

FIRST CORINTHIANS
Lesson 52–October 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. Welcome to this Bible lesson! Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verse 1 says...

HEBREWS 11:1 (Rory Translation)

...faith gives us confidence in the things we hope for...it's the assurance that God will deliver on the things we do not see.

We have a reliable God in whom we place our faith...and He always comes through for us! We study the Bible to learn the payoff for the faith placed in the Lord!

At Barah Ministries we know this truth...that Jesus Christ is God. As the Lord He is 100% Deity...He is God the Son, a member of the Triune Godhead. 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...100% God and 100% man in one Person forever. He is the Sovereign God of the Universe. He is the Jewish Messiah.

At Barah Ministries, we make a difference by teaching the Word of God from God's perspective and not from man's perspective. As those who make Barah Ministries our spiritual home, we are Christians. Being a Christian means we believe in the DEITY of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have a deep, intimate, and personal relationship with Him.

God has an enemy, Satan, whom God made "the ruler of this world." He is a

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liar who deceives the whole world, including you and me. He doesn't want us to get to know God, and he interferes with our chance to know God. Satan's strategy against the human race is religion, which is designed to make us either indifferent or antagonistic to God. Religion deceives many into thinking they are saved when they might not be. And it works!

The Word of God is the truth...and it informs us about Satan's insidious deceptions. As believers in Christ, we are in union with Christ, and we have the victory over Satan through our Lord, who has overcome the world.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON
Why I Don't Want to Go to Church

LESSON INTRODUCTION

In a word? People. You heard it right. People. Church would be great if it wasn't for people. That's what most people say. People who think this are missing the point. Wait...maybe they have a point...isn't there a Bible verse that says, "fixing our eyes on people?" Uh...NO! Here's what it says in Hebrews, Chapter 12, Verse 2...we are to keep on...

HEBREWS 12:2

...fixing our eyes on JESUS...the pioneer and perfecter of faith...who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross...despising the shame...and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God the Father.

Actually, going to church offers us two things, and in today's lesson, we'll see what those things are as we examine what was going on in the first-century church at Corinth *this* time.

SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's hear some music! As believers in Christ we get down on ourselves from time to time...and we wonder how God could love someone like us. But God never has a question about us. In Second Corinthians, Chapter 12, Verse 9, the apostle Paul says...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:9

...the Lord has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you...for divine power

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is perfected in human weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I (Paul) will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ (omnipotence) may be displayed (to the world) in me.

Yes...everything changed when we became believers in Christ...and our minds must change with it. Here’s the Rhett Walker Band to remind us in song what happened...WHEN MERCY FOUND ME.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

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

WHEN MERCY FOUND ME
Rhett Walker Band

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 giving us differences...different races...different nationalities...different genders...different socio-economic situations...different pressures...so that we can see your plan for mankind play out successfully in every circumstance...

Teach us how to value the differences in ourselves and in others...teach us how to treat people as we study Your Word...help us to make a difference in the lives of everyone we meet...especially by sharing the gospel message with them...

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

TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

Why I Don’t Want to Go to Church

People are why most people don't go to church. I can't even tell you how many times in my life I have heard people say. “I don’t go to church as

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much as I should." This comment is usually followed up by some comments about people. One of the more frequent comments pertains to how hypocritical Christians are. I am always happy to confirm their assessment. "You're right!" ... I say. And the Pastor is usually the biggest hypocrite of all! So why bother going to church? Why do you choose to come to Barah Ministries every week when you could be doing something else?

There are at least two reasons to go to church. First, to obey God's request through the apostle Paul in Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verses 23 to 25...

HEBREWS 10:23

Let us believers in Christ hold unswervingly to the hope we have as Christians without wavering...for He who promised is faithful...

The Lord keeps His promises...we need to be reminded of His promises **CONSTANTLY!**

HEBREWS 10:24

...and let us believers in Christ consider how to stimulate one another to unconditional love and good deeds...

HEBREWS 10:25

....not forsaking our own assembling together...as is the habit of some... instead, encouraging one another...and all the more as you see the day (the second coming of Christ) drawing near.

When a church is working well, that's exactly the benefit of it. We encourage each other to do the right things! Most Christians abandon their faith because of people! When a church isn't working well...when there are the inevitable horrible things that happen as we interact with other people, the church becomes a classroom for the practice of unconditional love. These two things aren't things available by merely watching online or listening online.

That's one of the reasons I admire this congregation so much. We go out of our way to be together and we go out of our way to stimulate each other to good deeds. When we have difficulties, we work them out. Especially, I admire the effort of the non-resident congregation members....to come here for homecoming...to keep in touch with us and with each other...to gather

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on their own...especially our friends in the Pacific Northwest who host a conference every year and who gather regularly in their own homes, who pray with us every week via the internet, emulating the first-century churches.

Why don't people come to church? People. Why ought people come to church? People! You can't grow alone and you can't grow sitting at home.

Well, the next passage we are studying in First Corinthians, Chapter 11 is all about people and the hurtful things that people can do. Just as a reminder the whole letter to the Corinthians was written because of people-problems in the church. Remember First Corinthians, Chapter 1, Verses 10 and 11?

FIRST CORINTHIANS 1:10

Now I (Paul) exhort you fellow believers in Christ, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree...and that there be no rivalries among you...instead that you be made complete...in the same mind and in the same purpose.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 1:11

For I (Paul) have been informed concerning you, my brethren (in the church at Corinth) ... by Chloe's people...that there are rivalries among you.

Let's see what's next in this dram filled church...First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verses 17 to 34...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:17

But in giving this instruction (the instruction in verses 1 to 16)...I do not praise you...because you come together not for the better but for the worse.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:18

For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you...and in part I believe it.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:19

For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.

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FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:20

Therefore, when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:21

...for in your eating, each one takes his own supper first...and one is hungry and another is drunk.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:22

What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this, I will not praise you.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:23

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:24

...and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:25

In the same way, He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:26

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:27

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:28

But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:29

For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does

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not judge the body rightly.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:30

For this reason, many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:31

But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:32

But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:33

So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:34

If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.

As we study this passage, what you'll notice is this structure...

THE STRUCTURE:

First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verses 17 To 34

The People Abuses Going on in the Church (Verses 17-22)

The Tradition Celebrated in the Church (Verses 23-26)

Paul's Recommended Solution for the Abuses (Verse 27-34)

When we return from our five-minute break, we'll take your offering, and then we'll begin our verse by verse study of this passage. Remember, people who need people are the luckiest people in the world!

FIVE MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns

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TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

Why I Don’t Want to Go to Church

When you give, many people that you don’t know, all around the world, receive the benefit. By giving, you display God’s heart through your generosity. Second Corinthians, Chapter 8, Verse 9 says...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...that though He was rich (as Deity)...yet for your sake He became poor (as true humanity)...so that you...through His poverty (the Cross)...might become rich.

Let’s keep on being generous like the Lord is generous. Let’s welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with today’s offering message.

THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

SECOND TIMOTHY 4:3

For the time will come when the men of God will not endure sound doctrine...but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own (doctrinal) desires...

OFFERING SONG

THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU

Don Moen

TODAY’S BIBLE LESSON

Why I Don’t Want to Go to Church

People!

If you ask most people who don’t go to church that is what they would say. “People at a church are ‘supposed to be’” ...they might say. Yeah? They aren’t.

In answering the questions being asked of him about the conduct of the

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believers in the first century Corinthian church which he founded, the apostle Paul has been diplomatic up to this point. Now his answers turn to rebuke. What is a rebuke?

REBUKE

The expression of very strong disapproval...a reprimand.

The believers in the church at first-century Corinth, even though they are now Christians, are still engaging in pagan practices and other conduct that was part of Greco-Roman culture. This self-focused culture had exactly opposite values of the unconditionally loving church Paul wished to create. It's much like what happens today. We come here to Barah Ministries to love each other...we come here to enjoy fellowship...then on the way home we're yelling at people on the freeway.

In the next passage, First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verses 17 to 34, the subject matter Paul is addressing involves disrespecting The Lord's Supper Celebration. In disrespecting the celebration, the people in the church were demonstrating a disrespect for God that manifested itself in indifference toward each other. They were not celebrating The Lord's Supper as the Lord intended...as a celebration of unity...a celebration of unconditional love...and a celebration of sacrifice for others.

In disrespecting the celebration, the people in the church were demonstrating a disrespect for each other. Those who had plenty were not sharing with those who had none. As was typical in the Greco-Roman culture there was social class distinction...an "I'm better than you," country club type atmosphere...there was social climbing...there were even seating differences. <FIRST CLASS vs. COACH>

In disrespecting the celebration, the people in the church were demonstrating a disrespect for themselves as well. They were getting drunk and coming to church. The church members were still immature...still acting like the world. Do you remember what Paul said to them in First Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 3?

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:1a

And so I (Paul), brethren (fellow believers in Christ), could not speak to you

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Corinthians believers as I would speak to spiritual persons (those with the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit...believers in Christ) ...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:1b

...but (I have to speak to you) as (if I am speaking) to men of flesh (those without the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit...unbelievers) ... as if I am speaking to infants in union with Christ.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:2

I gave you milk to drink, not solid food...for you were not yet able to digest solid food. Indeed, even now you are not yet able to digest solid food...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:3

...for you are still (acting as if you are) fleshly (acting like unbelievers). For since there keeps on being jealousy and strife (persisting) among you, are you not fleshly (acting like unbelievers...being selfish) ... and are you not walking (in lifestyle) like mere men (as if you are not spirit-filled persons)?

STRUCTURE: The Abuses...What are they?

First Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 17...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:17

But in giving this instruction (about women and their headwear when praying and prophesying in the first sixteen verses of chapter 11), I do not praise you...because you come together (AS a church) not for the betterment (the good of all of you)...but you come together for the worse (to harm each other).

Remember...in this divine age...The Church Age...there are no sacred buildings...each of us is a temple of God the Holy Spirit and our bodies house the indwelling Trinity. Paul is not highlighting activity that is going on “IN” the church...he’s pointing out abuses that are happening “AS” a church. The people in the church were treating each other poorly. Perhaps they met in the houses of the wealthier members of the church. Some people...the RIGHT people...got to sit in the dining room...in what was called the TRICLINIUM (Latin for “the place of the three couches” which could seat nine people)...while others were relegated to the lesser part of the house...the atrium. Black Lives Matter! You thought this kind of childish

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conduct is a recent occurrence in the world? This kind of conduct is all you can expect in the kingdom of a divisive tyrant...the enemy of God...Satan... who seeks to divide the whole world. That is why all this pseudo-consciousness about the importance of diversity and social justice and racial equality will go absolutely nowhere, just like it has always gone nowhere. The only way to change diversity, racial equality and social justice is to change it in your own head, one person at a time. Amen? No one outside of you can grant you freedom. You're free when you decide to be.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:18

For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you...and I (Paul) believe the report.

In the Corinthian church, there were the “HAVES” and the “HAVE NOTS.” Maybe Corinth was actually the Phoenix of the ancient world, not the Las Vegas, because our socio-economic make-up in Phoenix is exactly the same as in Corinth...the “HAVES” and the “HAVE NOTS.”

There is a competitiveness in the flesh of human beings. We want to be better than others. We can't just enjoy the differences between us and others. We get jealous. We get envious. We covet. We don't want what we have. We don't want what we earn. We want what everyone else has with no work. We want to have things handed to us.

The world doesn't work that way. Our success is not based on our environment. Our success is not based on our circumstances. Our success comes from our choices. As a result, we each have different education levels...different religious experiences...different financial acumen... different politics...different expectations...different experiences...different success in relationships. Yet we don't value our uniqueness. We covet sameness. What a pity. I'd actually prefer to be with the real people in the atrium rather than being with the stuffy people in the triclinium.

Competitiveness between people is what leads to rivalries and divisions.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:19

For (it's inevitable) there must also be factions among you, so that those who are elite may become evident among you.

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This is a verse that is taken out of context quite often...and out of context the meaning of this verse changes dramatically. Most people see this verse as a commentary on what inevitably happens in congregations...there are factions...some people leave...and the people who stay are the cool ones. That's not what this verse says in context at all.

The verse actually says that if the Corinthian believers didn't set up factions, the elite would blend in with the rabble. The Triclinium made it obvious that there were the "HAVES" and the "HAVE NOTS." The food served in the Triclinium was the best...the rabble ate cake! The food and the wine served allowed the elite to stand out. These were the things typical in the Greco-Roman culture. Paul is appalled by it (the pun is intended).

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:20

Therefore, when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:21

...for in your eating each one takes his own supper first (in front of everyone else)...and one is hungry (the poor ones with no food or less food) and another is drunk (the elite ones with the expensive wine).

The Corinthian believers are imitating the world and its selfishness! The Lord's Supper in the first-century church was part of a larger meal. People would bring their own food and wine to the gathering place. What would make sense in such celebration is that there was one room, one time to gather, and all the eating and socializing would be shared...done together in a theme of unity, consistent with The Lord's Supper Celebration's intention. Exactly the opposite happened. The poorer members of the congregation often didn't have any food, and the elite members weren't sharing. Paul is mad about this because it violates the spirit of The Lord's Supper Celebration. Thus, Paul's rebuke!

FIRST CORINTHIANS 11:22

Wait what?! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing (the "have-nots")? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this matter I will not praise you.

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If we want people to come to church...we have to treat people like people. There is, by the way, one other benefit of coming to church. It's a great place to gather with real people who are learning from a real Pastor who is teaching the real truth of the Word of God. It's a great place to grow your relationship with Christ and to equip yourself for another week in the world.

GOD WANTS YOU!

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

You matter to God. 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 to perish (in the Lake of Fire) but for all to come to repentance (a voluntary change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

To God's enemy, Satan...the ruler of this world, you don't matter at all. First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 8 says...

FIRST PETER 5:8

Be of sober spirit...be on the alert! Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

You are the "someone" on Satan's list.

The closing moments of our study are for those of you who do not have a personal relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's for those of you who may be wondering what is going to happen to you when you close your eyes in this life.

Satan...the enemy of God dislikes you so much that he doesn't want you to be saved. He doesn't want you to be with God in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. He wants you to be with him in the Lake of Fire. He wants you so badly that he sends false teachers to deceive you. In Matthew, Chapter 7, Verse 15...the Lord Himself warns about this...

MATTHEW 7:15

"Beware of the false prophets...who come to you in sheep's clothing...but

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inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

The bad news is that all of us are born in a state of unrighteousness. We are born physically alive and spiritually dead as ungodly, unrighteous unbelievers. **It’s not our fault, but it is our circumstance.** In First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 22, the bible says...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22a

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

This gospel message is your guide to the good news that rescues you from the kingdom of darkness you were born into, inviting you to be born again to the spiritual life available in God’s kingdom of light.

Satan, the enemy of God, who is a very real being, not a concept... sends false teachers to give you a false gospel message. For example, if you’ve ever had Jehovah’s Witnesses come to your door, they are evangelizing to you. If you’ve ever had members of the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints come to your door, they are evangelizing to you. Unfortunately, both of those groups are inviting you to believe in a false gospel message so you can share eternity with them in the Lake of Fire! Neither of these groups believes that Jesus Christ is God. I have family members who are part of one of these religions, and in spite of my best evangelism efforts, my family members don't want to hear anything that God has to say to them through me.

Many parents are leading their children to an eternity in the Lake of Fire. If you want to assess whether or not you’re a good parent, just ask yourself a simple question...are you influencing your children to have a relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Sovereign God of the Universe? He is the **ONLY WAY** to get to heaven according to 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...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.”

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If a gospel message makes it sound like you have to work to get to heaven, it's a false gospel message. Romans, Chapter 11, Verse 6 says we don't have to work to be saved...

ROMANS 11:6

...if salvation is by grace (a free gift from God) ... and of course it is...it is no longer on the basis of works...otherwise grace (as a free gift) is no longer grace (it is not free).

In fact, Romans, Chapter 4, Verse 4 says you CAN'T work for salvation...

ROMANS 4:4

Now to the one who works for salvation, his wage for his work is not credited to his account as a favor from the grace of God, but his wage is credited as what is due for the work.

Unfortunately, your hardest work is not perfect enough to earn you a spot in heaven. Do you want to get to heaven free of charge? Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31 says...

ACTS 16:31

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

John, Chapter 3, Verse 36 warns...

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.”

John, Chapter 3, Verses 16 and 17 highlight Jesus' mission...

JOHN 3:16

“For God the Father loved the world unconditionally...and He loved the world so much...that He gave His uniquely born Son (the God-man...the Lord Jesus Christ...to be crucified on a Cross) ... so that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but has eternal life.”

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JOHN 3:17

For God the Father did not send God the Son (the Lord Jesus Christ) into the world to judge the world...but the Father sent the Son into the world that the world might be saved through Him.

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 from God...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...

If you'd like, you can spend the eternal state with God's enemy, Satan, in the Lake of Fire...OR...you can have the free gift of eternal life right this minute! There's no time to waste! God wants you. If you want to go to heaven when you close your eyes in this life, simply believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved! Take His word for it concerning salvation, and the resurrection life is yours free of charge!

SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's close with music! First Corinthians, Chapter 10, Verse 13 says...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you believers in Christ but such as is common to humans...and God Father is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to endure...but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to handle it.

Our God is ALWAYS true to His word...and the word used to describe His integrity is the word FAITHFUL. Here's June Murphy to remind us that HE'S BEEN FAITHFUL!

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CLOSING SONG

HE'S BEEN FAITHFUL

June Murphy

CLOSING VERSES

A Doxology of Praise to Our God

ROMANS 8:37

...in every situation imaginable, believers in Christ keep on overwhelmingly conquering through the Lord who loves us unconditionally.

ROMANS 8:38

For I (Paul) am convinced that neither death nor life...nor (elect) angels nor principalities (demons...fallen angels)...nor things present nor things to come...nor powers...

ROMANS 8:39

...nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to sever us from the unconditional love of God the Father, who is for us through our union with Christ Jesus our Lord.

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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