

God Cares For You 14 - God's Grace Heals Our Guilt

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 (1:50)

This week, my wife and I shuttled our daughter off to college in Dallas, Texas...so the last of the children has flown from the nest. No seriously... that's it! I was fortunate enough to be working in Dallas for the week, so we got to see her a few more times and to hear about the drama of her first week settling in. What we were hoping to hear about, of course, were the classes, the teachers, the assignments for the semester...anything academic. Instead what we heard about were roommate issues, cliques, and the drama of the people problems at college.

There is probably no more legalistic group of individuals than college students. They gossip about each other. They tear each other down. They lure each other into dangerous and unproductive activities like drugs, alcohol and pre-marital sex, and then they criticize each other for indulging. It's frequently called "peer group pressure." It's nothing more than legalism.

I remember the high school and college days...young, immature, and ignorant about the world people trying to tell me how to live my life and then violating every demand they had of me.

Legalism is a disease...when we hold each other and ourselves to "perfect conduct," we neutralize our happiness in this life. As human beings we sin, and fall short of the glory of God...we do our best to follow God's rules only to find that we can't...then we wallow in the dilemma... "I can't stop sinning, but I can't follow the rules...what am I going to do about that?"

In today's lesson, you'll find that there is nothing you can do about that in your own human power. Fortunately, God did something for us. Welcome to the program.

TODAY'S LESSON (00:00 with the song)
God's Grace Heals Our Guilt

In the last lesson, we learned that the human race is guilty as charged.

We all are born sinners in the eyes of God, and there is no way to get around it. The fact that we were born in this sinful condition is not our fault, but it is our circumstance. The longer we avoid coming to terms with this painful reality, the longer we miss seeing God's solution.

We are studying The Consequences of Sin section in Romans, a passage that extends from Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 18 to Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 20. This section of Paul's letter to the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ at Rome has made us painfully aware of our very real situation at physical birth...CONDEMNED!

We conclude our study of this passage with the final two verses. Let's listen to Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 19 and 20 together, then let's see what conclusions we can draw from our study of this entire passage.

Romans 3:19

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God...

Romans 3:20

...because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in God's sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

We can hear what these verses say...but what do they really mean? In Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 19, here are Paul's final words to the Jews as he addresses them in the Consequences of Sin passage...

Romans 3:19

Now we Jews know that whatever the Mosaic Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Mosaic Law (us Jews), so that every mouth may be silenced and all the world (both Gentiles and Jews...all creatures) may become aware that they are responsible to God...

In this Consequences of Sin passage we have learned that if you have sinned in your lifetime, you won't ever be able to stand before God and argue that you're not a sinner. One of the things I have always found funny is that when people have committed a crime, have been convicted for it, and have served a full sentence, paying their debt to society...when the criminals go free, people still refer to them as convicts. "Hey convict!" Those who have stolen are considered thieves forever. Those who have committed homicide are considered murderers forever. I always thought it was a bit unfair until I studied this Consequences of Sin passage. Those of us who have Adam's sin, because we are born "in Adam" ... those of us who have committed personal sins...and by "those of us," I mean all mankind...we are sinners, until God does something about our situation.

As human beings, we can't turn to others and self-righteously condemn their sins as if we are sinless. That was the practice of the scribes and Pharisees, who condemned the only perfectly righteous One, the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the practice of many Christians today...those who have no concept of grace in their souls.

The ungracious among us, like the scribes and Pharisees are convinced that they are righteous because of things they do or don't do...because of things they have or don't have. The Jews Paul is talking to in this passage are examples of legalistic practices...as are college students (my daughter goes to a Christian college, by the way)...as are those who pull out their bibles or their religion, and whack other people over the head with condemning bible verses while they are busy violating every biblical request from God. It is the practice of those who are busy ignoring the context of biblical thought. In Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 1 to 5, the Lord Jesus Christ says to the legalists...

Matthew 7:1

"Do not judge so that you will not be judged."

Matthew 7:2

"For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you."

Matthew 7:3

"Why do you self-righteous ones look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?"

Matthew 7:4

“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye?”

Matthew 7:5

“You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly (enough) to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

Those of us who criticize the speck of dust in the eyes of others, tend to forget about the plank that is in our eyes. Or as one of my congregation members puts it, “Don’t point fingers Pastor Rory...when you point at others there are three fingers pointing back at you!” Well said!

James put it this way in James, Chapter 1, Verses 22 to 25...

James 1:22

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

James 1:23

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, and many are, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror...

James 1:24

...for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

James 1:25

But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

As human beings, we do well when we avoid the trappings of the lascivious lifestyle...the life of sex, drugs and rock and roll...we do well when we avoid the trappings of legalism...the life of ‘I’m better than you are’ ... and when we realize that all of us are in the same boat at physical birth...we are sinners who need a Savior...maybe we take it easy on others.

Among these legalistic ones...these ones who talk from behind a mask... these hypocrites...in this Romans passage, the Jews...in other biblical

passages the Pharisees...the ones the Lord is talking about in the Matthew 7 passage...among all creatures...there is none righteous, not even one. Those engaged in legalism can't see their own flaws but clearly see the flaws of others. Now to Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 20 it says...

Romans 3:20

...because by (keeping) the works of the Mosaic Law no flesh will be justified in God's sight (mainly because the only One ever able to keep the Mosaic Law perfectly is the Lord Jesus Christ); for through the Mosaic Law comes the knowledge of sin (not the knowledge of righteousness).

Through the Mosaic Law comes the knowledge of sin...not the knowledge of righteousness...A-Ha! God gave the Mosaic Law to the human race so that the entire human race, all creatures, might know that they are sinners from the point of physical birth...that they cannot keep the Mosaic Law (or any law for that matter). All creatures are law-breakers...thus all creatures are criminals in God's eyes...thus all creatures need a Savior. Yes, sinners are the only ones that need a Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ did not need a Savior...He is the Savior. Since all creatures are sinners, all creatures need a Savior.

When we reflect on The Consequences of Sin passage in Romans, which extends from Chapter 1, Verse 18 to Chapter 3, Verse 20, two words should come to mind...two words that express two feelings...helplessness and hopelessness. That's the circumstance of all creatures. We are nothing. Only God can make us into something. That's why this ministry is called Barah Ministries. That's what the Hebrew word "bara" means...to make something from nothing. Only God can make us nothings into something. The Lord Jesus Christ, who is God, speaks our righteousness into existence. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks our worthiness into existence. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks our salvation into existence. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks our spiritual life into existence.

One author puts it this way...he says that by studying this Consequences of Sin passage...

"Awareness of our desperate condition leads us to cry out to God, 'Is there no alternative to your law? Deliver me from the curse of the law, or I die!' God answers, 'For Me, there is no alternative to the law, BUT for you there is an alternative. As the Great Lawgiver, I must abide by the terms of my

own law. I must exact the penalty my law demands. But at the same time, I offer you an alternative to my law. I offer you my grace, my pardon, an escape from the law and its penalty.”

Praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ, to God the Father Almighty and to God the Holy Spirit who gives us this hope!

The author continues...

“This Consequences of Sin passage establishes the sinfulness of creatures and the condemnation that results. All creatures are in wrong relationship to God’s laws. The fact of creature guilt raises the problem of justification. How can creatures be justified? How can creatures be brought back into right relation with God’s laws? Can a person work himself back into a proper relation to God’s law? Can a person redeem himself? Perhaps with a little extra effort, we can exert ourselves ‘above and beyond the call of duty’ in the Christian life. Is this possible? Absolutely not! Not no way! Not no how! Every good work we do is owed to God...is required by His law... and therefore cannot be used to pay the debt for our sin. **WORKS CANNOT JUSTIFY.**”

The author continues...

“What possibility is left, then? How can God justify us, or treat us as if we have never sinned? How can we escape the wrath of God? Does any provision of the law allow a sinner to go unpunished? Can we remain within the framework of law and still be justified? Absolutely not! No way! If we are to be justified, we must come outside of the framework of law and into the framework of grace. We must completely exit law, and completely enter grace.”

We are not always willing to do that, are we? A lot of us have one foot in the old, the law...and a baby toe in the new....grace.

I like to look at grace as a sphere...a sphere like the huge geodesic dome at Disney World...God places us in this sphere at the moment we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ through faith alone in Him alone for salvation, and when we are placed totally in this sphere we are surrounded by His unconditional love, His forgiveness, and His grace. It is a sphere of freedom.

Do you make room in your life for the new spiritual things? Do you make room in your life for God's grace? Do you make room in your life for God's provision? Or are you trying to have a "do it yourself" salvation? In Luke, Chapter 5, Verses 37 to 39 we learn...

Luke 5:37

"...no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the old wine skins and the wine will be spilled out, and the old wineskins will be ruined."

Luke 5:38

"But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins."

Luke 5:39

"And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new wine; for he says, 'The old wine is good enough.'"

How profound are these words?

"Good enough" is the human condition. What is the way out of the dilemma of "good enough?" Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ. The Savior of the world.

I had a very interesting conversation this week. The subject matter was doctrine. I've heard people who study a discipline called Systematic Theology say numerous times... "I've been in the doctrine for thirty years." They are talking about bible doctrine, which is their terminology for the Word of God. "I've been in the doctrine for thirty years." As time passes, the number of years changes but the words do not. "I've been in the doctrine." When I take them to task on this spoken thought, the idea that Christianity is not "the doctrine," they think I'm being mean, or nitpicky, or semantic... I am not... I wonder if they ever stop to think how big an insult that expression is to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I've never heard my Systematic Theology friends say, "I've been in union with Christ for thirty years." I wonder why not? Why don't they say, "I've been in Christ" instead of "I've been in the doctrine?" This is the subtlety of Satan's deceit. "The doctrine" and Christ are not the same, are they? They're not. Absolutely not! Consider this... John, Chapter 3, Verse 16...

John 3:16

“For God the Father so loved the world (unconditionally), that He gave His doctrine, that whosoever believes in it shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

Is that what the Word of God says? Or does it say...

John 3:16

“For God the Father so loved the world (unconditionally), that He gave His uniquely born Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Those aren't the same are they? How about this? Second Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 3...

Second Corinthians 11:3

But I (Paul) am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to the doctrine.

Is that what the Word of God says? Or does it say...

Second Corinthians 11:3

But I (Paul) am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Those aren't the same are they? How about this? Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 13...

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through the doctrine which strengthens me.

Is that what the Word of God says? Or does it say...

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Look...I don't care about semantics. I care about Christ and I care about your spiritual life. Do you make room in your life for the new spiritual

things? We don't make room for the new when we cling so tenaciously to the old. What is the new thing the Lord is teaching you today?

The way out of the Mosaic Law is Christ, not doctrine. There is the Law, and there is Christ. It's easy for us to forget that it is a Person who saves us...not a concept. It is a person who saves us, not a law. The study of the Word of God is not an intellectual pursuit!

The Consequences of Sin passage will "bum you out" if you're not interested in looking in the mirror at who you really are.

Paul wasn't ready to look at himself in Romans, Chapter 7. Paul thought for a long time that *he* was the way out of every situation...that he was righteous enough on his own to get out of the sin that so easily entangles us...then finally he realized the real way out... Romans, Chapter 7, Verses 24 and 25...

Romans 7:24-25

*Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?
//Thanks be to God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

Amen?

No one will be declared righteous by law. The Lord Jesus Christ provides the way out of a hopeless and helpless condition. The Consequences of Sin passage is a reminder to believers in Christ to abandon the old, works...and to enter the new...grace.

Here's Barah Ministries Song Worship Leader June Murphy, singing a song she wrote and produced, that reveals God's attitude toward us, even when we are sinners and at our worst...the song is, Demonstrated Love.

SONG (4:09)

DEMONSTRATED LOVE

June Murphy

Romans, Chapter 3, Verses 19 and 20...

Romans 3:19

Now we Jews know that whatever the Mosaic Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Mosaic Law (the Jews), so that every mouth may be silenced and all the world (both Gentiles and Jews...all creatures) may become aware that they are responsible to God

Romans 3:20

...because by (keeping) the works of the Mosaic Law no flesh will be justified in God's sight (mainly because the only One ever able to keep the Mosaic Law perfectly is the Lord Jesus Christ); for through the Mosaic Law comes the knowledge of sin (not the knowledge of righteousness).

How many of God's laws have you broken?

In many ways, our study of the first three chapters of Romans have been depressing...especially for those of us who live in the delusion of self-sufficiency and self-righteousness. We have been asked to look at ourselves. We have been asked to stand before a mirror and look at who we really are. We comfort ourselves by knowing that the Lord, while talking TO believers in Christ in these three chapters, is mostly talking ABOUT unbelievers. But our comfort is short lived when we realize that as believers in Christ, we still have "the flesh" resident in our bodies, and we can still engage in the deeds of "the flesh" ... let's look at Galatians, Chapter 5, Verses 19 to 23...as you look at this sins list early in the passage, ask yourself how many of these sins you have committed...either by thinking it, saying it, or doing it...

Galatians 5:19

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality...

Galatians 5:20

...idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions...

Galatians 5:21

...envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of God the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness...

Galatians 5:23

...gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

The Consequences of Sin passage is depressing because we are guilty as charged. The Lord Jesus Christ created a religion to teach us that the lifestyle offers of Satan, the enemy of God, would never work. Not the lascivious lifestyle, not the self-righteous lifestyle. Then the Lord Jesus Christ gave us a lifestyle of freedom, free of charge that is beyond our wildest dreams. God's grace heals our guilt.

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 1280 KXEG, The Trumpet.

