

Look to Jesus and Be Changed (Part 3)

by Phil Beach Jr.

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the believer's responsibility in this process, which involves looking away from self, sin, and circumstances, and then steadfastly gazing upon Jesus.

Duration: 40:34

Scripture: John 14:16, 2 Corinthians 3:18

Topics: "Jesus", "The Role of the Holy Spirit", "Transformation"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, as outlined in 2 Corinthians 3:18. He explains that true transformation occurs when we look away from self, sin, and circumstances to focus solely on Jesus, who is the author and perfecter of our faith. This process of metamorphosis is not initiated by our own efforts but is a divine work of the Holy Spirit, requiring our cooperation and willingness to yield. Beach encourages believers to engage in this spiritual discipline to experience ongoing growth in grace and knowledge of God. Ultimately, he calls for a steadfast gaze upon Jesus to fully realize the character and moral excellence of Christ in our lives.

Transcript

Corinthians chapter 3, and we're going to be looking particularly at verse number 18. We have been ministering on the past several occasions when we've had opportunity to minister, which would be on Wednesday night and on Sunday nights, and we've been ministering on the Holy Spirit, and it's His ministry and our life. And this morning, we want to take up an aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit that is very, very essential for us to understand.

Let's begin reading 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse number 12. Begin reading in verse number 12. Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, and not as Moses who used to put a veil over his face, that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away.

But their minds were hardened, for until this very day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains unlifted because it is removed in Christ. But to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart. But whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Now, the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory

to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. Now, on Wednesday evening, and also on Sunday evening, we had looked into things that we should not do against the Holy Spirit.

Lie not, grieve not, quench not, provoke not, and tempt not. And we discovered that it is the will of God for us to have an ongoing relationship with the Holy Spirit, an ongoing intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit. In John chapters 14, 15, and 16, we see that the Holy Spirit was sent to the believer for the distinct and unique purpose of abiding with the believer as a companion, one that would comfort, one that would teach us, one that would show us the things of Christ.

The Holy Spirit was sent to the believer in order that we would not be left as orphans, as fatherless children. So, the Holy Spirit plays a very essential part in the life of the believer. Therefore, it is important that we understand our need to become acquainted with the Holy Spirit in a very intimate way.

I want to point your attention this morning to what we call Wednesday and Sunday night, a spiritual discipline that it is essential that we learn as Christians. Because this spiritual discipline will enable you as a believer to participate with the Holy Spirit in your growth in grace and knowledge of God. I say that again.

This spiritual discipline will enable you to cooperate and to participate with the Holy Spirit so that you can continue to enjoy the spiritual growth in grace and in knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 3, verse number 18, we discover that we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed. Now, we want to look this morning at basically two facts regarding the process that we are involved in as Christians.

The first fact that we want to look at is the fact of being transformed. Now, the word transformed is a very, very important word to the Christian. It ought to become an increasingly more important word to you as a Christian.

Because the word transformed describes what is actually happening to you on a daily basis as Christians. This perhaps is one of the most glorious, one of the most exciting, one of the most fulfilling and satisfying facts of the Christian life, knowing that we are being transformed. Now, what we want to look at this morning is we want to look at this word transformed.

I want to show you exactly what it is. The word transformed is a word metamorpho. And it has several different uses in the New Testament.

I just want to point your attention to a place, two places where this word metamorpho is used. And show you exactly what the implication is regarding this tremendous word. Now, mind you, this is the word that is used to describe what is happening to you as a believer.

Let's look first of all at Matthew chapter 17 verse number 2. Matthew chapter 17 verse number 2. Matthew chapter 17 verse number 2. We'll begin with verse number 1. And six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and brought them up to a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them. And his face shone like the sun, and his garments became as white as light.

Now, this word was used in reference to Christ's transfiguration. Quite exciting, isn't it? So, immediately we can see, in part, the nature of our transformation. As Christians, the nature of our transfiguration is similar to that which happened to Jesus when he was on the mount, where his garments were changed and his face shone as a light.

It is a supernatural event. It is a supernatural happening. And it's taking place in your life and in my life.

That's also found in Mark chapter 9 verse 2, which we will not turn to. These are two incidences where that particular word is used and it's in reference to Christ's transfiguration. So, we can see, by virtue of these two examples, the nature of our change, the nature of our transformation.

Now, here's another place that it's used. In Romans chapter 12. Romans chapter 12, verse number 2. Now, you're going to be shocked when you discover this, because we quote this scripture very often.

The transfiguration was Matthew 17-2. Most of you could probably quote Romans chapter 12, verse number 2. Let's begin with verse number 1. I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Here is another example of where that word is used. So, it would be interesting for us to note that so many Christians will quote this scripture, be not conformed to this world, but be renewed, be transformed by the renewing of their mind. But see, it's interesting to note this morning that the transformation, that transforming that the scripture suggests that we should be involved in, is not something that we can do of our own power.

This is, see, when you begin to delve into this and begin to understand that the salvation that was wrought for us was wrought by God himself. It is secured in the person of Jesus Christ, and it is initiated, activated, and wrought through us by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. It is not something that you can initiate, nor is it something that you can cause to happen.

Once we discover the full implications of what this metamorpho is, then we will simply go to our next step in this morning's message, and show you your responsibility in this divine plan of redemption. And hopefully, at the end, we will become more stable in our perspective, in understanding what God is doing in our life. Now, in Romans chapter 12, verse number 2, the uses of this word implies the undergoing of a complete change, which, under the power of the Spirit of God, will yield in the believer's life the very character, conduct, and moral excellence of Christ himself.

Once again, the usage of this word in Romans chapter 12, where Paul says, Be not conformed to this world. Do not follow the pattern of this world. Do not walk after the thinking of this world.

Don't walk after the beat of this world. You know, the world has a beat. The world has a certain beat that people are walking to, and the Holy Spirit here is urging the Christian church, Do not walk after the beat of this world.

Do not find fulfillment. Do not find ultimate satisfaction in the beat of this world. Be not conformed.

Do not place yourself under the influence of the Spirit of this world, but rather, be transformed. Ah, be transformed. What does he mean? The undergoing of a complete change.

Be completely changed, Paul says. Which, under the power of the Spirit of God, the object in understanding the metamorphosis, Paul, the object of the change is the Spirit of God, not ourself. The one who is initiating the change is the Spirit of God, not ourself.

So, the idea here implies undergoing a complete change, which, under the power of the Spirit of God, will yield in the believer's life the very character, conduct, and moral excellence of Christ Himself. So therefore, if every Christian believer is in the process of being changed by a transformation that is being conducted by the Holy Spirit Himself, and is being initiated by the Holy Spirit Himself, it would seem to me that it would be our whole responsibility and duty as Christians is to simply pray that we could stay in the flow of the Holy Spirit. You know how often times we'll say, don't get in the way? Well, I believe this would be a good time to say, get in the way.

Get in the way of the flow of the river, my friends. There is a river that flows from Emmanuel's throne. There is a river, there is a well that flows from deep within.

There is a baptism that Jesus baptizes His people with. It is a baptism of power, it is a baptism of life. It is the very life of God Himself.

May I exhort you this morning and encourage you this morning to begin to long to get in the way. You may have been told many times as a Christian, maybe growing up, maybe your parents have told you, get out of my way or get out of the way. But my friends, the Holy Spirit this morning is saying, get in the way, get in the way, get in the flow of the river.

Because it is the river of God, it is the Spirit of God that initiates this great transformation that literally changes us so that we ourselves can experience the very character and conduct and moral excellence of Christ Himself, which is the goal. 1 Corinthians chapter 9, running the race that is set before us. Running the race is having our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ.

Now in a short time, we are not done with this word yet. There is one more aspect of this word that we want to bring out this morning. We are going to look at the believer's responsibility in this great metamorphosis that we are undergoing.

And it is so simple, it is so simple. I pray that God gives it to us. These are two usages where this word is found.

Romans chapter 12 verse 2, Matthew chapter 17 verse 2, and also in the text that we read, which is 2 Corinthians chapter 3 verse number 18. In this particular portion, the idea is that believers are being continuously transformed. Listen, they are being adjusted and changed into the very image of Christ Himself.

Now to be able to understand that last part, that we are being adjusted and changed, it is needful for us to look one more time at this word. And what we want to do is we want to break this word up into two parts. Meta and we want to look at morpho.

Now, first of all, we want to look at the prefix meta. This means to participate, to participate with. Morpho means the idea of being adjusted.

The adjustment of a shape or thing by the process of refashioning. Now let's combine these two thoughts this morning. Let's combine these two thoughts this morning and see how this change is taking place.

Meta means to participate with. And morpho means the idea of being adjusted or adjusting the shape of a thing by the process of refashioning. This idea of being changed is seen as we understand the moment we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible says in 2 Peter chapter 1, we become partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter chapter 1. We begin the metamorphosis. We begin the process of change.

We participate with Christ. We participate with the divine nature. We actually become a partaker of the divine nature.

And then as a result of being a partaker of the divine nature, the second aspect begins to take place. And that is we are then being reshaped and adjusted by being refashioned by the very power and presence of God's Spirit in us. So that the entire process is initiated by Christ.

It is continuously wrought by Christ. And it is changing us from earthly to heavenly. From carnal to spiritual.

Literally refashioning and readjusting our very nature. That we might be conformed into the very nature of Christ Himself. This is the process by which you and I are being changed.

Now, I would like to invite you at this time to turn your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews chapter 12. And I want to read a very important scripture that we again often times will read and we will quote.

And I want to make it very clear as does the New Testament. That this glorious truth that we have just discovered in relation to our being transformed by the power of God and by the Spirit of God. Is wrought in the believer's life.

Listen closely. In relation to the believer's gaze upon Jesus. Hebrews chapter 12.

Beginning with verse number 1. Therefore since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us. And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Fixing our eyes on Jesus who is the author and perfecter of our faith. The author and perfecter of our faith. Listen.

The author and perfecter of this entire process of transfiguration. The author and perfecter of this entire process of being changed from earthly to heavenly. From carnal to spiritual.

From earthbound to heavenbound. The entire process of this working out our salvation. That was wrought in us the moment we believed.

Is all in the hands of Jesus Christ. He is building the temple. He is fashioning the stones.

But look what the writer of Hebrews tells us to do. Seeing that Christ is the author of this work. It's very simple.

Looking unto Jesus. The believers responsibility in this great plan of salvation. That was wrought by God himself.

Perfecter by Jesus himself. And is carried out by the Holy Spirit himself. The great responsibility that the believer has is simply to look unto Jesus.

Now, it's very interesting. And I found this to be very interesting. When we suggest the idea of looking to Jesus, this is what we are saying.

Or this is what the scripture is saying. It comes from a word that means this. It means to look away from one thing as to see another.

So the idea here that we find in scripture. When the writer of Hebrews, when the Holy Spirit is telling you as the church. To look to Jesus.

The idea is first of all we must look away from something. As to see another. You cannot look unto Jesus unless you look away from something.

That might block your view. May I suggest that there is a looking. That you can look at something but yet in looking you have not turned away.

There is a glance that you can experience where you are glancing at something. But the nature of that glance is not only seeing the object that is fixed before you. But it's also looking at something else.

Which is hindering your attempt to look at. So the idea here is to truly look unto Jesus. Is to first look away from.

So that you can clearly see Him. What are the things that we need to look away from? Before we can look to Jesus self. We must look away from self.

You have to take your eyes off. You have to take your eyes away from. Self.

As to see Jesus. There is a look in the church today. A look at the Son of God without taking our eyes away from self.

And the look is powerless. The look does not enable the Holy Spirit to continue that transforming work. Why are so many believers supposedly they are looking at Jesus.

But yet that transforming change is not really evident. Because they have looked without looking away from. Number two.

We must look away from sin. You cannot look to Jesus when you are still looking at sin. Sin must be dealt with at the cross of Jesus.

And the blood can cleanse you. When you are cleansed from sin. And when you have confessed your sin.

You take your eyes off of what is no longer there. So we must learn to take our eyes off of self. Off of sin.

And thirdly. We must learn to take our eyes off of circumstances. You remember Peter walking on the water.

When he looked at the waves. When he looked at the sea. When he looked at the wind.

He sank. This is a spiritual discipline friends. That the Holy Spirit can teach you.

You must learn to see by taking your eyes off of something. You cannot look by simply looking. It's got to be a two-fold action.

You've got to look away from in order to see Jesus. Pure faith is seeing Jesus as the result of looking away from everything else. Impure faith is looking to Jesus when in reality you are yet looking to

everything else.

This glance will not secure a change. But it will frustrate you. It will antagonize you.

It will confuse you. And ultimately it will destroy your faith. So the idea of looking unto Jesus is found by a two-fold action of looking away.

You've got to turn from sin before you can turn to Jesus. You've got to look away from self before you can look steadfastly upon Jesus. You've got to turn from circumstances before you can turn to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then secondly we find the idea of intently, steadfastly gazing upon earnestly. So once we have looked away from self, sin, and circumstances and our focus is focused in on the person of Jesus Christ then we have to exercise a steadfastness, a diligence, and an earnestness in that our focus and our gaze is not turned aside by something else. So the idea is turn from, look to, and keep your eyes upon.

Look away, look to, and keep them there. And as you keep your eyes upon Jesus Christ He becomes the author and the perfecter of this entire work of salvation where you are daily transformed and changed from earthly to heavenly, from carnal to spiritual. And you become a participator with the very character, conduct, and moral excellence of the person of Jesus Christ.

This is the meaning of the scripture in Philippians chapter 2. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Philippians chapter 2. This causes so many believers to stumble. Work out your own salvation.

How do you work out a salvation that you couldn't earn and can't earn and never will earn? Sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? Here's how to understand. Why don't we turn in closing. Let's turn to Philippians chapter 2. And let's understand this.

We could go into many, many different scriptures and you will find that this general teaching here follows through the entire New Testament. The entire New Testament. Philippians chapter 2. Okay, verse number 12.

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Now, the exhortation from Paul to work out our salvation with fear and trembling can only be understood in light of the next verse. For it is God that worketh in you.

So, when the believer is exhorted to work out his salvation, he is being asked to yield himself to the God who is working in him. It is work out your salvation by looking unto Jesus, by turning from anything that distracts you from Him so that you can realize the mighty God who is working in you both to will and to do and to offer and to perfect His salvation that He gave you as a gift. This entire process of being transfigured is that which He is doing in the lives of those who are looking steadfastly to Jesus, turning from that which would hinder, and then earnestly keeping their focus on Him.

Then we work out what God worked in us the moment we believed. We're not initiating this work. God initiates it.

We yield ourselves to Him, then God does it. That's why Paul says, quench not. That's why Paul says, grieve not.

Because when we quench the Holy Spirit, we hinder this process of being changed. When we grieve the Holy Spirit, we hinder this process of being changed. When we resist the Holy Spirit, we are not working out our salvation.

We're holding on. We're not letting God have free course. This is Paul's whole revelation in Romans 5, 6, 7, 8. Romans 5. We're lost sinners, but God saved us through Jesus.

Romans 6. We can be free from sin. Romans 7. There's a struggle. Romans 8. But as we yield ourselves to Christ, the struggle is overcome by the great God that works within us.

So your responsibility is to look, and God will assume full responsibility to perfect everything pertaining to you today. Where is your gaze this morning? Might I ask, what haven't you looked away from, resulting in your inability to see another? Look away. Look to Him.

See what He has done. Keep your eyes on Him. And He, the Author and Perfecter, will complete that which He has begun in your life.

Amen? Let's have a word of prayer, anyone?

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