

BARAH MINISTRIES
God Doesn't Need the Best to be the Best – August 25, 2013

**/ Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES
a Christian Church
Good Morning!
Let's Make a Mental Shift**

Good morning!

Galatians, Chapter 2, Verse 20 says...

/GAL 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and 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 loved me (unconditionally) and (who) gave Himself up (as a substitute) for me."

This is why we come to church. So that in the tough times, we can remember that it's Christ who lives through us, and by His unconditional love we can handle any circumstance we find ourselves in. So, in preparation for the study of the Word of God, it's time for self-evaluation. You can ask yourself, "What thought pattern am I allowing to influence my life?"

<WHERE IS YOUR SOUL TUNED? no verse... let the verse pop in on the next click>

Bible study is a time for us to focus on our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This is a time for us to let the Word of God flood our souls with His thoughts. Thus, allowing us to operate with His unconditional love. We can choose where we want to focus our attention, either on the things of this world or on the kingdom of heaven. Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2 says...

/ROM 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

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

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Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

Hanging by a Moment\

As God prepares you for the RENEWING of your mind, let's hear Lifehouse worship our Lord in song, while you concentrate on your Lord and Savior. The opening song is... Hanging by a Moment.

/OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...\

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

Please help us learn that You don't need us to be perfect for You to use us. All You need is a willing participant.

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

/WELCOME TO BARAH MINISTRIES

Caleb Alburn
Deacon\

Welcome to Barah Ministries. My name is Deacon Caleb Alburn. 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

God Doesn't Need the Best to be the Best

This is what God has been pressing on my heart as of late, so this is what we get to learn about today.

God's going to take us for a tour of the Bible. And, we're going to get to look at some of the "All Stars" of this book and learn a little about them.

God wants us to learn that perfection in this life is far less valuable than a willing heart. And, to get this point across, we're going to start in Genesis and work our way to the New Testament.

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So, we'll start with someone we've heard a lot of good things about. We're going to take a look at Abraham. We're going to see that he was indeed human. He wasn't even close to perfect by any measure.

What made Abraham the name he is today was his willingness to continue to get back on the donkey and serve God.

Now, let's go ahead and start looking deeper into Abraham's life. Let's turn to Genesis 20:12...

This is Abraham talking...

/GEN 20:12

"Besides, she is actually my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife;"\

So, in other words... Abram married his half sister and committed incest.

Another thing to note is that Abraham is saying this, because he was caught. He told Abimelech that Sarah was just his sister, so she was fair game.

/GEN 20:2

Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." So Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.\

Because he was scared for his life he made the decision to let his wife be with another man. Given the circumstance, sure it does make sense.

But, this trick didn't work the first time for them, so you think he would have learned his lesson.

Let's go backwards a little bit and turn to Genesis, Chapter 12, Verses 11 through 13. Here, we'll see how he first tried this with Pharaoh.

/GEN 12:11

It came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman; \

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/GEN 12:12

and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live.\

/GEN 12:13

"Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you."

Let's take another famous Abram story. Abram and Sarai were getting a little impatient with God in the matter of having children. So, Sarai came up with the brilliant idea of having Abram sleep with her maid, Hagar.

And, of course Abram agreed. After all, "Happy wife, happy life."

Let's see how this played out in Genesis Chapter 16, Verse 2...

/GEN 16:2

So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Please go in to my maid; perhaps I will obtain children through her." And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai.\

No hesitation. His wife offered him another woman, and he went for it. Now, let's go ahead and take the heat off of Abraham a little. Let's focus our attention on some other All Stars.

How about the trickster, Jacob, whom all of Israel is named after. He stole his brother's blessing and all that goes with it.

If you want to get the full vivid story. On your own time feel free to read Genesis, Chapter 27.

/Read Genesis, Chapter 27\

Now, let's fast-forward to Moses. Of course, we know that Moses is a pretty big deal, but that doesn't mean that he didn't have flaws. Moses was a murderer.

We read about this story in Exodus, Chapter 2, Verses 11 and 12

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/EXO 2:11

Now it came about in those days, when Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren.\

/EXO 2:12

So he looked this way and that, and when he saw there was no one around, he struck down the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.\

This isn't a story of self-defense. This isn't a story of heroism. This is premeditated murder. Moses made sure that there were no witnesses, before he killed this Egyptian.

You see Moses had a problem with anger and didn't quite like it when things didn't go his way.

He argued and argued with God when it came to him having to face Pharaoh. He ended up arguing so much so that God finally had Aaron help him when it came to public speaking.

You can read about this in Exodus, Chapter 4.

Or how about when the Israelites were crying about a lack of water?

So, Moses and Aaron went away from them to pray to God. Let's see what God had to say, and what Moses ended up doing.

Turn to Numbers, Chapter 20, Verses 8 through 12

/NUM 20:8

"Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink."\<

Perfect, that's what God said. He gave clear instructions to Moses, but Moses was getting a little angry again, so he decided to do things slightly different.

/NUM 20:9

So Moses took the rod from before the Lord, just as He had commanded him;\

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/NUM 20:10

And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?"\

/NUM 20:11

Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank.\

/NUM 20:12

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

You see, Moses may not have been the most well tempered and behaved individual. In fact, he was more of an angry raging murderer, but he's still considered one of the greatest people in history.

Or how about Rahab, a prostitute, who found her way into history in Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verse 31...

/HEB 11:31

By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish along with those who were disobedient, after she had welcomed the spies in peace.\

If you're wanting to read more about her story and Jericho, you can read about it on your own time in the book of Joshua.

But, we're going to move on to bigger and better things right now. No story of Old Testament scumbags is complete without an appearance from the All Star himself... King David...

Keep in mind that this is the same person that is called, "A man after God's own heart."

/King David is a man after God's own heart.\

This is the same man who committed adultery and then, murder to try to cover it up. We can read about this in 2 Samuel, Chapter 11, Verses 2 through 5...

/2 SAM 11:2

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Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.\

/2 SAM 11:3

So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?"\

/2 SAM 11:4

David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.\

/2 SAM 11:5

The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."\

Well, after failed attempts to get Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, to go home and sleep with his wife, David decides now, that it's time to just kill him, and end this once and for all.

Let's take a look at this...

/2 SAM 11:15

He had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die."\

/2 SAM 11:16

/2 SAM 11:16

So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there were valiant men.\

/2 SAM 11:17

The men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died.\

This should inspire us. Not that we're condoning murder, but that none of the people we've learned about so far were perfect. In fact, they're all far from it.

It's very safe to say, that most people we encounter throughout this life aren't going to be this depraved, including ourselves.

Which is why our lesson title states... God doesn't need the best to be the best.

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None of these people by any right were great individuals, but one thing they all had in common was that they were willing to be used by God.

Let's go ahead and take a 5-minute break... as we listen to *We Fall Apart*, by *We As Human*.

/BREAK

We Fall Apart - We As Human
When I Think About Home

Welcome back!

Now, that we've taken a look at the imperfection of some Old Testament All Stars, let's refocus our attention on some New Testament All Stars... The Apostles.

Before we can get started on the apostles themselves, we need to gain a little background on them during that time. We need to learn a little bit about what the apostles went through before they came to Christ.

In a magazine article by Dr. Ron Moseley titled *Jewish Education in Ancient Times*, he explains a little about the education system that Jewish people had during Jesus' time.

Their schooling started at age five. At five years old you started studying scripture. By age ten you would have mastered books such as *Leviticus* and *Psalms*.

Then, you would move on to master the *Torah*, the first five books of the Bible. By age thirteen you were deemed old enough to start living according to the commandments.

You continued to study the *Torah*, Jewish law, and Jewish leaders until you graduated at age eighteen. You were then old enough to marry. And, by age twenty you would start pursuing a career.

Most would just take on the family business that their father's did. However some of the brightest students would actually take on apprenticeships under Rabbis to eventually become one.

Well, let's take a look at what some of the apostles did before they met Jesus:

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There's not a lot of information on what all of the apostles did before they met Jesus, but the Bible does tell us what some of them did.

/MAR 1:16

As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen.\

So, there we go. We now at least know that Simon Peter and Andrew are brothers who became fishermen after they graduated high school.

/LUK 5:10

And so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men."\<

So, there we have it. We know that four of the apostles became fishermen before they met Jesus.

The only other career choice of an apostle that we know for sure is Matthew. He became a tax collector. This one is interesting.

Not because we don't like the IRS. But, this is interesting on a whole different level.

Think of what other people would have thought about him. Matthew was a Jew who was working for the Romans who ruled over the Jews at that time.

It's very safe to say that the Jews were not a fan of having to submit to Roman authority and were even less enthused to pay taxes to the Romans.

The closest thing we have in our history is paying taxes to Britain.

And, just to sweeten the pot, typically tax collectors collected extra taxes from people for their own pockets. This is how they made most of their money.

Jesus gives us a nice picture of what this looked like in Luke, Chapter 5, Verses 27 through 32...

Let's turn there in our Bibles...

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/LUK 5:27

After that He went out and noticed a tax collector named Levi (Matthew) sitting in the tax booth, and He said to him, "Follow Me." \

/LUK 5:28

And he left everything behind, and got up and began to follow Him. \

/LUK 5:29

And Levi (Matthew) gave a big reception for Him in his house; and there was a great crowd of tax collectors and other people who were reclining at the table with them. \

/LUK 5:30

The Pharisees and their scribes began grumbling at His disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with the tax collectors and sinners?" \

/LUK 5:31-32

And Jesus answered and said to them, "It is not those who are well who need a physician, but those who are sick. //I have not come to call the righteous but the sinners to repentance."

What Jesus said there is beautiful. That verse encompasses this entire lesson. There was something else in this passage that I want to look at though.

Pharisees were at Matthew's house during this party. Earlier we didn't go into detail about what a Pharisee was. Who are these Pharisees? Well in short, there are three main things we need to know about Pharisees.

/1. They were trained to become Pharisees. \

/2. They were the chief scholars at the time and were in charge of the educational system. \

/3. They were highly legalistic and proud. \

On that note, there's still another New Testament All Star that we haven't talked about yet... It seems fitting that since our church is studying about Paul right now, that we give him some air time. So, that's what we're going to do.

You see, Paul was little bit different from the other eleven apostles. Paul was a hot shot Jew. He was great in school.

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Paul also known as Saul was from the same tribe as the first king of Israel.

Paul learned under Gamaliel who was a famous Pharisee at the time.

/ACT 22:3

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today."

This last part of his statement is what stands out to me. This is where you can see into Paul.

A question that should have popped up into peoples' heads by now is... Why did Paul hate Christians so badly that he wanted to eradicate them from this earth?

That is a fantastic question. Paul loved God more than anything in the world. Christians were running around telling everyone that Jesus was God. Paul was raised and taught that just saying something like that was worthy of death.

It's no different than the feeling we get when someone says Jesus is NOT God.

It's no different than the feeling early the Americans had when they pushed Mormons out of the East Coast because they were saying that Jesus wasn't God.

Paul loved God, but he, like unbelieving Jews today, was so over focused on rules and tradition that he almost missed it.

He almost missed that everything that he had learned about in the Old Testament scriptures pointed to him Jesus Christ.

How do you think Paul felt when he found out that all of the high school dropout apostles figured it out years before he did.

Now, it makes a little bit more sense why Paul calls himself in, Ephesians "the very least of all the saints."

Granted he may have committed worse sins than any of us could ever imagine doing, but he also spent thirty years studying about Jesus by the greatest teachers of his time and he still missed it.

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Almost, that is. Until the Lord Jesus Christ knocked him off his high horse on the road to Damascus as it says in Acts, Chapter 22, Verse 7 and 8...

/ACT 22:7

And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'

/ACT 22:8

And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'

If God can turn Paul's and everyone else's life around that we learned about today, how much more can He do in your life?

Our closing song today is Human by Manafest...

And, just remember that life isn't about being perfect. It's not about right or wrong. All God asks from us is that we're willing to be used by Him. By doing so we can positively affect history.

/CLOSING SONG

Human - Manafest

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/JER 29:11

‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’\

/1 PE 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.\

/JUD 1:24-25

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, //to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.\

/CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...\

God, thank You for teaching us that life doesn't need to be an endless struggle of perfection. Lord, thank You for teaching us that we aren't as bad as we think we are. And, thank You for showing us that no matter what our past is, we can always give our future over to You. And, I pray that You continue to teach us that we don't need to be the best to be part of Your Best. 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. And we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit, and in Christ's name... Amen.

/Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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