

God Cares For You 11 - July 19, 2015 - Do You Take Advantage of God?

ANNOUNCER INTRODUCTION (0:30)

Welcome to “God Cares For You,” a series of radio broadcasts featuring Pastor Rory Clark of Barah Ministries...a worldwide Christian Church in Mesa, AZ...Pastor Rory teaches the truth of the Word of God in a simple way that is easy to apply to your everyday life...here’s Pastor Rory Clark.

SHOW TEASER (1:00)

You’ve probably heard the term “take advantage of,” as in, “I feel like he has taken advantage of me.” When someone “takes advantage of you” they use you for selfish ends. For example, a landlord has your damage deposit, and when you move out, the landlord keeps more of the damage deposit than is rightfully his, knowing that there is little you can do about it. Frankly, we usually don’t like it when someone “takes advantage of” us.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, WANTS you to take advantage of Him. The Lord provides you with a set of privileges that would stagger your imagination if you understood them fully. One of the things He wants you to take advantage of is salvation...the Lord wants you to be saved. In today’s lesson we’ll see some of the ways we can take advantage of God, because God wants you to use Him for selfish ends. Welcome to the program.

TODAY’S LESSON (24:50 with the song) **Do You Take Advantage of God?**

We are the studying the Consequences of Sin section of Paul’s letter to the Romans, a passage that extends from Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 18 to Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 20...and we’re in the “home stretch” of our study of this passage...the final twenty verses. Let’s listen to the next passage of study together...and a question I’d like you to consider after this passage is...“Do you take advantage of God?” Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 8...

Romans 3:1

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Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision?

Romans 3:2

Great in every respect! First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Romans 3:3

What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it?

Romans 3:4

May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, “That You may be justified in Your words, and prevail when You are judged.”

Romans 3:5

But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.)

Romans 3:6

May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world?

Romans 3:7

But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

Romans 3:8

And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), “Let us do evil that good may come?” Their condemnation is just.

So I ask you, “Do you take advantage of God?”

What comes to mind when I think of the question is the golfer who doesn't use a tee...or parents who don't hire outside expertise to train their children...or executives who don't use a coach...or homeowners who don't bring in home services experts on jobs outside their expertise...like bringing in a professional painter to paint or a plumber to plumb.

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The Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the Universe, gives His creatures distinctive advantages...do you take advantage of them? For example, the Lord offers the free gift of salvation to anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 17...

Romans 1:17

For in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ the righteousness from God the Father is revealed (negating self-righteousness), from faith in the Lord for salvation to faith in the Lord for all things; as it is written, "BUT THE (one who wants to be a) RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH (by placing his confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation)."

The way to heaven is righteousness, and believers in Christ are credited with righteousness by God at the moment they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation...thus they transition from being sinners to being saints.

For those of you who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ...do you take advantage of everything that the Lord Jesus Christ provides to His saints? If you're being truthful, the answer has to be a loud and resounding, "No!" You are in union with Christ. When you are going through a tribulation in your life, how often do you invoke the power of this advantage? I'd say virtually never! I've had Christian friends who have heard the words you never want to hear from a doctor..."You have cancer." I guarantee you, and they have told me, that the first thing that came to their mind was not. Oh that's okay...I'm in union with Christ...what is there to fear?"

Do unbelievers take advantage of God? Unbelievers do not have righteousness, thus the wrath of God is being stored up for and directed at them. Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 18...

Romans 1:18

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and (against all) unrighteousness of men (who are unbelievers) who suppress the truth (of the gospel) in unrighteousness.

Wouldn't the best selfishness for an unbeliever be to take advantage of the free gift of salvation?

In the passage we are studying, we see God taking away every argument in favor of unrighteousness. Unbelievers are ungodly and unrighteous,

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therefore, they are sinners. Do unbelievers press the advantage they have with God? The answer, of course is, “No!”

What we’ve learned so far is that the indictment of Romans 1:18 to Romans 3:20 is an indictment against the whole human race.

God’s message to the Gentiles so far in this Consequences of Sin passage is that there are two lifestyles Satan offers...the Lascivious Lifestyle of sex, drugs and rock and roll...the immoral lifestyle...and the Legalistic Lifestyle...the lifestyle of “I’m better than you” ... the moral lifestyle. What the Lord is saying to both groups is...the Lascivious Lifestyle does not work...and the Legalistic Lifestyle does not work.

One of God’s additional message to the Jews is...the Unregenerate Jewish Lifestyle does not work...Galatians, Chapter 3, Verse 6 says...

Galatians 3:6

Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him (credited to his account) as righteousness.

Another of God’s additional messages to the Jews is...simply having the Oracles of God is of no advantage, especially if you don’t take advantage of it. The unregenerate Jew is a Jew who is not like Abraham...Abraham is a regenerate Jew because He believed in the Lord Jesus Christ in His pre-incarnate state as Jehovah Elohim...the Son of God...the Lord. The unregenerate Jew is one who has rejected a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and who thinks that Jesus Christ is not the Messiah...that’s why Paul, a Jew Himself (and a regenerate one) says in Romans, Chapter 9, Verse 6...

Romans 9:6

For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel...

The apostle Paul is saying all racial Jews are not spiritual Jews...it’s not enough to be Jewish...it’s the racial Jew who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ that is regenerate like Abraham.

In Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 8, we’ll learn why believers and unbelievers forfeit the advantage they have from God. It’s because they twist Scripture for their own benefit. Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 8 acknowledges and disposes of “The Twisters,” who say the bible has a lot of

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contradictions. For example, I invited unbelievers into my home once...the kind who go from door to door peddling “salvation” ... which is really no salvation...as they discussed the bible with me, they said it has a lot of contradictions. They illustrated it the contradiction this way...they said, Luke, Chapter 1, Verse 37 says...

Luke 1:37

“For nothing will be impossible with God.”

Then Hebrews, Chapter 6, Verse 18 says...

Hebrews 6:18

...it is impossible for God to lie...

The contradiction is that if nothing is impossible with God, then how is it impossible for God to lie? They got kicked out of my house. Why? Because as believers in Christ we know, because of First Corinthians, Chapter 2, Verse 14...

First Corinthians 2:14

But a natural man (an unbeliever... “The Twister”) does not accept the things of (Holy) the Spirit of God (like the bible), for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 16 says...

Second Peter 3:16

...the untaught and unstable (“The Twisters”) distort (the things real teachers teach), as they do also (distort) the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

So let’s look at this passage in detail...Romans, Chapter 3, beginning at Verse 1...God is faithful to His promise even though those He trusted, specifically here the Jews, were not faithful to Him. Have you ever said, “I know it’s not good for me...BUT...” All creatures are faithless. All creatures fail to take advantage of God.

Romans 3:1

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Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit (is there) of (physical) circumcision?

Paul is saying that if you think righteousness comes as a result of those two things...being Jewish and being physically circumcised...you are sadly mistaken. The Jews did think this way. But Romans, Chapter 2, Verse 11 says...

Romans 2:11

There is no partiality with God.

God is not one to show favoritism to anyone. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 2...

Romans 3:2

(Now Paul's Response...being a Jew is...it is) Great (to be Jewish) in every respect. First of all, that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Paul is saying there IS advantage to being Jewish, but not in the matter of righteousness. The Jews were trusted with the Word of God for evangelism of the whole world...to proclaim the Messiah throughout the world...yet in that position of privilege, they found themselves unable to live up to God's standards...they took the advantage of God's trust and squandered His blessings by teaching...if you're Jewish you're saved...if you're not Jewish, you're screwed...as if God were partial to the Jews and to no one else. Here is why the Jews were trusted with the Oracles of God...so that they would be a blessing to others...Psalm 67, Verses 1 to 7...

Psalm 67:1

God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us — (display divine favor on us)...

Psalm 67:2

That Your ways may be known on the earth, (that) Your salvation (may be known) among all nations.

If God was willing to save the regenerate Jew, others should hear about it.

Psalm 67:3

(Because we are spreading the gospel) Let all peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.

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Psalm 67:4

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge all peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth.

Psalm 67:5

Let all peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.

Psalm 67:6

The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us.

Psalm 67:7

God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may respect Him.

God wants us to know Him. God wants to bless us. God wants us to take advantage of Him. He wanted the Jewish people to tell everyone about Him. Unfortunately, most times we don't want any of the things God wants for us. Unfortunately, the Jews forgot that the oracles they were entrusted with were for all the peoples. Now back to Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 3...

Romans 3:3

What then? If some (Jews) did not believe [in Jehovah Elohim (the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Old Testament Scripture) as Abraham did], their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God (the Father toward the Jews), will it?

Romans 3:4

May it never be (absolutely not)! Rather, let God (the Father) be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND (that you may) PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED."

Some Jews, even though they had the Oracles of God, rejected a relationship with the Lord of the Oracles, Jesus Christ...and even though they had the Oracles of God, they were unfaithful to the Word they were entrusted with, and did not use it as God intended. They didn't press their advantage. Yet the unfaithfulness of those who are trusted does not stop God from keeping his promise. God is faithful even when we're not. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 5 says...

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Romans 3:5

But if (for the sake of argument we say) our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human [argument] terms.)

Romans 3:6

May it never be (absolutely not)! For otherwise, how will God (the Father be qualified to) judge the world (if He Himself is unrighteous)?

“The Twister” of Scripture might say God is demonstrating how righteous He is by allowing unrighteousness. Paul says, “Absolutely not!” Unrighteousness comes from the free will of the creature. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 7...

Romans 3:7

But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

“The Twister” of Scripture asks, “If God lets me lie to demonstrate His truth, how can He then turn around and call me a sinner?” This was Judas Iscariot’s argument, the one who betrayed the Lord, illustrated in the rock opera Jesus Christ Superstar...here is an excerpt...

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR –The Last Supper

Jesus:

Peter will deny me in just a few hours
Three times will deny me - and that’s not all I see
One of you here dining, one of my twelve chosen
Will leave to betray me -

Judas:

Cut out the dramatics! You know very well who...

Jesus:

Why don’t you go do it?

Judas:

You want me to do it?

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Jesus:
Hurry they're waiting

Judas:
If you knew why I do it...

Jesus:
I don't care why you do it!

Judas:
To think I admired you but for now I despise you

Jesus:
You liar - you Judas

Judas:
You want me to do it!
What if I just stayed here and ruined your ambition?
Christ you deserve it!

Judas is saying he doesn't have free will...that God predetermined that he would be the betrayer. Absolutely not! Judas was one of the original "Twisters" of Scripture. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 8...

Romans 3:8

And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come?" (For anyone who says that...) Their condemnation is just.

Romans, Chapter 6, Verses 1 and 2 says it better...

Romans 6:1-2

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?//May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

"The Twister" of Scripture is saying that God's grace is a license to sin. It is not. Freedom is a license to sin.

Do you take advantage of God? As believers in Christ, we must inspect how we use our freedom. The Lord Jesus Christ indwelling us is divine

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advantage. Free will is an advantage. Do we take the advantage? I say, “No!” That’s why we don’t go to the gym when we have a health club membership. That’s why we smoke when we work in the medical profession. That’s why we avoid going to the doctor when we see the first signs of illness. That’s why we blow off friendships that are supportive of us. That’s why we are disobedient to parents. That’s why we hate feedback from people who are inviting us to the next level of development. That’s why we get bored in our marriages. That’s why we hate those who tell us the truth. That’s why we strive to create the illusion of control in our lives, and when our illusion is dashed we blame God as “yanking the rug out from under us.” That’s why we worry when we go through tribulation. But when we’re faithless...God is faithful...here’s a song by Barah Ministries Song Worship leader June Murphy to remind us about the faithfulness of God...it’s called...God is Faithful.

SONG (3:00)

GOD IS FAITHFUL

June Murphy

As Christians, we have a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. To what advantage is this relationship with Christ if you treat your life like you don’t have this relationship? To what advantage is our relationship with Christ if we don’t think like and act like the privileged beings we are? To what advantage is this relationship with Christ if we don’t exercise the gift of faith we have been given? Paul was asking the same thing of the Jews in our passage of study...Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 8.

Romans 3:1

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit (is there) of (physical) circumcision?

Romans 3:2

(Now Paul’s Response...being a Jew is...It is) Great (to be Jewish) in every respect. First of all, that the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Romans 3:3

What then (if some were faithless to that trust)? If some (Jews) did not believe [in Jehovah Elohim (the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Old Testament Scripture) as Abraham did], their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God (the Father toward the Jews), will it?

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Romans 3:4

May it never be (absolutely not)! Rather, let God (the Father) be found true, though every man (Jew and Gentile) be found a liar, as it is written (by King David...a Jew), “THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND (that you may) PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED (by sinful man as to the justice of your ways).”

Romans 3:5

But if (for the sake of argument we say) our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath (on the unbelieving Jew) is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human [argument] terms as foolish men talk.)

Romans 3:6

May it never be (absolutely not)! For otherwise, how will God (the Father be qualified to) judge the world (if He Himself is unrighteous)?

Romans 3:7

But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

Romans 3:8

And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), “Let us do evil that good may come?” (For anyone who says that...) Their condemnation is just.

The Jewish response of course was to deflect the true issue of God's indictment by twisting Scripture with ridiculous questions. For the time being, God allows the twisting. But there will be a day when the games are over.

As for us Christians, the time is now to press our advantage. If the Lord gives you advantages in this life, and He does, use them. Every one. Start with using Him. Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 31 and 32...

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God (the Father) is for us (and He is), who is (successful) against us?// God the Father, who did not spare His

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own Son (the Lord Jesus Christ), but delivered Him over for us all, how will the Father not also (in union) with Jesus freely give us all things?

For unbelievers, the advantage is even more simple...Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

Acts 16:31

They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes."

John 14:6

Jesus said to doubting Thomas, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through believing in Me."

John 3:36

He who believes in the Son has eternal life (the ZOE life); but he who does not obey the (command to believe in the) Son will not see (the Zoe) life, but instead the wrath of God the Father abides on him."

ANNOUNCER OUTRO (0:40)

You've been listening to Pastor Rory Clark of Barah Ministries, a worldwide Christian Church in Mesa, AZ. Pastor Rory teaches face-to-face lessons twice a week. For more information, especially on meeting locations, go to the Barah Ministries website at www.barahministries.com.

That's www.B-A-R-A-H-ministries.com.

The "God Cares for You" radio broadcast can be heard every Sunday from 9:30am to 10:00am right here on KXEG, 1280 on your AM radio dial.