

THE CREATOR-CREATURE CONFLICT
Lesson 438– March 17, 2013

/WELCOME TO BARAH MINISTRIES

Good Morning!

**Let's Make a Mental Shift **

Good morning! Colossians, Chapter 1, Verses 19 and 20 say...

/COL 1:19-20

For it was (God) the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness (of Deity) to dwell in Him (the Lord Jesus Christ),//and through Him (the Lord) to reconcile all things to Himself (the Father), having made peace through the blood of His (the Lord's) Cross; through Him (the Lord), I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

We have peace with God because of the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. It is on His Person and His work alone that we have hope, totally apart from anything we could ever do to add or subtract from the Lord's finished work at the Cross. God doesn't need our help to accomplish His purpose, yet He is happy to do all that He does for our benefit.

<WHERE IS YOUR SOUL TUNED?>

God the Holy Spirit is looking forward to filling up your deficiency of thought with this lesson, RENEWING you by leading you into the truths of the Word of God, enabling you with power so that you can know your Savior, and by unveiling the Plan of God the Father for your life. Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2 says...

ROM 12:2

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

As we gather to study the Word of God, we shift our minds to this RENEWING. We ask, in self-evaluation, "What thought pattern am I allowing to influence my life?" We wait in eager anticipation as God changes us into creatures who are engaging the Christian Way of Living.

Now is the time to let your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through the power

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of God the Holy Spirit, prepare you “in humility (to) receive the Word implanted, which is able to save your souls.”

/MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ

Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

Worthy\

As God prepares you for this RENEWING, let's hear June Murphy worship our Lord in song. The opening song is...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 know you through the Word of God and place into our souls the discernment that is required to study the truth so that we know with absolute certainty that the truths we hold in our souls are the truths you, our God, have placed there, and not the truths of man...

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

/WELCOME TO BARAH MINISTRIES

Rory Clark

Pastor-Teacher\

Welcome to Barah Ministries. My name is Rory Clark. My spiritual gift is Pastor-Teacher, a gift given to me by God for your benefit. Welcome to a ministry designed for people who want to develop a deep, intimate and personal relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

/TODAY'S STUDY

Don't Follow a Blind Guide

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Turn in your bibles to Matthew, Chapter 23...

<Read Matthew Chapter 23, Verses 1 to 12...>

In Matthew, Chapter 22, the Lord was severely tested (harassed) by the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees...in Chapter 23 of Matthew, it's the Lord's turn to have some fun...look at Matthew, Chapter 23, Verses 1 to 3...

/MAT 23:1-2

Then (the Lord) Jesus (Christ) spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, // saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses..."\

/MAT 23:3

"...therefore all that they tell you, do and observe (honor their authority), but do not do (this) according to their deeds (their practices of hypocrisy); for they say things and do not do them."\

The Lord Jesus Christ is calling the scribes and the Pharisees hypocrites.

/MAT 23:4

"They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger."\

The scribes and the Pharisees were laying on people the burden of legalism. Rather than teaching the reality of the rituals of the Mosaic Law, and how they pointed ahead to the Cross, they simply taught the ritual for ritual's sake. Meaningless.

/MAT 23:5

"But they (the scribes and the Pharisees) do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries (small leather pouches containing Old Testament Scripture) and (they) lengthen the tassels of their garments (so they will be more noticed)."\

Theoretically the more ornate the scribes and the Pharisees were, the more "spiritual" they were...they simply wanted to be seen as spiritual.

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/MAT 23:6-7

“They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, //and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi (a scholar) by men.”

The Lord Jesus Christ makes it clear that He does not want His followers to follow the same practice. So what should our attitudes be as Christians?

/MAT 23:8

“But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher (didaskalos), and you are all brothers (the brethren...the body of Christ...the Royal Family of God).”

/MAT 23:9

“Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He (God the Father) who is in heaven.”

/MAT 23:10

“Do not be called leaders (masters); for One is your Leader (Master), that is, Christ.”

/MAT 23:11

“But the greatest among you shall be your servant.”

/MAT 23:12

“Whoever exalts himself (like the scribes and the Pharisees) shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself (like Christ...as a servant) shall be exalted.”

I can honestly say to you that I could care less if I get one single crown in heaven. We all know there are rewards for believers in Christ in heaven... Paul highlights one of these crowns in his letter to Timothy, as Paul prepares for his eminent physical death...look at Second Timothy, Chapter 4, Verses 6 to 8...

/2TI 4:6

I (Paul) am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

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/2TI 4:7

*I (Paul) have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith... *

/2TI 4:8

*...in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing. *

I can honestly say to you that I could care less if I get one single crown in heaven. You may laugh, because I have joked several times about how “pimped out” I plan for my resurrection body to be in heaven. But in all seriousness, I could care less about the crowns...as the French say, “Que sera sera” ... what will be will be. I will do the work the Lord has appointed me to do, and I’ll let Him be the righteous judge that He is.

The Lord has given me the gift of Pastor-Teacher. You call me Pastor, and thank you for that, but I assure you it is quite unnecessary. Just call me Rory. I actually like my name. You now what my spiritual gift is...in some cases I know yours...but you won’t ever hear me say, “Good Morning Exhorter Caleb...hello future Pastor-Teacher Elliott...greetings Administrator Goodall.” By the way, I am using this as an example. It is not for me to know the gifts of these men, or you, but for the Lord to reveal your spiritual gift to you in due time. I may see what I think is a gift, I may say it out loud, but God will let you know your spiritual gift when the time is right. So I see no need for you to address me as Pastor Rory. We have one Teacher...we have One Father, we have One Master, and I know one thing for absolute certain...I am not any of those. We are equal members of the body of Christ. I am here to serve you. I appreciate it that you let me serve. I serve you for Christ, and I serve you for you, and I serve you because I WANT TO serve you...I don’t have to do it...and I don’t expect anything in return. If that is not obvious to you by this time, let me make it obvious to you by saying it out loud. I was talking to some of you before my trip, and I informed you about this passage...and a common reaction was, “I call you Pastor to respect you. There’s a line between you and us and I don’t want to cross the line.” This passage from scripture says there is no line...but if there is one, we are on the same side of it.

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Why in the world would I ever want there to be a line between me and you? Is there a line between Christ and those of us in union with Him? May it never be! Yes...there is an authority relationship...and I'm convinced that each of you know how to honor authority in your souls...but it is just as important that you know how much I honor and value you...and if there is a line, I don't see it. I have done my best to create open access for you without burdening myself so much with the social that I don't have time to study. But if you can't have access to your Pastor, what exactly am I here for? How can I serve you if I don't know what you need? Truth is...I can't. I expect us to get closer over time, not more distant. Some of you, when you are going through major things in your life, don't think to call me first. I want to pray for you. Prayer works. I care about you. But it has to be a two way street. If you have a kid, and the kid breaks his leg, he doesn't keep it from you, does he? Why would you keep your important things from me? Yet many of you have the, "I don't want to bother Pastor" mentality. Where did you get that? You didn't get it from me, I know that! That's a flat out wrong way to look at a relationship. So I wanted to open this lesson with those thoughts.

When you select a Pastor to study with, I suggest you follow our Lord Jesus Christ's suggestion in Mathew, Chapter 23 in numerous verses...take your pick...

/MAT 23:13

"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites..."

If I counted right, the Lord Jesus Christ says this six times in Chapter 23...

/MAT 23:16

"Woe to you, blind guides..."

/MAT 23:17

"You fools and blind men!"

/MAT 23:19

"You blind men..."

/MAT 23:24

"You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"

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/MAT 23:28

“So you, too, outwardly appear (to be) righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (rebellion).”

Let’s be clear...the Lord was dealing with religious unbelievers in the scribes and the Pharisees. We know this. But is it any less true that believers in Christ who are teaching the Word of God can be just as blind as scribes and Pharisees? Saved? To be sure. Going to heaven? Absolutely. Teaching things that lead people to a spiritual life that is over focused on sin, while simultaneously ignoring the weightier provisions of the spiritual life, like God’s unconditional love? No question.

If it is true, then, that believers in the pulpit can be blind and hypocritical... isn’t it important for you to make an assessment of why you’re following your teacher, an assessment that goes beyond simple human loyalty?

I think if you were asking the Lord whom you should select as a human Pastor-Teacher, He would certainly tell you to not select an unbeliever as a teacher...more than that, I think he’d make it absolutely clear to you that you should not follow a blind guide.

Take a five-minute break, and we’ll discuss this more.

/BREAK

Friend of Mine

When I Think About Home

Welcome back!

Robert Frost highlights the challenge we have been dealing with this year at Barah Ministries...in his poem, “The Road Not Taken...”

/The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood

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And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth...\

/The Road Not Taken
by Robert Frost

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim
Because it was grassy and wanted wear,
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same...\

/The Road Not Taken
by Robert Frost

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I marked the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way
I doubted if I should ever come back.\

/The Road Not Taken
by Robert Frost

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I,
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.\

We get to choose legalism or Christianity. We get to choose the doctrines of men or the Word of God. The doctrine of rebound is a doctrine of men, and not of God. Two bible verses highlight the same sentiment as the Frost poem...look at Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 13 and 14...

/MAT 7:13

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.”

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/MAT 7:14

“For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to (the Zoe) life, and there are few who find it.”

Whether an unbeliever or a believer you can be derailed from the Zoe life...for the unbeliever it's a salvation matter for the believer it's a matter of growth...the person you select as your Pastor-Teacher is the one leading you through the gate.

Don't follow a blind guide.

When I reflect on fifty years of Christianity, if I had a mind to, I could be pretty ticked off. I followed a lot of blind guides. Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...

<ROAD SLIDE #1 Unbeliever or Believer?>

I had a choice and I made the right choice. I chose a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ over a relationship with the world. I believed the evangelist who lead me to the bible, and to a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I am now a believer, I am going to heaven. I am eternally secure. Yet at the time of decision, I had no idea what I had done...I was eight years old. Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...

<ROAD SLIDE #2 Religion or Christianity?>

I ended up in Catholic School for eight grade, and I came to my next fork in the road. I want to get to know God, and what was in front of me was a Roman Catholic education. I didn't know the difference between religion and Christianity...I didn't know they were enemies, so I took religion. I am a curious sort, and as I went through Catechism of the Catholic Church Classes (CCC), I was the most spanked, slapped, pinched student in the class for asking valid and penetrating questions. Eventually I learned to keep my questions to myself. I had taken a wrong road into religion that would span the next twenty one-years of my life. Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...

<ROAD SLIDE #3 Legalism or Christianity?>

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The next fork in the road offered the way out of Roman Catholicism, but lead me into legalistic Christianity. I know that now. I was all too glad to take that fork, even though it was the wrong fork to take. Bible doctrine was clear, and it seemed biblical, and I valued clarity over accuracy. Many of my questions about God were answered, I liked and respected my teachers, still do, and I felt like I was advancing. Yet there was a similar dynamic in play. One teacher was not accessible. With another teacher, when my questions became too penetrating they were squashed. Now that is an overstatement of the truth, but a feeling nonetheless.

Look...I don't have anyone to blame for this fifty-year journey but myself...the journey from unbeliever to Christian...the journey into religion...the journey into legalism...and now the freedom of biblical Christianity. I don't regret the journey. It's my fault. I am not placing the blame solely on my teachers, although all of them have culpability in the matter of my spiritual life. James, Chapter 3, Verse 1 says...

/JAM 3:1

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

There were numerous exits along the broad way that were beckoning me to come to the narrow way, and for whatever the reason, I ignored the signs. And that is what I want to get across to you. It matters whom you choose as a teacher. Our Lord would tell us...

/Don't Follow a Blind Guide\

I followed blind guides. Worse than that, I followed blind guides blindly. By telling you this, I am indicting myself. I, too, have been a blind guide. As a Pastor –Teacher, for the first five years of this ministry, I taught mindlessly the company line of doctrines from my teachers. For this, I apologize to you. That day is over. I will not go back to legalism. God has answered a prayer that I have been praying from the beginning of this ministry...

/CLOSING PRAYER

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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.\

We will not retreat to legalism, no matter what the pressure. Turn to Luke, Chapter 6, Verse 39...

/LUK 6:39-40

And He (the Lord Jesus Christ) also spoke a parable to them: "A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit?//A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher."\

Don't follow a blind guide. A blind guide will lead you astray. Fortunately, no one can hide his attitude toward God, nor His attitude toward God's word, nor His attitude toward righteousness, because it is reflected by his life and it comes out of his mouth. Luke, Chapter 6, Verse 43...

/LUK 6:43-44

"For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, (is there) a bad tree which produces good fruit.//For each tree is known by its own fruit."\

We become like the ones we emulate...let us emulate and admire Christ... and not men... Luke, Chapter 6, Verse 45...

/LUK 6:45

"The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart."\

Listen carefully to your teachers. Their mouths give them away. Let this be a ministry that produces good fruit. Let this be a Pastor-Teacher who provides the nourishment of the Word of God to the fruit.

We have one Teacher...we have One Father...we have One Master, and I am not any of those. Let us emulate our teacher, our Father, our Master...and not men. Colossians, Chapter 2, Verse 8 says...

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/COL 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

I pray that my heart reeks of truth so that my mouth speaks of truth, so that by it you will be served and edified...and may I never deceive you again. That is my prayer to God on behalf of you, that He teaches me His true and unadulterated Word so I can pass it on to you, and that He help you to spot any counterfeits to His Word, no matter what the source, even me. May truth be your destiny.

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/CLOSING SONG

Destiny\

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.

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

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