

**THE ANGELIC CONFLICT**  
**Lesson 409 – January 6, 2013**

**/WELCOME TO BARAH MINISTRIES**

**Good Morning!**

**Let's Make a Mental Shift\**

In preparation for the study of the Word of God, your first shift is a mental shift. The Word of God diverts our attention from of ourselves and to the central figure in human history...CHRIST. Galatians Chapter 2, Verse 20 says...

/GAL 2:20

*"I (as a believer in Christ) have been crucified with (the Lord Jesus) Christ (in the past and I stand crucified with Him forever); and (thus) it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in(dwelling) me; and the (Zoe) life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who (once and for all time) loved me (unconditionally) and (who once and for all time) gave Himself up (as a sin substitute) for me."*\

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Shepherd. We learn His mind during bible study and...it solves our problems...it bandages our hurts...it cures our emotional aches and pains. Welcome to the cure for what ails you, the enduring therapy, the Word of God.

**/INVITATION TO RESTORATION**

**Make a Spiritual Shift\**

The second shift, before you study the Word of God, is a spiritual shift. We take a few moments to remind ourselves of the three things God wants us to do during biblical study...we are guided by our God to...

/EPH 4:22-24

*...lay aside the old self (conversation), (an old self) which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit(ful desires),//and...be renewed (by God) in the spirit of your mind,//and (then) put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness (+R) and (in the) holiness of the truth.\*

So it's time to lay aside the world's solutions to your problems...to realize that God solved all your problems in eternity past...and to find out how He did it, so you can go forth today, renewed in energy, to live the new self life.

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**/SILENT REFLECTION**

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ\

Take a few moments, in silence, to fix the eyes of your soul on the Lord Jesus Christ, as He gets you ready for the study of the Word of God...

**/OPENING SONG**

Worthy\

**/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 reflect on your ministry and our service of it, and help us to open the eyes of our souls to the opportunities you have placed before us...

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

**/WELCOME TO BARAH MINISTRIES**

Pastor Rory Clark\

My name is Pastor Rory Clark. You're listening to lesson four hundred and nine of the Angelic Conflict series. Welcome to a ministry designed for serious students of the Word of God.

**/TODAY'S STUDY**

**The CREATOR'S Will is that We Minister with this Ministry\**

In Ephesians, Chapter 3, the apostle Paul says in prayer...

/EPH 3:14

*For this reason I bow my knees before (God) the Father...\*

And among the reasons Paul prays for us believers is so that we...

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/EPH 3:19c

*...may be filled up (in all our deficiencies) to all the fullness of God (through an overflow of divine blessings)...\*

It seems like only yesterday when I was sitting on a stage in the Doubletree Hotel in Tucson, Arizona, becoming ordained as a Pastor. Alas, it wasn't yesterday. It was five years ago, on January 12, 2008, and this week you'll be listening to the final lessons of my fifth full year in the pulpit.

It was at this time that I embarked on the same mission as Paul, to allow my diligent study of the Word of God and my teaching, courtesy of the supernatural ability of God the Holy Spirit, to fill you up to all the fullness of God. And I pray that every day we have studied together has been an overflow of blessing for you, the resident and non-resident members of Barah Ministries. Your faithfulness to God and His Word has certainly filled me up and has made my life meaningful through the ups and downs of the Christian life.

During the month of December, I reflected quite a bit on the last five years...I reflected on my life as it stands at this moment, on this spiritual journey...but I wondered much more what the next five years will bring for Barah Ministries and for you and for me. I'd like to share some of my reflections.

The year 2013 will be a year of personal milestones...it is not only the end of my fifth year as an ordained Pastor...it also marks my twenty-fifth year of biblical study...and my fiftieth year as a Christian. Any one of those things should be enough to send you ladies in the resident congregation scurrying to your cookbooks to invite me for a celebration dinner to make me fatter...enough to send the compassionate hearts of the congregation to the Hallmark shop to pay way too much for "Pastor" cards...enough to have you guys in the congregation grunt and fart as you ask someone to pass you a beer in my honor. Yet years don't mean much in the Christian Way of Life. Sure I've been an ordained Pastor for five years. But is it really five years? Or was it one year five times?

When I think of the first five years of my Pastoring, some of it has been a regurgitation of the "company line" of doctrines from the Pastors I learned from. I learned the Word of God from two very wonderful men, two

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awesome Pastors, Colonel Robert Thieme, Jr. of Berachah Church in Houston, Texas; and from Pastor Robert McLaughlin of Grace Bible Church in Somerset, Massachusetts. Those of you who are familiar with these men know that one of them has been deified beyond belief, and one of them has been vilified beyond belief. For the benefit of those who are new to Barah Ministries, Pastor Thieme is “deity” in the eyes of many who learned from him...Pastor McLaughlin is Satan reincarnated according to those who left his ministry as he dealt with a host of personal challenges.

My loyalties lie with the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the accurate teaching of the inerrant Canon of Scripture, the Word of God. Yet I adore both of these men.

Pastor Thieme is not deity, and there is no one who knew that more than he. But if you want to have your head handed to you as a Pastor, all you have to do is to suggest that something Pastor Thieme taught is inaccurate. Like all Pastors, there are a lot of things Pastor Thieme taught that were inaccurate. Pastors make mistakes in the journey of teaching...we are human. There are quite a few Pastors who were ordained by Pastor Thieme Jr., or by one of his students, who know that what I just said is true. Many of them skirt the issue of admitting that out loud, and prefer instead not to handle this issue head on, especially with the group everyone laughingly calls the Thieme-ites in hushed circles. Pastor Thieme Jr. would have hated Thieme-ites.

What’s important, I think, is that Pastor Thieme Jr. got the major things of Christianity right...like salvation by grace, through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ alone...like positional sanctification...like many of the details of the life after salvation...like experiential sanctification. Pastor Thieme Jr. certainly had it right that the study of the Word of God, as a post salvation experience, is paramount to spiritual growth. Pastor Thieme was phenomenal at hanging doctrines in our souls like coat hangers. The Ten Problem Solving Devices...rebound...the filling of the Spirit...the faith rest drill...grace orientation...doctrinal orientation...a personal sense of destiny...personal love for God...impersonal love for all mankind...sharing the happiness of God...occupation with the person of Christ...the two power options...the three spiritual skills...Operation Z...the grace apparatus for perception...post salvation epistemological rehabilitation...the list goes on. When I have conversations with members of my own congregation who studied with Pastor Thieme Jr., two things astound me. First, that all of the

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vocabulary of Pastor Thieme Jr.'s ministry is still hanging in their souls...unchallenged. Yet I am even more surprised that anyone who studied with Pastor Thieme Jr. would ever study with me.

Here are some of the comments about my teaching that I have heard in my first five years as a Pastor directly from people who studied with Pastor Thieme, Jr. ...

You teach some nice “doctrinal concepts...”

“You know, ten years ago, I couldn’t have listened to you...you’re just not ‘buttoned up.’”

“Your casual attitude toward sin is amazing to me.”

In short, I get a nice pat on the head, with a “you’ll never be as good as Pastor Thieme Jr.” look. Inevitably, then the conversation turns to the time when Pastor Thieme Jr. had his lessons on reel-to-reel tapes. People who studied with Pastor Thieme Jr. still refer to themselves as “tapers,” even though tapes aren’t used anymore. There are still thousands of people studying with Pastor Thieme Jr. even though he has gone home to be with the Lord. God has provided these people with a living Pastor, yet they are not studying with their new Pastor. These people have locked their spiritual gifts in a closet and they’ll die with their spiritual gifts there, right next to their reel-to-reel tapes and their copious notes from their Pastor Thieme Jr. studies.

My experience is that many of these people are legalists, who feel more guilty about their lives as Christians than they felt when they were Roman Catholics. They are not free. They are slaves. Many of them can’t easily call to mind the doctrines they propose to know. A short quiz reveals their lack. They are hopelessly trapped in the “rebound syndrome,” and they are stifled by the fruitless pursuit of advancing themselves to spiritual maturity though spiritual self-esteem and spiritual autonomy. They are guilt ridden, and many of them loathe themselves because they know they are merely human beings who could never live up to the standards of maturity proposed by Pastor Thieme Jr.’s teaching. They comfort themselves with an intellectual knowledge of God. They think knowledge of God is enough.

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As for me, I'd love to believe that the key to the Christian Way of Life and the open door to the filling of the Spirit is rebound. I just can't find the Scripture that proves it. I'd love to understand how it is that the Lord's Supper is the only ritual that survived into the Church Age, yet I have been taught, and in fact *I* have taught, that ritualistic confession of sins two hundred and fifty times a day is what restores the filling of the Spirit. I just can't find the Scripture that backs it up. I'd love to believe that there are ten problem-solving devices, but I see hundreds of ways to solve problems in the Christian Way of Life...in fact, the most frequently mentioned biblical problem solving device is faith. I'd love to believe that impersonal love is as powerful as unconditional love, but it isn't. In fact, Pastor Thieme Jr. admitted in his last book that he totally underestimated God's love for us. I refuse to believe that a lack of emotion is somehow spiritual, and that a prerequisite for being spiritual in life is containing your emotions. Anyone who can study the Word of God and not be emotional about it is either comatose or on prescription medication. That emotion, however, need not be a distraction as the Pentecostals make it.

As for Pastor McLaughlin, those of us who know him have been assured by his detractors that he is the reason for their stunted spiritual growth. But I see a huge number of people who studied with Pastor McLaughlin, who then abandoned him for other Pastors, still stuck obsessing about the fifth cycle of discipline, the date of the Rapture, the Right Man-Right Woman fairy tale, engaged in an endless search to find their "Right Pastor," flitting between multiple ministries, serving none of these ministries with their spiritual gifts or spiritual contributions, and treating other Christians like "doggie-do-do." They evangelize to no one. They make a difference in the lives of no one. Yet they think they are "doctrinal" Christians because they collude with others for an agreement as to how spiritual they all are. They bang unbelievers over the head with doctrines. But where's the fruit? I don't see it. But then, I don't have to. The Word of God does the evaluation.

One day soon, Pastor McLaughlin is going to remember how little the detractors matter and how much the Word of God is alive and powerful, especially in his life and in his soul. He is one helluva teacher when he isn't entangled in the distractions of the people in his life. Pastor McLaughlin's humanness is what freed me from the legalism of a spiritual meritocracy added to the truth of the Word of God.

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Both of these men equipped my spiritual life well. I am both grateful for them and lucky to have studied with them. Their teaching still edifies me.

Yet I don't think my job as a unique Pastor in this unique age, the Church Age, is to regurgitate the "company line" of doctrines. I think my God and Father is my provider; I think God the Holy Spirit is my mentor and teacher; and I think the Word of God, the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ is my provision. My job as a Pastor is to exegete the nearly 8000 verses of the New Testament, to help you understand them in the time they were written, to categorize them, to compare scripture with scripture, and to get those exegeted verses into your human spirit through the filling of the Spirit...for your edification...for building you up for the work of service...the use of your irrevocable spiritual gift. I am not doing my job if I am simply regurgitating the "company line" of doctrines. My job is to help you remove some of those false doctrinal coat hangers and oppressive vocabulary from your human spirit, as it may be stunting your spiritual growth. I hope you're ready for the demolition process. I certainly am ready to tackle it. You have that to look forward to in the next five years. This is a formal goodbye and thanks to my Pastors...and a formal hello to the SOURCE of all truth. All Pastors, to grow up spiritually, must seek the unique road that God planned for each of us to walk...to find our unique voice in Christianity that our God has given to us without the mental interferences of the past.

In summary, many of us come from religious backgrounds. Because of that, when we became Christians, we bring our religiosity into the Christian Way of Life. We are a lot like Paul. Do you think Paul shifted immediately into mature Christian mode on the Damascus Road? Hardly. He spent years trying to turn Christianity into a religion, only to keep bumping into the same wall...his lack of self-sufficiency. At a point, he had to throw his hands in the air and surrender to the fact that he could not succeed in what he was trying to do. Last year was the end of self-sufficiency for me as well. I am not self-sufficient. I am only worthy because of what God has done for me. All of us must come consciously to this revelation. Here is Paul's realization in Romans, Chapter 7, Verse 24...

/ROM 7:24

*Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?\*



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The apostles came to realize their lack of self-sufficiency. They were clueless after three years under the personal teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, after His ascension, under the pressure of Satan's world system, they began to grow.

/BREAK

*As the Deer*

*When I Think About Home\*

Welcome back!

As congregation members, I think you have a right to ask your Pastor this question in every biblical discussion...and I hope you will hold me to this standard of teaching as we go forward...in every biblical lesson...

/“What does the bible have to say about the subject matter under consideration?”\

I've been trying to get several critical biblical things across to you in the first five years of Barah Ministries' existence...whether you are an unbeliever or a believer...and I hope these messages are coming across to you loud and clear...

/POINT 1

Get to know the Triune Godhead

*And we pray, God the Father, 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.\*

I want those of you who have a real heart for God to know God through the teaching from this pulpit.

/POINT 2

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ

ACT 16:31



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*“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and (everyone in) your household (who also believes).”\*

If you're an unbeliever, you're a five word conversation away from salvation.

**/POINT 3**

Be occupied in your soul on the Person and Work of Christ

HEB 12:2

*...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.\*

Compare every one of your thoughts to the thoughts of Christ on the same issue...it should give you a divine perspective.

**/POINT 4**

Study God's Word every day

2TI 2:15

*Study to show yourself approved unto God as a workman who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

2CO 11:3

*But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.\*

The Word of God renovates your thinking.

**/POINT 5**

Enter the freedom of Christianity...exit the slavery of religion.

GAL 5:1

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

Religion is designed to make you indifferent or antagonistic to God.

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**/POINT 6**

Bring others to the freedom of biblical Christianity

2CO 5:20

*Therefore, we (believers in Christ) are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.\*

If you really value what this ministry has to offer in this world, you will state your confidence by bringing people to Christ and His Word.

**/POINT 7**

Stop listening to and obsessing with the Old Self

GAL 2:20

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." \*

Let what is dead be dead. The Old Self is dead.

**/POINT 8**

KNOW the Christian Way of Life...DO the Christian Way of Living

JAM 1:22

*But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.\*

There is a big difference between knowing and doing. When knowing becomes doing, your life produces the fruit of the Spirit.

**/POINT 9**

Know the strategy of the Enemy of God and Resist Him

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...*

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EPH 4:27

*...and do not give the devil an opportunity (a room in your soul).*

Nothing the devil has to offer is for your benefit.

/POINT 10

Live the New Self Life...the Zoe Life

EPH 4:22-24

*...that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, // and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, // and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. \*

Let what is dead be dead. The Old Self is dead. Let what is alive be alive...bring your New Self to life. More than anything, that's what we have to look forward to in the next five years of Barah Ministries.

You'll get to see what God's property looks like.