

ROMANS
Lesson 401–February 25, 2018

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

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a Christian Church that makes a difference globally by having worldwide impact courtesy of the internet...and a church that is serving locally the Gilbert, Mesa, and Chandler, AZ communities. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. At Barah Ministries, our God is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and we like teaching the Word of God from His perspective.

Our God is so amazingly clear and so wonderfully simple...in First Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 13 he gives us the supreme Christian virtues...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:13

But now FAITH (in God), and HOPE (the absolute confidence of an unspeakably delightful future), (and UNCONDITIONAL) LOVE (for others are the supreme Christian virtues)...abide in the sphere of these three...but the greatest of these virtues is unconditional love.

When people “fall in love,” usually they pick the other person hoping the other person will provide for all their mental, physical, emotional, and psychological needs. Of course getting provisions as large as this from another human being is impossible, and both parties find that out within the first year of being together. “Falling in love” is typically a “what I’m going to get love.” Love...true love...is given not taken...it’s the kind of love that is received...the kind of love we get from our giving God. First John, Chapter 4, Verse 8 says...

FIRST JOHN 4:8

God the Father IS unconditional love.

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Real love comes from the ultimate source of love...God the Father. An absence of this unconditional love comes from those who do not know God...unbelievers. First John, Chapter 4, Verse 19 says...

FIRST JOHN 4:19

We love unconditionally (as human beings...specifically as Christians), because God the Father first loved us unconditionally.

Our God's unconditional love is a giving love...John, Chapter 3, Verse 16...

JOHN 3:16

“For God the Father loved the world unconditionally...and He loved the world so much...that He GAVE His uniquely born Son (100% God and 100% man in one person forever)...that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life (the resurrection life).”

Since unconditional love is a giving love, our job as Christians is simply to receive God's unconditional love. It's a really easy job. And as God the Holy Spirit perfects God's unconditional love in us, we learn to pass it on to others without condition so they can receive it, too...just as God the Father keeps on passing His unconditional love along to all mankind...Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 8...

ROMANS 5:8

But God the Father DEMONSTRATES His own unconditional love toward all mankind, in that while we were yet sinners (as ungodly, unrighteous, unbelievers), Christ died for us.

The Father GAVE His Son. Love...true love...real love...is giving. What is the greatest of the Christians virtues? It is unconditional love for others. When we give unconditional love to others, we invest ourselves in them, and there is nothing more fulfilling than that. And since love begins at home, it's a great thing for us to give each other right here at Barah Ministries.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

When does a Christian Think So As to Have Sound Judgment?

As believers in Christ, God wants us to think highly of ourselves. He just doesn't want us to think MORE highly of ourselves than we ought to think. Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 3...

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ROMANS 12:3

For through the grace given to me by God the Father (the grace gift of being an apostle...Paul's spiritual gift), I (Paul) say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think...but to think so as to have sound judgment...the thinking that's in line with the measure of faith given to you by God (your spiritual gift).

Additionally, God doesn't want us to think lowly of ourselves. Did Jesus Christ ever get down on Himself? Never. Combing the bible, I can't recall a single instance. Yet so many believers in Christ, people who have the victory over death, sin, and the law, spend so much time and energy getting down on themselves. Instead of thinking too highly of ourselves, or thinking too lowly of ourselves, God wants us to "think so as to have sound judgment." In today's lesson, we'll find out exactly what that means.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

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

JESUS THE ONE AND ONLY
Babbie Mason

Here's Babbie Mason to sing about the Lord Jesus Christ...the One who loves us...the One we love...THE ONE AND ONLY.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Almighty God and Father...thank you for the chance to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith...challenge us to let you change our lives because of the things we discover today...we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit...in Christ's name...Amen.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

When is a Christian Thinking So As to Have Sound Judgment?

We continue our study of Romans, Chapter 12 at Verse 3, the third passage in the chapter...

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ROMANS 12:3

For through the grace given to me by God the Father (the grace gift of being an apostle...Paul's spiritual gift), I (Paul) say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think...but to think so as to have sound judgment...the thinking that's in line with the measure of faith given to you by God (your spiritual gift).

To “think so as to have sound judgment”...these are deep and penetrating words coming from God the Holy Spirit, and naturally they evoke at least a curiosity...what is a Christian doing when “thinking so as to have sound judgment?” This is a simple request from God the Holy Spirit with a powerful meaning...and “thinking so as to have sound judgment” is a key to the Christian Way of Living.

There must be something special about the number five. It was about this time five years ago when I made the transition from teaching a mixture of Christianity and the Law to teaching Christianity for exactly what it is...a lifestyle of unconditional love, forgiveness, grace, and freedom...a lifestyle that is alive and powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. I remember the angst in my soul at that time...a feeling of dread and anguish that I would have to stand before you and tell you I had lied to you for many years. There was no decision to make about whether I would tell you I had lied, nor when I would tell you I had lied, but I felt like an absolute sucker. I was not embarrassed...just sad that you had to be affected by my mistakes.

I remember the moment when it hit me, while sitting in front of my computer preparing another lesson, that Systematic Theology is a lie...not all of it of course, but if there is any part of it that is a lie...it is all a lie according to God. In Galatians, Chapter 5, Verse 9, Paul says...

GALATIANS 5:9

A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.

Like yeast (leaven), false teaching spreads and permeates every aspect of the soul and the spirit. I remember feeling so duped...a second time being duped...the first time by Roman Catholicism. What does it mean to be duped? It means to be easily deceived...to be easily fooled...to be gullible. It means I got “played” as they say in the ‘hood. Being played was nothing new for me. I’ve been played a number of times. It’s the risk you take when

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you care about others and when you want to give of yourself to others. You can always be fooled when you love.

Five years later, as I begin the eleventh year of living in my spiritual gift, the gift of Pastor-Teacher, God the Holy Spirit is at it again. He is challenging me to attack with ferocity the dead lifestyle that Christians are so willing to live. And the attack, as always, begins with me.

For the past two or three months I have been in pain. It's intense emotional pain. I know you have noticed it. Angst. It's the same type of angst I felt five years ago, although this time the intensity is about one hundred times more severe. It hurts to get up in the morning. It hurts all day. It hurts at night just before I go to bed. Sleep is a relief. Waking is back to the pain.

For quite a while I couldn't comprehend the source of the pain. When things get this way for me, I tend to clam up in a shell...I tend to shut myself off from the world...and I tend to hide away. Either that, or I will bury myself in work so I don't have to feel. I am certain I am not alone in this approach to pain... Amen? So I feel good sharing this with you. I am grateful, too, that God has stripped me of work and has surrounded me with friends who have made it safe for me to share the pain...people I can just be vulnerable with who lend tremendous insight to what I'm going through because they know me so well. I am lucky to have friends like these.

The pain is grief...mental and emotional suffering...accompanied by a dull ache and by painful regret...a feeling of loss...sorrow...disillusionment...dismay...despondency...I feel grateful that I can use words offer a surface look at how I feel at this time. I apologize to those of you who have been at the wrong end of this pain.

This emotional pain and mental anguish, of course, connect to some "stinkin' thinkin'" on my part (as motivational speaker, the late Zig Zigler, would call it) ...sometimes thinking is so habitual that if it is not examined it just runs us...and sometimes it can run us into the ground. When lousy thinking runs us, we slow down...we stop...we die...and we're just not buried yet. Even though James is one of the people in heaven that I will want to have fisticuffs with, because one of his verses is one of the most distorted in the history of biblical Christianity...he was right...James, Chapter 2, Verse 14...

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JAMES 2:14

What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works?

James, Chapter 2, Verse 20...

JAMES 2:20

But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

Faith...true faith in Our God...has action behind it. So why do I grieve? I regret the inaction I have allowed to set into myself...and I regret the inaction I have allowed to set in at Barah Ministries. I hope you will indulge these next few lesson without feeling the need to condemn yourselves. Instead I'd just have you examine, along with me, the difference that we make in the world. Does your life make a difference? It does to God. Does it make a difference to others in our community? If you were convicted of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence so that you would be found guilty?

To “think so as to have sound judgment”...these are deep and penetrating words coming from God the Holy Spirit. He has asked me to ask myself, and He has asked me to ask you exactly how we know when we are thinking so as to have sound judgment.

I think we know we are “thinking so as to have sound judgment” when we only listen to the Word of God as it comes from God the Holy Spirit, and when we absolutely resist every single prompting that comes from Satan, from the flesh and from the world.

Revelation, Chapter 2, Verse 11 says...

REVELATION 2:11

He who has an ear, let him hear what God the Holy Spirit says to the churches.

God the Holy Spirit is talking...are we listening?

Satan, the enemy of God, has a war against the Christian Way of Living that

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is so subtle and so successful that we don't even notice its affect. Satan has installed a pseudo-Christian lifestyle into us that is robbing us of our drive, our serenity, and our unity. Paul warned the Corinthians about this over two thousand years ago...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 Christ.

Why are Satan's deceptions so effective? Second Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 14 says...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 11:14

No wonder...for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

Satan is successful because he is a master deceiver. He fools us and we don't know until sever damage is done. What is the counterfeit Christian Way of Living that Satan has successfully installed in us? It has many facets...I wish there were just one...but there are many...thinking lowly of ourselves...a focus on sin...thinking of Christianity as a set of rules...a focus on our weaknesses...an obsession with past mistakes as the very definition of our present and future...a focus on our brokenness...broken spirits...self-betrayal...self-justification...self-deception...self-absorption...self-fixation...getting down on ourselves... isolation from others... inaccurate self-evaluation...detesting feedback... morbid introspection... self-depreciation...a dismissal of our strengths... ignoring our successes with a pseudo-humility...confusion...seeing ourselves as unworthy...a magnification of our flaws...feeling undeserving of blessings...self-loathing...remorse...a disdain for church...a disinterest in serving others... losing sight of what we want...lack of recognition of our value...dismissal of our contribution to an effort...the failure to lend emotional support to others...I could go on and on...but can you imagine that God is the sponsor of these sick thoughts that we, as Christians, willingly entertain? Is God the source of my grief? Hardly.

My question for you, my Christian brothers and sisters, is a simple one...are you "thinking so as to have sound judgment?" Let's take a music break and then we'll come back and learn why we have settled into this dead Christian

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Way of Living. Toby Mac turns his eyes to God and gives the prescription for the real Christian Way of Living...he says in a song...I JUST NEED YOU, referring of course to the Lord. And he's right...

MUSIC BREAK

I JUST NEED U

Toby Mac

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

When does a Christian Think So As to Have Sound Judgment?

Thank you for supporting this ministry with your financial contributions. Through your generous support, the Lord has been able to provide the Word of God from this pulpit for over a decade. There is no way to measure how many broken souls and broken spirits that have been touched by your generosity, but we know God is making it happen.

Let's take a few moments to give you a chance to make an offering. If you are benefiting from the work of this ministry, then we ask you to contribute to the continuation of the ministry with any gift, large or small, so we can keep on providing the truth to those who might not otherwise be able to hear it. Please welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with his offering message.

THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

COLOSSIANS 3:12-13

So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...//bearing with one another, and forgiving each other...whoever has a complaint against anyone...just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

OFFERING

FLIGHT OF THE EAGLE

Dave McClure, Instrumental

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

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When does a Christian Think So As to Have Sound Judgment?

Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 3...

ROMANS 12:3

For through the grace given to me by God the Father (the grace gift of being an apostle...Paul's spiritual gift), I (Paul) say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think...but to think so as to have sound judgment...the thinking that's in line with the measure of faith given to you by God (your spiritual gift).

How is it believers in Christ have let Satan install a counterfeit, DEAD Christian Way of Living in us? The apostle Paul describes this life for his protégé Timothy in Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 5...

SECOND TIMOTHY 3:5

...(people) holding to a (superficial) form of godliness (the spiritual life), although they have (even) denied its power...

And continuing in Second Timothy, Chapter 3, Verse 7, Paul describes what this life is like...

SECOND TIMOTHY 3:7

...always learning and never able to come to the (epignosis) knowledge of the truth.

In other words always learning the real truth but never really believing it. Ouch. Perhaps an anatomy lesson is in order. As Christians, we have a body, a soul, and a human spirit. The body is the problem...for inside the body is a very dead part of us called “the flesh,” Satan’s inside agent in every believer in Christ. At the moment of salvation, our God could have removed this dead self...but He chose not to. Paul tells us why God chose not to remove it in Second Corinthians 12, Verse 7...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 12:7

...to keep me (Paul) from exalting myself, there was given me (by God) a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself!

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Also resident in our body is the entire Trinity...as Church age believers we are the first and only group to have this privilege. We are in Christ, we are in the Father, and we are in the Spirit...Romans Chapter 8, Verse 9...

ROMANS 8:9

However, you believers in Christ are not “in the flesh” (as are unbelievers) but you believers in Christ “in the Spirit,” if indeed the Holy Spirit of God indwells you, and of course it does. But if anyone does not have the Holy Spirit of Christ (and unbelievers don’t), this person does not belong to God.

So we can’t make the excuse... “Well there ya go! That’s why I sin! I have “the flesh” and it’s more powerful than me...there’s nothing I can do to stop sinning” ... we can’t make that excuse because greater is He who is indwelling you than He who is in the world.

Here’s the anatomy lesson. “The flesh” is not you. “The flesh” is not who you are. It is a dead part of you. It is not designed to run you. It is left in you to keep you from exalting yourself...nothing more. Here’s Paul’s description of the flesh and its effect on us. Romans, Chapter 7, Verse 15...

ROMANS 7:15

For what I am doing, I do not understand...for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate (sinning).

Romans, Chapter 7, Verses 17 to 23...

ROMANS 7:17

So now, (it is obvious to me that) no longer am I the one doing it (the sinning)...but (the) sin which indwells me (is doing the sinning).

The dead self is not who you are. The dead self is the source of the sinning. Your soul and spirit are who you are. The dead self, located in the body, is going to be fertilizer for daffodils one day. It will not be making the trip to heaven with you.

ROMANS 7:18

For I (Paul) know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh...for the willingness to do good is present in me (in the soul and spirit), but the doing of the good is not present in me (in the flesh).

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“The flesh” is up to no good. It hates Paul, it hates God, it hates others, and it is much more powerful than your will. You know the self-discipline you’re always talking about? You don’t have any. Sorry!

ROMANS 7:19

For the good that I want to do, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want to do.

ROMANS 7:20

But if I am doing the very thing I do not want to do, (it is obvious to me that) I am no longer the one doing it, but the sin which indwells me (“the flesh” is doing the sinning).

ROMANS 7:21

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

ROMANS 7:22

For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man (the new self...the soul and the spirit)...

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 (the body).

When we listen to the body, “the flesh,” we are not “thinking so as to have sound judgment.” Instead we are settling for a superficial, DEAD spiritual life. The way we can tell we have settled for that spiritual life is simply to look at what we are doing for others...to look at how we are using our spiritual gifts...to look at the impact we are making on others...to look at the difference we make here in Satan’s kingdom. Are we confounding Satan’s plans for his kingdom or are we going along with them? Each of us has to answer this question for himself and we have to answer this question as a ministry. Are we always just learning the truth but never living the truth? I say we are. I say we are settling for the superficial spiritual life.

Why?

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I think the “why” is that Satan has convinced us that he is more powerful than God, and we believe him. If I were to ask you who is more powerful in the battle between David and Goliath, what would you say? You know the truth. You’d have to say David is more powerful. If I asked you why David is more powerful, you’d answer correctly as well...David tells us how he beat Goliath in First Samuel, Chapter 17, Verse 47...

FIRST SAMUEL 17:47

“...the battle is the Lord’s and He will give you into our hands.”

God always gives his people the victory. No matter how big, how loud, or how imposing Satan is in any battle, the Lord always delivers his people to victory. So why do we doubt? We doubt because we are like Saul’s army in the David and Goliath story. We believe that Satan is more powerful than God...just as Saul’s army believed Goliath was more powerful than God...but neither is more powerful than God. Satan seems bigger like Goliath...He certainly sounds louder...and he is certainly imposing...but like Goliath, the Lord will deliver the victory into our hands. When Paul realize that true and irrevocable fact he exclaimed in Romans, Chapter 7, Verses 24 and 25...

ROMANS 7:24

Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

ROMANS 7:25

Thanks be to God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord (the Ones who will deliver me)! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind (the soul) am serving the law of God...but on the other, with my flesh I am serving the law of sin.

And as for how to handle sin, Paul had this insight in Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 1...

ROMANS 8:1

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in union with Christ Jesus.

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There is a battle inside of us believers in Christ. Galatians, Chapter 5, Verse 17...

GALATIANS 5:17

For “the flesh” sets its desire against God the Holy Spirit, and God the Holy Spirit sets His desire against “the flesh” ... for these are in opposition to one another...

How do we win the battle? How do we “think so as to have sound judgment?”

I think we know we are “thinking so as to have sound judgment” when we only listen to the Word of God as it comes from God the Holy Spirit, and when we absolutely resist every single prompting that comes from Satan, from the flesh and from the world.

The pain from grief that I described to you at the beginning of this lesson is not from my soul or spirit. It is from my body... “the flesh” ... a flesh that is continually letting me know how lousy I am...how weak I am...and this insidious and relentless badgering can easily make us choose to give away our power and to give away our victory. We stop “thinking as to have sound judgment.”

Let’s think about it for a minute...Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 17...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:17

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

The new-self life is not a dead life. Think about what that life is really like. It’s a blank slate life. It’s a new start life. It’s a successful life. It’s a resurrection life...it’s a life from the dead...it’s an eternal life.

I think it is about time for us, as believers in Christ, to start screaming at ourselves to “Wake Up!” And we’ll know we are up and out of the fog of the dead Christian Way of Living by how we serve others with our spiritual gifts.

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GOD WANTS YOU!

Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

The closing moments of our study are for the benefit of anyone who does not have a personal relationship with the Sovereign God of the Universe, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We want you to know that **GOD WANTS YOU**.

It's an easy decision to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ...you can do it anytime and anywhere...let's see what happens in a prison in Acts, Chapter 16, Verses 25 to 34...

ACTS 16:25

But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them...

ACTS 16:26

...and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken...and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened.

ACTS 16:27

When the jailer (a prison guard) awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

ACTS 16:28

But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!"

ACTS 16:29

And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas...

ACTS 16:30

...and after the prison guard brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

ACTS 16:31

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And Paul and Silas said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and everyone in your household who also believes.”

No works of any kind necessary... simply faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ is the ticket to eternal life...

ACTS 16:32

And Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to the jailer together with all the people who were in his house.

ACTS 16:33

And the jailer took Paul and Silas that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.

ACTS 16:34

And the jailer brought Paul and Silas into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in THE God (the Lord Jesus Christ) with his whole household.

Here’s June Murphy to sing about a God who shows us His love with actions.

CLOSING SONG

DEMONSTRATED LOVE

June Murphy

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

THANKS - INTERCESSION - PETITION

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

www.barahministries.com