

Hearing God's Word at the Potter's House - Part 2

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of humility and obedience in order to hear God's word and follow Jesus faithfully.

Duration: 56:05

Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-6, Luke 2:25-38, Luke 9:57-62, Luke 17:10, James 1:2-8

Topics: "Word Of God", "Hearing God's Voice", "Humility and Brokenness"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the necessity of humility and brokenness in order to hear God's word, drawing from personal experiences of unfaithfulness and the need for divine grace. He highlights that true faith requires surrendering our desires for comfort and security, as exemplified by Jesus' call to follow Him without looking back. The sermon encourages believers to approach God with a heart willing to listen and obey, using the examples of Simeon and Anna to illustrate the qualities needed to remain at the potter's house. Ultimately, Beach Jr. reminds the congregation that our unfaithfulness stems from pride and self-sufficiency, and that we must seek to be like the humble donkey, allowing God to mold us according to His will.

Transcript

We thank you for the worthy one who is in our midst, our Lord Jesus. We thank you, Lord, for his love, and we do stand, Lord, trembling in your presence. We ask that you will help us this morning.

Open up the ears of our heart and enable us, Lord, to receive your word and to hear your voice in our hearts. I pray, God, that you'll remove distractions from us, that you'll help us to cast the tormenting fears upon you that would try to harass our minds and keep us from hearing your word. The cares of this life, Lord, that are so responsible for choking the word, the desire for other things, Lord, I'm asking you by the power of your spirit to arrest our minds and hearts today and bring us into a place where we can hear your word.

And, Father, we just look to you to accomplish this today through the power of your Son, through the power of your word, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen. If the children want to go now with their teacher for practice, all right, well, I'm glad everyone shared a little bit.

That helped us because we're going to talk about why we're unfaithful today with God's grace. And I speak this not through a scholastic message but by experience. I'm a very unfaithful man.

I'm not referring to a moral unfaithfulness to my wife, and these things have to be said because these tapes go out and things, you know, so, but I'm not referring to an unfaithfulness in a sense of having failed my wife, although I'm capable of doing that if I don't keep my eyes on the Lord. I'm capable of committing any sin that is in my heart. And Jesus said that the heart is deceitfully wicked.

Who could know it? But let's again pray and look to the Lord for his grace. Father, I know that you're a wonderful Lord, a wonderful Father, and the thing that amazes me the most in my journey these days is that you love me. You love me and I'm unfaithful.

You love me and I have rebelled. You love me and I am weak and unwilling many times in my flesh to do what you tell me to do, but you still love me. That has become the anchor, Lord, that has held my soul and that has been the source of peace, even though I have seen how unfaithful I am.

I pray, God, that today your word would speak to my heart and that you would help me to learn of you and to draw my strength from you. And I pray, God, that you'll help my brothers and sisters to do the same. For Jesus' sake, amen.

In Luke, chapter 17, we're going to begin, we're going to look at a number of scriptures and all that we like to do when we gather together is pray that we all can hear the shepherd's voice speak to us. So I want to encourage you to listen for the shepherd's voice because he'll speak to you. He'll speak to you.

Whatever you're going through now, whatever it is, he'll speak to you. Now listen, some of you might not like to hear what he's going to say, but he's still going to say it. And if you'll listen and you'll pray, God, give me a humble heart and a broken heart, then you'll find that his words, even though they're bitter to your heart, they're sweet and they're lovely and they're beautiful.

And so, Lord, help us to hear you today. We're going to begin in Luke, chapter 17, verse 10. We're going to settle something once and for all here by God's word.

And that is we're always unfaithful and unprofitable servants always. OK, we don't come to where, well, last week I was faithful, but this week I'm unfaithful. We have to get rid of that mindset.

We're not going to be able to hear the Lord speak to us if we have these areas of darkness in our life. Luke chapter 17. OK, Luke chapter 17, beginning in verse number five.

And the apostles said unto the Lord, increase our faith. OK, this is the question. Increase our faith.

If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed. You might say unto this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the root and be thou planted in the sea and it should obey you. And now Jesus talks about a lesson in verses seven through ten.

After he explains that just a little teeny grain of faith. Will produce incredible results. Now he deals, I believe, with why there wasn't faith in the apostles heart and why oftentimes there isn't faith in our heart.

Listen carefully to this little story. But which of you. Which of you.

Now apply this to yourself, which of you. Having a servant plowing or feeding cattle will say to him by and by when he has come from the field, go and sit down to me and will not rather say to him, make ready wherewith I may sup. And gird thyself and serve me.

Till I have eaten and drunken and afterward thou shalt eat and drink. Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So, likewise, you.

When you have done all those things. Which are commanded you say we are unprofitable servants. We have done that which was our duty to do.

And so even when we have done all that we're supposed to do, we remain unprofitable servants. It's very, very important if we are to walk with the Lord and keep hearing his word that we recognize that our obedience does not change our status. Our obedience does not change our status.

Unprofitable servants is what it says. Now, why are we unfaithful? Why do we fail the Lord? You remember last week we looked at Jeremiah chapter 18. By the way, Debra's not here, that's good.

I was waiting for her to leave. She's been putting together a family newsletter. And this is what she wrote about last week.

Today at church was nice. Jessica and Christina were there and I liked the songs they sang. The sermon Dad spoke was good because I learned something.

We're always wanting to be like a great big horse. But Jesus said to be like a donkey. It was a nice Sunday.

And so when I read this on my desk, I said, well, that sums up last week quite fine. We learned last week that Jesus wants us to be like donkeys, not like mighty race horses. Why are we unfaithful to the Lord? Because we don't like to be donkeys.

Only donkeys are helped and strengthened and empowered by God. Only donkeys, not mighty thoroughbred race horses. Jesus likes donkeys.

He actually rode on a donkey when he went into Jerusalem. He didn't go and find a well-trained Roman horse that had been in battle. He found a lowly, meek old donkey and he rode upon it.

And Jesus today only rides on donkeys. Always remember this. Now, are we hearing the Lord? Jesus only rides on donkeys.

Do you want to bear the Lord before your brothers and sisters, before a lost and dying world? Do you want to bear him? Do you want him to ride upon your life and be seen? Then say, Lord, take for me this insatiable desire I have to be something more than a jackass, a donkey. No, you're no more than a donkey. Now, listen.

This is where you have to be careful. Don't believe the praises of men when they come to you. They're going to tell you all kinds of things and it's simply not true.

It's not true. Have you believed what people have told you about yourself? Have you believed how wonderful you are? Huh? What a great businessman. But what about, boy, you're really a humble man.

You really love the word, don't you? Oh, you really love, boy, you really get into the don't believe a word they say. They don't know what they're talking about. Don't believe what people say.

Jesus rides on donkeys. Now, Jeremiah, chapter 28 or 18. I'm sorry.

Jeremiah, chapter 18. Why are we unfaithful to the Lord? The word, Jeremiah 18, which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise and go down. Arise and go down.

Go down. Go down. Now, I want you to hold your finger there and I want you to go go to James.

I said we're going to go through some scriptures today, but we're going to be taught of the Lord. Hopefully I want you to go to James. Go down.

OK, now it's absolutely necessary if we are to hear the word of the Lord in our hearts. Daily commune with him that we have to arise and go down. We have to go down.

We have to be brought down. Now, the scripture says in James, chapter one, verse number two. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into many different temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith works patience.

But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that gives to all men liberally and abradeth not, doesn't find fault, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering, for he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

Let not that man think he shall receive anything from the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Now, verse number nine, let the brother of low degree rejoice and that he is exalted.

And now watch this. But the rich and that he is made low. Made low arise, Jeremiah said, and come down now in James, chapter one.

The words about the brother of low degree being raised up in the rich being brought low is in the context of trials and tribulations and testings. And so one of the purposes that God has when he brings us through trials and tests is to help us get lower. But that's not an end in itself.

That's a means to an end. He helps us get lower. Why does the Lord want us to get lower? So we can hear him.

See, he wants us to meet him, but he can't walk with thoroughbred horses. He can only walk with mules, with jackasses, with unprofitable servants, with lowly. Crippled, blind, lame men and women.

So we find that God spoke to Jeremiah. Arise and come down. Once the Lord gets us low enough.

Broken enough. Stripped of our own beauty. And self inflated pride.

We begin to hear his word. That's just what it says in Jeremiah. Arise.

Go down. And there I will cause you to hear my words. If we want to hear God's words.

If we want to hear the words of our Savior. We must be brought down. Why are we unfaithful to the Lord? Because we're too high.

That's why. We're too high. Too high.
Too strong. Now. Once we begin to hear his word.
Let's go to Luke. Chapter nine. When we get low enough.
And broken enough. And stripped enough. And desperate enough.
To hear God speak. Here's what he's going to say to us. Luke chapter nine.
He's going to say to us. Follow me. Follow me.
Jesus wants us to follow him. Now listen to this. Luke chapter nine.
In the context of following the Lord. Jesus deals with several issues. That are going to come up.
Now remember. We've heard the Lord say arise. That means wherever you're at.
Listen. Arise and come down. And there.
When you come down. Get off your thoroughbred horse. Become a mule.
A nobody. See the Lord. See his glory.
Come down. And there you're going to come to the potter's house. And now the potter's house.
Is all about. A lump of clay. In the hand of the potter.
Being fashioned into the image. Of the desire of the potter. The potter's house is all about.
Offering our lives. To the hands of the potter. And asking him to fashion us.
According to his desires. And his likeness. The potter's house is the place.
Where you and I get off the throne. Of our heart. The potter's house is the place where.
We pray and cry out. Oh God. Thou art the potter.
I am the clay. Mold me and make me. After thine own way.
The potter's house. Is where God gives us eyes to see. And we look into his holy book.
And everything in our life. That does not conform. To God's word.
We grieve over. We sorrow over. We mourn over.
And we look to the power of God's spirit. To change us. That's the potter's house.
The potter's house is a pliable piece of clay. Seeking nothing. But to know and do the will of God.
But we are not there. Because we are too high. Too mighty.
Too full. Too satisfied. Too infatuated.

With the one we see every morning. When we look in the mirror. It's not me brother.

Might be you. It is me. And if that's not you.

Then you pray for me. Okay. You pray for me.

Verse 57. Chapter 9. Now listen closely brothers and sisters. Oh God help us to hear.

Alright. Now we're looking at a place here. This is what happens at the potter's house.

This is what Jesus says to those at the potter's house. Because he knows that there's temptations at the potter's house. That are very very strong.

Very real. Now here's the temptation at the potter's house. And it came to pass that as they went in the way.

A certain man said to him. Lord I will follow thee wherever you go. Well that sounds good doesn't it? Boy that sounds great.

That sounds like someone who is either wanting to be at the potter's house. Or someone who is at the potter's house. I will follow you Lord wherever you go.

But Jesus the master. The great one who looks into the hearts of men. And sees what is lurking.

Responds to what he knows. Will be the ruin of this soul's desire. To follow him.

And this is what he says. And brothers and sisters. Write this in your notes.

Ask God to write this on your heart. If you aspire to be at the potter's house. If God is now bringing you down.

Bringing you down. And you're finding more and more. The capacity to see more clearly what it means to live at the potter's house.

And to start hearing the Word of the Lord. Here's the first warning that the Lord will speak to you. Foxes have holes.

Birds of the air. Nests. But the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

Now what's Jesus addressing here? What does a hole represent for a fox? Security. Comfort. Shelter.

Foxes have holes. And birds have what? Nests represent the same thing. But the Son of Man has what? Nowhere to lay his head on earth.

If you come to the father's house. To the potter's house. If you are brought down.

Where you find your heart beginning to cry out. With a sincerity that you've never known before. Oh God I want to follow you Lord wherever you go.

The Lord will say to you. Foxes have holes. Birds of the air have nests.

But if you follow Me you'll have nowhere to lay your head. If you follow Me you'll not be able to take haven. Somewhere in earth like you used to.

No haven. I have nowhere to lay my head. You want to follow Me? Do you want to follow Me? I have nowhere to lay my head.

So if you follow Me you'll have nowhere to lay your head. Nowhere. Nowhere.

To bang down my tent stakes. Nowhere to lay my head and find comfort in earth. Nowhere.

Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Come down to the potter's house. And there you'll hear My Word.

What is His Word? I have nowhere to lay your head. And if you follow Me you'll have nowhere to lay your head. Are we getting to see a little bit why the Scripture says, and many stopped following Him? Many stopped following Him.

John 6, 6, 6. Alright, there's the first one. You want to follow Jesus? You want to come down to the potter's house and hear His Word? And He'll say, follow Me. Now, the first time the man cried out, Lord, I want to follow You.

And Jesus responded by saying, Well, that's wonderful, but I want you to know that there's nowhere on earth that I lay my head. I don't find comfort in anything that originates from earth. Now, notice number two.

Verse number 59. And He said unto another, Follow Me. But he said, Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.

Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury the dead. But go thou and preach the kingdom of God. Now listen, number one, Jesus said, I have nowhere to lay my head.

Number two, He said, follow Me. And the fellow said, But Lord, listen, this is the key right here. Let me first.

Then I will. Brothers and sisters, please listen to me. Please listen to this word here.

When Jesus speaks to you and He says, follow Me, you and I don't say to Him, Lord, first let me do this and then I'll get around to following you. Lots of trouble in our lives right now because we've heard the Lord say, follow Me, and we've said, first, Lord, I need to take care of this, and I need to take care of that, and I need to do this, and then, Lord, I'll come and follow You. You see what Jesus is doing? He's laying down the rule of love for those that will be His companions for eternity who will be one with His heart and one with His Spirit.

Number one, no place to lay your head. Number two, no excuses. First, Lord, let me ask a question.

What are You doing now first? What are You doing now first? Then you'll get around to following Him, whatever it is. This is what Jesus says. Let the dead bury the dead.

And another said, Lord, I will follow Thee, but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at My house. And Jesus said to him, No man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the

kingdom of God. What happened to Lot's wife when she was running out of Sodom and Gomorrah? Why did she turn to stone? She looked back.

Why did she look back? You got it. That's it. Something that was being burned in Sodom and Gomorrah had a place in her heart.

Jesus said, Follow Me. Lord, I will follow Thee, but let me first go bid them farewell in My home and in My house. Lord, let me first turn around and look.

Jesus said, No man, having put his hand to the plow and turning around, is fit for what? For the kingdom of God. Now I've read that when a man has hold of a plow and he turns around, you know what happens? He gets off the straight and narrow. Jesus said, If you want to follow Me, there's no turning back.

There's no looking back. But you see how we hide our sin? It seems so commendable to want to go back to the family and say, Bye. Who could condemn such a soul for wanting to do that? Jesus.

Because Jesus is dealing with heart issues now. He's dealing with that which has a spot in the heart that is going to prevent us from following Him. What's preventing us from following Him today? Are we going to go to the potter's house? Luke chapter 2. Here's what we need to pray.

Luke chapter 2. Who is it that sees what the Lord is doing at the potter's house? Who is able to hear? Two people. Simeon and Anna. Simeon and Anna.

These two people, Simeon and Anna, represent, they capture a spiritual reality that the Lord must put in our hearts if we are to stay at the potter's house. Let me tell you, brothers and sisters, it's one thing for the Lord to begin to bring you down. It's another thing for the Lord to begin to bring you down and then you suddenly begin to realize where the potter's house is.

And that inward condition of a heart that is broken before God. And then it's another thing to begin to hear God say, Follow Me. In that inward brokenness of being at the potter's house and surrendering your rights and surrendering your will to God.

But it's a whole other different thing to be brought there and then to stay there. To stay there. And Simeon and Anna represent the kind of spiritual qualities that we must look to God for if we're going to stay at the potter's house.

Because the road at the potter's house is an offensive road. You have to die because there's no place of comfort on earth anymore. And you have to, by God's grace, give all the treasures of your heart over to the Lord so that He only is the treasure in your life.

Because, brothers and sisters, hear this prophetic word right now. Any treasure right now in your life, any treasure that you have placed your heart on will become the very thing that will turn you from the Lord. And it doesn't have to be an unlawful thing.

The very thing that our hearts are set on will become the very thing that will destroy us spiritually. And that's why Jesus says, you want to follow Me? You can't lay your head down. You can't take your soul and attach it to something on earth.

You want to follow Me? You can't say, first, Lord, let me do this, and then I'll come back and follow You. See, He's dealing with heart issues now. He's dealing with a spiritual caliber.

A spiritual stature that must be present in our lives if we're going to follow the Lord in the potter's house. We see it in Simeon, and we see it in Anna. Luke 2, beginning in verse 25, And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.

Now the word Simeon, listen, the meaning of these words unlocks the key to understanding what God has to do in our life if we're going to be brought to the potter's house and stay there. Because many, many Christians are brought at one time in their life to a place of brokenness. And this potter's house can be represented by many different terms in the Bible.

Brokenness, spiritual poverty, a life of utter dependence upon God, a life where you're surrendered, a life where you're walking softly, a life where you realize you're nothing but a mule, nothing but a donkey, I mean. You see, this is a spiritual place. Many have been brought there, but they don't stay there.

And it's ultimately because of what Jesus deals with in Luke 9, 57-62. We get there. We start following the Lord and we realize in following the Lord, He doesn't lay His head down anywhere.

And we start getting grieved because our souls go into torment. Our souls go into a convulsion. We want a place on earth to lay our head.

He says, if you follow Me, you can. Or, we want to follow the Lord, but first... first... Sorry, you're not fit for this walk with me if you want to do something first. So we say, remember the question we asked? Why are we unfaithful to the Lord? Are we starting to see? Now listen, Simeon means to hearken, to listen attentively.

Now watch what happens to Simeon. Watch what happens to Simeon. And there was a man called Simeon.

The same man was just and devout and waiting for the consolation of Israel and the Holy Ghost was upon him. Oh, brothers and sisters, we can just go on and on and on and on here. The hearkening heart, the listening heart, the heart that is attentive to listening to God is the just heart, the devout heart, and it's the waiting heart.

Waiting for the consolation of Israel. Waiting for the Christ. Waiting for the blessed hope.

Not only for Him to appear in the heavens, but for His fullness to appear in our lives. The hearkening heart. The Simeon heart is the devout heart.

The Simeon heart is the heart alone that can dwell in the potter's house. An obedient heart. A hearkening heart.

And the hearkening heart is the heart where the Holy Ghost is upon it. See, the Bible says that the Holy Ghost was upon him. Simeon captures the spiritual qualities that are inherent in the Lord Jesus Christ and that are available to those who will come brokenhearted before Him as spiritual paupers, bankrupt, saying, Lord, I have nothing.

Give me Your riches. Give me Your treasure. You ask the Lord for treasure.

You know what He's going to give you? A Simeon heart. A Simeon heart. The Holy Ghost was upon him.

And it was revealed to him. A Simeon heart is a heart that is able to receive revelation from God. A Simeon heart is the exact opposite of the kind of condition that we have naturally.

It is the exact opposite of the kind of condition that I have naturally. And without the Lord continuously ministering to me, I will not listen. I will not hearken.

I will not wait. I will not be devout. I am in need of Him today if I'm going to stay at the potter's house.

That he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. There's much here that we can't get into. But there is a place, and there always has been a place, there has been a company of people who have not seen death until they've seen the Lord's Christ.

And in seeing the Lord's Christ, it was reckoned to them as if they hadn't died. Like Joseph and his bones. But we can't get into that now.

We're going to just follow along here. And he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the law, then took Him up in His hands and blessed God and said, Lord, now let Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy Word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.

The Simeon heart is looking for nothing but the salvation of God that is found in the Christ. The Simeon heart is looking for nothing, cannot find any comfort, cannot find any joy, cannot find any satisfaction, cannot find a sense of security in anything unless it sees the Lord. And only in seeing the Lord does the Simeon heart rejoice.

Only in seeing the Lord. Verse 36, And there was one Anna. Simeon, to hearken, to listen.

Anna, grace. Now watch Anna. A prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.

She was of a great age and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity. Seven is the number of completeness. Now, you see, in Simeon and Anna, we have gathered up all of the qualities that Jesus is looking for.

Having lived with a husband seven years in her virginity. You know what that means? That means that for seven years she was married but didn't know her husband. Seven years.

The number of completeness. That represents what Jesus was talking about in Luke 9. Anna would not find ultimate fulfillment. Would not find ultimate sense of security.

Ultimate sense of pleasure. Rest on earth. That's what it represents.

For seven years. She lived with her husband but was a virgin. There it is.

The heart. Now, let me ask a question. Did she abstain from something that was unlawful? Absolutely not.

Something lawful. All of the lawful blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Lawful, not unlawful.

All of the lawful blessings that God has bestowed upon us. If we follow Him, we're going to have to abstain from them. Because if we don't, guess where our hearts are going to end up? Right there.

I mean, He is my husband. I do have the right to know Him, don't I? Seven years. I mean, the Lord has given me this blessing.

I do have the right to enjoy it, don't I? The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. Nowhere. Now watch Anna here.

She lived seven years from her virginity and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. All that Jesus talked about in Luke 9, all that the Lord was talking about in Jeremiah 18, come to the potter's house, and there you'll hear My word, is captured in Anna and Simeon. At the temple, day and night, devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fastings and prayer. Prayer indicates the soul's cry, I am dependent upon You. Fastings indicates the soul's cry, I am in denial.

I am denying myself. Fasting represents, if a man follow Me, he must deny himself. It may include abstaining from food and water from time to time, but the ultimate heart that God is looking for is a praying heart, I am dependent on the Lord, and a fasting life, I am living by the power of God in denial of those desires in me that if I lay hold of them and embrace them, they will take me right away from the potter's house.

Right away from following Jesus. So many idols. So many passions.

Verse 38, And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord. Both Simeon and Anna are thanking God when they see Jesus. Oh, may God help us to see.

And spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And so there you have it, brothers and sisters. Why are we unfaithful to the Lord? Because we are weak and we don't know it.

Because we must see Him more and more. So let's just together now for a few minutes look to the Lord who is here to help us, to strengthen us, to encourage us, and to empower us to see Himself and to hear Him call and say, follow me. Let's just bow our hearts for a moment before Him.

Lord, we realize that to follow You is something that we cannot do and that given to our own desires we will not do. And yet, Lord, You have called us and chosen us and You love us and You're commanding us to follow You. And so, Lord, we come to You in poverty, in weakness, and we pray, God, that in these times, Lord, of Your dealings in our life, You would make known to us, Lord, the Holy Spirit, His power, and His enabling so that we will be strengthened to die and follow You.

So, O God, speak to us now by Your Holy Spirit and help us, Lord, we pray. Help us, we pray, Lord.

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