

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

**Welcome To**  
**BARAH MINISTRIES**  
*a Christian Church*  
**Rory Clark**  
**Pastor-Teacher**

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a Christian Church with a worldwide reach and a worldwide impact on lives through the provision of our omnipotent God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the provision of His many blessings, including the internet. We are based in Mesa, AZ...my name is Pastor Rory Clark.

Let's begin our lesson in song...

**MUSIC AND REFLECTION**

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

*HERE IN YOUR PRESENCE*  
*LeBlanc*

The opening song is HERE IN YOUR PRESENCE by LeBlanc.

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

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

You are the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort...a God filled with unconditional love for all Your creatures and a God with an inexhaustible amount of compassion...

We pray for those who are suffering from abuse Father...and in Satan's kingdom here on planet earth, there is a ripe number of those people all across our world...help us to help those who have suffered the injustice, the humiliation and the pain from the many forms of abuse – sexual, physical,

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

emotional, spiritual, verbal, and all the other abuses that arise from sinful conduct...in the midst of their distressing circumstances, give them the courage to speak out and to reach out...let them feel your perfect love and let it drive out their fear and anxiety...in your mercy, create opportunities for these men, women and children to share their pain, to reveal their struggles, and to expose the hurtful actions of others...have us who love You to be there for them with sympathetic ears...give us the gift of Your grace, and Your sensitivity, and Your wisdom so that we can pass it along, as we minister to the victims and survivors of abuse...

strengthen those who have been abused with the certainty of Your love for them...and in all things we do, we ask that Your name be glorified Father...

We ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit in Christ's name...  
Amen.

**TODAY'S STUDY**  
**What Do You Want?**

At the beginning of a new year, we always think of the things we can do to make ourselves new. We hustle to the gym. We vow to give up our vices. We promise to do the things we know we need to do...the right things...the things that we are busy rejecting, after we figure out from a few errors how imperfect we are.

The struggle with ourselves is one of the many forms of suffering we encounter in our lives. In our first lesson of the year we looked at the suffering we go through when someone close to us dies suddenly...it is a painful dreadful form of suffering...and the message was a reminder that God always gives us what we need. So have you thought about that? What do you need? Or better, what do you want? We typically have ready and superficial answers to the question...

What do you want?

Well as we begin the year of our Lord 2016, let's contemplate that question from a point of certainty...let's look at Psalm 37, Verses 1 to 9...what is God's attitude concerning giving us what we want?

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

PSA 37:1

*Do not fret because of evildoers, be not envious toward wrongdoers.*

PSA 37:2

*For they will wither quickly like the grass and fade like the green herb.*

When we want the desires of our heart, often we will look to men for the provision. They cannot provide.

PSA 37:3

*Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.*

PSA 37:4

*Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

As believers in Christ we are to trust the SOURCE, the Lord Jesus Christ for everything.

PSA 37:5

*Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it.*

PSA 37:6

*He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.*

PSA 37:7

*Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret because of him who prospers in his way...do not fret because of the man who carries out wicked schemes.*

PSA 37:8

*Cease from anger and forsake wrath; do not fret; it leads only to evildoing.*

PSA 37:9

*For evildoers will be cut off...but those who wait for the Lord, they will inherit the land.*

Since God always gives you what you need, what do you want?

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248—January 10, 2016**

There are quite a few people in our congregation...people who are young, up and comers...they are growing...the Word of God is affecting them...they are spreading their wings...they are adding to their families...they are becoming adults...some are going to college...some are raising children to send off in to the world...some are budding entrepreneurs starting their own businesses...some are caring for elderly relatives...some are in that part of their lives where their careers are all but over and they don't know quite what to do with the rest of their lives...some are wondering how to make their relationships work...some are terrorized by the confusion of the torn flesh of divorce. These are the many forms of suffering in this life.

But I ask you...what do you want...especially in light of the fact that God gives us what we need...in light of the fact that God wants to give us the desires of our heart.

I'd like to share an article with you...it is written by a guy named Mike Madsen...the article asks us to contemplate a pungent question...one that penetrates right to the heart...

Article

MARK MANSON

What are you willing to struggle for?

*You probably know to ask yourself, "What do I want?" Here's a better question...*

*Everybody wants what feels good...everyone wants to live a carefree, happy and easy life...to fall in love and to have amazing sex and to have amazing relationships...to look perfect and to make money and to be popular and to be well-respected and to be admired to the point that people part like the Red Sea when you walk into the room.*

*Everyone would like that—it's easy to like that.*

*If I ask you, "What do you want out of life?" and you say something like, "I want to be happy and have a great family and a job I like," it's such a superficial answer that it doesn't even mean anything.*

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248—January 10, 2016**

*A more interesting question, a question that perhaps you've never considered before, is, What pain do you want in your life? What are you willing to struggle for?" Because that seems to be a greater determinant of how our lives turn out.*

*Everybody wants to have an amazing job and financial independence—but not everyone wants to suffer through sixty hour work weeks, long commutes, obnoxious paperwork...to navigate arbitrary corporate hierarchies and the blasé confines of an infinite cubicle hell. People want to be rich, without the risk, without the sacrifice, without the delayed gratification necessary to accumulate wealth.*

*Everybody wants to have great sex and an awesome relationship—but not everyone is willing to go through the tough conversations, the awkward silences, the hurt feelings and the emotional psychodrama to get there. And so they settle. They settle and wonder "What if?" for years and years until the question morphs from "What if?" into "Was that it?" And when the lawyers go home with their money, and the alimony check is in the mail, they say, "What was that for?" And if it was not for their lowered standards and expectations twenty years prior, then what was it for?*

*Happiness requires struggle. The positive things we get is the side effect of handling the negative. You can only avoid negative experiences for so long before they come roaring back to life.*

*At the core of all humans, our needs are more or less similar. Positive experience is easy to handle. It's negative experience that we all, by definition, struggle with. Therefore, what we get out of life is not determined by the good feelings we desire but by what bad feelings we're willing and able to sustain to get us to those good feelings.*

*People want an amazing physique. But you don't end up with an amazing physique unless you legitimately appreciate the pain and physical stress that comes with living inside a gym for hour upon hour...unless you love calculating and calibrating the food you eat, planning your life out in tiny plate-sized portions.*

*People want to start their own businesses or become financially independent. But you don't end up a successful entrepreneur unless you find*

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

*a way to appreciate the risk, the uncertainty, the repeated failures, and the working of insane hours on something you have no idea whether will be successful or not.*

*People want a partner, a spouse. But you don't end up attracting someone amazing without appreciating the emotional turbulence that comes with weathering rejections, building the sexual tension that never gets released, and staring blankly at a phone that never rings. It's part of the game of love. You can't win if you don't play.*

*What determines your success isn't, "What do I want to enjoy?" The question is, "What pain do you want to sustain?" The quality of your life is not determined by the quality of your positive experiences but by the quality of your negative experiences. To get good at dealing with negative experiences is to get good at dealing with life.*

*There's a lot of crappy advice out there that says, "You've just got to want it enough!"*

*Everybody wants something. And everybody wants something enough. They just aren't aware of what it is they want, or rather, what they want "enough." If you want the benefits of something in life, you have to also want the costs. If you want the beach body, you have to want the sweat, the soreness, the early mornings, and the hunger pangs. If you want the yacht, you have to also want the late nights, the risky business moves, and the possibility of pissing off a person or ten thousand.*

*If you find yourself wanting something month after month, year after year, yet nothing happens and you never come any closer to it, then maybe what you actually want is a fantasy, an idealization, an image and a false promise. Maybe what you want isn't what you want, you just enjoy wanting. Maybe you don't actually want it at all.*

*Sometimes I ask people, "How do you choose to suffer?" These people tilt their heads and look at me like I have twelve noses. But I ask because that tells me far more about you than your desires and fantasies. Because you have to choose something. You can't have a pain-free life. It can't all be roses and unicorns. And ultimately that's the hard question that matters. Pleasure is an easy question. And pretty much all of us have similar*

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248—January 10, 2016**

*answers. The more interesting question is the pain. What is the pain that you want to sustain?*

*That answer will actually get you somewhere. It's the question that can change your life. It's what makes me, me...and it's the question that makes you, you. It's what defines us and separates us and ultimately brings us together.*

*For most of my adolescence and young adulthood, I fantasized about being a musician — a rock star, in particular. Any badass guitar song I heard, I would always close my eyes and envision myself up on stage playing it to the screams of the crowd, people absolutely losing their minds to my sweet finger-noodling. This fantasy could keep me occupied for hours on end. The fantasizing continued up through college, even after I dropped out of music school and stopped playing seriously. But even then it was never a question of if I'd ever be up playing in front of screaming crowds, but when. I was biding my time before I could invest the proper amount of time and effort into getting out there and making it work. First, I needed to finish school. Then, I needed to make money. Then, I needed to find the time. Then ... and then ... and then ... nothing.*

*Despite fantasizing about this for over half of my life, the reality never came. And it took me a long time and a lot of negative experiences to finally figure out why: I didn't actually want it.*

*I was in love with the result—the image of me on stage, people cheering, me rocking out, pouring my heart into what I'm playing—but I wasn't in love with the process. And because of that, I failed at it. Repeatedly. Hell, I didn't even try hard enough to fail at it. I hardly tried at all.*

*The daily drudgery of practicing...the logistics of finding a group and rehearsing...the pain of finding gigs and actually getting people to show up ...the broken strings...the blown amplifier...hauling forty pounds of gear to and from rehearsals with no car. It's a mountain of a dream, and a mile-high climb to the top. And what it took me a long time to discover is that I didn't like to climb much. I just liked to imagine the top.*

*Our culture would tell me that I've somehow failed myself...that I'm a quitter or a loser. Self-help would say that I either wasn't courageous*



**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

*enough, determined enough or I didn't believe in myself enough. The entrepreneurial start-up crowd would tell me that I chickened out on my dream and gave in to my conventional social conditioning. I'd be told to do affirmations or join a mastermind group or to visualize something. But the truth is far less interesting than that: I thought I wanted something, but it turns out I didn't. End of story.*

*I wanted the reward and not the struggle. I wanted the result and not the process. I was in love not with the fight but only with the victory. And life doesn't work that way.*

*Who you are is defined by the values you are willing to struggle for. People who enjoy the struggles of a gym are the ones who get in good shape. People who enjoy long workweeks and the politics of the corporate ladder are the ones who move up it. People who enjoy the stresses and uncertainty of the starving artist lifestyle are ultimately the ones who live it and make it. This is not a call for willpower or "grit." This is not another admonishment of, "No Pain, No Gain."*

Here's his conclusion...

Article  
MARK MANSON

*This is the most simple and most basic component of life: our struggles determine our successes. So choose your struggles wisely, my friend.*

From the...

Article  
MARK MANSON  
What are you willing to struggle for?

Let's take a music break and then see what we can make of this wisdom.

**MUSIC BREAK**  
**FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES**  
*Larnelle Harris*



**TODAY’S STUDY**  
**What Do You Want?**

I want struggle. I want suffering. In fact, that is what I have had my whole life. And I know the Lord provided it. And I know it has made me the man I am today. I know He is providing the same thing for you. And I know this is the essence of your life when it is going well. Struggle. And suffering. First Peter, Chapter 5, Verses 6 to 11...

1PE 5:6

*Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time...*

1PE 5:7

*...casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.*

God considers your problems to be His responsibility.

1PE 5:8

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

God has an enemy who wants to thwart your dreams, and who wants you to think that suffering is punishment from God.

1PE 5:9

*But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren (other believers in Christ) who are in the world.*

1PE 5:10

*After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

1PE 5:11

*To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

Are you willing to suffer? Are you willing to embrace the feeling of being completely lost? Because when you are growing, that's how it feels. And why wouldn't it...you're doing things you have never done before.

We are studying Romans Chapter 8...and we are in the third passage...the passage that extends from Verse 18 to Verse 25...the passage that begins with shifting our minds to two subjects suffering...and glory...what a great way to start the New Year...thinking about life's struggles and life's suffering...the essence of life...and what God does for us after we have suffered for a little while...First Peter, Chapter 5, Verse 10...

1PE 5:10

*After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in union with Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

Let's listen to the passage...

ROM 8:18

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

ROM 8:19

*For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.*

ROM 8:20

*For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope...*

ROM 8:21

*...that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

ROM 8:22

*For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.*

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

**ROM 8:23**

*And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.*

**ROM 8:24**

*For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?*

**ROM 8:25**

*But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*

Two subjects are in view in this passage...SUFFERING and GLORY. One is happening to us now... SUFFERING...one will happen to us in the future...GLORY. One is temporary...SUFFERING...one is permanent for the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ...GLORY. And in God's plan, Suffering is always followed by glory.

Well to close out this lesson, as I was preparing it, I recalled all the suffering that I have gone through in these eight years as a Pastor...and in the seventeen years since Barah Ministries was started at a dining room table in my home, as I taught my two sons the truth of the Word of God.

I recalled the suffering of seeing many people come and many people go from this congregation. Hundreds of people...resident and non-resident.

I recalled the dissolution of my first marriage...played out as many of you watched. That's a scar that never quite heals.

I recalled seeing the suffering involved in watching my sons leave the congregation, and watching them struggle in their lives.

I could go on and on...because my suffering in this life has continued. But then I see men in my life like Denny Goodall and Larry Collins...my Deacons...men who would do anything I ask. That's GLORY. And I thank you men for that.

And I see a congregation that is unified and warm and open and loving. And

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

I thank every one of you, resident and non-resident for that. That's GLORY.

And I feel your generosity...how you open your wallets have been to keep this ministry open. And in eternity I look forward to having you see the fruits of your generosity and how many people were saved as a result. That's GLORY.

And I can't help shedding a tear as I see vividly in my mind something I've been envisioning and requesting from God for years...a church of our own...a gorgeous and stunning building where we can worship the Lord...and it is coming together nicely. That's GLORY. And I thank God for bringing Nick Tsontakis into my life.

I look forward to suffering with you in the coming year...and I look more forward to seeing all of God's glory revealed through the suffering. And I'm looking forward to a year of prayer, and a year of orienting to the direction of the still small voice of God the Holy Spirit.

**When the Lord Jesus Christ  
Promises Salvation, It's a Guarantee!**

ACT 16:31

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

ACT 4:12

*"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given to mankind by which we must be saved (except the name of the Lord Jesus Christ)."*

LUK 19:10

*"For the Son of Man (the Lord Jesus Christ) has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

**CLOSING SONG**

***THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU***

*LeBlanc*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 248–January 10, 2016**

*Let us pray...*

**THANKS - INTERCESSION - PETITION**

And we pray that You protect our steps as we go out into the world,  
Father...and that you keep us on the narrow way, completely dependent on  
You and Your Guiding, Mentoring Spirit...we ask this in Christ's name,  
Amen.

Thanks for coming!  
Thanks for watching!  
Thanks for listening!

**[www.barahministries.com](http://www.barahministries.com)**