

**PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS**  
**Lesson 15-May 17, 2026**

**Welcome To**  
**BARAH MINISTRIES**  
**An Online Christian Church**  
**Teaching the Word of God**  
**Verse-by-Verse**

**RORY CLARK**  
**Pastor-Teacher**

Good Morning!

I'm Pastor Rory Clark welcoming you to a Bible lesson with Barah Ministries, an intimate online Christian community teaching the Word of God verse-by-verse to the hearers the Lord provides.

No matter where you are in the world, no matter how the Lord gets this Bible lesson to you, thanks for listening!

Studying the Bible is one of the best gifts you give yourself every day.

Just a heads up...I'll be on vacation for the next three Sundays. I'll be back on June 14 to begin our study of the Gospel of John.

In my absence, your guest teacher will be Al Gleason. He'll introduce you to Second Timothy...a pastoral epistle from the apostle Paul to his protégé Timothy. You've enjoyed Al's teaching in the past and there's no doubt he'll bring you more Biblical goodness in his lessons.

**TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**  
**Looking Back on the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Philippians**

*LESSON INTRODUCTION*

Now that we've completed the study of Paul's letter to the Philippians, let's review the ten questions we ask at the start of a Biblical letter to see what insights we gained from our study. What things changed for us by studying the letter? And as we do every month, following the Lord's command, today we'll celebrate the Lord's Supper.

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*OPENING SONG INTRODUCTION*

Let's hear some music! Paul's letter to the Philippians is a letter about JOY. The Lord's half-brother had plenty to say about JOY in James, Chapter 1, Verses 2 to 4. He says...

JAMES 1:2

*Consider it all joy...my brethren...when you encounter various trials...*

JAMES 1:3

*...knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*

JAMES 1:4

*And let endurance have its perfect result...so that you may be perfect and complete...lacking in nothing.*

June Murphy puts those thoughts to music in her song COUNT IT ALL JOY.

**MUSIC - OPENING SONG**

Let's Hear the Singing of the Lord's Praises

*COUNT IT ALL JOY*

*June Murphy*

**OPENING PRAYER**

Let us pray...

We're grateful to You Heavenly Father for providing us with the absolute truth of the Word of God...

Father, thank you for giving us a chance to reflect on the lessons of Paul's letter to the Philippians...You're giving us an opportunity to apply these lessons to our lives...for what are we as Christians without a great attitude...what are we as Christians when we don't put others before ourselves just as You did...what are we as Christians when we don't nurture ourselves in every circumstance?

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As we think about the things we learned, we ask you to customize the lessons in our souls so we can have JOY...even in the worst circumstances...just as Your Son did at the Cross when He paid for the sins of all mankind...and just as Paul did from a prison cell in Rome...

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

### TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON

#### Looking Back on the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Philippians

As we now know, Paul's letter to the believers in Christ at Philippi is a letter about JOY regardless of circumstances. In my experience, the Lord always gives us exactly what we need at exactly the right time, and this letter to the Philippians is no exception.

Eight months ago, my best friend, Pastor John Farley, went home to be with the Lord. I still miss him terribly. Every day I want to call him for insights and a laugh. I can't bring myself to take his number out of my phone's favorites contacts list.

I have a choice. I can focus on the loss...which is my circumstance...and feel sorry for myself. Or, I can focus on how happy I am for my friend that he is at home face-to-face with the Lord. Paul's letter to the Philippians gave me the opportunity to choose my focus and my attitude in my circumstance.

The loss has left a huge scar on my soul, but rather than thinking about that, I choose to think about what it must be like for John in heaven. I look forward to joining him in heaven when my work on earth is complete.

How did this letter help you deal with the circumstances, the environment, the people, and the things in your life? Did you stop to reflect on how you can have JOY in your most trying times?

Well, as those who study with us know, we begin the study of a Biblical letter by answering ten questions. Let's look back on what we learned to add depth to the answers to the questions.

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QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

1

**Who wrote the letter we are about to study?**

The apostle Paul is the author of this letter.

We learned that Paul had quite a human resume. Philippians, Chapter 3, Verses 5 and 6...

**PHILIPPIANS 3:5**

*...I was circumcised the eighth day...I am of the nation of Israel...I am of the tribe of Benjamin...I am a Hebrew of Hebrews...as to the Mosaic Law, I am a Pharisee...*

**PHILIPPIANS 3:6**

*...as to zeal, I am a persecutor of the church...as to the righteousness which comes from following the Mosaic Law, I am found blameless.*

But as Paul learned from his Damascus Road experience, there's more to life than a resume. Philippians, Chapter 3, Verse 8...

**PHILIPPIANS 3:8**

*...I (Paul) count all things to be loss when compared to the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things...and I count the things lost as human excrement so that I may gain a relationship with Christ...*

Paul learned that his relationship with Jesus Christ was a lot more important than his resume.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

2

**To whom is the letter we are studying directed?**

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The letter we are about to study is directed to a group of believers in Christ in the city of Philippi.

Philippi is an ancient city in northeastern Greece. It's the home of the apostle Paul's first church planted in Europe. Previous churches he planted were in Asia.

Philippi was a Roman colony that housed many retired Roman soldiers. It was considered to be "Rome away from Rome." That's quite a tough place to proclaim Jesus Christ as King of the Universe when many of these soldiers believed that "Caesar," a term for whomever was the Roman emperor, was king of the universe. It made for some tough evangelism that could cost you your life.

How are you at evangelizing in the toughest situations?

### QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

3

#### **Where do the people who received the letter live?**

Philippi is a major mainland Greek city northwest of the nearby island, Thasos. Its original name was Crenides (Ancient Greek: Κρηνίδες, Krēnīdes which means "Fountains.") The city was renamed by Philip II of Macedon in 356 BC and it was abandoned in the 14th century after the Ottoman conquest.

The present village of Filippoi is located near the ruins of the ancient city and is part of the region of East Macedonia and Thrace in Kavala, Greece. The archaeological site was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2016 because of its exceptional Roman architecture, its urban layout as a smaller reflection of Rome itself, and its importance in early Christianity.

Did you do research to see where these people lived and what was important to them. One thing we must remember as we study the Bible. The people in the Bible are people, just like us. Certainly, no better than us. Certainly, no different than us. When we relate to them as people we understand ourselves a little better.

### QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

4

#### **What do we know about the author of the letter?**

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Paul is an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 1...

ROMANS 1:1

*Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called by God as an apostle and a set apart one for the dissemination of the gospel of God (to the Gentiles)...*

Paul was an evangelist.

He was assigned by God to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. It was quite a tough assignment because Paul was Jewish...a Hebrew of Hebrews as he described himself...and the Jews considered Gentiles to be barbarians, people no better than a stray dog.

When this letter was written, Paul was near the end of his life. He died around 64AD at the age of sixty-three years old. Paul packed a lot of insight into his sixty-three years.

Paul also is known as Saul of Tarsus. Saul was his Hebrew name, given to him by his father at birth. Paul was also a Roman citizen, and his Roman name was Paul. It was a common practice in the day for people to have more than one name.

By his own admission, Paul was the worst person of all time before he became a believer in Christ. First Corinthians, Chapter 15, Verse 9...

FIRST CORINTHIANS 15:9

*For I (Paul) am the least of the apostles...and I am not fit to be called an apostle...because I persecuted the church of God.*

What is your claim to fame as a Christian? Hint: It may be related to your spiritual gift.

### QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

5

**When did the author write the letter?**

The apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians around AD 60 to 62 while imprisoned in Rome, making it one of his four "prison epistles." The other three

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prison epistles are Colossians, Philemon, and Ephesians, all of which we have studied.

Instead of being depressed about his imprisonment, Paul was excited about it. Philippians, Chapter 1, Verse 12...

PHILIPPIANS 1:12

*Now I (Paul) want you to know brethren (believers in Christ) ... that my circumstances (of being imprisoned) have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel of Jesus Christ...*

Paul was chained to six different Roman guards every day, one every six hours, and he spent his time evangelizing to them. He had a captive audience.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

6

**Where was the author when he wrote the letter?**

Paul was in prison in Rome awaiting the chance to talk to the emperor of Rome at the time, Nero. Unknown to Paul early on in his imprisonment, he was about to be executed. Later, the Lord made it clear to him.

Nero was the worst and vilest emperor of Roman times, infamous for hating Christians. He saw no need to follow the law. He created his own laws in the mistreatment of Christians and Roman citizens. Nero rejected a relationship with the Lord. He was so evil he killed his own mother.

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

7

**What was God's purpose in getting Paul to write the letter?**

The Lord wants all of us to have lives of JOY. As He always does, the Lord gave us an example of a human being who is joyful in a horrible situation. In addition, the Lord was joyful in a horrible situation. Philippians, Chapter 2, Verses 5 to 8...

PHILIPPIANS 2:5

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*Keep on having this attitude in yourselves which was also the attitude in Christ Jesus...*

PHILIPPIANS 2:6

*...who, although He existed in the exact same essence as God the Father, did not regard equality with God the Father as a thing to be seized and held onto...*

PHILIPPIANS 2:7

*...instead, Jesus emptied Himself (depriving Himself of the rightful functions of Deity...in effect, making Himself a nothing) by taking on the form of a bond-servant, and by being made in the likeness of men.*

PHILIPPIANS 2:8

*Being found in appearance as a man, He humiliated Himself (rather than being an "entitled," spoiled brat) by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a Cross.*

Do you have JOY despite circumstances?

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

8

**What does God want the author to communicate to the letter's intended audience?**

Paul's message of JOY to the Philippians is, "It makes no difference what happens to us as long as Christ is glorified and the gospel is advanced through sharing it with those who need it."

Another message? "I (Paul) have learned to be content regardless of my circumstances."

Another message? Your attitude determines your altitude. "Have the attitude Jesus had as He went to the Cross...He considered it to be 'the JOY set before Him.'"

Do you consider your trials joyful?

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Paul communicates the need for single mindedness...a FOCUS on the Lord as the key to a JOYFUL life. Philippians, Chapter 4, Verse 13...

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

*I can do all things through the Lord Jesus Christ who strengthens me.*

What is your power source for JOY?

Another message? Think of others before you think of self. Philippians, Chapter 2, Verses 3 and 4.....

PHILIPPIANS 2:3

*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit (excessive pride in self)...but with humility of mind keep on regarding one another as more important than yourselves...*

PHILIPPIANS 2:4

*...do not only look out for your own personal interests, but also look out for the interests of others.*

Are you selfless when it matters?

JOY...the right attitude...single-mindedness...contentment despite circumstances...doing all things with Christ's power...others before self.

How well are you putting all these messages to work in your lives?

QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

9

**What is the central message of the letter?**

We know it is JOY, articulated this way in Philippians, Chapter 3, Verse 1...

PHILIPPIANS 3:1a

*Finally, my brethren, rejoice in union with the Lord.*

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Not only are we to have JOY, we are to REJOICE...feeling great delight again and again is at the center of the Christian Way of Living.

### QUESTIONS TO BEGIN THE STUDY OF A BIBLICAL LETTER

10

#### **What relevance does the letter have to our lives today?**

There are so many things we allow to steal our JOY. Isn't it time to make an assessment of those things so we can change them?

When we follow the suggestions of this letter we can proclaim, just as Paul does, the thoughts of Philipians, Chapter 4, Verses 18 and 19...

#### PHILIPPIANS 4:18

*As for me, I (Paul) have received everything in full and I have an abundance...I am amply supplied after having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent...it is a fragrant aroma...it is an acceptable sacrifice...and it is well-pleasing to God.*

#### PHILIPPIANS 4:19

*And my God will supply ALL your needs according to His glorious riches for all of you in union with Christ Jesus.*

Our God *will* supply ALL our needs, and He will provide people to minister to us. What a great God we have!

So these are the ten questions that introduced Paul's letter to the Philippians. After a study it's valuable to reflect on the beautiful messages sent to us by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ through the Bible...which is described as the mind of Christ...the exact thinking of Christ...in First Corinthians, Chapter 2, Verse 16 which asks...

#### FIRST CORINTHIANS 2:16

*For who has known the mind of the Lord well enough that he will be competent enough to instruct Him? (NO ONE OF COURSE!). But we believers in Christ have the mind of Christ (through studying the Bible).*

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When we have the mind of Christ, as believers in Christ we can reflect His mind with our lives to everyone we meet.

When we return from the break, we'll request an offering and then we'll celebrate the Lord's Supper.

As you listen to the break song, you'll hear the gospel of Jesus Christ put to music. It's amplification of John, Chapter 3, Verses 16 and 17 which reveal what God wants for you...

JOHN 3:16

*"God the Father loved the world unconditionally...and He loved the world so much...that He gave His uniquely born Son (the God-man...the Lord Jesus) ... to be crucified on a Cross) ... so that WHOSOEVER believes in Him shall not perish, but has eternal life."*

JOHN 3:17

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

Here's June Murphy putting those verses to music in her song WHOSOEVER. Enjoy listening to the song as you enjoy your break.

### **FIVE-MINUTE BREAK**

*WHOSOEVER*

*June Murphy*

### **TODAY'S BIBLE LESSON**

**Looking Back on the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Philippians**

#### *OFFERING INTRODUCTION*

God the Father GIVES. Romans, Chapter 8, Verses 31 and 32...

ROMANS 8:31b

*If God the Father is for us believers in Christ, and He is, who is ever going to be successful in opposition against us?*

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ROMANS 8:32

*God the Father...who (amid His feelings of WRATH) did not spare His own Son (the Lord Jesus Christ)...but delivered Him over for us all...how will God the Father...now that we are in union with Christ...not also freely give us all things?*

Since God the Father is willing to give us EVERYTHING, let's not be conflicted about giving. Be generous with the financial gifts the Lord has given you. You'll be supporting God's ministry...Barah Ministries...so we can provide the Word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ free of charge to people all over the world who need to hear about the Lord.

Let's listen to Deacon Denny Goodall present one of his always thoughtful and always inspiring offering messages.

### THE OFFERING

Deacon Denny Goodall

### OFFERING VERSE

EPHESIANS 1:3

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...who has blessed us believers in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...for all in union in Christ...*

### OFFERING SONG

*THERE IS NONE LIKE YOU*

*Instrumental Version*

### THE LORD'S SUPPER CELEBRATION

**At the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ Made It Possible for Us to Be Born Again**

Welcome to the Lord's Supper Celebration!

As we remember the Lord, let's enjoy recalling the things the Lord has done for us, especially His work on the Cross on our behalf. The Lord's Supper gives us a chance to direct our focus to the Lord alone.

Concerning the Lord's Supper, our God commands us in Luke, Chapter 22, Verse 19 to...

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LUKE 22:19c

*"...keep on doing this Lord's Supper Celebration in remembrance of Me."*

In celebrating the Lord's Supper, the Lord Jesus Christ wants us to make time to think about everything special in our lives, especially the most important relationship in our lives, whether we are believers in Christ or even unbelievers, the relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. A relationship with the Lord is critically and eternally important.

Yet the Lord's Supper Celebration is for the born-again ones...for spiritually alive believers in Christ who were placed into union with Christ through the baptism of God the Holy Spirit at the moment of their salvation. God the Holy Spirit turned us into eternal companions of Christ.

It is not wise to celebrate The Lord's Supper on the move. The Lord's Supper is sacred. It's a chance to be still and to reflect on the blessings the Lord directs to us. So, get your bread and wine, get someplace where you can concentrate, and join us for the feast.

At the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ made it possible for us to be "born again."

I've heard it from unbelievers many times in my lifetime. "You're not one of those 'born-again,' are you?" I'm proud to say, "Yes I am!" I'm with Paul, who said in Romans, Chapter 1, Verse 16...

ROMANS 1:16

*I am not ashamed of the gospel of God the Father...for the gospel of God the Father is the power of God the Father for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first chronologically...and also to the Greek.*

I am not ashamed. Jesus Christ is God and He is my Lord and Savior.

Our next book of study is The Gospel of John. It's a study of the Deity of Jesus Christ. The theme of the letter can be summed up in one word, which is repeated nearly one-hundred times in the letter...BELIEVE.

You may ask, BELIEVE what? Well, if I told you that, we wouldn't have to study the letter! But John, Chapter 3, Verses 1 to 3 gives us insight...

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JOHN 3:1

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees...named Nicodemus...a ruler of the Jews...*

JOHN 3:2

*...this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher...for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."*

Jesus, in His classic Sovereign God of the Universe style, stopped Nicodemus in his tracks in John, Chapter 3, Verse 3...

JOHN 3:3

*Jesus answered Nicodemus and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you Nicodemus, unless you are BORN AGAIN you cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Nicodemus was an unbeliever at the time. He was not born again. What does it mean to be born again?

Adam was the first human, and he was appointed by God as the federal head of the human race. All of his blessings are passed on to all creatures. Unfortunately, all of his mistakes were passed on as well.

Sin was his first mistake. Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 12 explains...

ROMANS 5:12

*...through one man...Adam...sin entered into the world...and spiritual death entered the world through his sin...so spiritual death spread to all men...because all men were considered by God to have sinned when Adam sinned.*

You were born in a state of sin. You were born spiritually dead. There was no way for you to get out of this predicament in your own power. That's why the Lord...God the Son...came to earth. John, Chapter 1, Verse 14...

JOHN 1:14

*And the Word (the Lord...God the Son) became flesh as Jesus...the Christ...the Messiah...and He lived among us...and we apostles saw His glory with our own*

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*eyes... (Jesus in a resurrection body)... the glory of the only begotten Son from the source of God the Father... full of grace and full of truth.*

Those who are spiritually dead need a spiritual life. In short, you must be born again. If you are not born again, you have the same problem Nicodemus had...

John, Chapter 3, Verse 3...

JOHN 3:3

*Jesus told Nicodemus, "Truly, truly, I say to you Nicodemus, unless you are BORN AGAIN you cannot see the kingdom of God."*

This Pharisee, who had been studying Scripture for years, didn't know one of the basic truths of Christianity. He tried to laugh it off... John, Chapter 3, Verse 4...

JOHN 3:4

*Nicodemus said to Jesus, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"*

The Lord said in John, Chapter 3, Verse 7 to a shocked Nicodemus...

JOHN 3:7

*"Do not be astonished that I (the Lord Jesus Christ) said to you, 'You must be born again.'"*

Knocked off of his arrogant high horse just as Paul was on the Damascus Road, Nicodemus muttered in amazement in John, Chapter 3, Verse 9...

JOHN 3:9b

*"How can these things be?"*

Once Nicodemus became a Christian, he had to keep it quiet. He was not public about his faith until after Jesus' crucifixion. John, Chapter 19, Verses 38 to 40...

JOHN 19:38

*After the crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus... and Pilate granted permission. So Joseph came and took away Jesus' body.*

JOHN 19:39

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*Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus by night (in secret), also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight.*

JOHN 19:40

*So Joseph and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.*

So what does it mean to be born again? It means you'll be in heaven when you close your eyes in this life. Acts, Chapter 16, Verse 31 exhorts...

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."*

In John, Chapter 3, Verse 36, the Lord provides an invitation and a warning...

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."*

If you are a spiritually dead unbeliever, take the Lord's advice and be BORN AGAIN! That's what the Lord made possible at the Cross.

### **THE LORD'S SUPPER CELEBRATION**

#### **Enjoying the Elements**

Bread and wine.

The Lord gave us these things to remember Him. We will enjoy the elements together in a few moments as we listen to The Lord's Supper Song.

Matthew, Chapter 26, Verses 26 to 28 tells us the reason the Lord wants us to celebrate this meal together...

MATTHEW 26:26

*While the apostles were eating, Jesus took some bread...and after a blessing...He broke the bread, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take...eat...this is My body which is being broken for you."*

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MATTHEW 26:27

*And when Jesus had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it...all of you..."*

MATTHEW 26:28

*"...for this is My blood...the blood of a new covenant...My blood...poured out for WHOSOEVER...for the forgiveness of sins."*

We celebrate to REMEMBER that Jesus Christ died as our sin substitute...that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead to prove His Deity...that Jesus Christ loves us unconditionally...that Jesus Christ forgives us once and for all time through His work on the Cross...that Jesus Christ's BLOOD paid for our sins...that Jesus Christ saved us from the wrath of God the Father...and that Jesus Christ will come again to gather us unto Himself.

As believers in Christ, we celebrate through this Lord's Supper and we are grateful that His work on the Cross gives us hope...the assurance of an amazing future.

Let's enjoy the elements as we listen to June Murphy sing about being BORN AGAIN.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER SONG

*BORN AGAIN*

*June Murphy*

### CLOSING SONG INTRODUCTION

Let's close with music! The Lord Jesus Christ allows His believers to suffer for their edification. The Lord's half-brother offers perspective in James, Chapter 1, Verse 12...

JAMES 1:12

*Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial...for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

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June Murphy offers similar perspective in her song WHEN YOU SUFFER.

**MUSIC - CLOSING SONG**

Let's Hear the Singing of the Lord's Praises

*WHEN YOU SUFFER*

*June Murphy*

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Let us pray...

Almighty God and Father...

...thank you for helping us deal with the most difficult parts of our lives with the right attitude...Your attitude...which leads to contentment regardless of circumstance...

...let our attitudes reflect You in a way that leads others to a relationship with the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...

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

**GOT BIBLICAL QUESTIONS OR WANT US TO PRAY FOR SOMEONE?**

Ask the Pastor  
pastor@barahministries.com

**KEEP ON STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD DAILY!**

Thanks for watching!  
Thanks for listening!

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