

Four Heart Attitudes Part 1

by Phil Beach Jr.

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the necessity of cultivating four essential heart attitudes for spiritual maturity, as exemplified in Abraham's journey of faith.

Duration: 40:34

Scripture: Genesis 12:1

Topics: "Heart", "Heart Attitudes", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the necessity of cultivating four essential heart attitudes for spiritual maturity, drawing from the life of Abraham. He highlights that these attitudes--teachable spirit, humility, continual drawing from God's grace, and readjusting our will to God's will--are crucial for receiving God's promises and lessons. Beach explains that Abraham's journey from receiving God's promise to its fulfillment took 25 years, during which he learned vital spiritual lessons through his relationship with God. The preacher stresses that these attitudes must be maintained through a close relationship with Christ to experience true growth and maturity in faith. Ultimately, the sermon encourages believers to seek these attitudes to become effective instruments for God's work.

Transcript

Just look into four, basically four attitudes that are essential for us to cultivate and maintain in our Christian life if we are to experience the fullness of God's blessing in our life and if we are to experience the fullness of maturity that God intended for us to have. Now, this basically is coming from a study of the life of Abraham. Just as a little bit of an introduction here.

Abraham was promised a son in Genesis chapter 12. Abraham was promised a son in Genesis chapter 12. We remember that in Genesis chapter 12, God said, Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee.

And I will make of thee a great nation. And I will bless thee and make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee.

And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So here, God promised Abraham that he would become a great nation. Well, that meant practically that Abraham was going to have to have a son through Sarah.

But guess what? Sarah was barren, which meant that she couldn't have children. Now I just want to point out a few interesting facts before we look at the four attitudes that must be cultivated and maintained in our Christian life. God promised Abraham in Genesis chapter 12 a son.

However, Abraham did not receive that promise until chapter 21 of Genesis. So we're looking at Genesis chapter 12. God promised Abraham a son.

Then we walk through the pages of the Bible until chapter 21. And that's when he actually received the son, which is, I believe it was 10 years later in that vicinity. I'm not sure.

How old was Abraham when he was promised? Oh, he was 75. Okay, so it was more than 10 years. That's right.

So you're looking at 75 to 100. He was 99 around there or 100. So you're looking at 24, 25 years it took.

Now let me just make a few comments here before we go on. Beloved, it's very important for us to understand. First of all, it was no coincidence that God told Abraham at 75 he was going to be a father through Sarah.

And then it took 25 years for Abraham to become an actual recipient of that promise. It was no coincidence. 24 years went by before Abraham received the promise.

And there are many, many things that God did in Abraham's life during those 24 years before he received that promise. And basically the things that God did in Abraham's life was God revealed himself to Abraham and brought an incredible spiritual maturity in Abraham's life. Now I have, we're not going to go into this tonight, but I have found 10 specific lessons that Abraham had to learn in his spiritual journey from when he received the promise to when he actually, or when he had the promise given to him to when he actually received it.

There were 10 specific spiritual lessons that God taught Abraham. And these 10 spiritual lessons are so incredibly applicable to the lessons that God is teaching us as Christians. However, we're not going into that tonight.

We're going into something that is essential if we are to learn these 10 spiritual lessons or to learn these 10 lessons. See, in order for Abraham to learn these 10 lessons, there were four qualities of the heart that had to be maintained and sustained by a relationship with God. I'll repeat that.

Before Abraham was able to learn these 10 spiritual lessons, there had to be four major attitudes and postures of the heart that had to be cultivated and maintained by a relationship with God. Now I want to remind you it was by a relationship with God, no other way. Genesis 12 through Genesis chapter 21 reflect a man who through relationship with God learned, generally he learned 10 specific spiritual lessons that changed and transformed his life.

Now tonight what we're going to look at is the four attitudes that had to be cultivated in Abraham's life to ensure that he could become a recipient of those 10 spiritual lessons and ultimately receive the promise. I'm just going to give a little introduction before we go into the actual four attitudes of the heart. The path that produces great faith and spiritual maturity can only be stayed upon as these four spiritual attitudes, these four spiritual attitudes of the heart are cultivated in us.

Each lesson learned during Abraham's journey necessitated a fuller death to his own self-life and a fuller union with Jehovah God. Each lesson that Abraham learned necessitated a death to himself and a greater union with Jehovah God. Each lesson that we learn will also necessitate the same thing.

However, if these four spiritual attitudes are not cultivated and maintained in our life through a relationship with God, we will not learn these lessons. And lastly, there is no close walk with the Lord apart from learning these lessons that Abraham learned through a relationship with God. Okay, let's look at the four attitudes that must be cultivated in our heart through a relationship with God that guarantees you and I the privilege of learning the spiritual lessons that will produce maturity as a Christian.

Number one, you may turn your Bible to Hebrews chapter 5. These four attitudes basically are interwoven. That is, each one dovetails with the other and they all sort of fit together in a nice neat bundle of spiritual attitudes. Hebrews chapter 5, verse number 8. We've read it before.

Hebrews chapter 5, verse number 8, speaking of Jesus Christ. Verse number 7, beginning, who in the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. The first godly attitude that must be gotten from the Lord and cultivated and sustained by the Lord through a daily relationship with him is an attitude of a teachable spirit.

A teachable spirit. A teachable spirit is an attitude that is willing to be corrected by God, rebuked by God, and enlarged by God. A teachable spirit is an attitude that is willing to be corrected that yields to God, permitting God to rebuke you, instruct you, teach you, and enlarge you.

Now listen closely. The absence of a teachable spirit is the presence of rebellion. The absence of a teachable spirit is the presence of rebellion and we know that God has promised that the rebellion dwell in a dry land.

A teachable spirit is of great price in the eyes of God. The book of Proverbs is full of admonitions and full of invitation for all who will hear the book to become of a teachable spirit. The book of Proverbs has a scripture that basically says that if you are teachable, you will learn and continue to grow in wisdom, but if you become a scoffer and a mocker, which basically is an unteachable person, you will reap shame.

May I submit to you that Abraham, in order to be able to learn the ten major lessons that he learned on his pilgrimage from Genesis 12 to Genesis 21, had to have a teachable spirit. Now beloved, as anything that we need from God, the place we get it from is the Lord himself. Understand that these attitudes that we are talking about now come only through a relationship with Christ.

As you cultivate a relationship with God through his word and through communion with him in prayer by the Holy Ghost and you just stay close to Jesus, you can't help but have a teachable spirit. You can't help but have a teachable spirit. Secondly, in addition to a teachable spirit, we must allow the Lord to give us, and then we must cultivate and sustain a posture of humility, brokenness and meekness before God.

Humility, brokenness and meekness before God. That's the second attitude of the heart that must be cultivated in our life. Now the scripture references for that, we could go to Psalm 51 verse number 17.

Psalm 51 verse number 17, the Bible says the sacrifices of God are a broken, the word broken there is bruised, shattered, a broken spirit and a broken and a contrite heart. Oh God, you will not despise. It is

very important for us as Christians to continue to pray and ask the Lord to give us a broken and a contrite spirit before him.

As we mentioned, the word broken suggests a bruised, a shattered spirit. Now what this basically means, it is not destroying your personality, it is not becoming repressed as a person and afraid to be who you are in God. This has absolutely nothing to do with a broken and a contrite spirit.

But a broken and a contrite spirit is a crushed and broken will before God. It is not a repressed personality. God does not want to put his finger on what you are and repress you and not give you the freedom to manifest your gifts and to manifest your personality.

If you have a bubbly personality, God does not want you to repress that and think that you have to be something that you are not. And we should never ever in our relationships with people seek to repress what a person is. Never put your finger on a person's personality and repress it and make them think that that is what it means to be broken before God.

No. Usually what that means is you want them to be like you and you are afraid to let them be like they are because you lose control. That is basically why people do that.

You ought not to put your finger on a person's personality. Let them be what they are. Let them express themselves.

Let them, you know, we have often heard this and it is really a remarkable observation. No two snowflakes are alike. Amen! I am glad that Colette is not like me.

I am glad she is not like me. First of all, I would be so bored. It is bad enough living with me.

But if I demanded that Colette be like me and I would not let her express her unique emotional personality, her unique administrative skills, if I put my finger on it and demanded that she did everything like me, I would be destroying the uniqueness of what she is in God. I would love to see her be herself in God. Take your hands off your husband or your wife or your children if you are trying to quench what they are.

Don't do it. Let them be what they are. Let them be unique.

Let them be unique. Accept them for what they are. Don't demand them to be like you.

Learn how to find, listen, learn how to find unity in diversity. Don't seek to make a clone. Sometimes churches do this.

You all have to become like somebody, like the pastor or like the music leader and sometimes if the music leader is dynamic, then everybody has to be dynamic and if you are not, there is sin in your life. You know, no, no. Don't quench the individuality of a person.

Now, I am getting into this because the Bible says that we must have a broken and contrite spirit, but I have seen Christians think that a broken and a contrite spirit was absolutely repressing their personality and taking on the posture of some zombie and thinking that that was being broken before God, not being themselves. Listen, God wants you to be you. Don't try to be like me.

You are going to fail. Don't try to be like some other person. Now listen, you can desire certain godly characteristics in a person's life.

For example, if you see someone has an incredible gift of mercy, you can desire to be a merciful person, but don't want to be like them in personality. If you are a laid back quiet person, don't necessarily think that you would be a better person if you were like Phil or like someone who has got a little bit of spark. Just relax.

Just develop in your personality the characteristic of Christ. Listen, Jesus doesn't have a personality per se. A lot of times people think that they have to lose their personality and take on the personality of Jesus.

I've seen a lot of Christians get into a lot of trouble with this. They repress everything that they are. No.

Here's what God wills. God wills that you retain the uniqueness of your personality, but in it, overflow with the life of Christ, which is the fruit of the Spirit. No matter what kind of personality you have, you can be full of love, joy, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, against such there is no law.

So, as Christians, we're not to try and change our personalities and all become like one personality. No. We are to retain individual uniqueness, but we're all to be filled with Christ who will uniquely manifest His character through each personality.

And there you'll have an expression of the diversity of the body of Christ, all expressing the same uniqueness and the same oneness of the character of Christ. And that's what God's will is. So, I suppose it was necessary to go into this.

I didn't even have it planned, but nevertheless, God must have known that we need to hear this. Do not associate a broken and a contrite spirit with the destroying of your personality and the taking on of a personality that is not what you are. But rather, identify a broken and a contrite spirit with a broken will before God.

Not a broken personality, but a broken will. A will that recognizes that you are under authority. God's word.

You are under authority. God Himself. And that if there's anything in your life that God begins to show you that is not pleasing to Him, a broken and a contrite heart would fall down on the knees and begin to say, Oh, I confess this sin before you, Lord, and I pray that you'll change my heart and bring me into obedience to your word.

That's a broken and contrite heart. Now, you can do that as a sparky person. You can do that as a laid back person.

You can do that as a dynamic person. And you can do that as a real boring person. And you don't have to change your personality to be broken and contrite.

Just become sensitive to God. And when you perceive that God is asking you to do something, get down on your knees, recognize where you're in disobedience and ask God to change you. That's a broken.

That's a crushed spirit. See, we don't want to crush people's personalities. We don't want to crush their freedom to express what they are.

Give people freedom to be what they are in God. But encourage others and encourage yourself that no matter what kind of personality you have, let's all be broken before God. Meaning in all of our diverse personalities, if we ever harm anyone, let's get on our knees and ask for forgiveness.

If we ever hurt somebody, let's be sensitive and say we're sorry. So that means you could be what you are, but a broken heart is whenever you sense that you've hurt somebody with your words or your attitudes, ask for forgiveness. Ask God to forgive.

Reconcile. Go wash their feet. I'm sorry.

Forgive me. There's a broken spirit before God. How many want a broken spirit? I do.

Praise God. I don't have to be anybody but me. And you know, I learned years ago God taught me that when I tried to be someone I wasn't, I could never fulfill the will of God.

What a burden fell off my neck, Danielle, when I learned that I was me and God had a call on my life and I didn't have to become someone else to fulfill it. What a burden rolled off my back. I'm me.

Now listen, a lot of people use that to justify sin in their life and God will judge them because that is not a cloak to be sinful. There's a difference between being sinful and expressing your personality before God and others. There's a difference.

So I know people right today who use that, God made me the way I am and he doesn't want me to change. They use that as a cloak for a rebellion. They use it as a cloak to be unkind to people, to be harsh to people, to be unforgiving, to be belligerent, to be like a bull in a china shop.

You know what a bull in a china shop would do? A lot of damage. And a lot of Christians are like bulls in a china shop. They say, well that's my personality.

No, no, beloved. When you damage someone, that's not personality anymore, that's sin. You can have a dynamic personality and be the most gentle person in the world if Christ is flowing through that personality.

So don't associate I can be who I am with sin. No. You can be who you are and then you allow God to develop his character through it.

And that's what God wants us to become as Christians. Thirdly, oh no, I'm sorry, let's just get two more scriptures for this because this is an important one. Let's go to Psalm 25 verse 9. Psalm 25 verse 9. Now remember these are the attitudes of the heart that qualify us to be taught the lessons that are necessary for spiritual maturity.

The absence of these attitudes means normally the presence of a spiritually delinquent Christian, which means they ought to be mature by now but they're not because they have refused to allow God to develop in them these attitudes. You know as well as I do, you can't teach someone that's not teachable, can you? No, you can't teach them. Okay, Psalm 25, this is a good one.

Verse 9. The meek will he guide in judgment and the meek will he teach his way. Isn't that good? The meek. And also Psalm 32, 7 and 8. Psalm 32, 7 and 8. Psalm 32, 7 and 8. You are my hiding place.

You shall preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.

I will guide thee with mine eye. Now again, God's promising here instruction and he's promising to teach us but in Psalm 25 he specifically said who it is that he teaches? The meek, the humble, the contrite. Okay? So beloved, I want to encourage you as we go through these.

We have two more. We'll be done in a few moments. I want to pray that you would take these to heart.

Do you know that God says he'll withhold no good thing from him that walketh uprightly? How come we have associated that with mansions and cars and money? People say, hey, praise God. If you walk right, God will give you a Cadillac. Beloved, that is so far from the heart of God.

Listen, you know what the good things are? Mercy, brokenness, contriteness, humility, meekness. These are the good things that God wants us to desire. So I want to encourage you, take these to God in prayer.

Pray over this. Say, God, give me a teachable spirit. Give me a humble, broken spirit because that will ensure that you will then learn the lessons necessary to become a spiritually mature Christian, and as a spiritually mature Christian, you'll have joy unspeakable and full of glory, and you'll have spiritual children to teach.

How many want to be able to teach others the way of God and instruct them and have people that look up to you and can learn from your life Christ himself? How many want that? Here, I do. God will never entrust you with spiritual children if you're unteachable and you're as strong-willed as cement. He'll never trust you because if he did, then what would you be teaching your pupils? Just that.

Number three, the third attitude of the heart must be an attitude of continual drawing. From Christ's grace, through waiting on God in prayer and meditation of his word. The third attitude of the heart must be an attitude of continual drawing from Christ's grace through waiting on God in prayer and meditation on his word.

The scripture, Isaiah 40, 28-31. This is a very familiar scripture. Many of us have read it, but I tell you, it never gets old.

Isaiah 40, beginning with verse number 28. Remember, this is the third attitude that must be gotten from the Lord because we don't get these outside of the Lord. He gives them to us, but once he gives them to us, though, it's our job to cultivate it through responding to him.

He keeps it going, but he waits to see if we respond. Isaiah 40, verses 28-31. We're going to be done in a couple of minutes.

Isaiah 40, verse number 28. Now here's God speaking to the prophet. Maybe he's speaking to Israel, but he's speaking to us.

Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? Now, beloved, you're going to learn real quick in your Christian life that weariness and fainting is a very severe temptation that comes to the Christian. And until you learn to wait upon God, this is the third attitude of the heart, waiting upon God through prayer and meditation. Until you learn that, you'll never be able to learn the great lessons that God has for you.

Neither is weary, there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. So the third attitude of the heart must be an

attitude of continual drawing from Christ's grace through, now this is the practicality of it, the practical application of this attitude is a lifestyle of waiting on God in prayer and meditation on God's Word.

So, firstly, we need a teachable spirit. Secondly, we need a humble, broken, meek, contrite spirit. And thirdly, we need a spirit of continuance in Christ through waiting on God in prayer and meditation in his Word.

It's easy to faint, and if we faint, that, well, Paul said, be not weary in doing well, for you shall reap if you faint not. So oftentimes, fainting will prevent us from reaping the full blessing that God has for us. And lastly, and this is, of course, is a very, very important scripture that we need to, or rather an attitude that we need to recognize.

Lastly, the attitude of continually readjusting our will into conformity to God's will as he shows us areas of disobedience. That's the third, the fourth necessary attitude or posture of the heart. I'll read it again.

An attitude of continually readjusting our will into conformity to God's will as he shows us areas of disobedience. Psalm 50, verse 3. Psalm 50, verse 3. No, I'm sorry. Psalm 50, verse 23.

Verse 23. Psalm 50, verse 23. Whoso offereth praise glorifyeth me, and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.

To him that ordereth his conversation. The word conversation there generally refers to the lifestyle. So basically, what the Bible's saying is to him that orders his lifestyle aright.

In other words, when we're walking a certain way and through God's word and through a revelation of the Holy Spirit, we discover that there's an area of disobedience in our life. To him that falls before God, there you have the brokenness and the meekness and the contriteness. To him that falls before God acknowledges the sin, acknowledges that there's an area in our life that is out of obedience to the word of God, and then prays and begs God and asks God to readjust that area in our life so that we are in conformity to God's will.

It's to that man that God will show his salvation. That is, it is to that man who God will grant the gift of spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity is a gift.

It's something that God does. Jesus said, consider the lilies. They neither toil nor spin, but they grow.

God causes them to grow. It's God who causes you to grow. You don't grow by struggle.

But nevertheless, people do not grow when they do not allow God to cultivate and to sustain these attitudes of the heart. So basically, these are attitudes of the heart, listen closely, that equal or make up a fertile heart. And a fertile heart will always produce fruit.

And the fruit that a fertile heart produces is Christian maturity, which is Christ is living in me and through me, and I am reckoned as dead. And that's surely what God's will is. 2 Corinthians 13, 7, last scripture.

2 Corinthians 13, 7, another scripture that applies to this last heart attitude. This last heart attitude is a determination not to do what's wrong. Don't do what's wrong.

And when you discover an area in your life that's not right, go to God. Ask God to change you. You say, well, I do and he doesn't.

Well, be persistent. Be persistent. Say, well, Brother Beech, I've been persistent and God just doesn't do it.

Well, now we're into a little bit of dangerous territory. Is God's word a lie? Does he promise to deliver all those that call upon him? Yes, he does. So either God's word's true or it's a lie.

If it's not working, it's not God's fault. See, don't accuse God. I've had Christians come to me and accuse God.

Say, God doesn't want to free me because I've asked him to take this area of disobedience out of my life and he won't. You know, that's dangerous. You know, if he's not doing it, he's trying to teach you something.

But don't think just because he's not doing it, he wants it there. He doesn't. He does never want sin.

It might be because he's teaching you perseverance. It might be because you're not seeking him with your whole heart. So don't begin to question God's word.

2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse number 7. I have a feeling that's why we have so many seminars and teaching seminars. It's because we're trying to explain why the word of God doesn't work. So we implement human methods.

God's word works. Right? You know, people struggle with certain things. God's word don't work.

So we put together a workshop and explain how to get it to work. God, hey listen, God's word works. If you're sincere before God, if you love him, if you honestly have an open heart, if you're open to the Lord's methods of dealing in your life, God's going to work his word in your life.

2 Corinthians chapter 13, verse 7. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil. There it is, right there. That reflects the last attitude of a continual readjusting of our will into conformity to God's will as he shows us areas of disobedience.

When the Holy Spirit reveals to you and convicts you of something that you have done or you're doing or you're planning on doing, and you recognize in a moment's time through the illumination of God, because apart from him you wouldn't know. You wouldn't know. You don't have something inside of yourself apart from Christ that's going to keep you in the right path.

So when God reveals this to you, he expects you as a result of him taking the initiative and showing you this area of disobedience, he expects you to respond by coming before him, confessing that sin, calling it what it is, acknowledging that it is a sin against him, and then seeking for that grace to change your heart, to change your will, asking God you want to be changed, and then asking God to take the power of his Holy Spirit and change that area in your life so that it can be brought into conformity to God's word. God expects you to do that. And as you do that and respond to God's initiative, there'll always be victory.

Now if it doesn't come overnight, and then the next day you get up and say, huh, see it didn't work, and you go out and do it again, that basically shows you that you weren't really sincere. Because if you were completely sincere, even though it didn't work, you would keep asking. That's what Jesus said, ask.

The Greek there is ask and keep asking, seek and keep seeking, knock and keep knocking. So see there's the lesson of perseverance. So they are the four heart attitudes.

I want to make it very clear before we close. You cannot generate these attitudes in yourself by willpower, by positive confession. There's only one place you get these attitudes.

That is from Jesus Christ in his presence as a gift. And there's only one place that these attitudes are cultivated and maintained in your life. Same place you got them.

From Jesus Christ in his presence as you abide in him. So therefore the logical conclusion is this. If you got him and keep him in his presence by his hand, then you're going to lose him if you drift from his presence and begin to stray.

So therefore, may I say in closing that God's word that we just taught on tonight doesn't work apart from Christ himself. And the key for these things to become life in your life is not just writing down principles and memorizing them, but getting in the presence of your savior Jesus and letting him produce these things in your life by the power of his Holy Spirit. And then as you stay in his presence and learn that joy of daily communion with him, he will keep them in your heart.

These will be attitudes that are reflected in your daily lifestyle and you will be on your way to learn the lessons that you must learn and the result will be spiritual maturity in God, joy unspeakable and full of glory and the privilege of helping others to find Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

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