

ROMANS
Lesson 165–February 1, 2015

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

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a worldwide Christian Church based in Mesa, AZ...my name is Pastor Rory Clark.

For the last few lessons we have been meditating on a question.

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

What is the proper use of your freedom?

As creatures, we have free will. We have the ability to choose. But if we are being honest with ourselves, and if we are looking at the body of work that defines us...if we're looking at our deeds throughout our lives...we'd have to quickly admit that we spend our will against ourselves much more than we spend it for ourselves. We would also have to readily admit, that when a chance exists to make a choice about a thing, we will, more often than not, choose the wrong the thing.

Then when we make choices against ourselves, we always ask ourselves the wrong questions. "Why?" "Why am I doing these things to myself?" "Why can't I stop doing the things I don't want to do?" "Am I a good person?" "Why can't I keep the promises I am making to myself?"

For the alcoholic, there are no delusions about the reasons why...

Alcoholics Anonymous - Step 1

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol...that our lives had become unmanageable.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Step 2

We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

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Alcoholics Anonymous - Step 3

We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.

Maybe your weakness isn't alcohol. Maybe it's money, or its sex, or its drugs, or its sugar, or its video games, or its stealing, or its lying, or its sports, or its gambling, or its movies, or its television shows...whatever your obsession of choice...whatever the thing is to which you are powerless...so go back to the first three of the twelve steps and change alcohol to your obsession of choice. Sooner or later in this life you come to know who you really are...

JER 17:9

“The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick...who can understand it (how sick it can really be)?”

...until you know who you really are, you can't be free. Until you know that you are not a good person, you can't be free.

You use your freedom to draw power from one of two sources...from the flesh...or from God. The flesh's power is corrupt and is desperately sick. God's power is perfect. God always does for us the things that we can't do for ourselves. Why does it take so long for us to learn the REAL source of power? Why? Why? Why? It's the wrong question. Welcome to a place where you can learn who you really are...where you can learn the truth about yourself...where you can decide to let God's will, the most powerful will in the universe, be your will.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

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

Give Me Your Eyes

Let's begin our worship of the Lord with a song...the opening song is...GIVE ME YOUR EYES.

OPENING PRAYER

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Let us pray...

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

Help us to know who we really are...help us to admit who we really are...help us to be comfortable with ourselves and our flaws by teaching us to see ourselves as you see us.

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

TODAY'S STUDY

Until You Know Who You Really Are, You Can't Be Free

Turn in your bibles to Romans, Chapter 6 where we continue our study of Paul's letter to the Romans, a foundational biblical work that teaches us the Christian Way of Living. The letter opens by asking you to reflect on this question...

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

What is the proper use of your freedom?

To examine freedom, we have taken a brief trip over to Paul's letter to the Galatians. Here's an overview of the letter.

GALATIANS

The Charter of Christian Liberty

Merrill C. Tinney

Christian liberty is the central theme of Paul's letter to the Galatians... freedom from the bondage of legalism, (a slavery that) is the natural consequence of attempting to earn salvation by works.

GALATIANS

The Charter of Christian Liberty

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If a man can obtain the favor of God by his voluntary fulfillment of the ceremonial law, then his salvation depends on the completeness of his obedience to the law.

GALATIANS

The Charter of Christian Liberty

Merrill C. Tinney

Any deviation from the law exposes him to punishment and jeopardizes his salvation. Each small volition of life (each decision in life), therefore, must be scrutinized carefully (while trying to earn your own salvation) to determine whether the decision is in keeping with the law of God, or whether it will transgress some expressed divine command and so bring our destiny into peril.

GALATIANS

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Such a legalistic attitude produces spiritual bondage, because the person involved becomes so engrossed with attending to the letter of the law that he overlooks the spirit of the law.

GALATIANS

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In the words of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, this person “strains out a gnat and swallows a camel.” [Matthew 23:24]

GALATIANS

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The letter to the Galatians shows that the believer is to be saved by faith in what Christ has done for him rather than by his own diligence in keeping precepts of the revealed law.

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Turn in your bibles to Galatians, Chapter 4... Paul continues his comparison between slavery and freedom, and his letter is best understood in the way the entire bible is always interpreted, in the time the bible is written. In the first century, children, even if they were rich, were similar to slaves, at least in one respect...

GAL 4:1

Now I (Paul) say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave child although the heir child is owner of everything...

GAL 4:2

...but the heir child is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

In other words, children, whether slave or free, have no freedom until they are mature enough to handle it...and the child's father determines the time of maturity. Now Paul links this analogy to the Christian experience.

GAL 4:3

So also we, while we were children (as unbelievers), were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world (we were "in Adam" ... we were slaves to Adam's sin).

Then a transition...staring with BUT...analogous to BUT NOW in Romans 3:21...

GAL 4:4

BUT when the fullness of the time came, God the Father sent forth His Son (God the Son...Deity...the Lord), born of a woman (as true humanity... Jesus Christ), born under the Law (a Jew)...

GAL 4:5

...so that the Lord Jesus Christ might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Just as a human father, in those times, determines the time when a child is mature and the way the child will receive an inheritance, so God the Father determines the way a child is to be saved...and provides the means for that "so great" salvation.

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The Lord Jesus Christ, the sinless one, is only one who fulfilled the law perfectly. He did so through the proper use of His freedom. We have a choice to keep the law or to break the law. He chose to keep the law. We choose to break the law. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ freed us from bondage to the law and demonstrated the possibilities of the proper use of freedom.

GAL 4:6

Because you are sons, God the Father has sent forth the Holy Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father! (Daddy!)”

All three member of the Trinity are involved in your salvation...God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When we realize we are sons, we shout with excitement to our Daddy! Shouting “Abba!” indicates an intimacy with a parent, and as believers in Christ we are certainly in an intimate relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

GAL 4:7

Therefore (as believers in Christ) you are no longer a slave, but (you are) a son; and if (you are) a son (and you are), then (you are) an heir through God the Father.

Paul is asking the Galatians, a critical question, “Why, when you are sons as believers in Christ, with the full privileges of a son, would you ever want to go back to being a slave under bondage?” Alas...we are weak...we have obsessions.

GAL 4:8

However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature (in their essence) are no gods (polytheism).

The end of Paul’s argument...the beginning of a plea...STOP BEING SLAVES. Take a five-minute break.

BREAK

Grace and Love

Welcome back! Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 9...

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GAL 4:9

But now that you have come to know God (a deep intimate and personal relationship as a Christian), or rather to be known by God (salvation), how is it that you turn back again to (listen to) the weak and worthless elemental things (KCOS...the world system), to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

Why are we so attracted to a weak system of life when God offers us a supernatural life? Why is the wrong question. But when you answer it, I know how you'll answer it. "I don't think I deserve a supernatural life. I'm so bad!" Well God thinks you deserve a supernatural life. That's why He gave it to you. Who are you going to listen to...to Satan...or to the Lord?

GAL 4:10

You observe (Sabbath) days and months (new moons) and seasons (festivals like Passover) and (sabbatical) years.

The Galatians, even though Gentiles, went back to the rituals of the Mosaic Law. They went back to traditions. They went back to what is comfortable. They thought these things would impress God. Our attempts to impress God do not help us in the matter of salvation or in the matter of our Christian walk...which is called sanctification....we are set apart for the privileges due children of a King.

GAL 4:11

I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

Paul is saying, "I have studied to the point of exhaustion to teach you the truth, and then you turn back to a worthless lie...legalism...works." Okay now it is no longer a simple plea...now Paul is on his knees...

GAL 4:12

I beg of you, brethren, become as I am (now...free from the law), for I also have become as you are (in the past...a slave of the law). You have done me no wrong (the first time I came to you)...

GAL 4:13

...but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time...

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GAL 4:14

...and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as (you would have received) Christ Jesus Himself.

Paul is stirring them up to get them to remember when he first came to them, when they were eager for faith alone in Christ alone for eternal life...the true gospel message.

GAL 4:15

Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me (back then).

Paul is saying, “The first time I came, you acted like I hung the moon! You would have walked through fire for me. We were friends! <New Marriages> Now I’m back, and I’m scolding you, and your love has turned cold.” Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 16...

GAL 4:16

So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?

Most of the time we don’t like to look in the mirror of the truth. The people around us seldom want to face the truth. The Galatians turned against the One True God, against the gospel message, and against the messenger. Welcome to my world! Pray for Pastors. We face this challenge every single day.

GAL 4:17

They (the Judaizers) eagerly (zealously) seek you, not commendably (not with a pure motive), but they wish to shut you out (from the truth) so that you will (zealously) seek them.

The focus of the Judaizers was not the message, but they were turning attention to the man...themselves...they were charismatic and they wanted to be worshipped by the Galatians.

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GAL 4:18

But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you.

Paul is saying that it is fun for a Pastor to be wanted...and not only face-to-face...but also when his back is turned, especially if the Pastor has pure motives (which the false teachers...the Judaizers did not).

Paul is no longer upset. He softens his tone. He desires their deliverance from the clutches of the false teachers. Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 19...

GAL 4:19

My (dear) children, with whom I am again in labor (as if I am a pregnant woman) until Christ is formed in you...

Christ is formed in them when they are mature...

GAL 4:20

...but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Paul would rather be delivering this message in person...but he had to deliver it by letter. In person, his tone might be better understood. Now Paul goes back to his argument. He reminds the Galatians that they are not slaves...they are free. He uses a hard-hitting illustration. He asks them which of the women of Abraham they are from...Hagar the slave...or Sarah the free woman. You'll remember these women from our study of Romans, Chapter 4...Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 21...

GAL 4:21

Tell me, you Galatians who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?

GAL 4:22

For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman (Hagar...and son Ishmael) and one by the free woman (Sarah...and son Isaac).

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GAL 4:23

But the son by the bondwoman (Ishmael) was born according to the flesh (the normal way), and the son by the free woman (Isaac...was born) through the promise (of God...a miracle...because Abraham was sexually dead and Sarah was barren at the time).

GAL 4:24

This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two different covenants: the covenant proceeding from Mount Sinai (the Mosaic Law) bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.

GAL 4:25

Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

GAL 4:26

But the covenant from Sarah of the new Jerusalem hovering above the earth is free; she is our mother.

All believers in Christ will live in the New Jerusalem during the Millennial Reign of Christ on the earth...and we will live in freedom in our resurrection bodies. Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 27...

GAL 4:27

For it is written, “REJOICE, BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE NUMEROUS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN OF THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND.”

GAL 4:28

And you Galatian brethren, like Isaac (from Sarah), are children of promise (the spiritual birth).

Now Paul asks, “Why are the false teachers bewitching you?” Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 29...

GAL 4:29

But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also.

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Cane and Abel...Ishmael and Isaac...Satan and Jesus Christ...the Judaizers and Paul...KCOS or WGOD...in all ages we will have a choice as to how we use our freedom... Galatians, Chapter 4, Verse 30...

GAL 4:30

But what does the Scripture say? “CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.”

GAL 4:31

So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but we are children of the free woman.

We are not to live as slaves...we are to live as free.

FREEDOM QUOTES

Give me liberty or give me death.

Patrick Henry

FREEDOM QUOTES

Freedom is not the right to do what we want, but the chance to do what we ought. Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.

Abraham Lincoln

FREEDOM QUOTES

The law will never make men free...it is men that have to make the law free.

Henry David Thoreau

FREEDOM QUOTES

Liberty is the right to choose...freedom is the result of that choice.

Anonymous

FREEDOM QUOTES

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Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor...it must be demanded by the oppressed.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Let's stop being slaves to Satan. Let's stop settling for a lesser life than we have been given. If we are going to do that, we have to learn from the Galatians. When we are given a benefit, we quickly turn away from it. Instead, let's turn to God, admit the powerlessness of our flesh, and let's ask God the Holy Spirit to use His power on our behalf.

Until you know who you really are, you can't be free. You are not a good person. Your use of freedom should tell you that. But with God, you don't have to be. It's not what He expects from you. He expects you to use His perfection to accomplish the things you want to do in this life. Trust Him for the power.

The Promises of the Lord Jesus Christ

When God makes a promise...
it's a guarantee!

2PE 2:20-21

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own private interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men carried along by God the Holy Spirit spoke directly from the exact thinking of THE God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

2TI 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2TI 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

CLOSING SONG

Come to the Well

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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 unconditional love, Your glorious Person, Your lucid thinking, Your impeccable work, and Your magnificent essence...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit, in Christ's name, Amen.

Thanks for coming...for watching...for listening!

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