

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 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.

The Lord Jesus Christ is always concerned with your thoughts...Proverbs, Chapter 23, Verses 6 and 7...

PRO 23:6

Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, nor desire his delicacies...

PRO 23:7

...for as the selfish man thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you...

A selfish man is one who lives his life under the guidance of the flesh. More often than not, this is an unbeliever...but occasionally believers in Christ are afflicted with letting their thoughts be guided by the flesh. Thoughts are things...thoughts become words...thoughts become actions...you must always be concerned with the development of your thoughts...you must always monitor your thoughts. Why? Because Satan, the enemy of God, tells us to focus on behaviors because he knows that doesn't work. He is always looking to sabotage us by influencing our thoughts. The apostle Paul encourages us to think good thoughts...Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 8...

PHI 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are right, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute, if there is any excellence (and there is) and if anything worthy of praise (and there is), let your minds dwell on these things.

The motto of Northwestern University...my alma mater..."whatsoever

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

things are true...let your mind dwell on these things.” What a fantastic sentiment! Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2...

ROM 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world (to Satan’s system of deception...stinkin’ thinkin’), but keep on being transformed by God the Holy Spirit in the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and that which is acceptable and that which is perfect.

Your thinking is something which must be cultivated...your thinking is something that must be guarded...your thinking is something which must be directed...your thinking is something that must be renewed...and we come together as believers in Christ, in bible study, to do just that...to have our thinking cultivated and guarded and directed and renewed. Welcome to a place for thought refreshment provided by the Word of God.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

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

Word of God Speak

June Murphy is away recording her fourth album...yet she is here through the miracle of technology to sing the opening song...WORD OF GOD SPEAK.

OPENING PRAYER

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 be decisive Father...and help us to know that the only good decisions in this life are the ones that agree with Your decisions about what works, which you communicate to us in Your Word...

We ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ’s

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

name...Amen.

TODAY'S STUDY

What is Your Decision: The Flesh or the Spirit?

What does it mean to decide?

DECIDE

To arrive at a conclusion that gives a victory to one side or the other.

Have you ever thought of a decision that way? Have you ever thought that when you make a decision, you are giving a victory to one side or the other? Wow! I'm one of the most decisive people I know, and I have never thought of a decision with that kind of clarity. With every decision you make, every day you give a victory to the flesh or to the Spirit. Galatians, Chapter 5, Verses 16 and 17...

GAL 5:16

But I say (to you believers in Christ), (keep on) walk(ing) by (means of) the Spirit, and you will not (be able) carry out the desire of the flesh.

GAL 5:17

For the flesh sets its desire against (God) the (Holy) Spirit, and (God) the (Holy) Spirit (sets His desire) against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

When you are listening to the Spirit, you CAN'T be listening to the flesh. I have asked you this way in the past, "Where is your soul tuned?" Is it tuned to KCOS (the cosmic system of thought radio station...Satan's broadcast)... or is it tuned to WGod (the Lord's system of thought radio station...the Lord's broadcast).

At every moment in time, with every decision, we are slaves to the thoughts of one system or the other. And for those of you who postpone decisions in the hope of not being wrong, you need to know that "no decision" is a decision as well. When you don't make a decision, you have decided to stay with the decision of inaction...that is a decision as well. You give a victory to the side of inaction. For example, a person who is an unbeliever is condemned to the Lake of Fire from birth. If an unbeliever postpones a

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

decision to believe in Christ, they have chosen to remain condemned. Now that person might say, “Wait a minute...I haven’t decided yet. I haven’t placed my bet with one side or the other.” But you have. By deciding to stay where you are, you have decided to remain condemned.

In the first passage of Romans, Chapter 6, Verses 1 to 11...we are pausing to investigate the Christian Walk.

Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verses 1 to 3 tell us...

EPH 4:1

Therefore I (Paul), the prisoner of the Lord, implore you believers in Christ to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...

EPH 4:2

...with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in unconditional love...

EPH 4:3

...being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We are being implored by Paul to live a lifestyle that is worthy of our call from God to be Christians...Paul implores us to live a lifestyle which reflects the fruit of the Spirit...and please be clear on this...we *reflect* the fruit of the Spirit, because we sure as hell can’t produce the fruit of the Spirit...Paul is begging us to live a lifestyle worthy of the child of a King. With God there is no Jew or Greek...no racial distinction...no slave or free...no social class distinction... no male or female...no gender distinction...we are the same in God’s eyes as believers in Christ and we are in a bond of unity. Often it seems we cherish anything but unity.

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we have been SANCTIFIED in the past, at the moment of salvation, with the result that we are SANCTIFIED forever as an established and irrevocable fact. Being SANCTIFIED means we have been made holy ones by God, and as a result, God requests that we choose to live a godly life and a holy life as if we are doing everything with God and for God, mainly because we are. What is a godly life? What is a lifestyle that is worthy of our calling as Christians? It is an obedient life. It is a life as a bondservant of the Lord. We listen to and execute every

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

recommendation from God in every decision. It is a lifestyle of obedience, not zeal. Many people are zealous for God. But all those who are zealous for God do not know God. I'd like to share an excerpt from the newsletter of Mike Gendron, of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries, who evangelizes to Roman Catholics...

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

The Apostle Paul's zeal for following the traditions of his religion (Judaism) led him to relentlessly persecute the church of Jesus Christ. Although as a Jew he was entrusted with the oracles of God, he was so indoctrinated with religious traditions that he tried to destroy Jesus Christ's church.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Paul wrote, "I persecuted the church of God ... being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers" in Galatians 1:13-14. As an unbeliever, Paul bore witness to having "a zeal for God but not according to knowledge." Romans 10:2

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Paul had a superior knowledge of his religion, but not a spiritual knowledge of God, which God imparts only to those who exchange their religion for a relationship with Christ. His religious pride and arrogance blinded him from the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ. When God gave him spiritual eyes to see the truth of His Word, he was miraculously transformed. No longer a merciless persecutor of the church, he was now a passionate evangelist for the church.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Tragically, many Roman Catholics are like the unbeliever Paul. They have a zeal for God but not according to knowledge. Many have a gratifying and stubborn-hearted knowledge of their religious traditions, but they do not

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

know the all-sufficient Savior as He is gloriously revealed in Scripture. They seek to become righteous before God because they do not know God's righteousness requires perfect righteousness, which they can never achieve on their own.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Like the Jews who were “ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's righteousness.” Being ignorant of God's righteousness, Romans Catholics believe righteousness is infused over time through the sacraments instead of imputed instantly by faith.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

As fallen people, Romans Catholics are doing whatever they can to cover up their guilt by participating in the rituals of the Catholic faith to gain a right standing with God.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

The Romans Catholic religious system misleads gullible people into believing they can achieve God's standard of righteousness by their sin-tainted works of righteousness. In fact, they are taught that they will never be permanently justified before God until they become righteous by their own efforts.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Roman Catholicism teaches that justification is obtained through the sacrament of baptism, lost by mortal sin, and regained through the sacrament of penance. Catholics believe they can become more righteous through participation in the sacrifice of the mass and by doing good works, which in turn merit eternal life (Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 24).

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

Since they don't have a spiritual understanding of God and His holiness, they think they can bring God down to their level and raise man to God's level. This is how Romans Catholics can refer to the leader of their apostate religion, the Pope, as "Holy Father."

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

The only hope any of us have is to come to the same understanding as Paul, and to count all of our religious activity as rubbish (skubala...human excrement) in order that we may gain Christ, and in order that we may be found, in union with Him, as not having a righteousness of our own that comes from the law; but having a righteousness which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God.

MIKE GENDRON Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries
The Danger of Following Religious Traditions

The free gift of God's perfect righteousness is our only passport into heaven. It is given as a free gift to those who reject their own "filthy rags" of righteousness and trust in Christ alone for righteousness.

Take a five-minute break.

BREAK

Change My Heart Oh God

Welcome back!

What is your decision for your Christian Walk? The Flesh or the Spirit?

Look...as Christians...if we are well taught and well informed we know we are hypocrites...that's a word that comes from the Greek word *hupokrites*... it refers to an actor or a stage player who talks from behind a mask. That describes us as Christians...we talk from behind a mask. So our hypocrisy is off the table. We ARE hypocrites. But we can make good decisions.

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

What's your decision for your Christian Walk? What are your choices in the daily decisions?

When we decide in favor of the flesh...when we give the victory to the flesh, we become pretenders. We actually become something we are not. We decide that Satan's three lifestyle offers are better than the Lord's single lifestyle offer. Satan offers us the religious lifestyle (follow the rules!), the self-righteous lifestyle (I'm better than you), and the lascivious lifestyle (sex, drugs and rock and roll). The Lord offers us the lifestyle of Christianity (a relationship with Christ).

In each daily decision, we make the choice to give the victory to one side or the other. For example, sometimes we give the victory to "the flesh."

If you are married, "the flesh" wants to destroy your marriage. You've got two people with "the flesh," and that part of you called "the flesh" is antagonistic toward your partner. In fact, it hates both you and your partner. It is talking to you every day.

You know that your spouse is coming home from work, and you are eager to see your partner. In your mind, you start to conjure up an alternate reality... a fantasy...about what it is going to be like when you get together. You're going to sit down and talk, you're going to sip a glass of wine, and you're going to cuddle up next to each other. Who knows what could happen after that! It's going to be just ducky!

Your spouse comes home and you hear the door slam. Uh oh! Decision time...the Flesh or the Spirit? Your spouse is cursing ... "Damn freeway traffic! Damn boss! Damn life! Where's dinner? What the hell are we going to do for dinner? I knew this would happen." The fantasy is gone. The flesh reacts. "What's wrong with you? Why can't you ever just..." And in spite of all the best intentions, you decide to let the flesh's thoughts dictate your actions.

In the aftermath, you ask yourself, "Why?" "Why can't I ever do what I want to do?" Well "the flesh" is your enemy. "The flesh" then offers you a pity party. "The flesh" is that voice in you that is always talking and never has anything good to say. "You need to stand up for yourself." "You don't deserve to be treated that way." "There are better people in the world that

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

would treat you differently.” “You should go looking!” An affair is right around the corner.

The voice of the flesh is always looking to let you off the hook.

“The reason you will never be good with money is because your parents were not good with money. This is not your fault. It’s genetic. If you had the exposure as a child to the right way to handle money, you would be great at it. Everything happens for a reason.”

You now have permission to be a financial misfit.

“The white man ain’t gonna let you do nothing man!”

Okay now black people have permission not to strive.

An Oscar winner, this year’s best supporting actress Patricia Arquette, said in her acceptance speech, “It’s our time to have wage equality once and for all, and equal rights for women in the United States of America.” It’s “the flesh” doing the talking. Patricia is whining about her first world problems. In the meantime, an Afghan woman who has left her country for political asylum in the United States, while fleeing from domestic abuse, forced prostitution and being stabbed repeatedly with a screwdriver by an abusive husband...acts that would have landed *her* in jail while her abuser husband went free...is wondering why Patricia doth protest so much.

The Flesh or the Spirit? When we, as Christians, listen to the flesh instead of the Spirit, we distort Christianity. We turn it into a series of rules. We reduce it to slavery. We reject freedom. Satan and the kingdom of darkness seek to influence our decisions. They want us to listen to “the flesh” which has an objective of completely ruining our lives, our relationships, our person, and our serenity. We willingly comply.

The flesh encourages us to completely ignore God’s urgings, and instead bids that we go inside of ourselves to look for the answers to this life. The flesh encourages us to live our lives in the “realities” we create in our minds. The flesh encourages us to wallow in the mistakes of the past. The flesh encourages us to look in the rear view mirror for answers to today’s life problems.

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

There's a great book by Marshall Goldsmith... "What Got You Here Won't Get You There." Can I get an AMEN? The answers to your life are not behind you. Philippians, Chapter 3, Verses 13 and 14...

PHI 3:13

Brethren (fellow believers in Christ), I do not regard myself as having laid hold of perfection yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead...

PHI 3:14

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God the Father in union with Christ Jesus.

Paul is a person who had every reason to reflect obsessively on his murderous past. Yet nowhere in the New Testament epistles do you see him doing it. How about you? How often are you looking backward for answers when, "What Got You Here Won't Get You There?"

One of the things that is most encouraging to living a life of freedom as a Christian is extracting the truth from this instruction from the Lord Jesus Christ. When we listen to the flesh...

JOH 8:44

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Jesus was talking to unbelievers here...not to believers...but as believers in Christ we can extract the lesson anyway...and here's the lesson...that voice you hear inside of yourself is "the flesh." Do you EVER remember the voice inside of you saying anything positive to you? I don't. Well you can be encouraged by John, Chapter 8, Verse 44. If you now know that everything that comes from Satan is a lie, because in his very identity he is a liar, because you have faith in what God says, then you know that anything the flesh is saying to you is a lie. Let me repeat that.

ATTENTION PLEASE!

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

Anything “the flesh” is saying to you is a lie

“You’re not good enough.” Lie. “God is disappointed with you.” Lie.
“You’re not worthy.” Lie. “You’re not happy.” Lie. “Nothing is ever going to work out for you.” Lie. “God is busy...don’t bother praying.” Lie.
“You’re not going to heaven...there is no heaven.” Lie. “If you keep on sinning, you can’t possibly think you’re a real believer in Christ, can you? You probably had a head belief and not a heart belief.” Lie. “You can earn your own salvation.” Lie. “You have to be good to get to heaven.” Lie.
“The bible is just a book written by a bunch of men giving their opinions.” Lie. “The bible was written over two thousand years ago. Things have changed since then. It’s no longer relevant. It needs an update.” Lie.

What is your decision...the Flesh or the Spirit...the lies or the truth? This is one decision that is no decision. Let every decision in your life be a Spirit led decision. If you’re going to let every decision in your life be a Spirit led decision, you have to know what God recommends for every decision. He tells you in His Word. Welcome to a place where you can learn your destiny as the child of a King.

**The Promises of the Lord Jesus Christ
are Guarantees!**

1PE 5:8-9

Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.//But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren (other believers) who are in the world.

1PE 5:10

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

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.

ROMANS
Lesson 175–March 8, 2015

CLOSING SONG

Destiny

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!
Thanks for watching!
Thanks for listening!

www.barahministries.com