

**HOMECOMING WEEKEND**  
**September 25-27, 2020**

**Welcome To**  
**BARAH MINISTRIES**  
*a Christian Church*

**Rory Clark**  
**Pastor-Teacher**

Good Evening!

Welcome home! You know where you are! You're at Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. In Matthew, Chapter 10, Verses 34 to 36, the Lord warns His disciples of the trials of being a disciple...

MATTHEW 10:34

*"Do not think that I (the Lord Jesus Christ) came to bring peace on the earth...I did not come to bring peace, but I came to bring a sword."*

MATTHEW 10:35

*"For I came to set a man against his father...and a daughter against her mother...and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law..."*

MATTHEW 10:36

*"...and a man's enemies will be the members of his household."*

There is a set of tribulations that are a means of instruction for followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The pain of these trials pierces even the veil of the family, so much so that occasionally a man's enemies will be within His own household. So it was in the Lord's household...so it is in ours. This has certainly been true for me...in my own nuclear family, in my extended family and even in my marriage families...but not because of Christ. Our trials and tribulations were manufactured in spite of our relationship with Christ...quite a bitter pill to swallow.

Knowing this from eternity past, my gracious God and Father gave me this family...the Barah Family...a group of people who choose to be together. It has been amazing to see Him sort out the pretenders...the Judas characters, leaving a group of people to love one other and to love others by reflecting

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the Lord's love for each of us. Getting together at ANY time with all of you is one of the sweetest things I am privileged to do in this life. Welcome home! I am so glad to see you that the joy can't really be expressed in words. I'm sure our time together will convince you of my deep appreciation for you and for my affection for your presence in my life.

### TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

#### God the Father is Someone You Can Trust

##### *LESSON INTRODUCTION*

In tonight's lesson we'll get to know God the Father...Galatians, Chapter 2, Verse 26 says...

##### GALATIANS 3:26

*For you believers in Christ are all sons of God the Father through faith in Christ Jesus.*

We are our Father's sons...and every great son knows his father. God the Son is no exception. John, Chapter 1, Verse 18...

##### JOHN 1:18 NIV Version

*No one has seen God the Father at any time...no one except the only begotten One...the Son of the Father...who is Himself God and who is in closest relationship with God the Father...God the Son has made God the Father known to us.*

What do you know about your Father? Did you know that He plans for you...that He provides for you...and that he protects you? If not, you're in for a treat.

##### *SONG INTRODUCTION*

Jeremiah, Chapter 29, Verses 12 and 13 tells us on eof the great things we can trust about our God and Father...He listens to and HE answers our prayers...

##### JEREMIAH 29:12

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*“Then you will call upon Me and you will come and you will pray to Me... and I will listen to you.”*

JEREMIAH 29:13

*“You will seek Me and you will find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”*

Here’s June Murphy to sing a song she wrote and produced...WE PRAY TO THE FATHER.

**MUSIC AND REFLECTION**

*Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ*

Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

*WE PRAY TO THE FATHER*

*June Murphy*

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

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

Almighty God and Father...thank you for being the only Father I would ever need...thank you for the words of truth that lead me to know You...thank you for your PERFECTION, especially the perfect and unconditional love You have for all of us...thank you for the perfect PLAN you created for each of our lives...thank you for the perfect PROVISION from Your Almighty hands which leave us with no other possible conclusion other than that You love us...which for me is the greatest feeling a boy can have, when a boy knows He is loved by His Father...and thank you for the tears of gratitude that flowed from my eyes when You revealed yourself to me in prayer, letting me know that You have been here for me all along...

...help us to get to know You this weekend...help us to have a conversation about You...help us to praise You as You deserve for all that You have done for us in the background...be present to us as we learn about You...

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

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name...Amen.

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**  
**God the Father is Someone You Can Trust**

One of the greatest questions I've ever been asked as a Pastor is , "What is God the Father doing right now?" As a fatherless boy whose father left his mother thirty days after they got married when she told him she was pregnant, I never had much concern for my human father, thus no real concern for getting to know God the Father. I didn't trust men.

The question, "What is God the Father doing right now?" stimulated an inquiry that helped have a deep intimate and personal relationship with God the Father. Every time the word "God" surfaces in the New Testament, my eyes and my heart perk up because this reference is usually to God the Father, and I am excited about the next thing I am going to learn about what He is doing right now. This question sent me on a lifetime desire to get to know God the Father personally. If you haven't, I invite you to come with me on this amazing journey as well, starting this weekend.

Three things God the Father has done, and keeps on doing, are PLANNING for us, PROVIDING for us, and PROTECTING us. These three things are the manifestation of who He is, articulated well by the apostle John in First John, Chapter 4, Verses 7 to 14...

**FIRST JOHN 4:7**

*Beloved, let us love one another unconditionally, for unconditional love is from the source of God the Father...and everyone who loves unconditionally is a born again one of God the Father...and everyone who loves unconditionally knows God the Father.*

**FIRST JOHN 4:8**

*The one who does not love unconditionally does not know God the Father, for God the Father IS unconditional love (in His very Person).*

With physical eyes, no one has ever seen God the Father. Yet He is indwelling us, and we can see Him with our spiritual eyes...we can sense Him from inside of us...and the way we sense Him is when His unconditional love is manifest in us to others.

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### FIRST JOHN 4:9

*From this source the unconditional love of God the Father was manifested in us...in that God the Father has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we believers in Christ might live the resurrection life through Him.*

### FIRST JOHN 4:10

*In this is unconditional love...not that we loved God the Father unconditionally...but that He loved us unconditionally and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

God the Father's love for us is an initiative...not a response to some stimulus coming from us. The Father did not have to be prompted to love us unconditionally.

### FIRST JOHN 4:11

*Beloved, if God the Father loved us so unconditionally, and of course He did, we also ought to love one another unconditionally.*

### FIRST JOHN 4:12

*No one has seen God the Father at any time...if we love one another unconditionally, God the Father abides indwelling us, and His unconditional love is perfected in us.*

### FIRST JOHN 4:13

*By this love we know that we abide in God the Father and that He is indwelling us, because God the Father has given us of His Spirit.*

Intimate acquaintance with God the Father is what produces unconditional love in us through the fruit of the Spirit.

### FIRST JOHN 4:14

*We have seen and we testify that God the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

This is the ultimate expression and demonstration of His love for us. PLANNING, PROVIDING, and PROTECTING are perfect gifts from a perfect God because there are no three gifts that make the recipients of them feel loved more than PLANNING, PROVIDING, and PROTECTING. To

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know someone has thought about you enough in advance to plan for you... that someone is willing to provide for you...that someone is there to protect you when you need it...these are securities that can't be bought. They can only be appreciated and enjoyed.

God the Father is a PLANNER. He has premeditated all of divine history to bring about the exact outcome He desires, especially all the things He wants for you personally. In a stirring testimony concerning God the Father, inspired by God the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter proclaimed in Acts, Chapter 2, Verses 22 to 24...

ACTS 2:22

*“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God the Father with miracles and wonders and signs which God the Father performed through Jesus in your midst, just as you yourselves know—”*

ACTS 2:23

*“...this Man (Jesus)...delivered over by the predetermined PLAN and by the foreknowledge of God the Father...you nailed to a Cross by the hands of godless men (unbelievers) and put Him to death.”*

ACTS 2:24

*“But God the Father raised Jesus up again (from the dead)...putting an end to the agony of death...since it was impossible for Jesus to be held in death's power.”*

God the Father's PLAN provided the means of our salvation.

God the Father is a PROVIDER. In Ephesians, Chapter 1, Verses 3 to 6 the apostle Paul introduces us to His provisions...

EPHESIANS 1:3

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in union with Christ...*

EPHESIANS 1:4

*...just as God the Father chose us to be in union with Christ before the foundation of the world...that we would be holy and blameless before the Father. In unconditional love...*

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### EPHESIANS 1:5

*...God the Father predestined us believers in Christ to adoption as adult sons through Jesus Christ to Himself...according to the kind intention of the Father's will...*

### EPHESIANS 1:6

*...to the praise of the glory of His grace...which God the Father freely bestowed on us in the Beloved (the divinely loved one, Jesus Christ).*

As David so aptly pointed out in Psalm 23, because of the Father's provision, we cannot lack anything.

God the Father is a PROTECTOR. David proclaims in Psalm 68, Verses 5 and 6...

### PSALM 68:5

*God the Father is the father of the fatherless...a PROTECTOR for the widows is God the Father in His holy habitation.*

### PSALM 68:6

*God the Father makes a home for the lonely...He leads the prisoners (the oppressed) into prosperity...only the rebellious dwell in a desolate land.*

The Father keeps us safe from every sort of malady. When we return from our five-minute break, we'll listen to a familiar story that is a testimony to God the Father's character.

## **FIVE MINUTE BREAK**

*NOBODY*

*Casting Crowns*

## **TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

### **God the Father is Someone You Can Trust**

The Prodigal Son is a parable, a short story that illustrates a truth, and it appears to be a story about two sons. Perhaps spiritual eyes see it differently. There are many things to learn about the legalistic son and the lascivious son (the prodigal), but hidden in the story, just as God the Father

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seems hidden to us, is the attitude and the character of an amazing father, an attitude and character that takes your breath away.

Luke, Chapter 15 actually contains three parables. The parable we will reflect on is the third of three. Jesus is telling the parables for the benefits of whiners, the scribes and Pharisees, who are quite upset that Jesus is giving attention to tax-collectors and prostitutes. Luke, Chapter 15, Verses 1 and 2...

LUKE 15:1

*Now all the tax collectors and the sinners (unbelievers and prostitutes) were coming near Jesus to listen to Him.*

LUKE 15:2

*Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man EAGERLY LOOKS FOR sinners and eats with them."*

Jesus wasn't just eating with the tax collectors and sinners...he kept on looking forward to being with them! They were His peeps! Now the third story...

LUKE 15:3

*So Jesus told them this parable, saying...*

LUKE 15:11

*"A man had two sons."*

LUKE 15:12

*"The younger of the sons said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that falls to me (before you are dead).' So the father divided his wealth between the two sons."*

LUKE 15:13

*"And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living."*

Loose living means reckless and self-destructive living. He wasted all his money.



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LUKE 15:14

*“Now when the younger son had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.”*

The younger son didn't dig a well before he was thirsty...he was “living in the moment” rather than putting some of the money aside for a rainy day.

LUKE 15:15

*“So, the younger son went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country (he got a job), and the citizen sent the younger son into his fields to feed swine.”*

When we detach from God, we attach ourselves to the self-destruction and the slavery and the misery of captivity to idols, like people, sex, drugs, alcohol, and electronic devices...to name a few idols.

LUKE 15:16

*“The younger son would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating...and no one was giving anything to him.”*

He was on his own, the worst place we can be.

LUKE 15:17

*“But when the younger son came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger!’”*

In his poverty, the younger son realized many things including the generosity of his father. Then he made a declaration to himself...

LUKE 15:18

*“I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight...’”*

LUKE 15:19

*“...I am no longer worthy to be called your son...make me as one of your hired men.’ ”*

The younger son wanted to go from being a son to being a servant.

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LUKE 15:20

*“So, the younger son got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.”*

This is the attitude of a planner, a provider, and a protector.

LUKE 15:21

*“And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight...I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ”*

LUKE 15:22

*“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on my younger son, and put a signature ring on his hand (the checkbook) and put sandals on his feet (a sign of wealth)...’ ”*

LUKE 15:23

*“...and bring the fattened calf...kill it...and let us eat and celebrate...”*

LUKE 15:24

*“...for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again...he was lost and has been found.’ And they began to celebrate.”*

What was the other son’s reaction to the father’s generosity? Envy!  
Arrogance! Ingratitude! Luke, Chapter 15, Verse 25...

LUKE 15:25

*“Now the father’s older son was in the field, and when the older son came and approached the house, he heard music and saw dancing.”*

LUKE 15:26

*“And the older son summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be.”*

LUKE 15:27

*And the servant said to the older son, ‘Your brother has come home, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received your brother back safe and sound.’ ”*

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LUKE 15:28

*“But the older son became angry and was not willing to go into the house... and his father came out and began pleading with him to come in.”*

LUKE 15:29

*“But the older son answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours... and yet you have never given me even a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends...’ ”*

Perhaps true...but the father did give the older son half of his estate even before he died! Then the older son continues...

LUKE 15:30

*“...but when this son of yours came home, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ ”*

LUKE 15:31

*“And the father said to his older one, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours.’ ”*

LUKE 15:32

*“But we had to celebrate and rejoice...for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live...and your brother was lost and has been found.’ ”*

What does this story display about the father’s character? The Father seeks and saves the lost...the Father finds...and the Father has great joy when a lost one is found.

Thank you, Father, for Your PLANS...for Your PROVISION, and for Your PROTECTION. Most of all thank you for the ultimate gift a father gives... HIS PRESENCE. Thank you for being a very present help in our lives.

*SONG INTRODUCTION*

I certainly did not grow up feeling my father wanted me. God the Father filled in the gap. Here’s June Murphy to sing a beautiful song to all the fatherless ones...FATHER I’M YOURS.

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**CLOSING SONG**

*FATHER I'M YOURS*

*June Murphy*

**CLOSING VERSES**

A Doxology of Praise to Our God

PROVERBS 3:5-6

*Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ 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 do 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 those who wait for Him.*

FIRST PETER 5:6-7

*Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may promote 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!

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Thanks for listening!  
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