

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS
Lesson 10-March 19, 2023

If you're in the resident congregation turn off your electronic devices and put them away. Let this be a place where you aren't distracted by the world.

Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES

Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with a worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. Thanks for listening to this Bible lesson!

What does Barah Ministries stand for?

We are Christians! We worship the ONE AND ONLY GOD, the Lord Jesus Christ because He is God. Titus, an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ knew it, too! Here's what he had to say in Titus, Chapter 2, Verses 13 and 14...

TITUS 2:13

...(believers in Christ are)...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior...the Christ...Jesus...

TITUS 2:14

...who gave Himself on the Cross as a substitute for us...to redeem us from every lawless deed...and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession...a people who are zealous for good deeds.

At Barah Ministries you'll learn the Word verse-by-verse from God's perspective and not from man's perspective.

Why do we study the Word of God? It brings us happiness according to Psalm 119, Verse 103...

PSALM 119:103

How sweet are Your words to my taste, Lord! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

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The Word of God offers direction...Psalm 119, Verse 105...

PSALM 119:105

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

By studying the Word of God, Christians get to know the Lord and His thoughts.

The Bible is the absolute truth...and it requires effort on your part to learn! The Word of God is better than money! Psalm 119, Verse 72...

PSALM 119:72

The law of Your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.

God has an enemy, Satan, whom the Lord made 'the ruler of this world.' Satan enjoys making believers in Christ suffer, and one his favorite patsies to make us suffer are family members. He attacks the mentality of those closest to us and gets them to turn against us. There is nothing more painful than a betrayal from a family member. God wants His believers to handle this kind of suffering as Joseph did with his brothers...Genesis, Chapter 50, Verse 20...

GENESIS 50:20a

As for you, my brothers...you meant evil against me...but God allowed what you did to me for my good...

No matter what Satan does to us, God works it out for our good.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Beware of the -ISM Life

LESSON INTRODUCTION

In the next passage of study in Paul's letter to the believers at first-century Colossae, we are introduced to a few of the false teachings of false teachers. There are many -ISMs of this life...we'll look at three...Legalism, Mysticism, and Asceticism. False teachers allege that -ISMs make us more spiritual. Do they? We'll take a look in today's lesson.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

The Lord allows us to find the truth by taking a path through the -ISMs of life.

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And as we are battered by deception in Satan's kingdom, we always have a comfortable place to rest...right in the mighty hand of God. So heed the advice suggested by Hilary Scott and the Scott Family in their Untitled Hymn...when you have problems...COME TO JESUS!

MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

UNTITLED HYMN (COME TO JESUS)

Hilary Scott and the Scott Family

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

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

Father, thank you for always being clear...You love us...You forgive us...You are here for us...You work things together for our good...You have nothing against us...You train us...You protect us...You provide for us...You are deeply interested in our well-being...You even allow tribulation to toughen us...You provide a guide...God the Holy Spirit...to lead us into all Your truth...

...show us the spiritual wisdom of the Word you'll be implanting in us today...and makes us aware of the things in our lives that this lesson will modify so that we can become the people You intend us to be...exact reflections of You...

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

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Beware of the -ISM Life

LESSON PART ONE

Recently, a friend told me people are like radio stations...they broadcast things from their mouths. She said some people are AM radio stations and some people

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are FM radio stations. She said, “The AM station people are ‘AGAINST ME’ and the FM station people are ‘FOR ME.’ ”

I find her thoughts to be true. And as much as we hate to admit it, there are a lot more AM (“AGAINST ME”) people than there are FM (“FOR ME”) people in our lives. Worse, we listen to the AM people a lot more than we listen to the FM people.

False teachers are AM people...they are AGAINST. They broadcast false teaching designed to hurt us, confuse us, and create doubt in us that paralyzes our spiritual lives. Our FM people friends are FOR us...they are the ones who know who we are and who we are not, and they love us anyway. They help us to navigate the next steps of life.

The passage for today is Colossians, Chapter 2, Verses 16 to 23. The apostle Paul is preparing the believers at first-century Colossae for the false teachers who are infiltrating the church, bringing with them a series of AM (“Against Me”) teachings designed to shipwreck their faith. Let’s listen to the passage...

COLOSSIANS 2:16

Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

COLOSSIANS 2:17

...things which are a mere shadow of what is to come...but the substance belongs to Christ.

COLOSSIANS 2:18

Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind...

COLOSSIANS 2:19

...and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

COLOSSIANS 2:20

If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as...

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COLOSSIANS 2:21

“Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!”

COLOSSIANS 2:22

...(which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

COLOSSIANS 2:23

These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

Let's study the passage verse-by-verse to see what the Lord wants us to learn.

There are people in our lives who give unsolicited advice about how we ought to handle life. A quick inspection of their lives almost always shows they don't even take their own advice. <DIET ADVICE>

The teachers who are surrounding the little churches of Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis were coming up with religious ideas, warped theologies, and heresies that had nothing to do with getting to know the Lord or His thoughts.

What they were saying are two things the religious always say...

WHAT THE RELIGIOUS CLAIM

If you don't do extra things other than just believing in Christ, you are not saved.

If you are saved and you don't do extra things, you can lose your salvation.

Lies. Nothing but lies. These false teachers offer religion, not a relationship with Christ. What is religion?

RELIGION

A Satanic DISCIPLINE OF DECEPTION focused on rituals, rules, and traditions...the things you can do, and the thing you can't do if you want to please

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God...and most of these things are not mentioned in the Bible...they are things that are not supernatural...things that are not focused on a relationship with Christ...and things that neither save us nor preserve our salvation.

Religious rituals do not impart life. They impart a burden. Here's what the Lord said to the religious Pharisees who opposed Him in Matthew, Chapter 23, Verse 15...

MATTHEW 23:15

“Woe to you...scribes and Pharisees...you hypocrites...because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte (a religious convert)...and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves!”

Minutes before spine surgery last Monday I knew the outcome. I would wake up in the recovery room or I would wake up in heaven. It was simple. My relationship with the Lord is secure, I knew He was with me, and I knew He would guide the medical team to get the result He wanted. I had nothing to worry about.

Also, I knew praying to a fake saint, or to Jesus' mother, or smelling incense, or dousing myself with “holy water,” or fasting or any religious rituals would do nothing to give me confidence...not chanting with my hands over my head...not speaking an unintelligible language...not seeking a sign from an angel...not even meditating...NONE OF THESE THINGS would help at all.

Jesus would help because He is a Person and He has all the power...divine omnipotence.

In Colossians, Chapter 2, Verse 16, Paul instructs the believers concerning false teachers and their false teaching...LEGALISM...

COLOSSIANS 2:16

Therefore NO ONE is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

What do false teachers with legalism have to offer? Laws. Here's what you should eat...here's what you should drink...here's what you should celebrate... here's when the Sabbath is...here are the things that have “extra power” like the New Moon...here are the festivals you must celebrate.

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What is LEGALISM?

LEGALISM

Adding to the perfection that is Christianity with an overfocus on the rules... turning Christianity into a perversion of self-righteous superiority and into a series of steps we could never follow successfully.

LEGALISM is self-righteousness, and self-righteousness is condescending...those who adopt it use it to delude themselves into thinking they are better than you.

LEGALISTS contend that if you follow the rules, you'll earn your salvation or you'll keep your salvation, even though they know that even they can't follow the rules. The Bible paints a different picture. The Lord knows you DON'T follow rules so what does He say it takes to be saved? Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes."

If you can do nothing to save yourself, does it make any sense at all that you can do something to keep your salvation? The Bible says NO in John, Chapter 10, Verse 28...

JOHN 10:28

"...I (the Lord Jesus Christ) give eternal life to believers in Christ, and they will never perish...and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

The Lord gives us salvation and the Lord preserves our salvation. The false teachers are wrong.

What promises do false teachers make with their false instruction? If we fast, we'll be Christ-like. If we avoid pork, we're more spiritual. If you don't have a glass of wine and others do, you're better than they are. The Sabbath never changed to Sunday...it must be celebrated on Saturday or you're displeasing God (the Seventh Day Adventists). There is a lunar new year. Last month, friends throughout Asia celebrated the year 4717...the Year of the Rat.

As for festivals, how about Easter? Have you ever noticed that there is always a festival to take the focus off of a real spiritual event? Three weeks from today,

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many people around the world will celebrate Easter. Christians celebrate the most important day in divine history, the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Satan, the enemy of God is always ready with a counterfeit.

SATAN'S EASTER COUNTERFEIT

Easter vs. Resurrection Day

The goddess Eostre vs. The Lord Jesus Christ

The Bunny vs. The Cross

Fertility Orgies vs. Spirituality

In the United States, Easter is soldered into our culture. It's cute to send our kids on Easter egg hunts and to dress them up in multi-colored outfits and to go on our semi-annual dress-up pilgrimage to church. Why don't we ever stop to figure out why we celebrate these festivals?

E̅ostre is depicted by scholars as a fertility goddess. Celebrating her was a month-long festival of orgies. The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ had no chance against these festivals. Christmas is similar.

SATAN'S CHRISTMAS COUNTERFEIT

Santa Claus vs. The Lord Jesus Christ

The Christmas Tree vs. The Cross

Is there anything wrong with celebrating these pagan holidays? The apostle Paul says NO in First Corinthians. He says that since the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus don't really exist, it's not a problem to celebrate...EXCEPT...when the celebration causes a weaker brother in Christ to stumble. Then these celebrations absolutely are a problem. Who are the weaker brothers? Our children. Parents lie to their children about the existence of the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus and think it has no effect on their credibility with their children. Hmmm...

Again...a look at Colossians, Chapter 2, Verses 16 and 17...

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COLOSSIANS 2:16

Therefore NO ONE is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

COLOSSIANS 2:17

...things which are a mere shadow of what is to come...but the substance belongs to Christ.

There's the shadow of a thing and then there's the substance of a thing. Christ is substance. In the Old Testament, many rituals prepared people for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, Jewish people celebrate Passover to commemorate their freedom from slavery in Egypt and a future deliverance and redemption for all who believe as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob did in Yahweh for salvation. Genesis, Chapter 15, Verse 6...

GENESIS 15:6

Then Abram BELIEVED in the Lord...and the Lord credited Abram's faith to him as righteousness (the admission ticket to heaven).

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not only racial Jews...they were spiritual Jews as well. The rituals of Judaism were shadows of the substance to come. The Christ...the Jewish Messiah was to come, and when He did, the ritual as a training aide was no longer needed. False teachers are more concerned with shadow than substance.

Many people ask why I make it a point to mention that Jesus...the Christ...is the Jewish Messiah. It is to honor the Jewish businessmen who invested in the Black Community when I was young. They let my Mom have groceries and supplies on credit until she got paid. They didn't have to do that. I have tons of friends who are Jewish, most of whom do not recognize Jesus as their Messiah. I hope they hear a message, investigate the truth, and become saved as a result of my mentioning it.

When we return from the break, we'll take a look at the two other -ISMs highlighted in this passage...Mysticism and Asceticism. Take a five-minute break.

FIVE-MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

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TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON
Beware of the -ISM Life

OFFERING INTRODUCTION

When God blesses us financially, He wants us to raise our standard of GIVING, not our standard of living. Remember, God is the One who seeks and saves the lost...the lost don't seek Him...Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 11 says...

ROMANS 3:11

There is no creature who understands God or any divine thing...there is no creature who seeks a relationship with God...

In Luke, Chapter 15, Verse 4, Jesus says...

LUKE 15:4

"What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine sheep in the open pasture and go after the one sheep which is lost until he finds it?"

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd. As His creatures, we are sheep. What does the Shepherd do for the sheep who are not seeking a relationship with Him? He goes after them.

Your generosity creates the opportunity for Barah Ministries to provide the gift of the gospel message to the unbelievers God brings to this ministry. Deacon Denny Goodall returns from vacation next week...so allow me to thank you for your generosity on his behalf as I collect the offering.

OFFERING SONG

THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU

Instrumental Version

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Beware of the -ISM Life

LESSON PART TWO

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There are many places in the Bible where the Lord makes it clear that LEGALISM isn't Christianity. In fact, the Lord created the Mosaic Law, so it is spiritual as Paul says in Romans 7...but the reason the Law was created makes it clear that law is not life-giving...Romans, Chapter 5, Verses 20 and 21 plus Romans, Chapter 6, Verses 1 and 2...

ROMANS 5:20

The Law came in alongside of sin so that the transgression (law-breaking) would increase...but where sin (law-breaking) increased...God's grace abounded all the more...

Make rules...more sin. It's that simple. God created the law to show sinners that they could not keep the law, thus they needed a Savior...

ROMANS 5:21

...the Lord provided grace abundantly in the presence of sin so that, as sin reigned as king "in union with Adam" ...even so, by means of the Lord's grace, we believers in Christ would reign as kings through righteousness ("in union with Christ") to eternal life (the resurrection life) through our union with Jesus Christ our Lord.

ROMANS 6:1

What shall we believers in Christ say then? Are we to continue in sin so that the Lord's grace may increase?

ROMANS 6:2

May it never be! How shall we believers in Christ (such ones as we...the children of a King)...who died to sin as an established fact at the moment of our salvation, still live in sin as if sin is still our master?

We wouldn't. So as Christians, we don't listen to false teachers and their legalism...we don't adopt a non-biblical code of conduct...with no Bible chapter and no Bible verses as backup...to feel superior over people who don't adhere to the code of conduct we suggest. Christianity is too free to be legislated.

Colossians, Chapter 2, Verses 18 and 19 introduce the false teaching called mysticism...

COLOSSIANS 2:18

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Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement, and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind...

COLOSSIANS 2:19

...and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

What is mysticism?

MYSTICISM

A belief that union with or absorption into a deity, or into the absolute, or into the spiritual apprehension of knowledge inaccessible to the intellect, may be attained through contemplation and self-surrender...self-delusion or dreamy confusion of thought, especially when based on the assumption of occult qualities or mysterious agencies.

What are some examples of mysticism in today's world? Mysticism introduces ecstasies and emotion into spirituality. It contends that if we feel more than we are more spiritual. Have you ever heard of faith healing. There is mysticism involved. Have you ever heard of Pentecostalism or the Tongues Movement? There is mysticism involved. Have you ever heard of the occult, with its magic and spirits and unusual phenomena? There is mysticism involved. Have you ever heard someone say...

MYSTICISM

There was a vision revealed to me by an angel

That is mysticism. Horoscopes. Psychics. Witchcraft. Ever heard of Wicca? Look it up on YouTube. You work with people who are part of this organization. Simply stated, mysticism is an attempt to be spiritual through experiences without Jesus and without the gospel message and without the Word of God. To those who are involved in mysticism, they lose their connection to God. I heard one person say, "I'm not interested in the narrow Christian view that there is only one way to God...Jesus." People involved in mysticism remind me of Ichabod Crane...the Headless Horseman of Halloween fame. They are a body that has no connection to the head...and the head is Christ.

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Those involved in mysticism engage in channeling...in emptying themselves of thoughts and emotions to get in touch with the universe. The Bible never encourages this kind of activity. In fact, it tells us the opposite...to be filled up to all the fullness of God.

I've heard numerous stories of contact with spirit beings.

In the Roman Catholic Church, its members are encouraged to pray to the "Mother of God, Mary" ... to angels ... to patron saints....and to avoid going directly to God for help.

All of these "fuller, manufactured spiritual experiences" make me better than anyone who has not had these experiences.

As Christians, all we have is...The Son of God...Jesus Christ...The Unconditional Love of God...the Forgiveness of Sins...The Resurrection of the Body...Eternal Life...the Indwelling of the Entire Triune Godhead.

Colossians, Chapter 2, Verses 20 to 23 highlight the finalism of the passage...ASCETICISM...

COLOSSIANS 2:20

If you believers in Christ have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world...and of course you have from the moment of salvation...why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as...

COLOSSIANS 2:21

"Do not handle...do not taste...do not touch!"

COLOSSIANS 2:22

...(which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

COLOSSIANS 2:23

These are matters which have, to be sure, THE APPEARANCE OF WISDOM in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body...but they are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

What is ASCETICISM?

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ASCETICISM

The contention that we become more spiritual through self-denial of any kind

How about married couples who think sex is dirty and that abstaining from sex is spiritual? Wow! No wonder the divorce rate is so high. Check out First Corinthians, Chapter Seven to see how spiritual people handle sex, an amazing gift from our almighty God.

Other forms of asceticism? Fasting...no Christmas trees...no celebration of birthdays...no blood transfusions...no swimming with members of the opposite sex...no wearing pants to church for women...no Easter bunnies...no fun...no celebrations of any kind...severe self-discipline...avoidance of pleasure...the body is the problem, so starve the body...feed the Spirit...

In First Timothy, Chapter 4, Verses 1 to 5, the apostle Paul warns his protégé Timothy and all Pastors about asceticism...

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:1

But God the Holy Spirit explicitly says that in later times (in every generation) some (believers in Christ) will fall away from the faith...paying attention to deceitful spirits and the doctrines of demons (false teaching)...

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:2

...by means of the hypocrisy of liars (false teachers) seared in their own conscience (with lies) as with a branding iron...

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:3

...men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:4

For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude...

FIRST TIMOTHY 4:5

...for it is sanctified by means of the Word of God and prayer.

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Satan is a joy killer. His suggestions look good on the outside, but means nothing on the inside. These things especially do not control the flesh...Satan's inside agent designed to destroy the spiritual life.

Let's close by looking at the WUEST TRANSLATION of the passage.
Colossians, Chapter 2, Verses 16 to 23...

COLOSSIANS 2:16

Stop, therefore, allowing anyone to be sitting in judgment upon you in eating or drinking or in the matter of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day...

COLOSSIANS 2:17

...all of which things are a shadow of those things about to come. But the body belongs to Christ.

COLOSSIANS 2:18

Let no one as a judge declare you unworthy of a reward, taking delight in a self-imposed humility and worship of the angels, scrutinizing minutely the things he has seen, being futilely puffed up by the mind of the flesh...

COLOSSIANS 2:19

...and not holding fast the Head, out from whom all the body, through the instrumentality of the joints and ligaments being constantly supplied with nourishment and being constantly compacted together, increases with the increase wrought by God.

COLOSSIANS 2:20

In view of the fact that you died with Christ from the rudimentary things of the world, why, as living in the world, are you subjecting yourselves to ordinances [such as]...

COLOSSIANS 2:21

"...do not begin to touch, neither begin to taste, nor begin to handle..."

COLOSSIANS 2:22

...all of which things are destined for corruption in their consumption... [ordinances] which are according to the precepts and teachings of men...

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COLOSSIANS 2:23

...all of which things as a class have a reputation for wisdom in self-made, self-imposed worship and [an affected, HYPOCRITICAL] HUMILITY and unsparing and severe treatment of the body, [ordinances which are] not of any value as a remedy against the indulgence of the flesh?

The issue with -ISMs is simple. You can choose freedom or you can choose slavery to rules, rituals and regulations. So why do so many people choose the -ISMs? False teachers are persuasive. Lies are persuasive. People always seem ready to accept cheap substitutes rather than the real thing.

As for me, give me Christ and His Word. As for false teachers with false teaching, they should take a long walk on a short pier. Being burdened with their slavery with absolutely no benefit in return dawned on me after years of giving myself to this nonsense. I hope you'll examine your life and rid yourself of any of the things you've allowed yourself to become enslaved to.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race

The closing moments of today's lesson are dedicated to anyone, anywhere, who is undecided or confused about having a relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We want you to know that...

GOD WANTS YOU!

He Wants You Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

The truth? Most of us take the easy way out in relationships. We like the people who like us and we dislike the people who don't. That's the human approach. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ loves each of His creatures unconditionally whether we like Him or not...whether we make time for Him or not...whether we worship Him or not. That's supernatural and it's great news for atheists.

Atheism is painful to hear. Atheists say, "There is no god." and "God doesn't exist." The Bible has a different view. Even though many atheists think the Bible is "just a book with a bunch of symbolic stories," the apostle John makes the purpose of the Bible clear in John, Chapter 20, Verse 31...

JOHN 20:31

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...these things in the Bible have been written so that you may BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ...the Jewish Messiah...the Son of God in human form...and that by believing in Him you may have the resurrection life (eternal life) in His name.

Philosopher Blaise Pascal, in what is known as “Pascal’s Wager,” says human beings bet with their lives that God either exists or He does not. Pascal is right, so if you are an atheist would do well to at least consider what the Bible has to say.

The Bible is the guide that helps us know God and His thoughts. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23 says...

ROMANS 3:23

...for all creatures have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 10...

ROMANS 3:10

...as it is written, "There is no creature who is righteous, not even one..."

Since atheists are created creatures, human beings, they would do well to be curious about exactly what the Bible is proposing. First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 22 says...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22a

...all in union with Adam at physical birth (and that is every human who comes to earth) are set to die the second death in the Lake of Fire...

That’s horrible news for an atheist! The good news is that the Lord has a salvation plan for all of His creatures that reflects an interesting attitude, even to those who think there is no god. Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9...

SECOND PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation, as some accuse Him of...instead He is patient toward you unbelievers (including atheists) ... not wishing for any of you to perish in the Lake of Fire, but for all of you to come to repentance (a change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

The Bible teaches that God exists, that He lives in heaven, and that you can secure your place in heaven right this minute. If you're an atheist, and you think Pascal

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was right that you bet with your life that God either exists or He does not, then there is no penalty for believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. RIGHT WHERE YOU SIT, RIGHT NOW, you can tell God the Father that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you're willing to count on Him for your salvation, and that is the moment of eternal life for you. Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes."

Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ is an atheist's acknowledgment that if there is a God, it might be smart to have faith in Him. John, Chapter 14, Verse 6...

JOHN 14:6

Jesus said to the doubting apostle, Thomas, "I am the way (to salvation), and I am the truth (through the Word of God), and I am the resurrection life...and no one comes to God the Father (in heaven) but through believing in Me."

No creature can do a thing to get to heaven on his own. Romans, Chapter 11, Verse 6 says...

ROMANS 11:6

But if salvation is by grace, and of course it is, it is no longer based on works...otherwise, grace is no longer grace.

In what will likely be considered one of the most gracious acts in divine history, the Lord created a place to live for all those who reject a relationship with Him... Revelation, Chapter 20, Verse 10...

REVELATION 20:10

And the devil who deceived the whole world (especially atheists and unbelievers) was thrown into the Lake of Fire and brimstone...where the beast (the anti-Christ) and the false prophet are also...and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Your eternal home does not have to be the Lake of Fire. You can choose a different fate. So heed the warning and accept the invitation in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

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JOHN 3:36

“He who believes in God the Son has the resurrection life right at that moment... but he who does not obey the command to believe in the Son will not see the resurrection life...instead the wrath of God (the Lake of Fire) abides on him.”

The apostle Paul describes the God who saves you in First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:3

For I (Paul) delivered to you as of primary importance the gospel message I also received from God...that it was Jesus Christ who died for our sins according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:4

...and that He was buried...and that He was raised from the dead on the third day...according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

Remember the words of the Old Testament prophet Joel in Acts, Chapter 2, Verse 21...

ACTS 2:21

‘And it shall be that EVERYONE who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved.’

If you're an atheist, keep on investigating whether God exists. If you find there is a God, there's plenty of room for you in heaven where God lives! Join us!

CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION

One of the greatest gifts the Lord gives to His creatures is unconditional love. The Lord loves us no matter what. When you direct His gift of unconditional love toward others, it's even better. But it's best when you choose to direct the Lord's unconditional love toward yourself. June Murphy discovered this and shares it with us in her song...I AM BEAUTIFUL.

CLOSING SONG

I AM BEAUTIFUL

June Murphy

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS
Lesson 10-March 19, 2023

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Father, thank you for Your guidance in the lesson today that puts an instant alert system in our souls to make us spiritually aware of the deception of false teachers...thank you for truth, the antidote for their lies...thank you for giving us a way to share your message of truth with others...

...as we prepare for another week in Satan's kingdom, help us to empathize with the plight of those who choose not to investigate the real truth about the Lord... give us the courage to approach them...help us direct them to accurate teaching which gives them a supernatural, eternal alternative to the despair of another destructive -ISM...atheism...

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

GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS?

Ask the Pastor
pastor@barahministries.com

KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD!

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

www.barahministries.com