

ROMANS
Lesson 32–May 24, 2020

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
a Christian Church

Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. At Barah Ministries we know this truth...that Jesus Christ is God. As the Lord He is 100% Deity... He is God the Son. He is also 100% human just like you and me, and His name is Jesus Christ. The Lord...God the Son...became flesh...Jesus Christ...and lived among us. He is the uniquely born One...the God-Man... 100% God and 100% man in one Person forever...He is the Sovereign God of the Universe...He is the Savior of the whole world...and He is the Jewish Messiah.

Those who make Barah Ministries their spiritual home are Christians. We are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and we have a deep, intimate, and personal relationship with the Lord...because Christianity is a relationship, not a religion...and the Lord Jesus Christ is a Person...He is not a thing... and He is not a concept. Just as we do with anyone whom we love, we spend time getting to know the Lord...and we do that through the study of His Word. You can't get to know the Lord without knowing His mind, and the Bible is His exact thinking.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON
Spiritually Speaking, is it Better to be Single or to be Married?

Happy Memorial Day Weekend!

On Monday, we celebrate Memorial Day. It is much more than just the unofficial start of summer, or a time to dust off the barbecue grill. On Memorial Day we celebrate those who made the ultimate sacrifice...those

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who shed blood...those who gave their lives in combat. Some of their bodies rest quietly beneath chalk-white headstones.

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE
To Those Who Gave Their Lives

My cousin is one of those people.

LEONARD BEATTY JR.
The Wall of Faces Slide

On November 20, 1968, not long after my thirteenth birthday, my cousin, Private First Class (PFC) Leonard Beatty, Jr. was killed in the Vietnam Conflict. He was an infantryman in the United States Army, and he died in ground combat. I remember him vividly. I remember his funeral. It was a really sad time for the family to see such a young member have his life snuffed out so many miles from home. I have an etching of his name from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC hanging above my office door. I think about him every day. I flash back to his face in the casket and I realize how precious the gift of life is that we have been given by our Lord. And even if some think the Vietnam Conflict was meaningless, his country ordered him to go, and he went. That's called integrity. That's called honor. I am proud to remember my cousin and the principle of freedom for which he stood. He brought credit to our great nation and our family.

There is nothing more profoundly American than Memorial Day. Throughout our history, American Servicemen and Servicewomen have willingly put their lives on the line to preserve its freedoms. The greatness of this Republic is founded on the selfless service of these ordinary heroes.

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE
Honoring Our Heroes

As you celebrate this weekend, please remember...

Memorial Day is the time in the United States when we remember the men and women who died while serving in the country's armed forces.

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And whether it is men and women from our country, or whether it is men and women from allied nations, we pause every year to give our tribute to those who imitated the Lord Jesus Christ by dying for us. Let's remember these brave people and the ideals that inspired them...especially the ideal that there IS something greater than self. This thought originated from and was demonstrated best by the Sovereign God of the Universe, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ when He died for our sins at the Cross.

There are no words that can ease the pain of the family members who have lost heroes in battle. Yet someone once said, "Grief shared is grief more easily borne." Today we honor the families of these heroes, and we grieve with them as we listen to THE ARMED FORCES MEDLEY, a collection of the fight songs of each military organization in the United States.

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

The Armed Forces Medley

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

Armed Forces Medley
U.S. Army

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

Armed Forces Medley
U.S. Marines

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

Armed Forces Medley
U.S. Navy

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Armed Forces Medley
U.S. Coast Guard

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MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

Armed Forces Medley
U.S. Air Force

MEMORIAL DAY TRIBUTE

God Bless America!

TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

Spiritually Speaking, is it Better to be Single or to be Married?

Seriously (SRSLY)? That’s not a question you have to ask married people! They would likely say “SINGLE” of course. But we’re not here for sarcasm. We’re here to learn what the Word of God, the mind of Christ has to offer on the subject. In today’s lesson the apostle Paul, who is single and celibate himself, offers the spiritual viewpoint, God’s viewpoint, of this important subject. Welcome to the study.

SONG INTRODUCTION

If Christianity could be summed up in a word, it would be LOVE. If it were summed up in two words, they would be UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. John, Chapter 15, Verse 13 says...

JOHN 15:13

Greater unconditional love has no one than this...than to lay down his life for his friends.

Like those we celebrate on Memorial Day, the Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life for us believers...His friends. He gave ALL of Himself to us. All He expects is the same in return...Mark, Chapter 12, Verse 30...

MARK 12:30

‘...and you shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart, and with ALL your soul, and with ALL your mind, and with ALL your strength.’

As Matthew West reminds us, the Lord wants us to be ALL IN.

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MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ
Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

ALL IN
Matthew West

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

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

Father, gratitude is the memory of the heart...thank you for those You have provided who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we enjoy every day...thank you for creating them to follow in the footsteps of Your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ...

Father, hold our current Servicemen and Servicewomen in Your strong arms and in Your righteous right hand...cover them with Your protection, Your presence, and Your provision...give them Your peace within their souls in the moments of battle...in grace, spare their lives...give them the courage to face each day...let their families feel Your love and support...and comfort those who still grieve for loved ones lost on the field of battle...those we remember this day and every day...

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

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Spiritually Speaking, is it Better to be Single or to be Married?

We're studying First Corinthians, Chapter 7 where Paul begins addressing problems brought up to him in the form of questions by Chloe and other people about the believers in Christ in the church at first-century Corinth, the Las Vegas of the time. Paul is interested in correcting erroneous thinking that is being housed in the minds of these new believers. Here is an overview of the topics in Chapter 7...

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FIRST CORINTHIANS
Chapter 7, Verses 1 to 5

Sexual Relations within Marriage

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Chapter 7, Verses 6 to 9

Single and Celibate or Marriage?

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Chapter 7, Verses 10 to 16

Instructions About Divorce
 For Married Christians
 For Christians Married to Unbelievers

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Chapter 7, Verses 17 to 24

A Guiding Principle:
Remain as You Are

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Chapter 7, Verses 25 to 40

The Advisability of Marriage
 For the Engaged
 For Widows

Some in the church at Corinth believed that sexual abstinence, celibacy for married couples, is a good idea. They intended to impose their will on others. So much of what happens within Christianity is similar in coercion...the desire to superimpose man's view of what is ideal over God's view of what is perfect. A reminder of last week's study concerning sexual relations within the marriage relationship...First Corinthians, Chapter 7, Verses 1 to 5...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:1

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NOW CONCERNING the things about which you wrote (such as), “Isn’t it the highest, most virtuous good for a married man not to touch a married woman?”

When we are a product of Satan’s teaching, when we think about sex, we are bad, dirty, and wrong. When we desire sex, we are bad, dirty, and wrong. When we have sex, we are bad, dirty, and wrong. When we talk about sex, we are bad, dirty, and wrong. Then he sets up the temptations to woo us to the very thing that is...you guessed it...bad, dirty, and wrong. And pathetically enough, we buy it hook, line and sinker. Clearly, bad, dirty, and wrong is not the viewpoint concerning sex from the Creator of sex, our Lord Jesus Christ. What is His thinking about it?

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:2

But because of the temptations of sexual immoralities (like fornication and purchasing sex for hire with strangers) ... each man is to have sex with his own wife...and each woman is to have sex with her own husband.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:3

The husband must fulfill his sexual obligation to his wife (by making himself available to her) ... and likewise also the wife must fulfill her sexual obligation to her husband (by making herself available to him).

Does anything about those directives sound bad, dirty, or wrong? Hardly.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:4

The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband has authority over her body...and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body...but the wife has authority over his body.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:5

So...STOP DEPRIVING ONE ANOTHER...except by mutual agreement for a time...so that you may withdraw to devote yourselves to prayer...and then have sexual intercourse again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

Now let’s look at the next section...First Corinthians, Chapter 7, Verses 6 to 9...the apostle Paul is giving spiritual insights on the single, celibate life versus the married life...

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FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:6

But this I say by way of concession, not of command.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:7

Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:8

But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 7:9

But if they do not have self-control, let them marry...for it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

Is it better to be single or to be married? When we return from our five-minute break, we'll take your offering, and then we'll learn what Paul and the Bible have to say on the matter.

FIVE MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

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If two words describe our God other than UNCONDITIONAL LOVE, the two words are HE GAVE. We have a God who is always giving. As we give to meet the God's needs for His flock, He reciprocates to overwhelm our needs... just as He demonstrated with the Philippian church...in Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 19...

PHILIPPIANS 4:19

And God the Father will supply all your needs (in abundance)...according to His glorious riches...for those in union with Christ Jesus.

Give generously at the offering just as He gave. Let's welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with the offering message.

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THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

PROVERBS 3:9

Honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your produce...

OFFERING VERSE

ROMANS 12:1

Therefore...I (Paul)...beg you...brethren (believers in Christ)...as you keep on being persuaded because of the many mercies of God...TO PRESENT YOUR BODIES (by choice, not by command...as) A LIVING AND HOLY SACRIFICE... acceptable to God the Father... which is your spiritual service...worship.

OFFERING SONG

THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU

David Bauer, Instrumental

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

Spiritually Speaking, is it Better to be Single or to be Married?

Welcome back! Let's look at the passage verse-by verse. God has a personal plan for each of us...an individual, custom made plan. Paul highlights this obviousness in this short section of First Corinthians, Chapter 7, Verses 6 to 9...

FIRST CORINTHINAS 7:6

Now I (Paul) say the following things...not a command...but as an agreement (a choice).

FIRST CORINTHINAS 7:7

I wish that all of you were as I myself am (single and celibate). However, each Christian has his very own grace gift from God...one has a gift in this manner...and another has a gift in that manner.

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Remember...the church at Corinth is a church with divisions and rivalries. Some people in the church are elitist, and as Paul will teach us later in this letter, some see their spiritual gift as “more important” than the spiritual gift of the “lesser” members of the congregation. The married, ascetic faction within the church, the ones who thought celibacy in marriage is a good idea, saw themselves as more spiritual and more honorable than others. The apostle Paul says, “Not true!”

Celibacy is not a normal human function for those who are created by God as sexual creatures to “be fruitful and multiply.” Celibacy does not come as a result of self-mastery as Roman Catholics might contend by asking their priests to be celibate. That is as cruel and as inhumane a doctrine as there can be for those who just can’t do it. The doctrine invites violation. If celibacy is a matter of discipline, it would imply that we can take credit for our works in this matter. Paul doesn’t think people should be trapped in a vow that goes against their very nature (“to burn”).

Because God works in ones...to each of us he given a single spiritual gift. Because Paul says his celibacy is a gift from God, it might have been included for some apostles as part of the grace gift package. However, since there were married apostles, it is likely that celibacy is not a spiritual gift, as God did not distribute it to every apostle. It may simply be a matter of God’s grace that Paul was able to be celibate...that he did not “burn.” The power to control ourselves comes from God. It is not self-generated.

FIRST CORINTHINAS 7:8

But I (Paul) say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them to remain single and celibate...even as I am single and celibate.

FIRST CORINTHINAS 7:9

But if they are not (ouk...absolutely not) exercising self-control (if they burn with sexual passion) ... let them marry (the imperative mood...a command) ... for it is better to marry than to burn (to be aflame with passion).

The idea of being aflame with passion comes from the Greek word *eros*. You may be familiar with the Greek god Cupid (whose name is Eros in Greek), who inspired a passion that could not be quenched. We get the English word erotic from *eros*. You may be familiar with the song by Sam Cooke...Cupid.

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CUPID by Sam Cooke

Cupid draw back your bow
And let your arrow flow
Straight to my lover's heart for me
Nobody but me!

Irresistible passion...passion that is aflame...is quenched temporarily by sexual intercourse. Celibacy doesn't quench passion, and sex for hire with strangers doesn't quench passion. Paul contends that the best choice for those with irresistible passion is marriage. In other words, celibacy is good for some and not good for others. If being single gives you angst, it is probably better to marry.

Also, Paul contends that marriage is less desirable than celibacy, but it's better than fornication. Celibacy is best for those who have received it as a grace gift from God just as Paul has received it.

How would you know if you have the gift of celibacy? If you burn...if you are constantly aflame with passion...then you don't have the gift of celibacy.

Having sexual desires is not a sin.

Having sexual urges takes the focus off of full time Christian service. Being married takes the focus off of full time Christian service. Why? Because both carry obligations. What sexual urges and marriage don't carry is guilt.

Is it better to be single and celibate, or is it better to marry? Only you know what is right for you! You determine what is right for you by using God's guidance.

GOD WANTS YOU!

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

The closing moments of our study are for the benefit of anyone who does not have a personal relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We want you to know that **GOD WANTS YOU.**

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If you closed your eyes in this life right this moment...and found yourself standing before the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...and the Lord asked you, “Why should I let you into heaven?” ...what would you say? Such a scenario would never happen...that’s not how God works...but let’s just suppose.

Many would talk about what a good person they are. Many would talk about all their good works...the things they have done to earn and to deserve entrance into heaven. The bible has bad news for good people who want to work their way into heaven...Romans, Chapter 4, Verse 4...

ROMANS 4:4

Now to the one who works for salvation, his payment is not paid as if it were a gracious favor...but his payment is paid because it is what he is due...it is paid to him as what he has earned because of his work.

The bad news is that your goodness as a person and your hard work are not good enough to get you into heaven, because they are not perfect. You were born with a problem. From the moment of your physical birth, God considered you a sinner. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 10...

ROMANS 3:10

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

Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23...

ROMANS 3:23

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

In addition to being a sinner, you commit personal sins. Sinners and those who sin simply don’t meet God’s absolute righteousness standard, because God requires perfection to get into heaven. So being a good person, or trying to work your way into heaven with good, but imperfect deeds, does not impress God at all. It’s not your fault that you’re a sinner from physical birth, but it is your circumstance. Unfortunately, being a sinner has a penalty. Romans, Chapter 6, Verse 23...

ROMANS 6:23

For the payment earned for being a sinner is both spiritual death and physical death...

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The Lord Jesus Christ Himself passed along this very bad news to a self-righteous Pharisee, Nicodemus, in John, Chapter 3, Verse 3...

JOHN 3:3

Jesus answered and said to Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you are born again (the spiritual birth) you cannot see the kingdom of God the Father (in heaven).”

This gospel message is the good news concerning what God did to fix the bad news for a sinner. Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

ROMANS 5:8

But God the Father demonstrates His own unconditional love toward all mankind...in that while we were yet sinners (while we were unrighteous, ungodly, unbelievers) ... Christ died (a sacrificial death) for us.

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

Absolute righteousness is the admission ticket to heaven and it is the key to eternal life...the resurrection life...and it is yours FREE OF CHARGE if you want it. Romans, Chapter 10, Verses 9 to 11...

ROMANS 10:9

...if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord (that He is God) ... and if you believe in your heart that God the Father raised Him from the dead...you will be saved...

ROMANS 10:10

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...for with the heart a person believes...resulting in the imputation of absolute righteousness (your admission ticket to heaven) ... and with the mouth a person confesses (choosing faith in Christ alone) ... resulting in salvation.

ROMANS 10:11

For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ will not be disappointed.”

If you closed your eyes in this life right this moment...and found yourself standing before the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...and the Lord asked you, “Why should I let you into heaven?” ...what would you say? It’s easy... 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.”

All you have to say is, “I believed in You when I was alive, Lord. That’s all it takes to get to heaven.” And you’d be right! So, heed the invitation and the warning of 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.”

There is a hell...a very real place...and it is described this way in the Bible... Matthew, Chapter 13, Verses 41 to 43...

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 commit lawlessness (unbelievers)...

MATTHEW 13:42

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

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MATTHEW 13:43

Then the righteous (believers in Christ) will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father...

For those without a relationship with Christ, He'll just ask them to step to the left and to take the "HELLIVATOR" ... just press down. Don't let that be you! Sinners need a Savior. That Savior is the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe in Him and you will be saved!

SONG INTRODUCTION

When we celebrate Memorial Day, we celebrate a basic tenant of Christianity...FREEDOM. Psalm 119, Verse 45...

PSALM 119:45

And I will walk in freedom for I seek Your precepts (the Word of God).

Galatians, Chapter 5, Verse 13...

GALATIANS 5:13

For you were called to freedom, brethren (believers in Christ) ... only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh...but through unconditional love serve one another.

Second Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verse 17...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 3:17

Now the Lord and the Spirit are the same in essence...and where the Holy Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

As believers in Christ, we have freedom...but for those in the world they remain in slavery to sin even though the Lord has purchased them from sin's slavery. Here's June Murphy speaking to unbelievers in her song...CALLING YOU TO FREEDOM.

CLOSING SONG

CALLING YOU TO FREEDOM

June Murphy

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PROVERBS 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. //In all your ways acknowledge Jesus, and He will make your paths straight.

DEUTERONOMY 31:8

“For the Lord is the one who goes ahead of you...He will be with you...He will not fail you or forsake you...so not fear or be dismayed.”

ISAIAH 30:18

The Lord longs to be gracious to you...He waits on high to have compassion on you...for the Lord is a God of justice...blessed are all those who wait for Him.

FIRST PETER 5:6-7

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time...//...slamming all your cares on His back, because He cares for you (God considers your problems to be His responsibility).

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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