

ROMANS
Lesson 402–March 4, 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 through its worldwide impact, courtesy of the internet...and a church that serves locally in 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 teach the Word of God from God's perspective, not from man's perspective.

One of my favorite things to do when I am on vacation near an ocean is to watch the sun rise. My favorite time is the moment when the sun first peeks over the horizon.

SUNRISE SLIDE

The intensity of the sun is still low, and if you are watching for it you can see a single line that leads your eyes directly to the sun. As the sun continues to rise, getting more intensely bright and harder to look at, with peripheral vision you can still see the line that leads directly to the sun...but you also start to see the two sides of the water that are not that line.

I think the Lord uses the sunrise to teach us the difference between focus and distraction. The line that leads to the sun is focus. Everything else is distraction. So it is in the spiritual life. That which leads our eyes to God the Son is focus. That which takes our eyes away from God the Son is distraction.

Those of us who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are Christians. It's a ten-word expression, and ten is the number of perfection. The first six words of this expression spell out Christ...the One we worship...the One we adore. Hebrews, Chapter 12, Verse 2 tells us to keep on....

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HEBREWS 12:2

...fixing our eyes on Jesus (the Son), the pioneer and the perfecter of the Christian faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, regarding the shame of the Cross with contempt, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God the Father.

God's enemy, Satan...the ruler of this world does everything he can to take our eyes off of this very important Person...Christ...The Jewish Messiah...The Lord and Savior...the Sovereign God of the Universe...the Son. In Second Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 3, the apostle warns us...

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.

When you take your eyes off of Jesus (who is your focus), and fix your eyes on the world (distractions), it's a prescription for living The Dead Christian Life. It is not the Lord's intention, nor is it His plan, that His believers...those in union with Him...would live such a life.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

God Wants Us to Live a Spiritual Life...Not a Carnal Life

It's easy for Christians to adopt a lifestyle other than the one the Lord intended. The apostle Paul had to deal with The Corinthian Church who had done just that...First Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 3...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:1

And I (Paul), brethren (of the Corinthian Church), could not speak to you as I would speak to spiritual men, but instead I must talk to you as I would speak to men of flesh (carnal men)...as if I were speaking to infants in union with Christ.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:2

I gave you milk to drink (teaching you basic truths, as if you were a baby), not solid food (teaching you advanced truths, as if you were adults)...for you were not yet able to receive solid food (advanced truths). Indeed, even now you are not yet able to receive solid food (advanced truths)...

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FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:3

...for you are still fleshly (carnal). For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly (carnal), and are you not walking (in lifestyle) like mere men (just like unbelievers walk...in the lusts of the flesh)?

Many Christians are like those in the Corinthian Church...they are more influenced by the world's thinking and the world's behavior than by the Lord and by His Word. Many Christians leave a door open in their souls for the world to set up its camp, creating a mixture of Christian thinking and world thinking which totally fragments the power of The Christian Way of Living. Second Corinthians, Chapter 11, Verse 4...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 11:4

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, and they do...or if one comes and preaches a different gospel we have not preached, and they do...

...as believers in Christ we are to flee from these false things that have an insidious and negative affect on our spiritual lives.

In today's lesson we'll reflect on the last two lessons to see if we can learn what God the Holy Spirit is saying throughout the world to His churches about our subtle drifting away from Christianity.

MUSIC AND REFLECTION

Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ

Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

FIRST

Lauren Daigle

There can only be one Number One in our lives. Here's Lauren Daigle to remind us to keep Christ FIRST.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

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Almighty God and Father... You're important to us, and important means You are first... You are number One in our lives... Your Son created us... You love us unconditionally... You planned for us... You protect us... You provide for us... You are the perfect Father... and You sent Your Son, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to pay for our sins with His blood on a Cross so that we could share in His perfect righteousness through our union with Him... Your Son died for us on that Cross... and was buried... and was resurrected from the dead on the third day... and we are grateful as Christians to share in His victory at the Cross and to follow the plan you have laid out for us in eternity past. Give us the strength and the courage to run with endurance the race that You have set before us... give us the clarity to navigate the waters of confusion instigated by Your enemy, Satan... remind us that we already have the victory You have given us and help us to live in that victorious state... every moment of every day... keeping You and Your Son first in everything... we ask this through the power of God the Holy Spirit... in Christ's name... Amen.

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

God Wants Us to Live a Spiritual Life... Not a Carnal Life

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...

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. Jesus Christ never got down on Himself. Yet so many believers in Christ, people who have the victory over death, over sin, and over the law, spend so much time and energy getting down on themselves... putting themselves down... thinking fatalistically... believing in the depths of themselves that God is going to work all things together for good as He promises, just not for them. Instead of thinking too highly of ourselves, or thinking too lowly of

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ourselves, God wants us to “think so as to have sound judgment.” These are deep and penetrating words coming from God the Holy Spirit.

We don't overestimate ourselves. Yet we don't underestimate ourselves, either. When we compare ourselves to God, we can question our worth and our deservedness because standing next to God, all of us pale in comparison. All of us fall short of the essence of God. Yet when we reflect on the gifts God gives us at the moment of salvation, we could never in good conscience question our worth or our deservedness, when the Sovereign God of the Universe declares His opinion of us once and for all time in an absolute and final judgment. Justified...righteous...holy...blameless...beyond reproach...you believers are exactly the same as my Son! Is our perfection, as believers in Christ, deserved? God the Father thinks so. The other members of the Triune Godhead agree. Is our worth, as believers in Christ, deserved? God the Father thinks so. The other members of the Triune Godhead agree. Why? Because the Lord Jesus Christ thought we were so worthy and so deserving that He laid down His life on a Cross and shed His blood for us. For Christians, God's opinion of us has to be more important than our opinions of ourselves, and infinitely more important than Satan's opinion of us.

The spiritual life God intends for us involves complete renovation of our thinking. God give us believers in Christ a spiritual life called the resurrection life...also called eternal life...or if you want to use the Greek word that describes it...the ZOE life. Another way to say it is that the spiritual life God gives us is a “God-kind of life.” It's the exact life He has. He wants us to live that kind of life here on earth and into eternity. By giving every believer His resurrection life, God has imparted His very nature, His very substance, and His very being into our human spirits. As believers in Christ, we have the life of God in us. John, Chapter 10, Verse 10 tells us...

JOHN 10:10

The thief (God's enemy...Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy (the sheep)...I (the Lord Jesus Christ) came that believers in Christ (God's sheep) may have the resurrection life (the ZOE life...eternal life), and have it abundantly.

Satan, the enemy of God is a master deceiver. He fools us into signing up

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for an inferior Christian life, and often we don't realize it until severe 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...doubt... getting down on ourselves...isolation from others...inaccurate self-evaluation...detesting feedback... morbid introspection...a dismissal of our strengths... self-depreciation...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?

C.S. Lewis, a British novelist said it well...

C.S. LEWIS ON HUMILITY

“True humility is not thinking less of ourselves, but thinking of ourselves less.”

Believers in Christ are born again! Believers in Christ have a new life...the ZOE life...the resurrection life! Yet few Christians really grasp the depth of what we have in this life, so we go on living much like we did before we came to Christ...a life of death.

At the center of this dead Christian life is unbelief. Rather than understanding that our wonderful God has freed us from a life of slavery, we gravitate back to a life where unbelieving hearts insist that we must earn God's favor through our good deeds. We are certain that our actions define our identity, and when those actions are rooted in sin and are rooted in gravitating toward “harm's way,” as we are prone to do, we absolutely forget who we are in Christ. What follows are periods of despair and times where we wallow in confusion. Satan uses our unbelief to torment us by continuing

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to darken our understanding of God and His Word and His gifts in such a way that we are robbed of our inheritance. In Second Corinthians, Chapter 2, Verse 18, Paul warns us...just parts of these two verses really say it all...

COLOSSIANS 2:18

Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize...

Second Corinthians, Chapter 2, Verse 20...

COLOSSIANS 2:20

If you believers in Christ have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, and you have, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself...

As believers in Christ, we have a choice...the spiritual life from God or the dead, carnal life offered by God's enemy. What's your choice? Are you thinking about yourself and your spiritual life "so as to have sound judgment?"

Let's take a music break...in the break song, Natalie Grant reminds us to fix our eyes on Jesus...rather than allowing the enemy to make our hearts wander. Take a moment to listen to the song and then we'll give you some time to have your break.

MUSIC BREAK

MORE THAN ANYTHING

Natalie Grant

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

God Wants Us to Live a Spiritual Life...Not a Carnal Life

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

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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

HEBREWS 12:1

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of Old Testament witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and let us lay aside the sin which so easily entangles us (buffeting us from all sides), and let us instead run with endurance the race that is set before us...

OFFERING

FLIGHT OF THE EAGLE

Dave McClure, Instrumental

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

God Wants Us to Live a Spiritual Life...Not a Carnal Life

Why is it so important that Christians live their spiritual lives? John sums it up well in John, Chapter 1, Verses 4 and 5...

JOHN 1:4

In the Lord was the resurrection life, and the resurrection life was the Light of men.

The Light ALWAYS defeats the darkness. Let me repeat that. The Light ALWAYS defeats the darkness. Where light is shining, there is no darkness. Satan would have us believe that light is a bad thing. "All your sins are going to come to the light!" Satan portrays this coming to the light as if we are going to be exposed so that everyone will find out our secrets and they'll find out how bad we are. I contend that we want our sins to come to the light so that we can see what has been frustrating our lives and our advance in the spiritual life God planned for us. It is altogether fitting that our hindrances should come to light, to never again be a secret, so that we can shed them and so we can rid ourselves of their power for all time.

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JOHN 1:5

The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

The darkness CANNOT overpower the light. No one can frustrate the power of God's spiritual life. That's why Christians who are on a course to ruin their lives are never successful at it. God just keeps on blessing them with light, and they cannot successfully retreat fully into darkness, no matter how hard they try. This absolute and irrevocable fact completely exposes the lie that God only blesses His believers when they are doing the right thing. God blesses where He lives...and the Lord Jesus Christ lives indwelling every one of His believers. John, Chapter 8, Verse 12, the Lord Himself says...

JOHN 8:12

Then Jesus again spoke to the Pharisees, saying, "I am the Light of the world...he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness...but will have the Light of the resurrection life."

Jesus...our Light...the Light of the world...has freed us from a life of sin, and evil and ignorance.

The spiritual life, the resurrection life is a life of faith, hope and love...in First Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 13 Paul tells us of 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.

Thinking so as to have sound judgment is a life filled with unconditional love. Yet make no mistake, FAITH is a critical component of the spiritual life. When we take our eyes off of Christ, we have a crisis of faith. Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verses 35 and 36 warn us...

HEBREWS 10:35

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward.

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HEBREWS 10:36

For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

Unbelief kills confidence.

Often, it seems the evil prosper and the evil triumph...and indeed through the grace of God, sometimes they do. They win battles...not the war. The righteous man lives by faith. We place our absolute confidence in our God and in everything He promises, knowing His promises always come true.

The carnal life is a life of unbelief. Mainly this unbelief comes from lousy self-evaluation. Satan convinces believers in Christ that because we sin after salvation, we should feel bad about it...that God doesn't really forgive us... that we have to redeem ourselves. The unbelief comes from a consistent pattern of believing what Satan whispers to us over what God is telling us in His Word. When we believe Satan...when we believe ANYTHING that liar says...we are calling God a liar. We are saying to God that He is not going to come through for us as He promises. Sorry...that is just not true. A victorious life for Christians is not based on what we do or don't do. A victorious life for Christians is based on what Christ did for us at the Cross to make us WHO WE ARE...and what HE did there is make possible the resurrection life.

One of the things I hated more than anything else when I played softball was a forfeit. I would look forward to the game all week, and then the other team wouldn't show up. Forfeit. That's what most Christians are doing. They are forfeiting the magnificent resurrection life. They don't show up for the resurrection life. First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 56 and 57...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:56

The sting of death is sin...and the power of sin is the law...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:57

...but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Satan sells the dead Christian life...we buy it...we let it "conform" us...we

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become molded into a dead pattern of inaction, and unbelief and we end up making no difference in the world.

The spiritual life is a life of positive expectancy...a life beyond our wildest dreams...a life we know is because of Christ and not because of us. We present our bodies to Christ, we keep on being transformed through the renewing of our minds, and we think so as to have sound judgment. As people who are in union with Christ...as a congregation in union with Christ...as people who are alive from the dead, we know that acting the opposite is conduct unbecoming of a Christian. Luke, Chapter 1, Verse 37...

LUKE 1:37

“For nothing will be impossible with God.”

<The flesh = the fallen self = not able>

What are your dreams? Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 13...

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

If Satan has convinced you to run the “If it’s to be it’s up to me” lifestyle, just know that he is a liar and he is the one who keeps on fathering lies. God is the One who keeps on perfecting you.

I can’t help but be impressed by these words...Matthew, Chapter 17, Verses 14 to 20...

MATTHEW 17:14

When the Lord and His disciples came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying...

MATTHEW 17:15

“Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic (he has epilepsy) and is very sick (he’s having an episode)...for he often falls (throws himself) into the fire and often (he throws himself) into the water.”

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MATTHEW 17:16

“I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him.”

MATTHEW 17:17

And Jesus answered and said (to His disciples), “You unbelieving and perverted generation...how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring your son here to Me.”

MATTHEW 17:18

And Jesus rebuked the demon, and the demon came out of the man’s son, and the boy was cured at once.

MATTHEW 17:19

Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not drive it out?”

MATTHEW 17:20

And Jesus said to them, “Because of the littleness of your faith...for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move...and nothing will be impossible to you (if it is in God’s will).”

Faith the size of a mustard seed is really small. But what is inside of a seed? Life! Inside of a 1 to 2 millimeter mustard seed is the largest of all garden plants. What is the real significance of the dead Christian life? If we buy it, we won’t plant seeds. Being the light of the world means planting seeds with the gospel message and the Word of God that God the Holy Spirit can grow into the most amazing of plants. We plant the seeds of hope in others...the Holy Spirit waters them and produces the fruit. Second Corinthians, Chapter 9, Verse 10...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 9:10

Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness...

Christians...I implore you...live your destiny. If there is anything I want you to take away from the last three lessons, that’s it. Live your destiny.

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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**.

What is going to happen to you when you close your eyes in this life? Is there an “afterlife?” And if there is, how can you get to heaven?

Many people believe the answer to the question, “How can I get to heaven?” is to be a good person. In fact, most people think they are, and I quote, “...basically good people.” For some, being good means not being bad. Here’s what I have heard many people say over the years... “I haven’t murdered anyone. I don’t steal. I don’t curse. I don’t lie. I’m not a drug addict. My conscience is clear because I’m not nearly as bad as the people I read about in the newspapers or the ones I see on television. I’m just like everyone else, and I know everybody can’t be going to hell.”

And when these people are “unlucky,” they open a bible and it obliterates their delusion...Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23...

ROMANS 3:23

...for all creatures have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 10...

ROMANS 3:10

...as it is written “There is no creature who is righteous, not even one...”

First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 22...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22a

For all in union Adam at physical birth (and that is every human who comes to earth) are set to die the second death in the Lake of Fire...

The good news is that the Lord has an interesting attitude toward His creatures...Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9...

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SECOND PETER 3:9

The Lord is not slow about His promise of salvation, as some accuse Him of, but instead He is patient toward you unbelievers...not wishing for any of you to perish (in the Lake of Fire) but for all of you to come to repentance (a change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

The apostle John makes clear the function of the bible...John, Chapter 20, Verses 30 and 31...

JOHN 20:30

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book (the bible)...

JOHN 20:31

...but these things written here have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah)...the Son of God (in human form)... and that by believing in Him you may have the resurrection life in His name.

How can you get to heaven? Right where you sit, RIGHT NOW, you can tell God the Father that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is the moment of eternal life for you. Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

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

Believing in Jesus Christ is your acknowledgement that you can't do a thing to get to heaven on your own. Romans, Chapter 11, Verse 6 says...

ROMANS 11:6

But if salvation is by grace, and of course it is, it is no longer on the basis of works...otherwise grace is no longer grace.

God's grace makes your salvation a free gift to you...if you have to work for a gift then the work makes you deserve the gift. In salvation, there is no way for you to impress God enough that He would allow you to save yourself. It's very wise to let God save you, because once God does something He never changes His mind.

Heed the warning in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

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JOHN 3:36

“He who believes in the Son has the resurrection life right at that moment... but he who does not obey the command to believe in the Son will not see the resurrection life...instead the wrath of God (the Lake of Fire) abides on him.”

The apostle Peter reminds us of the words of the Old Testament prophet Joel in Acts, Chapter 2, Verse 21...

ACTS 2:21

‘And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved.’

Join me in heaven!

Here’s June Murphy to sing about a God who has made you worthy.

CLOSING SONG

WORTHY

June Murphy

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

THANKS - INTERCESSION - PETITION

Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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