

ROMANS
Lesson 306–August 21, 2016

/Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES
a Christian Church
Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher

Good Evening!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a Christian Church based in Mesa, AZ...my name is Pastor Rory Clark. Barah Ministries teaches the Word of God from God's perspective and not from the human perspective. We want to know what God has to say to us through His Word, because we're convinced that God knows exactly what He's talking about. And our God is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

/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 truck came through my neighborhood handing out free ice cream and teaching the gospel by mail. It was a clever way to get the gospel 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. It prepared children to receive the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church, of which baptism was one.

Soon, I was baptized and confirmed. Even though I hated going to church, I

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was in the church every time the doors opened. An altar boy at 7:30 mass...a commentator at 9:00 mass...a guitarist at 10:30 mass...an altar 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 to a priest...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...didn't 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.

The hatred for church continued into high school which was 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 philosophers...the History of 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 the Catholic Church from the inside. Or so I thought. Ambitious for a teen-ager, wasn't I? Twenty-one years of Roman Catholicism later, I stopped going to church completely.

I have a question for you...

/QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Why don't you go to church?\

And 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. 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 place that teaches unconditional love, and a perfect place to practice it. It's 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.

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Welcome to a church where you can learn the value of going to church.
Let's begin our reflection with a song that encourages you to be saved.
Here's June Murphy singing BORN AGAIN.

/MUSIC AND REFLECTION

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

BORN AGAIN

June Murphy

/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 aspect 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...help us take 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.

/THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall\

Let's begin this lesson by giving you a chance to make an offering. Please welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with the offering message.

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/OFFERING VERSE

SECOND TIMOTHY 4:5

But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

/OFFERING

FLIGHT OF THE EAGLE

Dave McClure, Instrumental

/TONIGHT’S BIBLE LESSON

If You Don’t Go to Church, You Don’t Know What You’re Missing

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\

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’re in, they take you to it, hoping ANYTHING positive will rub off on you. Unfortunately many of our parents have been involved in religion. Of course religion is Satan’s counterfeit system of thought that’s designed to make you indifferent or

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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's church that turns you off. No...it's you that turned you off. At least that is the way God sees it. But mostly, maybe as a child you just had to do what your parents suggested. But what's your excuse now that you can make your own decisions? 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.

Secondly, going to church is not about SELF. The smart phone has ruined us. We can customize our experience of technology any way we want, and many of us are wondering why the people in our lives 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 here in Phoenix. 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

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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 seeing us. All of a sudden they were people to me, not just things...they 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 music break. Then we'll see what we're missing by missing church.

/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 experienced by doing this 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 get closer to God when you make a mistake? Most of the time we move away from Him when we make mistakes.

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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...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 thoughts from 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

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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.

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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. 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 falling apart 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 the Lord 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...people I can lean on when I am down. Yes they know I'm a

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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!”

Again, you turn yourself off. On another note, 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. I endure. 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 Corinthians), because you come together not for the better but for the worse.

In other words, their coming together at church was 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

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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 who are 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! 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 ensuring salvation is a response 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

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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 Scripture or the interpretation of Scripture by the Pharisees 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 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

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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 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. God has a divine solution for every human problem.

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.”

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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.

Spread these five things to your non-church going friends.

/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

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#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!

/GOD WANTS YOU!

The Most Important Decision of Your Life

MATTHEW 19:25b

(The disciples asked the Lord) "Then who can be saved?"

/ROMANS 3:10

...as it is written, "There is no creature who is righteous, not even one..."

/ROMANS 5:7-8

For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.//But God the Father demonstrates His own unconditional love toward all mankind, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died instead of us.

/EPHESIANS 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith (alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone); and that (grace and faith and salvation is) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; //it is not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

/TITUS 3:5

The Lord Jesus Christ saved us, not on the basis of deeds we have done in self-righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and by the renewing from the Holy Spirit...

/CLOSING SONG

YOU RAN AFTER ME

June Murphy

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/CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

THANKS - INTERCESSION - PETITION

/Thanks for coming!
Thanks for watching!
Thanks for listening!

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