

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 331–November 27, 2016**

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

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a Christian Church based in Mesa, AZ...my name is Pastor Rory Clark. Barah Ministries teaches the Word of God from God's perspective and not from the human perspective. Our God is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Creator of the Universe and all things in it, including us creatures. John, Chapter 1, Verse 3 says...

**JOHN 1:3**

*All things came into being through the Lord...God the Son, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.*

The Lord Jesus Christ is worthy of all honor and it is an absolute pleasure to sing His praises at every opportunity.

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**  
**Why I Am Embarrassed to Be a Christian**

I must quickly tell you that embarrassment is an emotion I rarely feel. In fact, I feel it so rarely, that I can probably count on my hands the number of times I have felt embarrassed. So the title of today's lesson isn't entirely accurate, because I am not embarrassed to be a Christian...in fact, I'm quite happy about it.

Why the title? Well I was looking for a title that is provocative...a title that when someone sees it or hears it, they would want to read on or hear more. The title was inspired by a lecture given in 1927 by Bertrand Russell, a British Philosopher who made commentary on several things in life, and among his favorite things to comment on were Christians. I can easily see why we were a favorite target.

Russell's lecture is worth listening to, so I won't spoil it for you even though I doubt you would ever listen to it or read it. I guess that's one of the many

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things that embarrasses me about being a Christian. Every week, I engage in deep and intricate thinking to make suggestions for your edification, knowing full well that you'll never take the advice. So I guess today's lesson is a forum to get a few things off my chest for your consideration.

Welcome to a place where you can make thoughtful consideration of the things of this life for the purpose of living the life the Lord Jesus Christ intended for us to live.

**MUSIC AND REFLECTION**

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

*JESUS LOVES ME*  
*Chris Tomlin*

The opening song for this lesson is JESUS LOVES ME sung by Chris Tomlin.

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

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

Thank you for opening our minds with truth...guide the words and the thoughts that come from this pulpit today, and let them land on open ears and open hearts...

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

**THE OFFERING**

Deacon Denny Goodall

Let's begin this lesson by giving you a chance to make an offering...we need and we value your financial support as a prerequisite for continuing the work of this ministry...please welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with the offering message.

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**OFFERING VERSE**

FIRST THESSALONIANS 5:12-13

*But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, // and that you esteem them very highly in unconditional love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.*

**OFFERING**

*FLIGHT OF THE EAGLE*

*Dave McClure, Instrumental*

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**Why I Am Embarrassed to Be a Christian**

The title of this lesson should tell you that it might not be a good thing when I get away for a few days to really think. The Thanksgiving holiday is a break from the routine of life, and thinking is one of the things you can't help but do during this week...in fact, during this time of the year. In my thinking, a bible verse came to mind...Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 1...

EPHESIANS 4:1

*Therefore I (Paul), the prisoner of the Lord, implore you believers in Christ to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...*

I asked myself, "Am I?" Our God, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, through the apostle Paul, is communicating His exact thoughts to us in this verse. He expects us to conduct ourselves in a worthwhile manner that's in line with the royal lifestyle that He has invited us to be part of, the resurrection life. Are you? Are you walking in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called? Is your lifestyle in line with the expectations of your God if you are a believer in Christ? Could you sit in front of him today and give Him an accurate account of where you are right on target with His request, and where you are way off base in your lifestyle? You don't have to be a keen observer to notice that Christians conduct themselves in every way but this lifestyle. That's one reason why I am embarrassed to be a Christian.

You see I *am* a keen observer. And lest you think I am being self-righteous,

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I am no exception to the request in Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 1. You can easily look at my life and see all the ways that I don't conduct myself in a manner worthy of my calling. If you have been around me for any amount of time, you know my faults. But I wonder if you know your own. You see, studying the Word of God every day as I do makes me acutely aware of my faults...I don't get to live in delusion because my conduct is under scrutiny every day...under my own scrutiny, as well as under the scrutiny of the mirror that the Word of God shines on my lifestyle. And I say "ooooooo" to myself way too many times every day. How about you? Do you self inspect? Second Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 5 asks us to...

**SECOND CORINTHIANS 13:5**

*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith...examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is indwelling you— unless indeed you fail the test?*

The truth? We rarely self-inspect. And just so you know...guilt isn't self-inspection. Self-inspection, when done well and with good intent, leads to a change in thinking and a change in conduct. So why the thoughtfulness?

Someone said to me recently that he liked the lesson I taught but that we have doctrinal differences. This bugged me. In fact, it gnawed at me for a week before I expressed my irritation to someone. Why are there some things that are obvious to me and not obvious to other Christians? As a Christian, do you know that it is impossible for us to have doctrinal differences? Back to Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verses 4 to 6...

**EPHESIANS 4:4**

*There is one body (of Christ) and one God the Holy Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling...*

**EPHESIANS 4:5**

*...there is one Lord (Jesus Christ), one faith, one baptism...*

**EPHESIANS 4:6**

*...one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

If everything with God is ONE, how can we have differences? The truth is, we can't. That's obvious to me. If we, as humans, have doctrinal

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differences, one or both of us are wrong. Christianity is not wrong. Christ is not wrong. Christ is one. His thinking is singular. You are in line with it or you aren't. So there are not doctrinal differences. What people typically mean when they say there are doctrinal differences is, "I'm right and you're not."

I was reading a strand on abortion recently. Christians were giving their opinions. As is typical of those strands, there is the pro-life view and there is the pro-choice view. One side thinks abortion is murder. One side thinks abortion is a medical procedure. In the entire strand, there was absolutely no consideration about what God thinks about the matter. So I intervened. Without stating my viewpoint, I simply implored curiosity. What is God's view of this situation? What does the bible have to say about this situation? When does God say **human** life really begins? Can two human beings create human life by copulating? The answer is obvious if you look at Scripture...John, Chapter 1, Verse 3 says...

**JOHN 1:3**

*All things came into being through the Lord...God the Son, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.*

Yet there was no consideration by these Christians of what the Lord's viewpoint might be...no influencing a person who takes a point of view and simply defends it...and when I see this conduct among Christians, it is simply embarrassing...it's one of the reasons why I am embarrassed to be a Christian at times. If the Lord were participating in this strand of exposition, He would patiently listen to both sides, and then He would say something that was so thought provoking and so penetrating that it would send each side into thoughtful introspection. A Christian would do the introspection and leave with the right thoughts, the thinking of the Lord. The Christian might not like the Lord's thoughts...and the indictment of his own thoughts the Lord's thoughts might bring...the Christian might be exposed as wrong, but they would know the truth, and the truth would make them free.

I see so little of this today among Christians...the truth setting them free.

I think the journey through Christianity moves from confusion to clarity to confidence. If you asked me three years into being a Christian what God is like, back when I was eleven years old and before I became a Romans

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Catholic, my viewpoint was confusion. I thought God was a vengeful God who was sitting in heaven, recording all my sins, and He was waiting for me to die so He could throw all my sins back in my face. My viewpoint about God is polar opposite today. I have moved from my childish confusion about God, to clarity about God, to an absolute confidence in who the Lord is and what He thinks.

All of us, as Christians, are at various points on this journey of getting to know God...from confusion to clarity to confidence. As we progress through life, it is as if we have a large sack, and we gather pieces of knowledge about God and put them in the sack. When we have enough knowledge in the sack, and enough experiences to validate the knowledge, the knowledge turns to wisdom. It turns to wisdom, that is, if we don't stop somewhere along the journey, sit down, and stop gathering knowledge because we think we have the answer. I fear my friend thinks he has the answer...furthermore he thinks that I don't have the answer. Embarrassing.

My journey is not complete...but one thing I do...I keep gathering knowledge and I keep inspecting. I inspect the knowledge and I inspect myself, looking for further insight. Do you? Why do I handle my life this way? Because I have absolutely confidence that God the Holy Spirit will keep on teaching me and will keep on giving me insights, especially if I ask Him the questions that I am perplexed about.

For example, before this weekend, I hated the word repent. I know clearly what it means...it means to turn away from something and to move in a completely different direction. An unbeliever who becomes a believer in Christ abandons his union with Adam and chooses union with Christ. Yet legalists distort the word repent and connect it to sins. You have to repent of your sins...and you have to keep on repenting of your sins...or else God is not going to like you very much...guilt inducing, yet worthless thought. It became obvious to me that we need to repent in our thinking...that repenting has little to do with sins already paid for at the Cross, and it has everything to do with how we think.

In other words, as believers in Christ, when new find ourselves thinking evil, we need to repent...to turn away from the evil thoughts and turn to the Lord's thoughts. An easy example is pre-marital sex...sex among people who are not married. The Lord would say to us, in Galatians, Chapter 5,

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Verses 19 to 24...

**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 the Spirit is unconditional love, joy, peace...patience, kindness, goodness...faithfulness...*

**GALATIANS 5:23**

*...gentleness, self-control...against such virtues there is no law.*

**GALATIANS 5:24**

*Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

When we repent, we stop thinking the thoughts and doing the deeds of the flesh, and instead let God the Holy Spirit produce in us the fruit of the Spirit. Let's take a music break....

**MUSIC BREAK**

*HOLD YOU UP*

*Matthew West*

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**Why I Am Embarrassed to Be a Christian**

Welcome back! So why am I embarrassed to be a Christian? Because Christians miss the obvious. You see if there is something that I resent in

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myself, it's the mixture of natures. You see God made me new at the spiritual birth... Second Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 5...

**SECOND CORINTHIANS 13:5**

*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, and all believers in Christ are, he is a new creature...the old things passed away (died)...behold, the new things life has come (the resurrection life).*

Yet...Romans, Chapter 7, Verses 21 to 23 are equally true...

**ROMANS 7:21**

*I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.*

**ROMANS 7:22**

*For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man...*

**ROMANS 7:23**

*...but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.*

I resent the mixture of the “new self” which is learning to simply be a reflection of the virtues my God is installing in me with “the flesh” that hates me, hates God, and wants to destroy my life even though it can never succeed at its goal.

We are missing the obvious, as if we are going to redefine Christianity. It's as if we think we are going to successfully bend the rules in such a way that God is going to be sentimental and change to our whim of the moment. It's as if we are going to somehow change the doctrine because we want it to fit us. That's why it is embarrassing to be a Christian, because we think like the world. We are more interested in fitting into the world that we are getting the world to conform to the thinking of our God.

Make no mistake about it...the world will conform to our God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He will not conform to the world...Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verses 11 to 13...

**HEBREWS 10:11**



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*Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins...*

**HEBREWS 10:12**

*...but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God...*

**HEBREWS 10:13**

*...waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.*

Philippians, Chapter 2, Verses 9 to 11...

**PHILIPPIANS 2:9**

*For this reason also, God the Father highly exalted the Lord Jesus Christ, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name...*

**PHILIPPIANS 2:10**

*...so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth...*

**PHILIPPIANS 2:11**

*...and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Ephesians, Chapter 4, Verse 1...

**EPHESIANS 4:1**

*Therefore I (Paul), the prisoner of the Lord, implore you believers in Christ to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...*

As a Christian, does your lifestyle make a difference to those around you? Is it obvious to people that you are a reflection of your Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It's embarrassing to be a Christian when our lives are not such a reflection. I know I have more to say about this...and this is a good time of the year to do it...so stay tuned.

**GOD WANTS YOU!**

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

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**ROMANS 1:16**

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God the Father...divine omnipotence...to provide salvation to everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ...to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Gentiles).*

**MATTHEW 7:13**

*“Enter salvation through the narrow gate (the Lord Jesus Christ)...for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction...and there are many who enter through it.”*

**MATTHEW 7:14**

*“For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to the resurrection life, and there are few who find it.”*

**JOHN 10:9**

*“I (the Lord Jesus Christ) am the door to salvation...if anyone enters through believing in Me...he will be saved...and then he will go in and out and find pasture.”*

**FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22**

*For all in union with Adam are set to die the second death in the Lake of Fire...but all those in union with Christ will live the resurrection life.*

**CLOSING SONG**

*GOD IS FAITHFUL*

*June Murphy*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

THANKS - INTERCESSION - PETITION

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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