

SPECIAL: INSIGHTS ON EVANGELISM
September 13, 2024

Welcome To
BARAH MINISTRIES

Rory Clark
Pastor-Teacher

Good Evening!

Welcome to the Barah Ministries...an intimate, local Christian Church with a worldwide impact. My name is Pastor Rory Clark. Thank you for lending your ear to this Bible lesson.

YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

Why are we here?

The next three lessons are part of Homecoming Weekend for Barah Ministries Non-Resident Congregation Members. And while we're together we throw in a little Pastor Appreciation to the weekend, giving you the chance to express your gratitude for what the Lord can do through willing men who have made a lifetime commitment to serve you by teaching you the Word of God. This weekend is always a highlight in the Barah Ministries year...a time to which we look forward.

I wish geography didn't separate all the people who are part of this ministry and all those who are friends of this ministry because it's a special group of people. I wish we didn't consider it unusual to fly to a location to be together. I wish for even more regular reunions...perhaps even quarterly...as budgeted items in our financial portfolio!

Why? Because there is nothing better than a gathering of the Lord's saints. Hebrews, Chapter 3, Verse 1 describes us...we are...

HEBREWS 3:1

...holy brethren (set apart ones to God...set apart to serve Him)...partakers of a heavenly calling (that invited us to salvation)...

In Hebrews, Chapter 10, Verses 23 to 25 the Lord makes a recommendation to His saints...

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HEBREWS 10:23

Let us believers in Christ keep on holding fast to the confession of our hope...and let us do so without wavering...for the God who promised us hope is faithful...

HEBREWS 10:24

...and let us believers in Christ keep on considering how to stimulate one another to unconditional love and good deeds...

HEBREWS 10:25

...not forsaking our own assembling together...as is the habit of some...instead let us keep on encouraging one another...even all the more as we see the day drawing near (for the Lord's return).

The Lord wants His saints to be together...to stay together...to dwell in...to wallow in the unity into which He placed us.

We certainly have all eternity in heaven to look forward to, where all the saints will be gathered face-to-face with the Lord. Unfortunately, right now, we live in Satan's kingdom. It is a divided, divisive and perverted kingdom. In Satan's kingdom, unity is discouraged...isolation is encouraged.

Even though God makes it clear it is not good for us to be alone, as Christians we have become prey in Satan's kingdom by not prioritizing the gathering of ourselves together. "I'll do it online...I'll do it on my own...I'll do it on the fly...I'll do it on my phone." This has become the norm for everyone, even the Lord's saints.

It's unfortunate because there is nothing better than touching each other hand-to-hand...looking into each other's eyes...hugging each other...sitting down with each other...and talking to each other about our relationship with the Lord. Gathering ourselves together is dedicated time to share our grief...our sorrows...and our problems with people who care about us.

Gathering ourselves together is a time to realize we are not alone in the things we are going through. It is stimulating and edifying to connect with like-minded people, and we are desperate for it...starved for this kind of connection. We need it. We crave it. This weekend is the opportunity for it.

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YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

What is the subject matter for the next three lessons?

EVANGELISM SPECIAL
Insights on Evangelism

Our focus is evangelism. What would God want us to do as a ministry, as a body...the Body of Christ...and as individuals in the matter of evangelism? We'll investigate. What is evangelism?

EVANGELISM

The sharing of the gospel message...the good news concerning the Lord Jesus Christ's salvation offer...either by public preaching or by personal witnessing.

Evangelism is a critical part of the Christian experience. We know that God the Father gives us opportunities to share the gospel message...Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 10 reminds us...

EPHESIANS 2:10

For we believers in Christ are God the Father's workmanship...and we were created to be in union with Christ Jesus...we were designed for good works...which good works God the Father prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Evangelism is a divine work. During our lifetimes, God the Father will give us multiple opportunities to share the gospel message...with family...with friends...and with strangers. It is our sincere hope this weekend gives you insights that equip you to be effective at evangelism when God gives you the opportunity.

What is our approach to evangelism? Hopefully, our studies and discussions this weekend will give us clarity.

YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

Who will be teaching the lessons?

Joining me for the weekend is Pastor John Farley from Lighthouse Bible Church of South Florida.

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Pastor Farley and I met in a work setting in 1997, and over the last twenty-seven years, we've become lifelong friends.

Pastor Farley is a native of Providence, Rhode Island which is one of the New England states...so if you're wondering why he talks funny, that's it.

Several expressions in our language are irritating to me...more as I get older. One of those expressions is, "Maybe it was meant to be." My conclusion when people use this expression is they have watched one too many Disney movies. However, I am certain of one thing, my relationship with John is divinely ordained...it was always meant to be.

I'm grateful to him for many things, mostly for his support of who I am and who I am not. I know if I am wrong in every single thing I think and do, I can still count on John to be my friend. There are people God sends to us who stay when all others come and go. John is such a special friend.

Even though we were born in different places and placed by God into different circumstances, our spiritual life journey has been eerily similar. We both went through the hell of being staunch and devout Roman Catholics. Unfortunately for John, I lured him into the hell of Systematic Theology.

Through the gauntlet of those two hell holes, with the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, we found our way out of religion and legalism into a relationship with Christ. Now we are both residents in the sphere of God's grace...a geodesic dome that surrounds us with an atmosphere of unconditional love, forgiveness, and grace.

Welcome John!

Also, here for the weekend is John's wife, Roberta, a woman deserving of respect for many reasons. She's a great mother who has helped raise two amazing children...she's in a career of service as a physical therapist, helping people get back on their feet...but most of all, she can be respected for the support she provides for John.

It's a pretty difficult challenge being a Pastor's wife. When Roberta married John, there was no way for her to know the job for which she was signing up. She is mastering the challenge, and it is with gratitude that I'll be spending all eternity in heaven with these two amazing people.

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YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

What will you and Pastor John be teaching?

As we share insights on evangelism, John will focus on the Biblical aspects. He'll be teaching you what the apostle Paul's New Testament epistles have to say about evangelism.

Conferences are my chance to be topical...to discuss some of the human aspects of the selected subject. You'll be hearing insights about how you can evangelize to the religious, to agnostics, and to atheists. John and I have the sincere hope that what you learn this weekend changes the way you spread the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ's salvation offer to the people God brings to you.

Pastor Farley and I will each teach all three days, and we will alternate. I'll teach first tonight. Pastor Farley will teach first tomorrow. Sunday I'll teach first as we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Pastor Farley will bring our weekend to its conclusion.

YOU MAY BE WONDERING...

What's the schedule?

THE SCHEDULE
Homecoming and Pastor Appreciation Weekend

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Friday Night | The Gathering 6:30PM-7:00PM |
| | The Lessons 7:00PM to 9:00PM |

THE SCHEDULE
Homecoming and Pastor Appreciation Weekend

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| Saturday | The Lessons 10:00AM-12:00PM Ask the Pastors An Afternoon of Food and Fellowship |
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THE SCHEDULE

Homecoming and Pastor Appreciation Weekend

Sunday

The Lessons
9:00AM-11:00AM

Ask the Pastor and Prayer Circle
11:00AM-12:00PM

LESSON INTRODUCTION

Let's kick off this evening's lesson with a startling revelation...from birth we are all created equal in the spiritual realm. We'll learn the implications of God's goodness in our spiritual lives as spiritual beings.

OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's hear some music! The Lord Jesus Christ tells a religious Pharisee who had been studying Scripture for years how easy it is to get to heaven in John, Chapter 3, Verse 3...

JOHN 3:3

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God."

June Murphy sings about how to get to heaven in her breathtaking song...BORN AGAIN.

MUSIC

OPENING SONG

Let's Sing the Lord's Praises

BORN AGAIN

June Murphy

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

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

Father, thank you for sending Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to die on a Cross to pay our way to heaven...thank you that we don't have to depend on ourselves for salvation...thank you for making it easy for ANYONE to get to heaven by counting on what You and Your Son did for us...thank you for God the Holy Spirit whose convicting ministry when we are unbelievers paves the narrow way that leads to heaven...

...as we listen to Your Word tonight, open our hearts to Your truth, forsaking our beliefs that don't match with the truth...help us to know how easy it is to share the good news of the gospel message with others...and give us the courage to share the gospel message without fearing rejection...

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

Welcome to the...

EVANGELISM SPECIAL
Insights on Evangelism

LESSON PART ONE

Some things are apparent to all of us.

We are born. In the Declaration of Independence, a document announcing a decision for freedom from tyranny, we learn a critical fact about being born...it says...

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We hold these truths to be self-evident...that all are created equal and all are endowed by the Creator with certain unalienable rights...and among these rights are Life...Liberty...and the Pursuit of Happiness.

It's true.

Elvis Presley described my entrance into the world in a song...

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IN THE GHETTO by Elvis Presley

As the snow flies...
On a cold and gray Chicago morn
A poor little baby child is born
In the ghetto
And his mama cries...

IN THE GHETTO by Elvis Presley

'Cause if there's one thing that she don't need
It is another little hungry mouth to feed
In the ghetto...

We are born. No matter where we are born in the world, we share a spiritual equality. We are born physically alive and spiritually dead according to Ephesians, Chapter 2, Verse 1...

EPHESIANS 2:1

And you were spiritually dead in your trespasses and sins...

None of us exited the womb being moral or immoral...religious or irreligious...
Christian or atheist or agnostic.

Over time, we accumulate teachers, the first of which were our parents. They taught and we believed, often regardless of whether what they were teaching was correct. When presented with teaching, we spent our faith...placing our confidence in what a trusted teacher was teaching...and we believed...we took the teacher's word concerning what's true.

Some teachers were teaching the truth. Some teachers were teaching lies. There was a time when we couldn't discern the truth from lies. Our learning came from a SOURCE, and little did we know that the SOURCE matters.

As time passed, we learned that there would be several concerns in this life...relationships with others...relationships with self...intimate relationships...a career...family...money...health...and resources. There would be a lot to learn. Little did we know...and maybe we weren't taught early on...that at the center of all these concerns is the spiritual life. Without question it is the most important of our concerns in this life. Few take it that seriously.

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At a point in our lives, the Chief Executive Officer of evangelism, God the Holy Spirit, entered our lives and began His work...John, Chapter 16, Verses 8 to 11...

JOHN 16:8 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

“And when God the Holy Spirit comes...He will convict the world...of its sin (Adam’s sin imputed...sin as a master...our own sins...and the flesh inside of us which sins)...and He will convict the world of the need for God’s righteousness...and He will convict the world of the coming judgment.”

JOHN 16:9 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

“The world’s sin is that unbelievers refuse to believe in Me (the Lord Jesus Christ).”

JOHN 16:10 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

“Righteousness is available because I (the Lord Jesus Christ) go to God the Father, and you disciples will see Me no more (so you have to carry forth the gospel message).”

JOHN 16:11 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

“And judgment is coming...because the ruler of this world (Satan) has already been judged...and everyone under the rulership of Satan and his world system of thought is headed for the same judgment (the Lake of Fire).”

God the Holy Spirit’s convicting ministry is designed by the Godhead to provide us with “convincing evidence” concerning the central issue of evangelism...making a decision for or against a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

God uses people to bring the message...believers in Christ as ambassadors representing the Lord Jesus Christ in Satan’s kingdom...Second Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 20 is God’s great commission for Church Age believers...

SECOND CORINTHIANS 5:20

Therefore, we Church Age believers in Christ are ambassadors for Christ...as though God the Father were making an appeal to unbelievers through believers...because He is...and we beg you unbelievers on behalf of the Christ...be reconciled to God.

Evangelism is a function of the Christian ambassador. But let’s take some pressure off of you...it’s God’s responsibility to evangelize...He uses us for an assist.

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So as we study evangelism, we're not doing it to make ourselves feel bad...we're not doing it to initiate a works program so God will like us better. We're doing it because it's the very thing we would do if we found a great way to invest our money and we wanted to share the information with others. It's the thing we would do if we found a great deal on an important staple that everyone uses...like toilet paper. It's the thing we would do if we found a healthy way to counteract disease. We'd share it.

In this sharing, we have an amazing SOURCE...God the Holy Spirit, who will always give us the exact words to use as we present an accurate gospel message to others.

The one assurance we have as believers in Christ is that everyone we know will get multiple opportunities to hear, to understand, and to make a decision on the gospel message. God will send people whom each person respects and to whom each person will listen. Each person gets to make a decision for or against Christ multiple times in their time on earth.

So we are born...we are spiritually equal at birth...but as we begin to accumulate teachers, regardless of the subject matter area, we must use discernment. Is what teachers are teaching true? When we reach the age of discernment, some people will decide for a relationship with Christ and some will reject a relationship with Christ.

At the point of this discernment, it will be apparent that the whole world falls into two categories...unbelievers and believers. Evangelism is a ministry to unbelievers. Let's close this segment with this question...

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION

Who are three people in your periphery, whom you suspect of being unbelievers, that you would feel immeasurable loss if they were not in heaven?

Please write three names on your notes. Please pass those names to me at the end of the evening. These are the people we will be praying for as the weekend goes on. After the break, we'll hear from Pastor John Farley. Take a ten-minute break.

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FIVE-MINUTE BREAK

NOBODY

Casting Crowns