

Childlike Wonder

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining childlike wonder and faith in our relationship with God.

Duration: 23:08

Scripture: Psalm 139:14, Matthew 18:3, Mark 10:14, John 1:12, Romans 8:16-17, 1 Corinthians 13:11, Galatians 4:6-7, Ephesians 2:19, Hebrews 11:1, 1 Peter 2:2

Topics: "Childlikeness", "Childlike Faith", "Wonder Of God"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the importance of maintaining a childlike wonder and faith in our relationship with God, drawing inspiration from his daughter's innocent awe at the world around her. He reflects on how adults often lose this sense of wonder due to intellectualism and the burdens of life, which can lead to spiritual stagnation. Beach urges the congregation to seek a deeper, more vibrant connection with God, one that is filled with the splendor and majesty of His presence, akin to the imagination and joy found in childhood. He highlights that true understanding of God transcends mere theology and requires a heart that is open and vulnerable, much like that of a child. Ultimately, he calls for a restoration of this childlike faith to experience the fullness of God's love and power.

Transcript

You know, some of these quality children have, we desperately need, don't we? And somehow, as adults, they slip from us. I thank God for my little girl's wonder. I thank God for her, for her, for her vulnerability.

I mean, I learned so much from her. Today, we brought her to the airport, and we were walking near planes, and she was afraid of the planes. It's just because she's so small, and they're so big, and they're powerful.

And I marveled. She wouldn't walk. I had to hold her.

And she'd walk up real close to the plane and look at it like this. Like, wow, is this thing going to take off? You know, and here she had this element of wonder. And I said, Lord, give me this.

Give me this about you. Give me this childlike concept of you. You know, there's power in that.

There's power. There's incredible rest for the soul. I don't know many kids that die of nervous breakdowns.

I don't know of many children that have massive heart attacks. Even children that don't have parents, though at times they have troubles yet, even children that don't have parents somehow find something to comfort their heart with. Oh, God, give us back.

A. W. Tozer said, when the wonder of God is taken from the church, the church suffers greatly. When the wonder, when the majesty, when that part of God that you can't explain, and you can't theologically figure out, when that part of God is taken from Him, and you've got them all figured out, and He's just all fit into your scheme of thought, I don't want to serve that God. You can have that God and take Him somewhere.

I want the God of splendor, the God of wonder, the God of majesty, the God whose ways are unsearchable. Not that we can't know Him according to the Word. We can.

But let me tell you something. You can know God in the Word very clearly, and you can be grounded in the Word. But if that takes the element of childlike faith from your heart, where your heart jumps when you think about God being with you, you've got dead theology, and I suggest you bring it to the cemetery and bury it.

And don't even put a gravestone on it, because then people can come and look at it. Just bury it. Find the splendor.

Find the Rebecca faith. The Neil Arthur faith, little Neil Arthur. What about the Jonathan faith? What do you think, George? The Jonathan faith.

You want to know God, find God as a child would. Wow, that's what I want. That's what I believe the Lord wants for us all.

The splendor, the glory, the majesty. How many here feel we need a good dose of this stuff? Sure we do. We get so caught in our minds.

We get so hung up in our intellect. I tell you, it just drives us into places of such hurt and despair. God, make me a child.

Make me a child, Lord. How we can see more and more Paul's understanding on this. God said the wisdom of this world is foolishness to him.

God's foolishness is wiser than men's wisdom, if God ever had foolishness. You know why God's foolishness is wiser than men's wisdom? Because the foolishness of the cross saves people. But the wisdom of this world looks at the foolishness of the cross and mocks it.

I believe only a work of the Holy Spirit can accomplish this. The wonder of God. Oh, God can do anything, no problem.

The feeling of a child who can meet Popeye. Come on, us guys. You know as well as I that you wished you could eat a bowl of that spinach that Popeye ate.

I used to imagine every bowl of spaghetti my mother made me was spinach. And I'd look at Pluto and say, come on, Pluto. Huh? Isn't that right, Gary? Huh? I tell you, Pluto, listen, Pluto looks pretty mean.

Until that old Popeye's spinach comes popping out of the jar. Brutus. Yeah, that's right.

Brutus. I'm sorry. You remember that? You remember Brutus? He had a crush on olive oil.

But Popeye had a crush on her too. And boy, I tell you, he would get Popeye in the worst predicaments. And Popeye was just about ready to die or to be just driven out of the cartoon.

And all of a sudden, this jar or this can of spinach would somehow come on the scene. And he'd squeeze it, and it'd pop open. Then all of a sudden, he'd start shaking, and his arms would get muscles.

And steam would come out of his ears. And I tell you, Brutus is his name. Brutus.

Brutus better be on the run. Now, I don't know about you, but when I was a child, I used to watch those things. And if, you know, the thought of meeting Popeye, I mean, he saves the day.

Or what about if you were in the car, and all of a sudden, you met Speed Racer? Huh? Huh? Come on now. Speed Racer. Boy, I tell you, that guy, he could blow anyone off the road.

I mean, you might be in your dad's old car, your mom's old car, your uncle's old car. But in the backseat, they're up there talking about their big, all-important talk. And you're probably, like I, in the backseat imagining, boy, if this was Speed Racer's car, I tell you, I'd be the hottest one on the road.

Put it down to the floor. You'd go. I mean, you'd go.

Why? Why is there such, and let me tell you something, that's what sustains many children. Their imagination, being able to associate themselves with figures that represent power and success to them. Many kids who are in troubled families, the only thing that enables them to survive is a healthy imagination.

That's what got me through school many times. It really did. I had a hard time in school as a child.

But I would go home, and boy, I'd leave the world. And I'd imagine, you know, I'd imagine, I'd really, I'd encourage myself. We need this.

We need this in a scriptural way. We need the Holy Ghost to come to us and reveal the splendor of God to us. We are the sons of God.

We are children of the King. We are heirs of eternal God. There's nothing too hard for Him.

But we've lost the splendor of it. We've lost the majesty of it. It's been reduced to a dead orthodox theology and confession.

But I believe God wants to find little children. And I tell you, this whole thing of Christianity, without being misunderstood, can become the greatest cartoon going. And the good thing about it is, it's not something that's going to be turned off at the half of the hour.

It just goes on. And it's in living color. And Walt Disney can't pervert it.

It's coming from God. And in this cartoon, there's a hero. And his name is Jesus.

And he's overcome the foe. And you're in his boat. You're in his car.

And the same way little children find incredible joy in imagining themselves being with these characters in television. Likewise, you can find in the Holy Ghost a joy and a peace and an assurance. When you get the revelation, when you can get the childlike concept in your spirit, that you're seated with Christ in heavenly places.

And that the King of Kings is watching over you. What about, I'm thinking of all these cartoons are coming back. I'm thinking about Mighty Mouse.

Wasn't he neat? Didn't he always have a little girlfriend mouse? And every time, what happened now? Every time she got in trouble, wasn't she the one that sang a song? Huh? Oh, Underdog. Yeah, Underdog. Yeah, Sweet Pot.

Yeah. Now listen, she sang a song. Now listen, it didn't matter where Underdog was.

Isn't that the truth? Was it Mighty Mouse? Well, whichever one it was. I mean, this thing used to always amaze me. Now as a kid, now remember as a kid, here whoever it was, Mighty Mouse or Underdog, they could be... Yeah.

Yeah, here I come to say... Now he's up in another planet, right? And all of a sudden, she starts singing. And what happens? His ears hear it. And bammo, he comes and he saves the day.

Now as a child, children can often imagine, wouldn't that be great if I had a genie? Or if I had some kind of thing where all I have to do is start singing and someone great and powerful would come and save me. Well, what's wrong with us Christians? What do you think we have? Now God isn't a genie. I'm not suggesting that.

But we do have a God that will come and save us. We do have a God that is strong and mighty. You see, we do.

Listen, I am persuaded. I am persuaded. The more time I spend with Jesus, the more I realize how dumb I am and foolish I am and how my wisdom next to Jesus is nothing.

He laughs at my intelligence. Every time I get in his presence and start communing with him, he laughs at my intelligence. He says, you're too complicated, Phil.

You get involved too much. I know God is telling me. Now I'm just talking about myself for a second.

I know God is telling me, listen, Phil, get down on your knees and be like a little child. I am persuaded that that element which is in children was never intended to be lost as adults. But it's lost.

That's what God had his eyes on when he said, suffer the little children and forbid them not for such is the kingdom of God. The wonder of a child when he looks, wow, mommy, how are the stars up there? They're big. We don't do that anymore.

When was the last time you looked at a star and tear came down your eyes and you went, wow. Now we've got it all figured out now. Oh, well, that's just a combination of gases and helium gases.

And you know, it's just a natural phenomenon. No sweat. You know, we look at a tree or something, you know.

Oh, yeah, that's, let me see now. What's the word where the light comes in? Photosynthesis. We've got that all figured out.

You know, but your little child goes, wow. Like we went and brought Rebecca to see the ducks. She went, wow, daddy, look.

Chickens or whatever they were, chickens. You know, there's a... Then we went and saw the deer. Now, what's the bird with the real big peacock, with the real big feathers? All different colors, the peacock.

Well, we were there and the peacock spread its wings, its feathers. And I mean, that thing was huge. And then it started shaking.

It was really neat. And here Rebecca's going, wow, look at daddy, look. You know, the wonder, the amazement.

Oh, God, I don't know about you, but I want to begin to see God like that again. I don't want to see God anymore in a dead letter. I want to see God as who he really is.

I want to see the Lord as a beautiful, majestic, eternal, beautiful daddy. Abba father. That means daddy God.

I want God to restore back to me what I had as a seven-year-old. I really do. I can remember I had such great times as a kid.

And it wasn't the material possessions because my mom and dad didn't give us a lot. We only had what we needed. It wasn't a superior education.

I wasn't a smart kid. I was laughed at by the brains. I wasn't smart.

What was it? It was just an incredible child heart. I just got the kick out of everything. I just enjoyed everything.

And I see as an adult, the world and pride and the spirit of this age usurps and robs that element from us. And we become hard and calloused and smart and intelligent. And we become enemies of Christ.

We become enemies of the wonder of God. Oh, God, help us. Help us, Lord.

Help us to become like little children resting in the arms of God. Mike, did you want to say something? You bet. You bet.

You bet. Yeah, George. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

I don't know about you, but I want to become a child. You say, is it scriptural? Certainly it is. Paul told the Corinthians to be like children when it came to getting along with each other.

Now, he said, be like adults in your understanding. Be like adults in your maturity. But you see, there's something within the heart of a child that God never intended for an adult to lose.

And I tell you, the only way it can be restored back to the church, listen, God wants to restore back to us this element of childlike wonder when it comes to him and his word. What God could do in a heart that has been reduced to childlike faith is beyond my imagination. Beyond my imagination.

And only God can do it. Only God can do it. And it's certainly a good prayer to pray, isn't it? Someone have the time? 835.

I didn't bring my watch tonight. I know it's getting late. Tom, you want to share something? How about if we close by reading 1 Corinthians 13 about love? Would that be a pertinent scripture? I'm reading from Young's literal translation of the Bible, so it'll sound a little bit different, but it'll just give us some fresh insight.

And it's my prayer tonight that as we are continually being ruled by God's spirit to look to him and live in him and actually be sustained by him. I'm praying that this agape love will be so evident in our life that it will overflow like a mighty river and touch every person that we meet. Remember, its source is not in self.

It's in the Savior. 1 Corinthians chapter 13. If with the tongues of men and of messengers, I speak and have not love, I have become brass sounding or a symbol tingling.

And if I have prophecy and know all the secrets and all the knowledge, and if I have all the faith so as to remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing. And if I give away to feed others all my goods, and if I give up my body that I may be burned and have not love, I am profited nothing. The love is longsuffering.

It is kind. The love doth not envy. The love doth not vaunt itself, is not puffed up, doth not act unseemly, doth not seek its own things, is not provoked, doth not impute evil, rejoices not over unrighteousness and rejoices with the truth.

All things it beareth, all it believeth, all it hopeth, all endureth. The love doth never fail. Beloved, we have just read a description of the one and only Lord Jesus Christ.

Hang around him and he'll rub off on you. Amen. God bless you.

God be with you. And we love you very much. Amen.

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