John's love for reading, and provided him with some reading material about God's Word. The reading material led Pastor John to Grace Bible Church, to becoming an ordained Pastor, one of the biggest shocks of my life. My evangelism produced a Pastor? Holy Schnikes! Well God wasn't finished. The guy

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that I had rescued from Roman Catholicism ends up ordaining his rescuer! You could say this is a coincidence. You might even say that this is God's sense of humor. I have said both. Yet the latest circumstances that have led me to this pulpit at this moment leave me knowing that this was not just God's sense of humor. That dinner in Minnesota was the first step in an intricate plan for God to have two men's lives so intricately entwined that through this friendship we would get to know God intimately.

Unbeknownst to me, I had led Pastor John out of Roman Catholicism into the legalism of Systematic Theology. I hadn't rescued him at all. I had just led him to a nicer prison. Over the last five years, through many intimate conversations, I have noticed in both of us what a woman in my congregation describes as an "undertone of discomfort, which finally erupted." Erupted indeed.

I am reminded of the ending scene in the movie *Pretty Woman*, with Richard Gere and Julia Roberts. If you haven't seen the movie, it's terrific. Richard Gere, who is afraid of heights, climbs up a fire escape to "rescue" the fair maiden Julie Roberts from her imprisonment to a lifestyle of prostitution. When he gets to her, he asks her a question...

/PRETTY WOMAN CLOSING SCENE

Richard Gere:

So what happens after the prince climbs up the tower and rescues the princess?

Julia Roberts:

She rescues him right back!\

I may have rescued Pastor John from the prison of Roman Catholicism, but for the last three months...in multiple phone conversations daily...Pastor John Farley has rescued me right back from the prison of legalism, and he has created an explosion of revolt in my soul against the things that were making me uncomfortable with Christianity and with God, things that were hindering the true relationship I have always wanted with the Sovereign of the Universe, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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Because of Pastor John Farley's work of late, which you too have been the beneficiary of, I am free from the straight jacket of meaningless rituals, of check the box, comatose Christianity, and of deifying men, instead of honoring and worshipping the only Deity, our Sovereign God. I am free from the imprisonment of the perversion and distortion of God's Word, which turned the alive and powerful and sharp and piercing Word of God into a dead and impotent and dull and obligatory daily venture into entrapment.

In his second inaugural address, the sixteenth president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, said this, nearly a century and a half ago...

/SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Abraham Lincoln

March 4, 1865

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us (the ability) to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan ...to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”\

As I look back on my fifty-year journey from unbelief, through religion and through legalism, I am grateful for the preordained journey God has taken me through, and to all the teachers who have been any part of that journey. Lately, a lot of my anger has been directed toward them, and they deserve it. They are culpable in the matter of my spiritual life. I gave them my childlike faith, and to the degree that they did not give me back accuracy in return, they are as blameworthy as a parent who misdirects a child in any matter. They are as culpable as I am, to all those whom I misdirected with legalism.

However, when the dust of the current anger settles, and when my own mistakes in teaching are illuminated, two things will be true...our warfare is not with souls and sin natures, but with the world forces of the kingdom of darkness. We will see Satan's hand of sabotage firmly placed on our misdirection. Yet just as surely, we will see the hand of God has perfected

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and confirmed and strengthened and established us in spite of it. Turn in your bibles to First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

So often, when something happens to a Pastor, like this thing that happened to Pastor John, from a legalistic viewpoint there is an automatic assumption that because Pastor John has been teaching such great things that the kingdom of darkness is attacking him. And we can easily go to this verse, to reinforce our legalistic and fatalistic thinking... First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

/1PE 5:8

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.\

What Pastor John has opened our eyes to is how fatal this error is...because to excerpt this verse from its context misses the whole point of the passage...let's begin at First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 1...you don't need the Greek to see the beauty of this passage, although the Greek illuminates this passage to a level of ecstasy that makes us totally aware of God's love for us...

<Read First Peter, Chapter 5, Verses 1 through 11>

I'll call your attention to these two verses...

/1PE 5:6-7

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, // casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.\

God cares for you. It's a Greek idiom that means, "God Considers Your Problems to Be His Responsibility."

I'll call your attention to this verse as well...

/1PE 5:10

After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in (union with the Lord Jesus) Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.\

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We can bear anything knowing that God considers our problems to be His responsibility...that God cares for us...that God will perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish us. We are certainly to be alert for Satan and his strategy against us...but even if Satan is successful, as he has been to lure me into religion and into legalism, my God considers my willingness to trust and the result of being deceived to be his responsibility, and He will STILL perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish me...and of course you, too.

Are we to resist the growth that God had planned for us in eternity past?

Pastor John Farley has been leading you out of legalism into the truth of the Word of God. I know it is a shock to your system. It was for me. To be led out of a deception means we have to give up our illusions.

We cannot deny it. Many of us have become lazy learners. We have given up our responsibility to learn and laid it squarely on the backs of our teachers. Over time, we have learned to deify our teachers...to make humans our gods. Our teachers do not want that responsibility, but we give it to them anyway. When God reveals that this way of approaching the spiritual life is false, many of us reject God's leading. Why? Ego. We say in our souls, "No. I was not wrong." Philippians, Chapter 2, Verse 5 says...

/PHI 2:5

*Have this attitude (this thinking) in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus... *

We are to have the mind of Christ as our attitude...Philippians, Chapter 3, Verse 15 says...

/PHI 3:15

*Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you... *

Check the context of Philippians, Chapters 2 and 3 for a message much deeper than the one I have for you right now...I am asking you this...

Can You See the Hand of God in This Circumstance?

I certainly do. God has asked you to announce your allegiance. Is your

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allegiance to men and their legalistic viewpoint about God or is your allegiance to the simplicity and purity of God and His Word?

The teaching that has been coming from Pastor John and from your church is the best bible teaching I have seen coming from a pulpit in my life. It has led me right where I have always wanted to be led...to God and His Word. It has forced me to look at myself, at my allegiances, at my very being...and it has freed me to do what I have always wanted to do...to know God without the interference of Satan's viewpoint.

When you shop for food next time, stop into the frozen food section. Look for a frozen turkey dinner.

/SEEN ON A FROZEN DINNER PACKAGE

Gravy with Sliced Turkey\

On the package you will see...Gravy with Sliced Turkey. When I was a child, you would have seen Sliced Turkey with Gravy. But the Food and Drug Administration determined that if a food had more of one ingredient than another, the major ingredient has to be listed first, or else the packaging is deceptive. Since there was more gravy than turkey, much more, the packaging label changed from Sliced Turkey with Gravy to Gravy with Sliced Turkey.

Pastor John Farley has introduced the study of the pure and unadulterated Word of God. Before, I had been studying and teaching legalism, with a little biblical truth. I had been teaching the company line of doctrines as taught by my teachers.

Funny story...that happened on more than one occasion...I called Pastor John and said... "Hey...I'm studying a subject...got any resources you trust on the subject." Pastor John, with a bit of contempt in his voice would say, "Yeah...turn in your bible to..." And he would lead me to passage after passage. I'd get a sheepish grin on my face and say to myself, "Wow. That was embarrassing." After about the tenth time I experienced the same thing...me saying "Hey...I'm studying a subject...got any resources you trust on the subject." And Pastor John, with a bit of contempt in his voice saying, "Yeah...turn in your bible to..." I got it. I valued men, more than I

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valued God and His Word. I'd get a sheepish grin on my face and say to myself, "Wow. That is embarrassing." Now I'm faced with a dilemma.

All I have is God and His Word.

Can You See the Hand of God in This Circumstance? I certainly do.

With one question, Pastor John Farley changed me. "Do you see any connection between First John, Chapter 1, Verse 9 and the filling of the Spirit?" I didn't. I still don't..But I hadn't for a really long time. I just ignored what I knew, and God helped me experience my lack of curiosity as an "undertone of discomfort which finally erupted."

Now, I am curious again. I am asking questions again. Christianity has come alive for me again. I feel free. I am free. My freedom is an established fact, and I am now interested in living in the freedom. Galatians, Chapter 5, Verse 1 is a reality in my soul...

/GAL 5:1

It was for freedom that (the Lord Jesus) Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm (in the freedom) and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

Often, the only way to see the error of your current thinking is to objectively look at a matter from the viewpoint of the opposite thinking. For example, when I ask you, "Who killed John F. Kennedy?" what would you say? You might agree with the Warren Commission and say that it was Lee Harvey Oswald, who acted as a lone gunman. Possibly. But if we look from the opposite viewpoint, who would be the least likely person that you think might have killed John F. Kennedy? My answer to the question would be his brother, Robert F. Kennedy. Yet if I entertain the question, "Under what circumstances would Robert F. Kennedy have his brother John killed?" just the investigation of the question might lead to a totally different look at the Warren Commission conclusion.

I can tell you this...I got out of Roman Catholicism by looking at it from the viewpoint of the Seventh Day Adventists. Even though their viewpoint was wrong, I saw something about Roman Catholicism that I wouldn't have seen if I were defending my position. I got out of the legalism of Systematic

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Theology by looking at it from the viewpoint of Christians who know nothing about Systematic Theology...only then could I see the error of it.

What I learned from Pastor John is to look at the spiritual life and Christianity through God's eyes. There are Christian friends of mine who refuse to do it. They are convinced that they are right, entrenched in their positions, and refusing to budge. I can relate. I can't even begin to tell you the number of times I was invited out of Roman Catholicism and out of Systematic Theology, and how many times I just refused to look at it.

But after all of my egotistic, "I'm right and you're not" responses to the invitation out of the two distortions, Roman Catholicism and Systematic theology, God brought the message by means of someone I trust and respect. I couldn't ignore Pastor John's invitation.

You know what? If Christianity doesn't work for the Mexican who has to carry bricks up fifteen flights of steps for \$2 a day, then it doesn't work for anyone. And I have evangelized to men such as these with Systematic Theology, and they were not impressed...they were not moved...they didn't understand it. It was too complicated. God is not confused or confusing. The Word of God is simple...it is not complicated. Christianity is not an intellectual pursuit...it is a relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe. Ultimately, Roman Catholicism and Systematic Theology stood between me and God, and interfered with my ability to know God and to have a relationship with him.

Pastor John invited me to change. And I have been changed for good. I'd like to dedicate this song, from the musical *Wicked*, to my friend, Pastor John Farley and to our friendship.

/FOR GOOD from Wicked

ELPHEBA

I'm limited

Just look at me - I'm limited

And just look at you

You can do all I couldn't do, Glinda

So now it's up to you...for both of us

Now it's up to you...\

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/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

GLINDA

I've heard it said
That people come into our lives for a reason
Bringing something we must learn
And we are led to those
Who help us most to grow
If we let them
And we help them in return\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

GLINDA

Well, I don't know if I believe that's true
But I know I'm who I am today
Because I knew you...
Like a comet pulled from orbit
As it passes a sun
Like a stream that meets a boulder
Halfway through the wood\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

Who can say if I've been changed for the better?
But because I knew you
I have been changed for good\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

ELPHEBA

It well may be
That we will never meet again
In this lifetime
So let me say before we part\

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/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

ELPHEBA

So much of me
Is made of what I learned from you
You'll be with me
Like a handprint on my heart
And now whatever way our stories end
I know you have re-written mine
By being my friend...\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

ELPHEBA

Like a ship blown from it's mooring
By a wind off the sea
Like a seed dropped by a sky bird
In a distant wood
Who can say if I've been changed for the better?
But because I knew you\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

GLINDA

Because I knew you

BOTH

I have been changed for good\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

ELPHEBA

And just to clear the air
I ask forgiveness
For the things I've done you blame me for

GLINDA

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But then, I guess we know
There's blame to share

BOTH

And none of it seems to matter anymore\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

GLINDA

Like a comet pulled from orbit
As it passes a sun
Like a stream that meets a boulder
Halfway through the wood

ELPHEBA

Like a ship blown from it's mooring
By a wind off the sea
Like a seed dropped by a bird in the wood\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

BOTH

Who can say if I've been
Changed for the better?
I do believe I have been
Changed for the better...\

/FOR GOOD from *Wicked*

GLINDA

And because I knew you...

ELPHEBA

Because I knew you...

BOTH

Because I knew you...

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I have been changed...
For good...\

Pastor John Farley...I want to thank you for changing me for good. I may have rescued you from Roman Catholicism...but you rescued me right back...and unlike Glinda and Elpheba who went their separate ways, I look forward to our continuing friendship and our continuing conversations that will lead us both to that which is most important to us...a real relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, unhindered and unimpeded by deifying men, by legalism, by religion, and by the attempts from the kingdom of darkness to steal our liberties.

I clearly see the hand of God on our friendship and on this congregation and I am very happy to have you Pastor John, and this congregation...this royal family...as a part of my life.

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CLOSING VERSES

/PRO 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.//In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.

/DEU 31:8

The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed

/ISA 30:18

Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him.

/CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...\

THANKS

INTERCESSION

PETITION

And we pray that you continue to shape the messages from this pulpit that are an accurate reflection of your person, your thinking, your work, your reputation and your essence...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit, in Christ's name, Amen.