

THE OTHER SIDE OF FAITH
Special Lesson-July 7, 2024

Good Morning!

Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES

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Guest Teacher

My name is Al Gleason and I'm happy to get this opportunity to teach in Pastor Rory Clark's pulpit. It is truly an honor whenever I'm blessed to share the Word of God.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege and opportunity of studying Your Word today.

Thank you for justification by faith, the work you do in our spiritual lives, and the gift of salvation and freedom that we have been given in you.

Today I ask that you help us receive the truth of your word today, that we will be obedient and follow your guidance. Give us the strength to be vigilant to make sure that none of our traditions make your word of no effect in our lives.

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

TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

The Other Side of Faith

We understand that having faith in Christ gives us eternal life, and this eternal life gives us eternal freedom. There is a master trick that our enemy Satan uses in an effort to get us to forsake our freedom and again be subject to the bondage we were delivered from. Are you aware of it?

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In today's lesson we will expose this trick to aid you in living in the freedom that Christ died for you have.

As believers in Christ, we understand that because Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, we are all born into sin. Have you ever thought about what this means for our lives today? If we are working toward faith, what type of belief system do we actual start with? If we don't have faith, what do we have? If we are striving for faith, what are we are trying to leave behind or what are we are trying overcome?

The first answer that may come to mind is sin. Psalm 51, Verse 5...

PSALM 51:5

Behold I was brought forth in iniquity...and in sin my mother conceived me.

Here David had been with Bathsheba and was asking God to blot out his transgression. This was before Christ's work on the Cross. Romans, Chapter 3, Verse 23...

ROMANS 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Paul expresses the point that everyone needs the righteousness of God that we have through faith, because everyone has fallen short. He discusses his personal challenges as well...Romans, Chapter 7, Verse 15...

ROMANS 7:15

For what I (Paul) 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.

Romans, Chapter 7, Verses 19 and 20...

ROMANS 7:19

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

ROMANS 7:20

But if I am doing the very thing I do not want...I am no longer the one doing it...but sin which dwells in me.

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Sin is often what we do, even when we don't desire to. Paul, one of the greatest men of faith tells us how he is struggling to do the things that he desires to do. Why did a faith-filled man like Paul struggle so much?

It's the same reason we all have the challenges that Paul had...and it's because of our sin nature (also known as the flesh). Yes, even that cute sweet innocent baby of yours has it, too. By default, we get Adam's sin credited to our account from physical birth, and we are on track to go to the Lake of Fire. Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 12...

ROMANS 5:12

Therefore, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world...and spiritual death through Adam's sin...and so spiritual death spread to all men... because all men were considered to have sinned when Adam sinned.

Because one man caused all men to sin, we are conceived in sin and shaped in iniquity, and it is in our nature to sin.

As believers in Christ, we have righteousness credited to us, and our sins have been paid for because of Jesus Christ's work on the Cross. Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 19...

ROMANS 5:19

For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One (Jesus Christ) the many will be made righteous.

As believers in Christ, sin is taken care by Christ. However, our sin nature remains, and this gives our enemy access to deceive us.

Satan, who is the ruler of this world, has a system of doing things. As with everything else he does, it is perversion of God's original design.

Your default system of operating, what you have when you don't have faith, the trick that the enemy uses on us, is what I call the other side of faith.

I'm going to show you the "other side of faith." It is the motivating force behind all sin, and it is the basis of how Satan and the kingdom of darkness operates.

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It is the reciprocal of faith. It operates just like faith, but on the other end of the spectrum. It is the opposite of faith. It is the perversion of faith.

The other side of faith is called FEAR.

Fear is the opposite of faith. Fear is the “faith” of the devil.

God gives us truth that leads to freedom in union with Him. Satan can’t operate in your life without fear so he uses it to deceive you and lead you back into bondage.

Faith leads to a life more abundant in union with Christ while fear leads you to sin and death. Deuteronomy, Chapter 30, Verses 19 and 20...

DEUTERONOMY 30:19

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death...the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants...

DEUTERONOMY 30:20

By loving the Lord, your God, by obeying his voice, and by holding fast to him...for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land, which the Lord swore to your fathers...to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...to give them.

The children of Israel had to make a choice....either to serve the true and living God, or to turn to other gods and serve them. Likewise, we have a choice to make. Will you live in the freedom that salvation through Christ provides, or will you choose to stay stuck in bondage to fear?

You may be wondering, “Why talk about fear?”

Believers in Christ need to be aware! Satan has used fear to capitalize on our ignorance for way to long! It is a subtle killer that is destroying believers in Christ and keeping us from enjoying the benefits that have been gifted to us.

If you are making decisions the way you always have, based on the same reasons that you have always had for making those decision, you are likely making fear-based decision. Every decision you make is either faith based and will lead you to the things of God, or fear based, leading you to things of the enemy.

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THERE IS NO MIDDLE GROUND!

FAITH AND FEAR ARE POLAR OPPOSITES!

Earlier we learned we are born into sin and that we have a sin nature.

Our enemy Satan, rules his kingdom enticing his followers to sin, and it operates by fear.

It's important to understand that since you are born into sin, and you have a sin nature, that means that it is also in your nature to fear.

The reason why Paul struggled so much in Romans, Chapter 7 is because he was battling his very nature! Have you ever wondered why it seems difficult for you to walk by faith sometime? Just like Paul, we are battling with our nature, and it is our very nature to fear!

Are you starting to see why this is important now? Every area in your life that is not running by faith likely operates by fear!

This is why you have confidence in the work Christ did on the Cross, but you struggle when it comes turning the other cheek.

Let me share a few examples.

Are you afraid to give because you see it as a loss and not something that God will bless and give it back to you?

Are you afraid to discipline your children because you are afraid of losing them, even though God instructs parents to do so?

I want to share something about marriage relationships I believe the Lord put on my heart. Today the divorce rate is as high as ever. Because of fear, many go into their marriage with conditional love. "If you do this, then I'll do that" mentality. Seeds of conditions are sown that generate a harvest of more conditions. There are unrealistic expectations (often unspoken) and before long, no one can meet all the conditions. There is blaming, frustration, and ultimately the relationship falls apart.

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If your goal is unconditional love, you chose to love first based on what you want to give, not what you can get (conditions). When you choose to give, it is impossible for you to get taken advantage of, so fear can't torment you with that (being taken advantage of). You sow seeds of unconditional love, and your harvest becomes more unconditional love. The relationship is one where each person's primary goal is making sure their partner's needs are met so no one goes without. This type of relationship is evergreen and can last as long as the two shall live.

Back on our main topic. So, what is fear? Fear is in opposition to faith, and it shows up every time you have to make a decision to challenge faith or to challenge the Word of God.

Fear is a spiritual force. Let's look at how it manifests in our lives. According to Webster, fear is...

FEAR

An unpleasant often, strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger...anxious concern...it can be profound reverence, especially toward God...a reason for alarm in the face of danger.

The profound reverence for God is the only type of fear we should have. If you recognize fear in your life, you will see that it is trying to keep you from receiving the promises of God.

Have you thought about the real reason you haven't pursued the vision God has placed in your heart? What has you thinking you aren't capable? When you feel that way, recognize that it is not God.

Jesus expressed some specific thoughts on this in Mark, Chapter 11, Verse 23...

MARK 11:23

Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him.

Paul adds this in Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 13...

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

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A quick biblical search will reveal many scriptures and stories of believers who were here before us, providing evidence of what can be done when we operate in faith.

Many of us have made agreements with fear and allowed it to stay in our lives. We justify it staying in our lives because it's comfortable, and it is natural for us to do so. One of my favorite examples of this is a fear of heights. This gets people angry with me, but let's examine it for a moment. What about heights causes you to have a strong emotion caused by anticipation of danger? Is it that tall buildings are less safe than shorter ones, or that or being in a car is less dangerous than being in an airplane? There is no evidence to support that tall buildings are less safe, and being in a car is statistically more dangerous than being on airplanes. So why are you fearful of the things that you are? It's as if somewhere in your heart you made a deal with fear and said, "If you leave me alone, I'll leave you alone in these areas." The reality is any fear in your life will breed more.

How did Jesus handle situations in which others would fear? In one case, He just slept! Matthew, Chapter 8, Verses 23 to 26...

MATTHEW 8:23

When Jesus got into the boat, His disciples followed him.

MATTHEW 8:24

And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves...but Jesus himself was asleep.

MATTHEW 8:25

And the disciples came to Jesus and woke Him, saying, save us, "Lord...we are perishing!" Jesus said to them, "Why are you afraid you men of little faith?" Then Jesus got up and rebuked the wind and the sea, and they became perfectly calm.

The "wisdom" of Satan's world system is fear based. That is the way we are taught and it is natural for us. God says this in First Corinthians, Chapter 3, Verses 18 to 20...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:18

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise.

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FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:19

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness.

FIRST CORINTHIANS 3:20

And again, the Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless.

When discussing fear, it's common for people to justify their fear by calling it wisdom. God makes a distinction between His wisdom and the wisdom of the world...Proverbs, Chapter 2, Verse 6...

PROVERBS 2:6

For the Lord gives wisdom...from His mouth comes knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright...

Luke, Chapter 21, Verse 15...

LUKE 21:15

For I (the Lord Jesus Christ) will give you utterance and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist or refute.

God understands the debilitating power of fear in us, yet so does Satan. This passage is speaking of unbelievers, and it indicates Satan's effort to keep us from understanding what we have in God. Second Corinthians, Chapter 4, Verse 4...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 4:4

And whose case 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.

Choosing to do things the way you've always done them, or being ignorant of the benefits we have in Christ will keep you from all God the Father has for you. More evidence of the Satan's plan to influence us to fear and keep our minds distracted is where Jesus is explaining the parable of the sower....Mark, Chapter 4, Verses 18 and 19...

MARK 4:18

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And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns...these are the ones who have heard the Word...

MARK 4:19

...but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful.

To avoid falling for the fear trap that comes when we get caught up with the things of the world, we must be vigilant with what we allow ourselves to see and hear, and ultimately how we think. Consider the gossip you hear at work, or the new stories that you watch on TV. Do they build your faith in Christ or do they lead you down a path that will have you worried about the things of the world?

Have you ever noticed people's responses when you greet them with positivity? When asked how you're doing, if you respond with enthusiasm and say that you're excellent, people will give you a strange look and wonder what's going on with you. If you say you're having a rough day, they will proceed to describe how they recently had a rough day as well. People don't jump on the bandwagon and tell you about how they've had excellent days.

Though the apostle Paul, God tells us to meditate on positive things and renew our minds...Philippians, Chapter 4, Verses 6 to 8...

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God.

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence, and there is...and if anything worthy of praise, and there is...let your minds dwell on these things.

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Focusing in this way, will shield you from falling victim to fear, and ultimately build your faith in God. Ultimately, you will not be distracted by the tricks of our enemy!

God has more to say about the importance of thinking on the right things, which will eliminate fearful thinking. Romans, Chapter 12, Verse 2...

ROMANS 12:2a

And do not be conformed to this world (by Satan, by his world system of thought, and by the flesh resident in you)...instead, keep on being transformed by God the Holy Spirit through the renewing of your mind (by studying the Word of God)...

ROMANS 12:2b

...so that you may see clearly...through the testing of experience...what the will of God is...and the will of God is that which is good for you and that which is acceptable to Him and that which is perfect in result.

We can experience the good and perfect will of God for us when we choose to renew our minds. Hebrews, Chapter 11, Verse 6...

HEBREWS 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him...for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who seek him.

Faith is pleasing to God and rewards come to believers who have faith. Hebrews, Chapter 12, Verses 2 and 3...

HEBREWS 12:2

Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who, for the joy set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God the Father.

HEBREWS 12:3

For consider him (the Lord Jesus Christ) who has endured such hostility by sinners against himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Here we are reminded to think about all Jesus endured so that we will not be discouraged and grow tired of keeping the faith. If you are not in faith, you are in fear.

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Let's look at what God says about fear in Second Timothy, Chapter 1, Verse 7...

SECOND TIMOTHY 1:7 (KJV)

God has not given us the spirit of Fear (timidity in NASV)...but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

If God didn't give us the spirit of fear, then where did it come from? Timothy tells us that God did not give us the spirit of fear, and he also tells us what God did give us...He gives us power, love, and a sound mind. If you haven't noticed yet, changing the way we think is important to God. He is all about power and love as well. First Corinthians, Chapter 4, verse 20...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 4:20

For the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.

Second Peter, Chapter 1, Verse 3...

SECOND PETER 1:3

Seeing that the Lord Jesus Christ's divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The Lord gives us life and godliness, through His true knowledge, for his glory and excellence. Let's look at the love part, a key element of a fearless life...First John, Chapter 4, Verse 8...

FIRST JOHN 4:18

There is no fear in unconditional love...but perfect love casts out fear...because fear involves punishment...and the one who fears is not perfected in unconditional love.

Where fear is, there is no love. Fear involves punishment, and it is a trick of Satan to keep you in bondage.

God is serious about fear and He does not want it in your life. When we think about fear, we generally don't classify it as something so egregious that we should go to prison for it. But God has a different perspective...Revelation, Chapter 21, Verse 8...

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REVELATION 21:8

But the fearful (cowardly) and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

God is serious about getting fear out of your life. For unbelievers, fear is a lifestyle. That's what the Revelation verse describes. It is NOT a lifestyle the Lord planned for His believers.

The Lord Jesus Christ defeated sin, and consequently He defeated fear. You do not have to endure the torment a fear-filled life brings. Obedience to the Word of God, by renewing your mind, will free you from the bondage fear.

In closing, remember that we have an enemy, Satan, that uses fear and our thinking, to trick us into doing things his way. Following the Lord's instruction may be challenging, but it is possible and a gift that salvation brings. Thinking about salvation, Paul admonishes us in Romans 10, verse 11

ROMANS 10:11

For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed".

Trust in the Lord and his Word, and you will not be disappointed.

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Heavenly Father, thank you for your loving kindness toward us. It is your love that constrains us, and propels us. Thank you for understanding, and a willingness to do all that you have instructed us to do, regardless of how we feel about it.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to live a life free from the bondage of fear.

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

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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.

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Ask the Pastor
pastor@barahministries.com

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

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