

**ROMANS**  
**Lesson 447–December 30, 2018**

If you're in the resident congregation, turn off your electronic devices and put them away. They are not welcome. Let this be a place where you aren't distracted by the world.

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

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...a Christian Church with worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. At Barah Ministries, our God is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We make a difference by teaching the Word of God from God's perspective, and not from man's perspective.

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**  
**What's Your Choice?**

The theme is the same every year about this time...so it seems cliché...but "Where did the year go?" It seems like just yesterday when we were saying "Happy New Year," and now we're saying it again to usher in the "Anno Domini," The Year of Our Lord 2019.

How was your year?

As I ask you the question, I'm thinking of things I've seen this year. A student of mine died on a plane on his way home from a workshop. A friend of mine started the year happily married and is ending the year going through a bitter divorce. Several of my friends are out of work. As a result, they're thinking they are worthless because their self-worth and their employment status are Siamese Twins.

I've always thought that life boils down to a series of choices. All of us have volition, defined as the ability to choose, and I've been of the opinion that when all of our decisions are added up it determines our destiny. So at this time of the year I stop to reflect on the choices I am making to see if they are consistent with the destiny I want.

However, that lie doesn't include God. That's a natural man's look at things. That's the, "If it's to be it's up to me" life viewpoint. What's true, especially for believers in Christ, is that our God is transforming us. He has a personal, supernatural plan for each of us, and while our will certainly factors into the plan, the absolute truth is that our God is conforming us to His image. Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 29 says...

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ROMANS 8:29a

*For those whom God the Father foreknew (and that's believers in Christ), He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son (the Lord Jesus Christ)...*

My friend who died this year was allotted a number of days by God. He wasn't going to be on this planet one more day or one fewer day than God had decided a billion years ago. He had a congenital heart condition. He had choices in the matter of how he handled that condition with the medical community, yet God factored in his decisions in the allotment of days. There were decisions my friend controlled, but the ultimate decision about His longevity was in God's hands.

My friend who is going through a divorce loves his wife, and he wants his family, but he can't make the woman he loves want to stay. He can't make her love him back.

My friends who don't have jobs right now did certain things that contributed to them being without work...yet whether or not their company retained them was not up to them. Now they have to get ready for the next challenge God will provide in the career realm.

What's your choice? In Second Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 5, the Lord commands us, through the apostle Paul, 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?*

I don't think the habit of a once a year examination is enough. I don't think the habit of examining ourselves only when things are tough is enough.

What's your choice?

The world is about to take us through an examination of the last year...a look back on what happened...the year in review...and most notably we'll see a list of all the celebrities who died this year. Even though I am not a celebrity, I'm hoping I didn't make the list. I can guarantee none of the people on the list planned to be there at this time last year.

So as we wrap up this year and begin the next...what's your choice? What is it that you want to be true about your life at this time next year that is not true now? I've always chosen to live an intentional life. When we make choices we articulate intention. What's most important, as I see it, is that God shows up in every one of our choices. That means God is at the center of our lives, and as we make every choice we factor in His thoughts so that our choices for ourselves are the same as the choices He would make for us.

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My hope for you is that as you self-examine, whether once a year or with every decision, that the reality of your status as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ provides you with the truest measure of success...peace of mind. I hope you make the same choices for yourself that He would make for you. In today's lesson, we'll examine the wisdom of making every decision from a firm foundation...the foundation of Christ. Welcome to a place where you can learn to make your choices and to build your life on a spiritual foundation through your relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

What's in a name? Philippians, Chapter 2, Verse 9 says...

**PHILIPPIANS 2:9**

*For this reason also (because the Lord did not see equality with God the Father as a thing to be seized and held), God the Father highly exalted Jesus Christ, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name...*

There's a lot in a name...let's hear June Murphy sing about the name that is above every name in her song COME SEE A MAN.

**MUSIC AND REFLECTION**

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

**COME SEE A MAN**

*June Murphy*

**OPENING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

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

Thank you Father, for allowing us to live another year...thank you for allowing us to live another day...thank you for all of the gracious provisions You have given to sustain us...thank you for helping us to grow...thank you for giving us a series of experiences designed for our benefit, each of them purposed to help us come closer to You...thank you for sending Your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ...to live for us...to die on a Cross for us...to come back from the dead for us...

Help us, as we reflect on the year gone by, to see it as You see it...help us to see Your mighty hand in everything we have done...and as we move into the New Year, show us how to make

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decisions for our lives that are totally consistent with obedience to You and in line with what You want for our lives...things exceeding and abundantly beyond anything we could ever ask or think...

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

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**  
**What's Your Choice?**

Are you in the faith? Second Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verse 5 asks you 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?*

Well, in a sense, you are in the faith. God placed you there. He has given you faith as a gift. How are you using the gift? God intends for us to use the gift by recognizing who we are in union with Him, and to use that supernatural power in every choice. He is the cornerstone of our life's foundation and every one of us are His living stones.

There is a crisis coming in your life. Will you be ready for it? If your life is built on a firm foundation you will be ready. In Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 24 to 27, the Lord Jesus Christ says there are two foundations...

**MATTHEW 7:24**

*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."*

**MATTHEW 7:25**

*"And the rain fell...and the floods came...and the winds blew and slammed against that house...and yet the house did not fall...for the house had been built on the rock."*

**MATTHEW 7:26**

*"Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand."*

**MATTHEW 7:27**

*"The rain fell...and the floods came...and the winds blew and slammed against that house...and it fell—and great was its fall."*

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What is the foundation of your life? In the matter of salvation, there are two paths...the sand and the rock. Believers in Christ are ready for the coming crisis because our houses are built on rock. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Rock. The Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation of life. First Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verse 11...

**FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:11**

*For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid... (the cornerstone of) which is Jesus Christ.*

As believers in Christ, we have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as the foundation of our lives. At the moment of salvation, God made us new. What is true of those who are made new? Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 17...

**SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:17**

*...when anyone is in union with Christ...and all believers in Christ are...he is a new creation...the original things died...behold, all things have been made new.*

We are a new creation without a trace of the original creation. The old man is dead. We are alive, in union with Christ. As we inspect our lives, God wants us to do certain things that aptly reflect Him...First Peter, Chapter 2, Verses 1 to 8...

**FIRST PETER 2:1**

*Therefore, putting aside (that is, making a break with) all malice and all deceit and all hypocrisy and all envy and all slander...*

**FIRST PETER 2:2**

*...instead...like newborn babies...long for the pure milk of the Word (truth, not deceit)...so that by learning the truth you may grow in respect to salvation...*

Believers in Christ are commanded to grow spiritually while laying aside the sins of the past.

**FIRST PETER 2:3**

*...if you believers in Christ have tasted the kindness of the Lord (and of course you have).*

The Lord is delicious, and so is His Word!

**FIRST PETER 2:4**

*And as you believers in Christ habitually come to the Lord, realize you are coming to a living (life giving) stone which has been rejected by (natural) men (unbelievers)...but (this stone...Christ) is choice and precious in the sight of God the Father...*

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Through your union with Christ, you are precious to God the Father as well.

**FIRST PETER 2:5**

*...you also...as living stones (chips off the old block)...are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood...to offer up (that is, to present yourselves as) spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God the Father through your union with Jesus Christ.*

**FIRST PETER 2:6**

*For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I (God the Father) lay in Zion a choice stone...a precious corner stone (the support on which everything in a building rests)...and he who believes in the precious corner stone, the Lord Jesus Christ, will not be disappointed.”*

Believers in Christ are saved, and have eternal security.

**FIRST PETER 2:7**

*This precious value (the Lord Jesus Christ), then, is for you who believe... but for those who disbelieve (unbelievers), “The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone...”*

**FIRST PETER 2:8**

*...and it became, “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense” ... unbelievers stumble because they are disobedient to the Word (the gospel message)...and to this doom (eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire) they were also appointed (for rejecting a relationship with Christ).*

There are two paths...what’s your choice? At the center of every human choice is Christ. Will you obey Him or disobey Him with your choice? Believers in Christ have obeyed the gospel message. For unbelievers, the Christ...the Messiah...is someone they stumble over...they ignore a relationship with Him.

<CORNERSTONE SLIDE>

The Lord Jesus Christ becomes for unbelievers the “rock of offense.” He is the jutting part of a cornerstone that cuts to pieces those who rub against it. He who was intended for salvation becomes the One who inflicts wrath on those who choose to reject Him. It has never been God’s desire, nor will it ever to be God’s desire that any creature go to hell.

So an analogy connecting us to life has three parts...The Cornerstone (Christ)...The Living Stones (believers in Christ)...The Stumbling Block (what Christ is to unbelievers). Why is the Lord a stumbling block for unbelievers? Without the Lord, unbelievers can do nothing. Anything they build is on sand. Without the Lord, believers in Christ can do nothing. We

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produce no fruit.

When we return from our five-minute break, we'll reflect on our foundation...Christ...and think about how to attack the new year.

**BREAK**

Five Minutes

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**What's Your Choice?**

Welcome back!

I can offer you a quiz as you contemplate where your life is heading. What's your choice in the matter of your spiritual life? What's your choice in the matter of how you use your time? What's your choice in the matter of your health? What's your choice in the matter of how you develop self?

What's your choice in the matter of your career? What's your choice in the matter of a companion? What's your choice in the matter of your family?

What's your choice in the matter of how you use the resources at your disposal? What's your choice in the matter of your finances? IN addition, consider this...where are the lies in your life? In what ways are you allowing yourself to be deceived? In what ways are you allowing yourself to live a deception? In light of the fact that God's will be done, what changes do you have to make in your life? Here's Hillary Scott with her song THY WILL BE DONE.

**MUSIC AND REFLECTION**

*Be Occupied with the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ*

Enjoy the Singing of His Praises

*THY WILL BE DONE*

*Hillary Scott*

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**What's Your Choice?**

The triangle is the strongest structure in the universe. In three-dimensional form, a triangle is a pyramid. It is not a coincidence. It's just one more thing in nature that points to God.

<TRIANGLE SLIDE>

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We have a triune Godhead...one God in three separate and distinct Persons...God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Then there is the physical manifestation of the Godhead...God the Son incarnate (in human form)...the God-man...the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...100% God and 100% man in one person forever.

When building a pyramid, the foundation is the cornerstone. Anything we build with our lives needs to start with Christ or it is destined to crumble.

Revelation, Chapter 1, Verse 8...

REVELATION 1:8

*“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “The One who IS and The One who WAS and The One who is TO COME...I am the Almighty.”*

John, Chapter 15, Verses 1 to 5...

JOHN 15:1

*“I (the Lord Jesus Christ) am the true vine...and My God, the Father is the vinedresser.”*

JOHN 15:2

*“Every branch in union with Me that does not bear fruit, God the Father takes away...and every branch that bears fruit...He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.”*

JOHN 15: 3

*“You are already clean (as believers in Christ) because of the word (the gospel message) which I have spoken to you.”*

JOHN 15:4

*“Abide in union with Me...and I indwelling you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine...so neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in union with Me.”*

JOHN 15:5

*“I am the vine...you are the branches...he who abides in union with Me and I indwelling him...he bears much fruit...for apart from Me you can do nothing.”*

Another great analogy...God the Father is the Vinedresser...the Person who owns the entire vineyard.

<VINEYARD SLIDE>

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Vine...believers in Christ are the branches... and God the Holy Spirit produces fruit in believers.



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<BRANCHES AND FRUIT SLIDE>

Galatians, Chapter 5, Verses 22 and 23...

**GALATIANS 5:22**

*But the fruit of God the Holy Spirit is unconditional love, joy, and peace (in yourself...the kind of peace that surpasses comprehension)...patience, kindness, goodness (toward others)...*

**GALATIANS 5:23**

*...faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (in your relationship with God)... against such virtues there is no law.*

Everything in a Christian's life is as a result of the abundant life gifted to us by God. John, Chapter 10, Verse 10...

**JOHN 10:10**

*The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy (the sheep)...I (the Lord Jesus Christ) came that the sheep may have the resurrection life...and have it abundantly.*

Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verses 19 to 22...

**EPHESIANS 2:19**

*So then you believers in Christ are no longer strangers and aliens (as unbelievers are)...but you are fellow citizens with the saints...and you are of God's household...*

**EPHESIANS 2:20**

*...having been built (as living stones) on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone...*

**EPHESIANS 2:21**

*...in whom the whole building...being fitted together...is growing into a holy temple in union with the Lord...*

**EPHESIANS 2:22**

*...in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God the Father by the agency of the indwelling God the Holy Spirit.*

Believers in Christ in the Church Age are indwelled by the entire Trinity. There is no reason for us ever to feel inferior. In Matthew, Chapter 6, Verse 33 we are commanded to...

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MATTHEW 6:33

*...seek first His kingdom and His righteousness...and all these things (the desires of your heart) will be added to you.*

First John, Chapter 5, Verse 12...

FIRST JOHN 5:12

*He who has a relationship with the Son has the resurrection life (divine life...eternal life)...he who does not have a relationship with the Son of God does not have the resurrection life (instead a life of spiritual death).*

This is the last lesson of the year, and it's a good time to check your choices. Are they built on the only foundation that has been laid? Are they built on the Rock? This is a great time to make the decisions that will propel you through 2019, helping God to deliver everything you dream of and more. The precious cornerstone, Jesus Christ, is inviting you to use His supernatural power on your toughest challenges. What's your choice?

**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.

Here are seven things for you to investigate as you consider a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

**POINT 1**

**There is a God and He is the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth**

The first four words of the bible confirm His existence...Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 1...

GENESIS 1:1a

*In the beginning, GOD...*

In Joel, Chapter 2, Verse 27, He says...

JOEL 2:27b

*I am the Lord your God, and there is no other God...*

John, Chapter 1, Verse 3...

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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.*

Therefore...

**POINT 2**  
**God Created You**

You are one of God's creatures and He was purposeful in creating you. Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 26...

GENESIS 1:26

*Then God the Father said, "Let Us (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) make man in Our image... according to Our likeness..."*

**POINT 3**  
**God Has a Plan for Mankind**

God is organized, and He laid out His plan for all mankind in eternity past... Acts, Chapter 2, Verse 23...

ACTS 2:23a

*...(everything happens) by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God the Father...*

**POINT 4**  
**God Has a Personal Plan for You**

With God, everything is a personal. He knows you intimately because He created you. He custom made a life specifically for you. Matthew, Chapter 10, Verse 30...

MATTHEW 10:30

*"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."*

**POINT 5**  
**God Reveals Himself in Ways that Make Sense to Human Beings**

God wants you to know Him. Anyone who says, "God works in mysterious ways" doesn't know God at all. Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 20...

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ROMANS 1:20

*For since the creation of the world the Lord's invisible attributes, His eternal power and His divine nature, keep on being clearly seen by everyone...being understood even through what has been made (as reflected in the things of nature)...so that all mankind are without excuse (in the matter of knowing of the existence of the Lord).*

**POINT 6**

**You Owe God a Hearing**

Since God created you, you at least owe him a hearing. He has planted in you a desire to know the things that are bigger than you and your life. Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3, Verse 11...

ECCLESIASTES 3:11a

*The Lord has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set a knowledge of eternity in everyone's heart...*

**POINT 7**

**God Has an Enemy, SATAN, Who Does Not Want You to Know God**

Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers. Second Corinthians, Chapter 4, Verse 4...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 4:4

*...the god of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ...who is the image of God.*

Like an eclipse, Satan obscures the Son...He doesn't want you to take advantage of the free gift of salvation offered to you by the Lord Jesus Christ. You would do well to think about how enemies operate...because the enemy of your salvation operates in very predictable ways. It's obvious that he wants you to miss out.

Start your new year off right by getting into a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Second Peter, Chapter 3, Verse 9 says...

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).*

John, Chapter 1, Verse 12...

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JOHN 1:12

*But whosoever received Him, to them the Lord Jesus Christ gave the right to become children of God the Father, even to those who believe in Jesus Christ's name...*

Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31...

ACTS 16:31

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

John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

JOHN 3:36

*"He who believes in the Son has eternal 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."*

John, Chapter 3, Verse 17...

JOHN 3:17

*For God the Father did not send God the Son (the Lord) into the world to judge the world...instead that the world might be saved through believing in Him.*

Acts, Chapter 4, Verse 12 says...

ACTS 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."*

It is God's intention that you see His hand operating in everything in your life. Here's TobyMac noticing God's hand in his song EVERYTHING.

**CLOSING SONG**

*EVERYTHING*

*TobyMac*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

*Let us pray...*

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Thanks for coming!

Thanks for watching!

Thanks for listening!

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