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

Welcome To BARAH MINISTRIES

Rory Clark Pastor-Teacher

Good Morning!

Welcome to Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with a worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. Thanks for listening to this Bible lesson!

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON The Lord Wants Christians to LIVE Love

LESSON INTRODUCTION

You've probably heard this Bible passage at every wedding you've ever gone to...First Corinthians, Chapter 13, Verses 1 to 8...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:1

If I (Paul) speak with human tongues...and I do...and if I speak with the tongues of angels...and I do...but I do not have unconditional love as my foundation...I have become like a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:2

If I (Paul) have the gift of prophecy...and I do...and if I know all mysteries and I have all knowledge...and I do...and if I have all faith so as to move mountains (if I'm able to do the impossible)...and I am...but do not have unconditional love, I am nothing.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:3

And if I (Paul) give all my possessions to feed the poor (philanthropy)...and I do...and if I surrender my body to be burned (in martyrdom)...and I do...but do not have unconditional love...it profits me nothing.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:4

Unconditional love is patient...unconditional love is kind and is not jealous... unconditional love does not brag and is not arrogant...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:5

...unconditional love does not act unbecomingly...unconditional love does not seek its own...unconditional love is not provoked...unconditional love does not take into account a wrong suffered...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:6

...unconditional love does not rejoice in unrighteousness...but unconditional love rejoices with the truth...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:7

...unconditional love bears all things...unconditional love believes all things... unconditional love hopes all things...unconditional love endures all things.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 13:8a Unconditional love never fails!

You've heard this passage...but the word UNCONDITIONAL is always left out. Human love can't sustain a marriage. UNCONDITIONAL love is what NEVER fails.

What is unconditional love?

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

A love without expectations...loving someone regardless of their actions or circumstances...not basing love on what someone does for you in return...loving someone as they are, with no strings attached...caring about someone's happiness without any concern for how it benefits you.

As we continue our study of Romans, Chapter 13 today...a three-verse passage...we'll learn all we need to know about Christianity. Our Lord wants us to LIVE unconditional love.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's hear some music! At Barah Ministries we like teaching the Bible from God's

perspective, not from man's perspective. June Murphy, under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, likes writing and singing songs from God's perspective as well. Here's one of her best...WHEN I SAY I LOVE YOU.

MUSIC OPENING SONG Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

WHEN I SAY I LOVE YOU June Murphy

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

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

Father, thank You for loving us as You do...unconditionally...thanks for forgiving us as You do...completely...thank you for teaching us the importance of how to treat others when they make mistakes...with grace...and thank you for being the perfect example of how to love, how to forgive, and how to be gracious...thank you for being our example of how to BE...

...as you teach us about unconditional love today, help us bring to mind all those closest to us with whom we are conditional in our love...open our spiritual eyes so we can see...open our spiritual ears so we can hear...open our spiritual heart so we can feel the message You are sending to us today about the importance of loving others UNconditionally...keep us from saying to ourselves, "Oh this message would be perfect for someone else, not me"...instead, let the message penetrate so we learn to love others as You do...

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

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON The Lord Wants Christians to LIVE Love

LESSON PART ONE

On January 15, 2009, an Airbus A320 taking off from LaGuardia Airport in New York City struck a flock of Canadian geese and lost power in both engines.

About four minutes after colliding with the birds, the plane's captain...Sully Sullenberger...landed the jet in the Hudson River. The passengers and crew exited the plane into inflatable rafts. Emergency responders were on the scene in minutes. A number of the passengers were treated for hypothermia, but only five people suffered more serious injuries.

Here's my question for you. If you were on that plane, would you feel any obligation to help other people on the plane to get to safety? Would the life of another, perhaps someone you didn't even know, be as important or more important than your own?

According to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, LOVE is the most important quality a person can possess. Unconditional love. What does our life mean if we don't have unconditional love for ourselves and for our fellow man?

This is the subject of today's short passage in Romans Chapter 13...LOVE. In Greek, it's *agapao* love...unconditional love. Here's the passage...Romans, Chapter 13, Verses 8 to 10...

ROMANS 13:8

Owe nothing to anyone except to keep on loving one another...for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled God's law.

ROMANS 13:9

For "You shall not commit adultery" ... "You shall not murder" ... "You shall not steal ..." "You shall not covet" ... and any other command is summed up in this one ... "You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself... unconditionally."

ROMANS 13:10

Unconditional love does no wrong to a neighbor...therefore, unconditional love is the fulfillment of God's law.

The New Testament describes this love as a debt. In effect it says, "Owe no debt to anyone except the debt to love one another." The Lord considers us as indebted to one another. Is that your mindset when you are interacting with others, especially those you don't know? Are you thinking, "I owe you unconditional

love?"

Unlikely.

Is that our attitude toward those we love? Are we thinking, "You know...you're being a real butthead lately, yet I love you unconditionally. I owe it to you." That's simply not the way we think.

Today's short passage packs a punch. The Bible is filled with commands for us to love unconditionally. The Lord wants us to love others more than we love ourselves. He wants us to love those who are hostile to us...those who have harmed us...those who persecute us...those we love who don't love us back...and those we don't like.

The Lord even wants us to love our enemies. The Lord contends if we don't have unconditional love, even toward our enemies, we miss the whole point of the resurrection life the Lord gives us. As First Corinthians 13 says, we are simply a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. Here's an example of the love the Lord wants for us.

An expert in the Mosaic Law was arguing with the Lord in an attempt to provoke Him. The Lord teaches the lawyer a lesson the lawyer did not want to learn... Luke, Chapter 10, Verses 25 to 37...

LUKE 10:25

A lawyer stood up and put Jesus to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

LUKE 10:26

And Jesus said to him, "What is written in the Law (lawyer)? How does it read to you?"

LUKE 10:27

And the lawyer answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind...and you shall love your neighbor as you love yourself."

LUKE 10:28

And Jesus said to the lawyer, "You have answered correctly...do this and you will

live."

LUKE 10:29

But wishing to justify himself (for not doing these things), the lawyer said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Okay. Let's get technical. Let's think we can trip the Lord up.

LUKE 10:30

Jesus said to the lawyer, "A Jewish man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead."

LUKE 10:31

"And by chance a Jewish priest was going down on that road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side."

LUKE 10:32

"Likewise a Jewish Levite also, when he came to the place and saw the man, passed by on the other side."

LUKE 10:33

"But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon the man...and when he saw the man, he felt compassion..."

LUKE 10:34

"...and the Samaritan came to the man and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them...and he put the man on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him."

LUKE 10:35

"On the next day the Samaritan took out two denarii (two full days wages) and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him...and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.""

LUKE 10:36

"Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands (the priest, the Levite or the Samaritan)?"

LUKE 10:37

And the lawyer said, "The one who showed mercy toward the man." Then Jesus said to the lawyer, "Go and do the same."

The Jews HATED the Samaritans. So, this story is a perfect illustration of real love...unconditional love. There was no reason for the Samaritan man to help a Jewish man. Even two of the beaten man's landsmen didn't help. But the Samaritan stopped to help. In Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 46, the Lord tells us how to treat others...

MATTHEW 5:46

For if (3) you love only those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

Now you know the significance of an earlier question. If you were on the plane that went down in the Hudson River on that fateful day in 2009, would you feel any obligation to help other people on the plane get to safety? Would you love?

Unconditional love is from the heart. Unconditional love works from the inside out. Unconditional love is a mindset, not an emotion. In God's view, this unconditional love is not only to be directed to other Christians. It is to be directed to unbelievers as well. In First Corinthians, Chapter 16, Verse 14 the Lord commands...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 16:14 Let all that you do be done in unconditional love.

Unconditional love is a payment others do not deserve. In First John, Chapter 3, Verse 16, the apostle reveals God's loving attitude...

FIRST JOHN 3:16

We know unconditional love by this...that Jesus laid down His life for all of us... and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren as well.

In Matthew, Chapter 22, Verses 34 to 40...

MATTHEW 22:34

But when the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together.

MATTHEW 22:35 One of them, a lawyer, asked Jesus a question, testing Him...

MATTHEW 22:36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

MATTHEW 22:37 And Jesus said to the lawyer, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.""

MATTHEW 22:38 "This is the great and foremost commandment."

MATTHEW 22:39 "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.""

MATTHEW 22:40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

The Jewish Torah...the first five books of the Bible written by Moses under the Lord's direction...offer well over seven hundred commands about conduct. Yet the Lord says all of those commands fit nicely under the umbrella of two commands. Matthew, Chapter 22, Verse 37...

MATTHEW 22:37

"You shall love the Lord your God unconditionally...with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

...and Matthew, Chapter 22, Verse 39...

MATTHEW 22:39

"You shall love your neighbor unconditionally as you love yourself... unconditionally."

Biblical love is not, "I'm no longer getting, so I'm no longer giving."

Unconditional love is "no matter what" love. We love because of the way the Lord loved us. We owe a debt to the One who loved us unconditionally enough to die in our place. We were born headed straight to hell...and the Lord Jesus Christ

stepped in so we would not get paid the wages for our sins, which is the second death in the Lake of Fire.

God is asking us to pass on His unconditional love to others...First John, Chapter 4, Verse 11...

FIRST JOHN 4:11 Beloved (divinely loved believers in Christ)...if God so loved us... unconditionally...and He did...we also ought to love one another unconditionally.

Amen?

When we return from the break we'll take the offering and then we'll look at these three verses in more detail.

FIVE-MINUTE BREAK *NOBODY Casting Crowns*

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON The Lord Wants Christians to LIVE Love

OFFERING INTRODUCTION

Did Jesus ever think about money? Rarely! What the Lord did think about was giving. As you think about giving, today and every day, let your attitude reflect the Lord's giving attitude as communicated in Acts, Chapter 20, Verse 35...

ACTS 20:35b "...remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Since you benefit from the Lord's thoughts in these Bible lessons, it just makes sense to contribute to the workers who communicate His thoughts to you. Give generously just as the Lord gives and watch what the Lord credits back to your account.

Let's welcome up Deacon Denny Goodall with one of his always inspiring offering messages.

THE OFFERING Deacon Denny Goodall

OFFERING VERSE

JOHN 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world...he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

OFFERING SONG *THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU Instrumental Version*

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON The Lord Wants Christians to LIVE Love

LESSON PART TWO

Romans, Chapter 13, Verse 8...

ROMANS 13:8

Do not keep on owing anything to anyone except owing the debt you owe to God to love one another unconditionally...for he who loves his neighbor unconditionally has fulfilled God's law.

The Christian Way of Living can be summed up in a word...LOVE.

We are not to be irritated with the things we see going on around us. We are not to be irritated with people. Instead, we are to remember at all times that the Lord is in charge of the universe and nothing happens here without His permission. Therefore, we can love what we see...whether good or evil...knowing that our God is for good and against evil. We don't have to right the wrongs of the world, except as God directs. LOVE is a great way to right the wrongs of the world.

So we take Moses' advice to the Jews as they fled Egypt...Exodus, Chapter 14, Verses 13 and 14...

EXODUS 14:13

But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you today...for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever."

EXODUS 14:14

"The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent."

In Galatians, Chapter 6, Verses 15 and 16, the Lord says it another way...

GALATIANS 6:15

For neither is physical circumcision anything...nor is uncircumcision anything... but a new creation is everything.

GALATIANS 6:16a

And those who will walk by this rule (the law of Christ...love)...peace and mercy be upon them...

What is the new creation? YOU ARE! Second Corinthians, Chpater 5, Verse 17...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in union with Christ, and all believers in Christ are, there is a new creation...the old things passed away...behold, new things have come.

Unconditional love is conduct becoming of the new creation. Romans, Chapter 13, Verse 9...

ROMANS 13:9

For these are commands from the Lord... "You shall not commit adultery"... "You shall not murder"... "You shall not steal"... "You shall not covet" ... and if there is any other command, it is summed up in this one, "You shall love your neighbor just as you love yourself...unconditionally."

The Lord knew you might not remember seven hundred commands, but He knew you could remember three. Love God. Love Self. Love Others. ALL IN.

Do you remember the self-esteem movement? We were told that we need high self-esteem. If we didn't have high self-esteem, we had low self-esteem. Of

course, if your self-esteem is too high, you're selfish. And, we need to raise children who have high self-esteem. If there is anything that ruins kids fast, that's it. This is where the participation trophy came from.

How can you tell if you have high self-esteem? When you see a giant dose of self-justification, which describes the modus operandi every person on earth! We ALWAYS give ourselves a break. We ALWAYS are willing to overlook our own weaknesses and struggles.

Romans, Chapter 13, Verse 10...

ROMANS 13:10 Unconditional love does not keep on doing wrong to a neighbor...therefore when we demonstrate unconditional love for others it is the fullness of God's Law.

Love is an expression. Every act is an expression of your unconditional love. Christianity is a lifestyle of love. The apostle Paul considered his ministry to be an expression of love. Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 14...

ROMANS 1:14 I (Paul) am under an obligation of debt...both to Greeks (people who speak Greek) and to barbarians (people who don't speak Greek)...both to the wise (believers in Christ) and to the foolish (unbelievers).

What is the first fruit of the Spirit? 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 yourselves)...patience, kindness, and goodness (toward others)...

GALATIANS 5:23

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

Obeying authority is a form of unconditional love. Paying your taxes is a form of unconditional love. Love is an unpaid debt we never finish paying.

As you assess yourself in prayer, check to see how you love. God wants you to love from the inside out. God wants you to love all the time. God wants you to

love those you don't like. Unconditional love requires God's help. And when He helps, His love never fails.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race

The next ten minutes could be the ten most important minutes of your life. You'll be introduced to the good news concerning how you can spend all eternity in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. We want you to know that...

GOD WANTS YOU!

He Wants You Make the Most Important Decision of Your Life

...and what He wants for you is that you make the most important decision of your life.

The Lord Jesus Christ created you! He loves you unconditionally. He forgives you for every sin you'll ever commit. He offers you His grace when you make mistakes. He has always had you in His mind for all eternity. He knows your name. The Lord wants the best for you. Have you ever had a human being love you this way?

Well, if you don't yet have a relationship with the Lord and Jesus Christ, He considers you to be a SPIRITUALLY DEAD sinner who needs a Savior. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23 says...

ROMANS 3:23 ... all creatures have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 10 says...

ROMANS 3:10 ...it is written, "There is no creature who is righteous...not even one..."

Your condition at physical birth IS NOT YOUR FAULT, but it is your circumstance.

Spiritual death, caused by sin, is a barrier between us and God. Spiritual death is the first death. Eternity in the Lake of Fire is the second death, and it's your

eternal fate if you close your eyes in this life as an unbeliever. You do not want the second death!

God wants you to have a spiritual life. First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 22 says...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:22

...all in union with Adam at physical birth (and that is every human being) are set to die the second death in the Lake of Fire...but all who are in union with Christ will be made spiritually alive by God.

The Lord provides you with the Bible to illuminate the SPIRITUAL LIFE, which is your path to heaven. John, Chapter 20, Verse 31 says...

JOHN 20:31

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

The Bible contains the Lord's exact thinking. It is your "owner's manual" for life. The good news is the Lord Jesus Christ did something about your sin problem. He has a plan for your salvation because He doesn't want anyone to go to the Lake of Fire...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...instead, He is patient toward unbelievers...not wishing for any to perish (in the Lake of Fire) but for all to come to repentance (a voluntary change of mind about having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ).

By your own choice, you can be SPIRITUALLY ALIVE, making you special in God's sight...Psalm 116, Verse 15 says...

PSALM 116:15

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones (His saints... His spiritually alive believers in Christ).

The fact that GOD WANTS YOU and has made a way for you to be

SPIRITUALLY ALIVE is a great thing to know, especially as you get older, because everyone dies. What's going to happen to you when you close your eyes in this life? Will you go to heaven or will you go to hell?

It's your choice. 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 by God, you and everyone in your household who also believes."

The ONE WAY...the ONLY WAY to get to heaven is through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ...John, Chapter 14, Verse 6...

JOHN 14:6

Jesus said to the doubting apostle, Thomas, "I am the way (to salvation)... and I am the truth (through the gospel message in the Word of God)...and I am the resurrection life...and no one comes to God the Father (in heaven) but through believing in Me."

Who is this God who saves you? The apostle Paul describes the Lord Jesus Christ in First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verses 3 and 4...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:3

For I (Paul) delivered to you as of primary importance the gospel message I also received from God...that it was Jesus Christ who died for our sins according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:4

...and that He was buried...and that He was raised from the dead on the third day...according to the Old Testament Scriptures...

Believing in Jesus Christ is acknowledging that you can't do a thing to get to heaven on your own. You confirm that being "a good person" does not get you to heaven. It's wiser to let God save you because once God does something, He never changes His mind! In John, Chapter 10, Verses 28 and 29, the Lord says...

JOHN 10:28

"...I (the Lord Jesus Christ) give eternal life to believers in Christ, and they will never perish...and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

JOHN 10:29

"And My Father, who has given believers in Christ to me, is greater than all...and no one can snatch believers in Christ m out of my Father's hand."

You can't lose your salvation. If ANYONE says you can lose your salvation, they are lying to you.

God has an enemy, Satan, the ruler of this world. He creates counterfeit lifestyles to blind your mind. His strategy against the human race is RELIGION, and the religions of the world mislead you into thinking you're saved when you may not be. Satan wants you to believe you can work your way to heaven, earning your own salvation.

What happens if you reject a relationship with Christ? In Matthew, Chapter 25, Verse 30, the Lord shares the consequences...

MATTHEW 25:30

"Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness (the Lake of Fire)...and in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

So, heed the warning and accept the Lord's invitation in John, Chapter 3, Verse 36...

JOHN 3:36

"He who believes in the Son of God 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."

You can join me and a host of your believer friends in heaven when you close your eyes in this life! Reject SPIRITUAL DEATH. Choose SPIRITUAL LIFE right now!

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE The Good News of Jesus Christ's Salvation Offer to the Human Race

CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's close with music! June Murphy has another song from God's perspective...YOU DON'T HAVE TO BEG!

MUSIC CLOSING SONG Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BEG June Murphy

CLOSING PRAYER Let us pray...

Almighty God and Father...

...thank you for teaching us to love as you love...unconditionally...help us to assess our love...and where it has conditions, root them out...let our love be without hypocrisy...let it be pure and holy and good...let us see how loving as You do changes everything...

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

THE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please make it a habit to listen to the announcements. They are posted separately. Keep current on the things going on and coming up in Barah Ministries.

DISCUSSING THE LESSON AND PRAYER CIRCLE

Join us Live or on Zoom Immediately Following the Lesson

GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS?

Ask the Pastor pastor@barahministries.com

WANT US TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE?

Send your request to pastor@barahministries.com

KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD DAILY!

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

www.barahministries.com