

The Way Up Is Down

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes that true spiritual growth begins with recognizing our poverty and dependence on God's grace through Christ's sacrifice.

Duration: 40:17

Scripture: Matthew 5:3

Topics: "Christian Life", "Humility", "Spiritual Poverty"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the profound love of God demonstrated through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, highlighting that this love came at a great cost, as Jesus bore our sins and experienced separation from the Father. He explains that true spiritual poverty leads to mourning and meekness, urging believers to recognize their need for Christ and to approach God with humility. The sermon underscores that the way to God is not through self-righteousness but through acknowledging our brokenness and dependence on Jesus. Beach encourages the congregation to maintain a posture of repentance and to seek the Lord's mercy, reminding them that true access to God comes through the blood of Christ. Ultimately, he calls for a heart that is true and acknowledges the truth of our condition before God.

Transcript

Father, our hearts are amazed at your presence. We are amazed at the presence of your Son. We are amazed at the presence of your Holy Spirit.

We are amazed because in your love you have opened the eyes of our heart and enabled us to see ever so dimly the glories that belong to your Son, the love that your Son has for you, the dedication that He has to your will, and the incredible, unspeakable, unimaginable love that He has for us. Enemies, we've cursed you. We've broken every single moral commandment that is able to be broken, every one, and yet you love us.

But it's not a free love. It's a love that costs the Son of God His life, that brought shame upon His neck and sorrow to His heart, a love, O God, that even caused Him to cry out, My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me? A love so deep that it cost Christ the loss of His fellowship with you for however long it took to redeem My sinful soul. I don't understand, Lord, but my heart is filled with thankfulness.

Help us now hear your Word and bring life to our hearts from your Word, for Jesus' sake. Amen. A love so great, a love so deep, that it took Jesus into the depths of bearing my sin so deeply, so deeply, that His

Father had to forsake Him because His Father could not look upon Him.

But why? Why, Jesus, He was the holy, spotless, undefiled, without sin, Son of God. Why did God forsake Him? Because God forsook Him because He was representing Me. So God didn't forsake His Son.

He forsook who? You. He turned His back on you and me. Do you know that kind of love? I don't.

He forsook His Son because His Son became sin, my sin. That is the beginning of the Beatitudes right there. You can read Matthew chapter 5 over and over again, and it is nothing but theology, nothing but good teaching, nothing but a nice thing to do, until your eyes see the crucified Son of God and realize the depths of horror that He experienced when He cried out, My God, My God.

We're talking about the Son of God who knew eternal fellowship with His Father, unbroken intimate communion with His Father from eternity past, never, ever, ever, ever for a moment knew what it was to be alienated from His Father's presence, and yet He hung on a cross naked, naked, stripped down to possibly a few rags. Why should such a horrible thing come upon the Son of God? Why should such a horrible thing come upon the rose of heaven? Why should the rose be trampled on? Why? What did He ever do to hurt anyone? What did He ever do to hurt anyone? Nothing. And there He hung.

He hung on the cross with a crown of thorns upon His head, welts, blood, His face bleeding because they plucked His beard out with their hands. Melodramatic? Not at all. Reality.

And then the words that I'll never understand. Father, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why was Jesus punished so severely, friends? Do you know why? That's the beginning. Matthew chapter 5, beginning in verse 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

Blessed are the poor. Poor there. Blessed are those who are beggars.

Beggars because they know. Oh, brothers and sisters, do we know this morning? Do we know? Blessed are the poor. Blessed are the beggars.

They are beggars because they know. They have no bread. Their cupboards are empty.

They have nothing in themselves. Blessed. Jesus pronounces a blessing upon the state of poverty, spiritual poverty, the poverty of seeing our true condition before God.

Blessed are you when you see that every form of righteousness that you offer to God is rejected. Blessed are you when you see that all of your wisdom in its attempt to figure out how to govern your life and all of your knowledge in an attempt to try and figure out how to govern your life is of no avail. Blessed are you who are poor in spirit.

For theirs. Whose? Theirs. Whose? Those.

Oh, Jesus, please, I ask you to help me ever, ever, ever, ever see my poverty apart from you. The road to God starts when God helps us to see and we go down. The world says, if you want something, grasp for it.

But God says, if you want something from me, get down. Acknowledge your need. Oh, dear Lord, help us to see that we're poor.

Brothers and sisters, please make a note of this. If you have truly seen Jesus, you have seen your poverty. And it will you'll never be the same.

You'll never be the same unless like last week. Do you remember what we spoke about last week? Unless you turn to the left and to the right, because only seeing Jesus do we see the truth about ourselves. But if we turn to the left and turn to the right and get our eyes off of Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, who is the brilliant, radiant glory of God's person, in that light alone do we see our poverty.

And in that light alone do we hear the call of his spirit. Now that you've seen your poverty, come to me and I'll give you what you need. But if we turn to the left, we lose sight of our poverty.

And what do we begin to think? We've got something. We've got something. Remember what Lucifer did? He looked at what? His beauty.

Now was his beauty something God gave him? But was he supposed to look at it? Is God giving you something? Don't look at it. Don't look at it. You'll begin to think that you don't need him anymore.

Jesus, take our eyes from everything right now that's keeping us from seeing our poverty. Do you see your poverty this morning? Well, not really. Oh, that's because you're not seeing the Lord.

From poverty we go to mourning. Oh, how sweet the words of Jesus are. From poverty we go to verse 4. Blessed are they that mourn.

Now, I want you to know that the language here in the original literally says this. Blessed are they who are continuously mourning. It's a continuous action.

It is impossible to continually see the Lord and see your poverty and not be mourning at the same time. It's impossible. The absence of deep inward mourning over our true state means our eyes have somehow turned from the Lord and we're looking to something else.

Because anything on earth that you look at, listen, too long. Oh, you can notice. It's okay to notice the blessing.

Thank you, Lord, for this. Thank you, Lord, for that. But you know what? Don't notice it too long and don't try and get other people to notice it.

Oh, Lord, help us. Oh, my. Who or what is it that you want other people to notice about you? Lord, search our hearts, please.

Help us not be afraid. Come on. What do you want them to notice? You remember last week, we realized that when Isaiah saw the Lord, he said, woe is me.

He saw his sin. And then he said, I dwell among a people who are unclean. He not only saw his own sin, but he realized every one of his brothers and sisters were in the what? Same boat as he was.

You know the only difference between a sinner who has seen the Lord and a sinner who hasn't? Or should I say the only difference between a Christian that has seen the Lord and another Christian who has lost sight of the Lord? The Christian who has seen the Lord knows that they are horrible, rotten sinners and everyone else is exactly like them. And the one who hasn't seen the Lord knows everyone else is a sinner except them. That's the difference.

Did we catch that? Now, when Isaiah saw the Lord, an angelic being came from the altar of God and touched his lips. But notice what the angelic being had. It had six wings.

We mentioned this last week, but it's important to mention this week. But with four of those wings, four of the six wings, two of the four, he covered his face and two, the other two of the four, he covered his feet. And then with the other two, he flew.

So he maintained his heavenly position with two of the wings, but with four of the other wings, he covered himself. What spiritual depths of teaching there the Lord would have for us. What a gift God has given the angelic beings.

What beauty. But when they make themselves known to a mortal man, they take four parts of six. More than half of their spiritual energies are devoted to what? Covering themselves from the eye of the man so the man doesn't look at them.

So the man doesn't look at them and say, wow, no. The last thing that a person or a heavenly being wants that has been in the presence of God is for anyone to look at them. But the pride of man wants man to look at who? It's God's mercy that he hasn't given us any more beauty, isn't it? Because our beauty would be our ruin because of the pride in our heart.

We need Jesus, brothers and sisters. I'm wondering how many here are spending over half of your spiritual energy keeping others from seeing you. I'm guilty.

Don't be afraid. I'm guilty. Are you guilty? Oh, you're not.

Well, then pray for me. I'm guilty. You know why I'm guilty? Because I'm a sinner.

And even if my heart tells me I'm not guilty, guess what? My heart is deceitful and I can't trust it. Charlie, I can't trust my heart. Pete, I'm sorry.

See, I can't trust my heart. See, even if I try and convince myself I'm not guilty of these things. Now, I know a few people who are, Diane.

I know a few people. But I'm not. There's the deceitfulness of the heart.

Now, guess how we are preserved from self-deception? Real simple, Mike. Listen to this. Guess how we're preserved from self-deception? Don't trust your heart.

Believe what God says. God says all flesh is vanity. God says all have sinned.

God says everyone's tongue has the poison of vipers in it. Everyone. Now, have you accepted that sentence? Have you judged yourself in that way yet? Have you accepted that judgment from God? If not, then you are still coming to Christ on the basis of your own righteousness.

You see how low we have to get? You see how low we have to get? But can't we just, can't we shine a little bit? I mean, I know some people, maybe this is what you're thinking. I know some people who really are a mess, but I don't think I'm quite that bad. What does that sound like? Deception.

Whose prayer does that sound like in the Bible? We've talked about it many times, Meg. The Pharisee's prayer. How does the Pharisee pray? Father, oh God, I thank Thee that I'm not like other people.

What a mess. Wait a minute now. Before we say, isn't that horrible? I have to say this because my conscience bothers me.

I'm guilty. I'm guilty. See, I'm not talking to you.

I'm not preaching at you. I'm guilty. You mean you have done that, Phil? Yes, I have.

Pray for me. Have you? So, if you are looking at any length of time on something earthly, you'll lose the vision of truth. Now, truth is seen in the person of Jesus Christ.

You'll lose the vision of truth. And once you lose the vision of truth, you will lose the vision about the truth about your own self. And you'll begin to believe the lie of the devil.

What's the lie of the devil? Eve. Chill out. God doesn't really mean what he says.

If you reach for that fruit, you can become wise. You can become self-governed. You don't have to be dependent on someone else.

You don't have to acknowledge that you're a little child that needs a mommy and a daddy. To lead them. No, you've grown out of that.

Come on. That's the message you're going to get. That's the message I'm going to get if our eyes turn from Jesus.

So, we've got mourning that follows poverty. And then verse 5 is as far as we're going to go today. Meekness.

The Bible defines meekness, listen carefully, as Jesus Christ. He's meek. He says in Matthew, come unto me for I am meek and lowly.

Meekness, listen, meekness is what a person sees when your heart is leaning heavily upon another, namely Jesus Christ. A meek person is a highly dependent person upon another, namely Jesus Christ. Meekness grows out of one's recognition of their poverty.

A meek man is a man who heavily trusts in Jesus and has no trust in himself. Meekness was seen in the Lord Jesus Christ. A meek man.

All of these qualities are only found in the person of Jesus Christ. Listen, and the new covenant is the covenant sealed in the blood of Jesus that qualifies sinners to come as they are in brokenness and in repentance and by faith, not by struggle, not by effort, not by self-righteousness, but stock spiritually naked as they are, undone, unrighteous, come to Jesus by the blood and look to Jesus to put into them what they have openly confessed they don't possess in themselves. That's the new covenant.

That's why Paul was crucified, because he preached this gospel among a nation, Israel namely, who what? Who tried to find a right standing with God based on their good works, based on this attitude. Well, I keep the law of Moses quite well. Thank you.

Thou shalt not commit adultery. I've never committed adultery, but I say unto you, if a man looks at a woman and lusts after her in his heart, he has done it. Where's that righteous man now? He's either one in two categories.

He either becomes a hypocrite and denies the truth and says, oh, I've never done that, or he swallows his self-righteous pride and says, I'm guilty of adultery. Every sin, I'm guilty. The new covenant has no place for any other kind of a person.

Now, this isn't true just for the sinner, but this is how we come as Christians too. Our last scripture reading this morning is found in Hebrews. Oh, how precious the word of God is, isn't it? Oh, how living.

Oh, how powerful it is. Oh, how it heals the heart. Doesn't your heart leap for joy? God's word is so beautiful.

Hebrews chapter 10. Watch this. This is so beautiful.

The writer now is making a difference between the old covenant and the new covenant. The old covenant was based on man trying. The new covenant is based on Christ having accomplished all the requirements that God has ever had.

Christ has secured it for us. Watch this now. Hebrews chapter 10 verse 16.

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord. Watch. I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.

And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now, where does God write His law? On the heart of who? Well, let's go back to the Beatitudes. Blessed are who? The poor.

Who are the poor in spirit? Those who come to God and say, Lord, your law is not written in my heart. Sin is. Lord, your law is not written in my mind.

Evil thoughts are. God writes His law upon the hearts of those who are continuously acknowledging that in themselves they don't have. They're poor.

And that's where the new covenant is fulfilled. Isaiah 55, 17. You don't have to turn there.

If you'd like to, you may. I am the High and the Holy One, God says, and I dwell in eternity. But I also dwell with Him who is of a humble and a contrite heart.

A humble and a contrite heart is a heart that says, Lord, I don't have it. But you do. Okay.

Verse 19. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, please notice that because of the new covenant, because Christ died and was crucified and rejected because of your sins and my sins, we have boldness. The boldness is not based on our good Christian life.

It's not based on our good works and deeds. It's not based on how well we're doing. The boldness is based on the surety of what God has done through His Son.

That's the boldness. Now watch what it says. We have boldness to enter into the holiest.

The term there, holiest, literally represents the very presence of God Himself where no man could ever enter in the Old Testament because of sin. Only the high priest could go in once a year into the very presence of God. And they actually tied a rope on his ankles in case when he got there, he dropped dead so they can pull him out.

No kidding, Bill. They actually tied a rope onto his ankle. See, the holiest was a place that represented open-faced communion with Almighty God.

How can we as sinners have such communion? Because Christ died for sinners. That's how. So it's not your sin that disqualifies you from coming into the holiest.

It's your self-righteousness It's not your sin. If we confess our sin, if we tell the truth and acknowledge what God says is true and ask God to give us a repentant heart, the vilest sinner or the worst Christian, and that's me, has access directly to the presence of God through the blood. Not through my own righteousness, but the blood.

But if I'm going to claim the blood, then I have to take the place of a sinner. Taking the place of a sinner is not just saying, oh yeah, praise God, 27 years ago I realized I was a sinner and hallelujah, I trusted Christ and now I'm a Christian. No, taking the place of a sinner is a continuous thing.

A continuous posture of the heart. I take my place of a sinner when I come into the presence of God and whenever He shines light into my life that shows me there's some kind of darkness, some kind of sin, I immediately come to Him in brokenness and confess it. That's taking the place of a sinner and that keeps the access wide open.

Okay, we're just about ready to close. Listen here. Having brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, Jesus is the way, which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart.

This is what we're going to close on. Brothers and sisters, please understand a true heart here is not talking about a good heart. It's not talking about a heart that never stumbles.

A true heart is simply a heart that acknowledges the truth whenever the light of God shines on it. A true heart is a heart that says, Colette, forgive me. I was proud.

I shouldn't have said that. A true heart is a heart that agrees with truth. So therefore, in order to maintain constant access into the very holy of by the blood of Jesus, we have to ask God to give us a true heart, because when we lie against the truth, then what we're doing is we are hiding in darkness, and if we hide in darkness, then we're coming to the Lord on another term other than a sinner, and He has to help us not hide in darkness.

This is what it means to be a true heart, a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. And so there you have it, beloved, God's word helping us to understand what Jesus is doing in our lives, what Jesus is doing in our midst, and what Jesus wants to do in our homes, and what He wants to do every day. Let's just bow our hearts for a moment.

Lord, thank you for your word. Thank you for the Holy Spirit who faithfully helps us to see Jesus. And now, Lord, I pray that during these next few moments, you'll help us to come to you and minister to our hearts.

I pray, Lord. I do want to mention real quickly as we're in the presence of the Lord that the Svensson family is not here because the doctors called Mrs. Svensson, or called Norman, and said that Mrs. Svensson is getting worse, and that unless she takes a turn for the better in the next couple days, the

doctor does not expect her to live. So please keep the family in your prayers as we are before the Lord.

I just want to say this before I put the mic down. Today, the Lord gave a window of opportunity. He is in our midst as the healer.

There's much love coming from His heart, but here's what He's saying. All the love that the Savior can say, this is what He's saying to us all. I will be all that you need if you will humble yourself.

Bow down. Repent of your pride. Repent of your arrogance.

Repent of wanting to be right when I said you're wrong. If you will come and bow down and come the way of humility, I will heal and restore what has been destroyed and ruined. This is God's promise, but there's only one way to get it.

Down on our knees, taking the place of a guilty sinner and looking to the Savior for mercy. God, help us today to take that place. I pray, help us to teach our children to take that place.

We commit our lives into your hands for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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