

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 396–January 14, 2018**

**BARAH MINISTRIES**  
*a Christian Church*  
**Announcements**  
**January 14, 2018**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!  
Annie Grace Davis  
January 14, 2018

Three years old?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!  
Larry Collins  
January 17, 2018

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!  
Deacons Meeting  
January 18, 2018  
1:45P-8:00P

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!  
Next Lord's Supper Celebration  
February 4, 2017

MARK YOUR CALENDARS  
HOMECOMING  
April 27-29, 2018

Get your flights now while they are inexpensive! Pastor John Farley of Lighthouse Bible Church in Florida will join us for the weekend.

CONGRATULATIONS!  
Ordination Anniversary  
10 Years in the Pulpit  
Pastor Rory Clark  
January 13, 2018

As many of you know, yesterday was the tenth anniversary of my ordination as a Pastor. On January 13, 2008 in Tucson, Arizona, Pastor John Farley led

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a group of men who laid on hands in approval of my promotion to the office of Pastor-Teacher. I've been teaching the Word of God to willing and unwilling hearers since 1999...so for nearly two decades the Word of God has been at the forefront of my mind.

What I am proudest of, as a Pastor, is the sacrifice. I am privileged to have been hurt over and over again, very deeply, by those closest to me during this journey...by those who claim to be my friends...hurt so much that I am absolutely certain I know what is meant by whoever first quipped this expression...“You've never really been screwed until you've been screwed by a Christian.”

What I learned from the pressure is to take a punch. This week I went to a Northwestern basketball game in Chicago, and I ran into one of my assistant coaches when I was on the team, Rich Falk. He was smiling from ear to ear as he recalled the days when he was teaching me basketball. One of the things he said was, “I taught you how to take a punch!” And he did. I didn't like to be fouled. After two weeks playing him one on one every day after practice, I came to expect that fouls were a nuisance to be expected every time I went up for a shot. Pastoring has the exact same challenge. There is never a time when a Pastor isn't taking a punch, and in a decade of taking punches I simply have come to expect them and to enjoy them.

I took this job voluntarily, and I am glad I did.

I've made just about every mistake a person can make as a Pastor, and I keep on making mistakes. One of the biggest mistakes is being a personal Pastor who is willing to mingle with the congregation and to let the congregation see the real person. There have been several people who have come and gone in Barah Ministries, and many leave because they see the real person. When they uncover my flaws, they sew division, they stab me in the back, and they leave.

It has been my voluntary privilege to keep on getting up from each assault and to gently hum in my head the Elton John tune...“I'm still standing after all this time...picking up the pieces of my life without you on my mind.” The reason I am so happy inside for these tribulations and insults and persecutions is that I know they had to pass through the permissive will of my Lord and Savior, the Sovereign God of the Universe, Jesus Christ. It is

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with gratitude and pleasure that I sacrifice for Him and suffer for Him in the ways He allows.

What really makes the job of Pastor sweet, though, is the loyal men and women who are the reason I am still standing. These are the people who have held me up through the years so that I *could* keep standing. You've held me up with your wallets, with your unconditional love, with your hands, with your pep talks, with whatever it took to let me know that you were on my side and you weren't going anywhere. You wouldn't believe, if I told you, the unconditional support I get from so many in Barah Ministries. I will not mention the people by name, but I love you so much for being willing to love me back.

I don't want to be admired. I want you to admire Christ reflected through me. I am who I am because of Him...that is not modesty...I am a nothing that He is making into something...I am pleased to share in His afflictions... I am happy to be a "whosoever" Pastor who has been trained to overlook the faults of others and to see no man according to the flesh.

I don't want to be thanked. It is my privilege to share my selfish passion to know my Lord through the study of His Word, and to share it with you.

In heaven, I will get to present many of you to the Lord, "complete in Christ." Wow! From the bottom of my heart, I thank those of you who have stuck around through thick and thin. I know it is important for you to serve the Lord, but you have chosen to serve me as well...and you have decided to hang in there...to offer me the components of a great relationship and a great marriage. I am confident that He who began a good work in us will keep on perfecting it. Again...thank you for this indescribable gift.

A NEW HOME FOR  
BARAH MINISTRIES  
Targeting January 8, 2021

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