

## **PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS**

**Lesson 4-June 1, 2025**

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!

### **OPENING AGENDA**

You may be wondering...

Who is the God we worship at Barah Ministries?  
What is our source of truth?  
Who is our enemy?

### **Who is the God We Worship at Barah Ministries?**

We worship a Triune Godhead. We call them the Holy Trinity. There is One God who reveals Himself to mankind as three beings who are separate...distinct...co-equal...co-infinite...and co-eternal Persons...God the Father...God the Son...and God the Holy Spirit.

GOD THE FATHER is the author of the Triune Godhead's plan for all creatures. If we, as believers in Christ, want a great spiritual life, we should begin by following the apostle James's suggestion in James, Chapter 4, Verse 7...

JAMES 4:7a

*Submit to God the Father...*

When God the Father's will for us becomes our will for us, knowing that Father knows best, we'll have an amazing spiritual life.

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GOD THE SON (the Lord) volunteered to execute God the Father's plan...taking on human form as Jesus...the Christ...the Messiah. Jesus Christ is God.

If we want a great spiritual life, our relationship with ourselves needs to move up our priority list as we realize that concern for self is not selfish. We are IN CHRIST. God has given us an amazing spiritual position. What the Lord wants for us is peace...Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 7...

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

*...the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds...for those of you IN CHRIST Jesus.*

There's the magic term from Paul's letter to the Ephesians...IN CHRIST. The Lord Jesus Christ has big plans for His believers, including making us the recipients of unconditional love, forgiveness, grace, and peace.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT is our Mentor and Teacher, a guide who is the rudder of a Christian's life. He is a Person. He is fully God, equal in every way to God the Father and God the Son. He is not a "ghost" as some like to call Him. He produces fruit in you...Galatians, Chapter 5, Verses 22 and 23...

GALATIANS 5:22

*But the FRUIT OF GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT is unconditional love, joy, and peace (in yourselves) ... patience, kindness, and goodness (toward others) ...*

GALATIANS 5:23

*...faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (in your relationship with God) ... against such virtues there is no law.*

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are believers in Christ's power team..., which specializes in the supernatural...a team we can call on for help in times of trouble.

### **What is Our Source of Truth at Barah Ministries?**

The Bible is the Word of God, and it is our source of absolute truth. Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verses 16 and 17...

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### SECOND TIMOTHY 3:16

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness...*

### SECOND TIMOTHY 3:17

*...so that the man of God may be mature, thoroughly furnished for every good work.*

The Bible is a supernatural work breathed into its human writers by God. It is the only source of absolute truth about eternal things.

As Christians, we develop a deep, intimate, and personal relationship with the Godhead and get to know them as Persons through studying the Word of God.

At Barah Ministries, you can learn the Bible from God's perspective...not from man's perspective...because the precepts of men are not doctrinal truths.

### **Who is Our Enemy at Barah Ministries?**

GOD HAS AN ENEMY...Satan...whom God made 'the ruler of this world.' He is the enemy of believers in Christ as well. He is the great deceiver. His strategy against humanity is religion, and he passes off the deception of religion as a lifestyle of light...Second Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 14 warns us about him...

### SECOND CORINTHIANS 11:14

*...Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.*

The biggest enemy of believers in Christ is IGNORANCE OF THE ENEMY. Don't be ignorant.

I used to do this introduction every week. From now on you can count on hearing it once a month so I can remind you why we study the Word of God and who wants to hinder our progress.

### **TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**What has God DONE for Us Former Sinners?**

### *LESSON INTRODUCTION*

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Believers in Christ used to be sinners. Now we are saints. What has God done for us former sinners?

In Ephesians, Chapter 1 we learned we have several SPIRITUAL POSSESSIONS as gifts from God...spiritual possessions that knock us off our feet...that stagger our imaginations...that we don't even understand. The apostle Paul prayed for us believers in Christ to be enlightened by God to comprehend the depth of the SPIRITUAL WEALTH God has given us.

In today's lesson, as we transition into the study of Ephesians, Chapter 2, we'll learn that we have a SPIRITUAL POSITION IN CHRIST that rescued us from the kingdom of spiritual death and darkness.

### *OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION*

Let's hear some music! As believers in Christ, we were once spiritually dead, condemned to the Lake of Fire, as helpless and hopeless unbelievers. No more! As MercyMe says in song, the Cross has made us FLAWLESS!

### **MUSIC**

#### **OPENING SONG**

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

*FLAWLESS*

*MercyMe*

### **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 our position IN CHRIST...help us know it's value...

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

### **TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**What has God DONE for Us Former Sinners?**

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### LESSON PART ONE

Let's begin our study of Ephesians, Chapter 2 by hearing the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD TRANSLATION of the passage...Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 1 to 10...

#### EPHESIANS 2:1

*And you were dead in your trespasses and sins...*

#### EPHESIANS 2:2

*...in which trespasses and sins you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, according to the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.*

#### EPHESIANS 2:3

*Among them we believers in Christ, too, all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the desires of the mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, just like the rest.*

#### EPHESIANS 2:4

*But God the Father, being rich in mercy, because of His great unconditional love with which He loved us...*

#### EPHESIANS 2:5

*...even when we were spiritually dead in our transgressions, made us spiritually alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...*

#### EPHESIANS 2:6

*...and raised us up with Jesus Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places IN CHRIST Jesus...*

#### EPHESIANS 2:7

*...so that in the ages to come God the Father might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us IN CHRIST Jesus.*

#### EPHESIANS 2:8

*For by grace you have been saved through faith...and that not of yourselves...it is the gift of God...*

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### EPHESIANS 2:9

*...not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

### EPHESIANS 2:10

*For we believers in Christ are God the Father's workmanship, created IN CHRIST Jesus for good works, which God the Father prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

You'll notice a structure to the passage as we study it.

### STRUCTURE OF EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Verses 1 to 3 tell us this...

Why Did the Lord Need to Leave Heaven to Come to Earth?

### STRUCTURE OF EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Verses 4 to 6 tell us this...

What Did Human Beings Get as a Result of His Coming?

### STRUCTURE OF EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Verses 7 to 10 tell us this...

What was the Lord's Purpose in Coming?

So let's begin our verse-by-verse study.

Why did the Lord leave heaven to come to earth? Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 1...

### EPHESIANS 2:1

*And all of you (all mankind) were spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins...*

As spiritually dead unbelievers (in Greek...the *psuchikos* people) ... we were unable to comprehend spiritual things. We were spiritual corpses. We were the walking dead. The prophet puts it this way in Isaiah, Chapter 59, Verse 2...

### ISAIAH 59:2

*But your iniquities (trespasses and sins) have made a separation between you and your God...and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.*

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There is a wall between us and God from birth.

A great way to think of our unbelieving friends? They are the walking dead, separated from God by a wall. No matter how prosperous unbelievers may look or what successes we see them having, their eternal future is the second death. Romans, Chapter 6, Verse 23...

ROMANS 6:23a

*The wages of sin is spiritual death...*

The first death is spiritual death. The cause of spiritual death is trespasses and sins. Spiritual dead is separation from God.

The second death is an eternity in the Lake of Fire. This is separation from God for all eternity.

The Lord describes the spiritually dead as "whitewashed tombs." In Matthew, Chapter 23, Verse 27 the Lord warns religious Pharisees...

MATTHEW 23:27

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees...you hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."*

This applies to all of us from birth...Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23...

ROMANS 3:23

*...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...*

None of us are righteous from birth.

<UNBELIEVERS DESCRIBE THEMSELVES THIS WAY:

I'm not religious...I'm more spiritual>

Yeah, right...how ridiculous is that...Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 1 and 2 together...

EPHESIANS 2:1

*And all of you (all mankind) were spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins...*

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### EPHESIANS 2:2

*...in which trespasses and sins you believers in Christ formerly walked according to the course of this world (the world system curriculum)...according to the command of the prince of the power of the air (Satan)...with the same spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience (a spirit of rebellion against God).*

Disobedience is the cause of spiritual death. Sin involves disobeying God. The sources of influence leading to disobedience are...Satan...His world system of thought...and the flesh...two sources from the outside and one source from the inside. It's a counterfeit of God's system. Unbelievers are CONTROLLED by these three influences, and their attitudes and their values come from this unbelieving NATURE.

When we were unbelievers, we were living as rudderless slaves to sin, following the instructions of the ruler of this world, Satan, and his kingdom of death and darkness...Luke, Chapter 16, Verse 15...

### LUKE 16:15

*And the Lord Jesus Christ said to the scribes and Pharisees, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts...for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God."*

Whitewashed tombs. Phonies. The walking dead. We were people who want to redefine God's priorities.

<SEXUALITY...I'm non-binary)

We were people interested in accumulating the world's wealth and its toys. But the one with the most wealth and the most toys still dies!

Satan is the "Pied Piper" ... leading most of the people in the world right off a cliff to condemnation and wrath. Satan works in the atmosphere. He is an organizing influence of a spirit of disobedience. He uses the media to disseminate his evil messaging. First John, Chapter 5, Verse 19...

### FIRST JOHN 5:19

*We believers in Christ know that we are from the source of God...yet the whole world lies in the power of the evil one (Satan).*



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As believers in Christ, we answered God's call. Unbelievers have not. They are called, but they are not yet chosen because they refuse to answer the call.

Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 3...

EPHESIANS 2:3

*Among them we Jewish believers in Christ all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the desires of the mind, and we were by nature children of wrath, just like the rest.*

Anyone who rejects a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is a target of God the Father's wrath.

As the ruler of this world, Satan influences people to disobey. Satan's world system influences people to conform. The Flesh inside of us influences us to do our own thing...the "do it yourself" mentality including do-it-yourself salvation.

So why did the Lord...God the Son...leave heaven to take on human form as the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ? Since the wages of sin is spiritual death, and since spiritual death erects a wall between God and mankind, someone had to pay the price for sin to bring the wall down. It was either us, or someone else.

Knowing that we could not pay the price of sin successfully, the Lord Jesus Christ decided to pay the price for us at the Cross. The Lord's earthly mission is highlighted in John, Chapter 10, Verse 10...

JOHN 10:10

*The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy...I (the Lord Jesus Christ) came that My sheep may have the resurrection life...and have it abundantly.*

When we return from the break, we'll take the offering and then we'll study the rest of this amazing passage verse-by-verse.

**FIVE-MINUTE BREAK**

*NOBODY*

*Casting Crowns*

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### TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

**What has God DONE for Us Former Sinners?**

#### OFFERING INTRODUCTION

When you're giving, what's important to God is your attitude. When we give, God wants us to give voluntarily, thoughtfully, cheerfully, prayerfully, generously, and enthusiastically. I urge you believers in Christ to check your attitude as you give. Make sure your attitude is an EXACT reflection of the voluntary, thoughtful, cheerful, prayerful, generous, and enthusiastic sacrifice that our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, made on our behalf at the Cross to provide for us with a "so great" salvation.

Let's welcome up Al Gleason with today's offering message.

#### THE OFFERING

Al Gleason

#### OFFERING VERSE

SECOND CORINTHIANS 9:6

*Now this I (Paul) say...he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly...and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

#### OFFERING VERSE

SECOND CORINTHIANS 9:7

*Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

#### OFFERING VERSE

SECOND CORINTHIANS 9:8

*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed...*

#### OFFERING SONG

*THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU*

*Instrumental Version*

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### TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

#### What has God DONE for Us Former Sinners?

#### LESSON PART TWO

Welcome back!

#### STRUCTURE OF EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Verses 4 to 6

What Did Human Beings Get as a Result of the Lord's Coming?

What did human beings get as a result of the Lord's coming? Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 4 to 6...

EPHESIANS 2:4

*But God the Father, being rich in mercy, because of His great unconditional love with which He loved us (ALL mankind)...*

EPHESIANS 2:5

*...even when we were spiritually dead in our transgressions...made us believers in Christ spiritually alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...*

EPHESIANS 2:6

*...and God the Father raised us up (in resurrection from the dead) with Jesus Christ...and seated us with Him in the heavenly places IN CHRIST Jesus...*

Jesus Christ provided all mankind with mercy and grace at the Cross. Mercy is the Lord's attitude toward unbelievers. In mercy...

MERCY

God does not give unbelievers what they deserve

Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9 makes God's will for unbelievers clear...

SECOND PETER 3:9

*The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation, as some accuse Him of... instead, He is patient toward unbelievers...NOT WISHING FOR ANY TO PERISH*

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*IN THE LAKE OF FIRE...but wishing for all unbelievers to come to repentance (a voluntary change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).*

God offers unbelievers a stay of execution by keeping them alive. God hates sin but He loves sinners (unbelievers). God loves all of His creatures unconditionally. God IS love in His very Person. Love is His very nature. At salvation, we become objects of God's love. First John, Chapter 4, Verse 8...

FIRST JOHN 4:8

*The one who does not love unconditionally does not know God...for God is unconditional love (in His Person and in His nature).*

Grace is the Lord's attitude toward believers in Christ. In grace...

GRACE

God gives believers in Christ what we don't deserve.

Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 5...

EPHESIANS 2:5

*...even when we were spiritually dead in our transgressions...God the Father made us believers in Christ spiritually alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...*

God speaks our spiritual life into existence with a Word...Hebrews, Chapter 4, Verse 12 describes the power of His Word...

HEBREWS 4:12

*For the Word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword...and it's piercing...even as far as the division of soul and spirit...of both joints and marrow...and it is a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

John, Chapter 5, Verse 24...

JOHN 5:24

*"Truly, truly, I (the Lord Jesus Christ) say to you that he who hears My Word and believes God the Father who sent Me has eternal life...and he does not come into judgment...but has passed out of spiritual death into spiritual life."*

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Now we believers in Christ share everything that belongs to Christ as co-heirs of the promises. Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 6...

EPHESIANS 2:6

*...and God the Father raised us believers in Christ up (in resurrection from the dead) with Jesus Christ...and seated us with Him in the heavenly places IN CHRIST Jesus...*

Our SPIRITUAL POSITION is in the heavenly places, seated next to God the Father's right hand with Christ. That's our SPIRITUAL POSITION. We are IN CHRIST.

"Raised us up" is past tense... "seated us" is past tense. We are living on earth as citizens of heaven. Jesus Christ's work on our behalf is DONE in the past and the result is finished forever. God gave us a salvation we cannot screw up.

When I think of POSITION I think of a friend of mine from graduate school. Randy won a scholarship from a small town in the middle of Illinois. A doctor there endowed a fellowship for a student every year. The fellowship paid for anything the winner wanted...tuition, books, a car, a camera, travel...ANYTHING he wanted. In exchange, the recipient of the fellowship had to work in the small town for three years after medical school at a salary of \$300,000 per year.

The doctor who endowed the scholarship ensured that the small town he worked in for forty years would always have a doctor. He was sure one would stay and contribute to the fellowship fund for future doctors. Wow!

What was the Lord's purpose in coming?

STRUCTURE OF EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Verses 7 to 10

What was the Lord's Purpose in Coming?

Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 7 to 9...

EPHESIANS 2:7

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*...so that in the ages to come God the Father might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us IN CHRIST Jesus.*

### EPHESIANS 2:8

*For by grace you have been saved through faith...and that grace and that faith and that salvation are not from the source of yourselves...it is the gift of God...*

God giving you what you don't deserve!

### EPHESIANS 2:9

*...(and your salvation is) not as a result of your works...so that no one may boast (about saving himself).*

Good works do not save us...we are not lost because of bad works...we are saved by mercy and grace...not love. God's love is a bonus. God's salvation work is DONE! In Greek...*tetelestai*...it is finished...our salvation is PAID IN FULL.

Sin worked against us. God worked for us. Philippians, Chapter 2, Verse 13...

### PHILIPPIANS 2:13

*...for it is God the Father who is at work in you believers in Christ, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 10...

### EPHESIANS 2:10

*For we believers in Christ are God the Father's workmanship, created IN CHRIST Jesus for good works, which God the Father prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

We are a poem. Workmanship is *poiema* in Greek. We believers in Christ are a new creation...Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 17...

### SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:17

*Therefore if anyone is in union with Christ, and all believers in Christ are, there is a new creation...the old things passed away (they died) ... behold, new things have come.*

We are being conformed to the image of the Son...how? By three things.

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The Word of God...First Thessalonians, Chapter 2, Verse 13...

FIRST THESSALONIANS 2:13

*For this reason, we constantly thank God that when you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the Word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.*

By prayer...a divine power that works in us...Ephesians, Chapter 3, Verses 20 and 21...

EPHESIANS 3:20

*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the divine power that works within us...*

EPHESIANS 3:21

*...to Him be the glory in the church and IN CHRIST Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

And through suffering...First Peter, Chapter 4, Verses 11 to 14...

FIRST PETER 4:11

*Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God... whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies...so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

FIRST PETER 4:12

*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though something strange were happening to you...*

FIRST PETER 4:13

*...but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing...so that at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice also with exultation.*

FIRST PETER 4:14

*If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed...because God the Holy Spirit of glory and God the Father rest on you.*

God equips us...Hebrews, Chapter 13, Verses 20 and 21...

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### HEBREWS 13:20

*Now may the God of peace, who brought you up from the dead...the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant...even Jesus our Lord...*

### HEBREWS 13:21

*...equip you in every good thing to do His will...working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

God works in us and through us. So as Watchman Nee would say...SIT! God's salvation results in a changed life...a new creation...and GOD prepares the new creation for good works. Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 10...

### EPHESIANS 2:10

*For we believers in Christ are God the Father's workmanship, created IN CHRIST Jesus for good works, which God the Father prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

When you do the good works God gives you to do it is evidence you are saved. Can you let what God has DONE for you be good enough? Colossians, Chapter 1, Verse 10...

### COLOSSIANS 1:10

*...so that (as a result of God the Holy Spirit's work in you) all of you will have a lifestyle of purpose...to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord...so as to please the Lord in all respects...so as to bear fruit in every good work...and to increase in the knowledge of God the Father...*

Let's hear the NEW LIVING TRANSLATION of the passage...Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 1 to 10...

### EPHESIANS 2:1

*Once you were spiritually dead because of your disobedience and your many sins.*



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### EPHESIANS 2:2

*You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.*

### EPHESIANS 2:3

*All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature, we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.*

### EPHESIANS 2:4

*But God the Father is so rich in mercy, and He loved us unconditionally and He loved us so much...*

### EPHESIANS 2:5

*...that even though we were spiritually dead because of our sins, He gave us spiritual life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God the Father's grace that you have been saved!)*

### EPHESIANS 2:6

*For God the Father raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.*

### EPHESIANS 2:7

*So God the Father can point to all us believers in Christ in future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of His grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all He has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.*

### EPHESIANS 2:8

*God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this...it is a gift from God.*

### EPHESIANS 2:9

*Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*

### EPHESIANS 2:10

*For we are God the Father's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

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Legalism is a dead life. It is not the life God has prepared for you. Lasciviousness is a dead life. It is not the life God has prepared for you. Live the life God has prepared for you. Live in your POSITION...IN CHRIST.

### THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

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

The closing moments of this lesson could be the ten most important minutes of your life. You'll be introduced to the good news concerning how you can spend all eternity in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. We want you to know that...

### GOD WANTS YOU!

He Wants You to Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

...and what He wants for you is that you make the most important decision of your life.

God wants a RELATIONSHIP with you! The Lord's half-brother says in James, Chapter 4, Verse 8...

JAMES 4:8

*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.*

The enemy of God, Satan wants you to be part of a RELIGION. Religion is Satan's strategy against the human race and it is designed to make you indifferent or antagonistic to God. It works! The Bible describes religion in Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 5 as...

SECOND TIMOTHY 3:5

*...a superficial form of godliness (a counterfeit to Christianity) ... that denies godliness' divine power...*

You have a choice...relationship or religion...what's your choice?

Religion can't get you to heaven! Religions propose that if you don't do everything their "god" expects, the god will be disappointed. Regardless of your best efforts to follow religious rituals, the religion does not GUARANTEE you will get to heaven.

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Roman Catholicism is one of the many religions, and it is bought “hook, line, and sinker” by a million and a half people, nearly 20% of the world’s population. Roman Catholicism is a COMPLETE DECEPTION. In Matthew, Chapter 23, Verse 27 and 28, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself excoriates religion...

MATTHEW 23:27

*“Woe to you (religious) scribes and Pharisees...you hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs...which on the outside appear beautiful...but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.”*

MATTHEW 23:28

*“Outwardly you appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (you are unrighteous unbelievers).”*

The Bible is a gift from God that introduces you to the possibility of a relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hebrews, Chapter 4, Verse 12 describes the power of Scripture...

HEBREWS 4:12

*For the word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword...and it’s piercing...even as far as the division of soul and spirit...of both joints and marrow...and it is a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

God’s plan is to teach you the truth about how to have a relationship with Him through the Bible. Satan’s plan is to teach you lies that obscure the truth of the Bible.

What happens when you close your eyes in this life? If you have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, counting on Him to save you, good things happen. If are counting on religion to save you, bad things happen. Let’s examine Luke, Chapter 16, Verses 19 to 31 to see the difference between RELATIONSHIP and RELIGION.

LUKE 16:19

*“Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple (the color of royalty) and in fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day.”*

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LUKE 16:20

*"And a poor man named Lazarus laid at his gate every day, covered with sores..."*

LUKE 16:21

*"...longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table...and dogs were coming regularly to lick the poor man's sores."*

LUKE 16:22

*"Now the poor man died and was carried away by angels to Abraham's bosom (a compartment of Hades called Paradise)...and the rich man also died and was buried."*

LUKE 16:23

*"In Hades the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in Torments (a compartment of Hades reserved for dead unbelievers), and the rich man saw Abraham far away...and he saw Lazarus, the poor man, in Abraham's bosom (a place of comfort)."*

LUKE 16:24

*"And the rich man cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'"*

LUKE 16:25

*"But Abraham said to the rich man, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things (you had wealth) ... and likewise Lazarus had bad things (he was poor)... but now Lazarus is being comforted here in Paradise, and you are in agony (in Torments)."*

LUKE 16:26

*"And besides all this, between us and you there is a GREAT CHASM FIXED, so that those who wish to come from over here to you will not be able...and none may cross over from there to us."*

LUKE 16:27

*"And the rich man said, 'Then I beg you, father Abraham, that you send Lazarus to my father's house—"*

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LUKE 16:28

*"...for I have five brothers—in order that Lazarus may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of Torment."*

LUKE 16:29

*"But Abraham said, 'Your brothers have Moses and the Prophets...let your brothers listen to them.'"*

LUKE 16:30

*"But the rich man said, 'No, father Abraham...if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent (they'll change their minds about having a relationship with Christ)!'"*

LUKE 16:31

*"But Abraham said to the rich man, 'If your brothers do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"*

When you die it is heaven or the Lake of Fire for all eternity. You get to make the choice where you spend eternity. Relationship or religion? What's your choice?

God wants a relationship with you because He doesn't want ANYONE to spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9 says...

SECOND PETER 3:9

*The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation as some accuse Him of...instead, He is patient toward unbelievers...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).*

Believe the Bible. Don't believe the doctrines of your religion. In fact, compare them! For example:

The Bible says you are justified (saved) by faith in Jesus Christ. Galatians Chapter 2, Verse 16...

GALATIANS 2:16

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*...nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Mosaic Law but through faith in Christ Jesus...since by the works of the Law no flesh (no creature) will be justified.*

Roman Catholicism says justification is conferred by the sacrament of water baptism (CCC, 1992).

“If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone...let him be anathema (accursed).” (Council of Trent, Canon 9).

The Bible and the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church are saying opposite things. Romans Catholics call themselves Christians, yet their religion is not selling a relationship with the Lord.

If religion can't save you, can a relationship with the Lord save you? The Bible says yes in Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

*“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved by God...you and everyone in your household who also believes.”*

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 gospel message in the Word of God) ... and I am the resurrection life (eternal life) ... and no one comes to God the Father in heaven but through believing in Me.”*

Who is this God who saves you? The apostle Paul describes the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:3

*For I (the apostle Paul) delivered to all of 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

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

So, accept the invitation and heed the warning in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

JOHN 3:36

*"He who believes in 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."*

For those who embrace a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, an eternity in heaven is their eternal future...Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:8

*...we believers in Christ are of good courage, I say, and prefer to be absent from the body and to be at home face-to-face with the Lord.*

For those who embrace religion, Torments to the Lake of Fire is their destiny at the end of this life. Matthew, Chapter 13, Verses 40 to 42...

MATTHEW 13:40

*...just as tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.*

MATTHEW 13:41

*The Son of Man (the Lord Jesus Christ) will send forth His elect angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks (unbelievers)...and those who practice lawlessness (unbelievers)...*

MATTHEW 13:42

*...and the elect angels will throw unbelievers into the furnace of fire (The Lake of Fire) ... and in that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (for all eternity).*

Relationship or religion? It's your choice. Make the right choice RIGHT NOW...RIGHT WHERE YOU SIT...RIGHT THIS MOMENT!

**THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**

## **PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS**

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

#### *CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION*

Let's close with music! Jesus Christ was the One the "builders" rejected according to Acts, Chapter 4, Verse 11...

ACTS 4:11

*He (the Lord Jesus Christ) is the stone which was rejected by you builders...but He became the chief corner stone.*

As believers we are IN CHRIST. As Keith and Kristyn Getty sing...we are IN CHRIST ALONE. There's no better spiritual position to have.

#### **MUSIC**

##### **CLOSING SONG**

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

*IN CHRIST ALONE*

*Keith & Kristyn Getty*

##### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Let us pray...

Almighty God and Father...

Thank you for Your masterful orchestration of our position IN CHRIST...may we invite our friends to the same position in Your power...

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

#### **THE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Please make it a habit to listen to the announcements. They are posted separately. Keep current on the things going on and coming up in Barah Ministries.

#### **DISCUSSING THE LESSON AND PRAYER CIRCLE**



## **PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS**

**Lesson 4-June 1, 2025**

Join us Live or on Zoom Immediately Following the Lesson

### **GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS?**

Ask the Pastor

[pastor@barahministries.com](mailto:pastor@barahministries.com)

### **WANT US TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE?**

Send your request to [pastor@barahministries.com](mailto:pastor@barahministries.com)

### **KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD DAILY!**

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

[www.barahministries.com](http://www.barahministries.com)