

Beating Our Bodies

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of acknowledging sin, repenting, and living a life of self-denial in order to experience God's healing and love.

Duration: 47:31

Scripture: Hosea 14:1, James 5:16, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Disciplines", "Repentance", "Self-Denial"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the necessity of self-denial and the acknowledgment of our sins in his sermon 'Beating Our Bodies.' He highlights the importance of confessing our shortcomings and the dangers of pride and denial, urging believers to recognize what they are truly trusting in instead of God. Through the lens of Hosea and 1 Corinthians, he calls for a deep, heartfelt repentance that leads to healing and a renewed desire for Jesus. The preacher stresses that true victory in Christ comes from beating our bodies into submission and living in constant dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

And as we come to you confessing our sins and our shortcomings and our failures, that you are faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, your Word says, confess your faults one to another and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And so we know, Lord, that the Holy Spirit's movement this morning is so much in accord to your Word.

So much in accord to your Word. And now, Lord, we pray that your Word will shine light into our hearts and that we will be able to gain life and insight into what is going on and how you are moving and what your Word says. And by the Holy Spirit's power, we might be enabled and empowered, Lord, to come into all that you're doing through your Son, Jesus Christ.

And we stand together with the Holy Spirit for this purpose to be accomplished in our midst and in our lives. We pray these things, Lord, in the mighty, wonderful name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen and Amen.

First of all, I'd like to, if you would please, turn your Bibles to Hosea. And I want to read a Scripture that we read a few weeks ago. A Scripture that we read a few weeks ago and how appropriate this Scripture is in light of the confession of our sister Danielle and how it is my confession as well.

And I trust that the Holy Spirit will help you to make it your confession. Hosea chapter 14. This is the promise of the Word of the Lord to all those who will simply come to God as we are, begging Him to strip from us the masks that we wear, begging us to deliver us from play-acting, play-acting, play-acting, and to bring us to the place where our hearts agree with the truth of His Word and that we bow before His Word and we cry out, Lord, You are right in Your Word and anything in my life that is contrary to it is wrong.

And I acknowledge this and I admit it. God's great cry to Israel was one thing and one thing alone. Not that they had sinned against God, although that was a grievous thing, but that they refused to acknowledge their iniquity.

They refused to acknowledge. Jeremiah and Ezekiel continuously cried out and said, Only acknowledge thine iniquity. Only acknowledge the true state of your heart.

Only acknowledge that you have become hard and insensitive. Only acknowledge, husbands, that you're insensitive to your wives and that you don't know how to love them and that you are unkind and that you're an egomaniac. Only acknowledge that so often your love is conditional and when you're crossed in any way, you get angry.

Oh, you cover it well, but it's there. All God is saying, acknowledge it. Yes, the sin is grievous, but what's worse than the sin is the denial of the sin.

That's worse. And that's pride. Hosea chapter 14, beginning in verse 1. Oh, Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thy iniquity.

Take with you words, take with you words and turn to the Lord. Say unto Him, take away all iniquity and receive graciously so we will render the calves of our lips. Asher shall not save us.

We will not ride upon horses. Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands. You are our gods.

For in thee the fatherless find mercy. Do we understand the depths to which God is requiring repentance here? This is not simply a casual confession of, oh yes, dear Lord, we have strayed, and Lord, we're willing to admit that. But God is demanding that we would be brought so desperately low before Calvary's cross, before the blessed Son of God, that we would take words that were born out of a broken heart, a heart that has seen the Lord, a heart that has beheld the Son of God who was crucified, who was punished, who suffered the most horrible punishment imaginable.

Words that would come to God and say, Lord, it was for my sin, my iniquity, my pride, my backsliding, that my Lord, my blessed Lord, was crucified and suffered so much. It was because of me. Take words, God said.

Take words and come to Me. Words. Words that have been born out of a revelation of Jesus Christ and say, take away all iniquity.

Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously. And then verse 3, Asher shall not save us. God required that these people would acknowledge that they were looking to something other than God Himself to save them.

And so with repentance and with confession of sin and with the dealing of God, God will show us what we're trusting in other than Him. And He requires that we confess it. What are we trusting in other than

Him? What have our hearts begun to lean toward other than Him? He's not interested in what we say with our lips.

He's not interested with what we say with our profession. He's interested in what it is that our hearts actually are set on. Oh, brothers and sisters, when Jesus walks into our midst and He comes into our homes and He invades our territory and He invades our lives, He will demand that we cry out and say, Oh, Lord, I have been trusting in my job.

I have been trusting in my reputation. I have been trusting in my wisdom. I've been trusting in whatever God You've been trusting in.

Can you honestly say before God this morning that if you had to fill in the blank, if you had to fill in the blank, here God says to Israel, Asher shall not save us. But what is it that you can fill that blank in? What is it that you can say? Now I know that blank shall not save me. Who have you been looking to? What have you been looking to to save you? To help you? To give you a sense of satisfaction? A sense of fulfillment? It's an idol.

It's an idol in your life. If you've been looking to it, the depths of repentance. We will not ride upon horses.

This is the Holy Spirit demanding that we will acknowledge before God and before one another that we have been trusting in human strength because horses in the Old Testament represent the stride, the strength and the might and the wisdom and the power of man. You know Pharaoh boasted about the thousands and thousands of horses that he had in Egypt. And the prophet David cried out to the Lord's people and said, Don't trust in the horses and the chariots of Egypt.

Don't trust in them, brothers and sisters. And God is saying to us through this demonstration of the Holy Spirit that is in our midst now, through the dealing of God that has been in our lives for a long time now, He's saying that He wants us to come to the place where we say we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands. And so not only is God dealing with the people and requiring that they go so low and they become so broken.

Remember the series on brokenness we started? We never finished it. Why? The Lord said to me, Stop. Can't hear.

Can't hear. Not broken enough. Stop.

Right in the middle of it. But I have faith that sometime soon we could pick up and finish this message on brokenness. But we can't hear because we're still looking to Asher to save us.

We're still riding upon chariots and horses and the works of our hands. You know what the works of our hands represent? Neither will we say any more to the works of our hands. Ye are our gods.

The works of our hands represent that which we do which has become to us a God. A God, that which we do. Something we worship.

Something we bow down to. Something we pay our homage to. Something we, in some instances, sell out our whole soul to.

Asher shall not save me any more. I will not ride upon the horses of Egypt. And I will no longer say of the work of my hands, Ye are my God.

Now right there is a picture of a Holy Spirit revival. Right there is a picture of Jesus Christ coming into the midst of a company of believers, whether it's 10 or 10,000. When God begins to see from the depths of our heart a crying out because we have seen, we've been discovered, we have been exposed because the Lord in His glory has come that we've been trusting in something other than Him.

And we've been trusting in our own strength and in our own wisdom. You say, how do I know I'm trusting in my own strength and my own wisdom? Are you crying out to God day and night in desperation, afraid of yourself? Are you afraid of yourself? Are you afraid of your wisdom? Are you afraid that sometime in your life you're going to begin to go on the light of your own understanding? And you're so desperate, you're so afraid of yourself that you go to God, Oh Lord, keep me from myself. No.

Then you've mounted upon the horse of Israel or of Egypt and you're riding. Yes. Yes, it's true.

It's true. Oh God, I'm concerned. I'm concerned, Lord.

I'm a fool, Lord. I don't know the way, Lord. Lord, I don't know the way.

Oh, we go for weeks and months, comfortable, eating the sweetness of our ways, not desperate before God. Let me tell you, young people, if you're not desperate before God, you will be deceived. You will become deceived and you will become the devil's fool.

You think, you think you can govern your own life. You think that you know best, but you don't. You don't.

You don't know the way. And us adults need to learn that lesson all over again. Because many times our children are following in the example that we have set.

They see confident, cocky, self-righteous parents who aren't trembling before God, aren't trembling before His Word. They figure it's okay to be like that. Because that's what they're being taught.

How low do we want to go? How low. And now, this lovely word, chapter 14, verse 4. When God gets a people and so smashes their pride, and so smashes their self-importance, and so deals with their heart and shows them the truth, and they renounce the thing that they've been trusting in, and they renounce their own foolish wisdom and strength, and it becomes repulsive to them, and they can no longer joy and find fulfillment and go to bed at night and lie down and sleep sweetly because they're resting in their own wisdom. They've assessed the situation.

They have got a good understanding of what to do, and they go down and they sleep sweetly. That's not trusting in God. That's trusting in human wisdom.

The soul that goes to bed trembling, saying, I don't know, God. I don't know, God. Help me.

And falls asleep with this sweetness. That's the soul that's saying, God has become my hope and my trust. And when God brings us to where we are crying out to Him in this way, and we renounce the work of our hands, then we have this promise from God.

Verse 4, I will heal their backsliding, and I will love them freely. I will heal their backsliding. God says if you will confess and acknowledge your need, I will heal you.

I will not reject you. I will not cast you off. I will not chide you and mock you.

But I will heal you. I will love you freely. I will meet the deepest need in your life.

I will meet the deepest longing of your soul. I will be to you everything that you need. If you will simply acknowledge my dealing in your life and agree with everything that I say in my Word to you, I will heal you. And as Danielle said, it's true.

When God brings us to this place, something starts to happen. And we start to feel a stirring. We start to feel an awakening.

We start to feel a desire for Jesus. And we certainly know it's not a desire coming out of our own selves, because we've just seen our true condition. It's the grace of God putting in us what we don't have in ourselves.

It's the grace of God filling us with a heart for God. There's nothing sweeter. There's nothing more beautiful than to see your true state before God and to come to Him and acknowledge it and to bear the pain and the sorrow of true repentance and then to arise and begin to feel that God starts putting His love in your heart.

It starts putting a song in your heart. It starts putting a peace in your heart. And you say, God, how can this be? How can this be? I'm so backslidden.

I'm so prone to all that is wrong. God says, I will heal your backslidings. I will love you freely.

I will give you the gift of righteousness. I will teach you how to detest and hate that part of your life that you have now seen is nothing but unfaithful before Me. I will teach you how to live by My Spirit in utter dependence upon Me.

For mine anger is turned away from Him. When we see Jesus, we see God's anger turned away from all those who trust in Him. Now, brothers and sisters, the Spirit of God is relentlessly working in our lives.

He's working in our homes. He's working in our gatherings. And now this morning, in Hosea, we see what God is wanting to do.

We see the Holy Spirit's intention in dealing with us. And now, I want to begin, for a brief time, to look by God's help and God's grace to understand the struggle that we're going through and what the Holy Spirit has to teach us in order to discover the victory that's ours in Christ Jesus. Now, I want to bring you to 1 Corinthians 9. Now, brothers and sisters, if somebody decided that they were going to write a short article on the grace of God, the church would love it.

If someone decided to write a short article on the blood of Jesus Christ, most Christians would say hallelujah to God. This is a good article. If another person decided to write an article on the cross of Jesus Christ and how Jesus died on it to save us from our sins, most Christians would say amen.

Glory to God. But we're going to read a section of Scripture at this time which addresses the struggle that the Holy Spirit is having in our lives. This is the battle that's going on.

And if somebody would ever write an article about this particular topic, most Christians would throw it out and say this isn't of God. This doesn't sound right. This isn't the kind of Christianity that I want.

This isn't like the Jesus that I want to believe in. The God of grace and mercy and liberty and freedom. The God that lets me basically do what I want without feeling guilty.

We're going to deal with something here brothers and sisters, and we need hearts that are broken before God. We need hearts that are broken before God. Because this is the foothold that the enemy has and has successfully latched onto that is causing the defeat in our lives as Christians.

Alright? 1 Corinthians 9 I want to read it from a more literal translation of the Bible as it really impacts the message here. 1 Corinthians 9 And I want to begin, if I could please. 1 Corinthians 9 It's difficult because this is Roman numeral stuff.

I'm here saying, where am I here? Okay. Nope. Right.

That's what I'm looking for. Please be patient and bear with me here. Okay, here we are.

1 Corinthians 9 Beginning in verse number 24. Now, if you want to follow along in your version, go ahead. But try to keep an open ear to this one.

Because this is powerful. Do you not know? Now, first of all, the context. Paul is talking about the absolute necessity of living a life of self-denial.

Denying oneself. Listen, all the problems that were going on in the church of Corinth. And let me tell you, brothers and sisters, there were a lot of problems going on.

Those Corinthian believers were trusting in Asher. Hosea chapter 14. Those Christian believers were high-riding on the horses of Egypt.

They owned many horses in their homes. They actually let the horses come into their homes. They slept with their horses.

Now, I'm only speaking figuratively here. But it's language that I trust the Holy Spirit will use. They loved their horses so much, they paid more attention to their horses than their brothers and sisters who were in great need.

They cared for their horses more than they did their ailing brothers and sisters. They spent more money on their horses than they did on the needy brothers and sisters in their midst. They washed their horses daily and polished them and made them shine while others were hurting.

Oh yes. Oh yes. These Corinthians were in a mess.

And Paul loved them enough to tell them. Isn't that wonderful? You want a true friend? Don't find someone who's going to smile at you when they should be weeping. Don't find someone who's going to tell you everything's alright when they ought to be saying to you everything's all wrong in your life and you need to search God and I'll pray with you.

Don't hang around with people. Young people, listen. Listen to the Spirit of God.

Don't find friends that let you do things that are wrong and laugh at you. Are you hearing? Don't find friends that let you do things that are wrong and then laugh at you or say, oh, isn't that cool? Or don't find a friend who says, now if you do that which is wrong, it's okay, I won't tell anyone. That's not a friend.

That's an enemy. That's an enemy. A true friend will bring you into account.

A true friend will bring you into accountability and say, Deborah, Rebecca, Sarah, Michael, Benjamin, Christopher, Jessica, all the little... They'll say, what are you doing? That's not right. That's not right, Michael. That's a true friend.

Brothers and sisters, you want friends? Pray that God will send someone in your life that will love you enough to pray for you and weep for you and tell you the truth. Pray that you will have a husband that will look at you and say, you know, you really are a self-centered person. I want to pray for you.

That was free. So these Corinthian believers were in a mess. They loved their horses so much that the house of God was a mess.

Wasn't it? Earthly wisdom was in the house of God. Division and schisms was in the house... I'm just going through the chapters right now. Schism and division and contention and jealousy was in the house of God.

Rivalry was in the house of God. Immorality, sexual impurity was in the house of God. Divorce was in the house of God.

Vaunting Christian liberty without considering love was in the house of God. And it was causing other brothers and sisters to stumble. They were boasting in their knowledge, hey, we know there's only one true God.

Bless God. We don't care what anyone thinks. And they were hurting and wounding the weak conscience of their brothers and sisters.

Not to mention chapter 12 where there was misuse of gifts. All because every bit of it was rooted in one thing. The Corinthians failed to understand that to follow Jesus Christ meant by the power of the Holy Spirit, they were to declare war on their self-life.

And they were to deny it by the power of the Holy Spirit. They were to recognize how it is corruptible, how it will never get converted, how that sin within us will never get converted, and it has to be reckoned as crucified and set aside and denied by the believer through the power of the Spirit of God. And if there's ever a time when we give place to that sinful desire within us, it will immediately place us on the throne.

So all these problems were stemming out of the Corinthians' failure to understand Christ crucified means I'm crucified with Him. The I. The self. Now watch what Paul says.

Oh Lord help me. Oh good, I left a marker. Thank God.

Alright. Do you not know? See? Do you not know? See, the Holy Spirit is saying to these Corinthians, Corinthians, you have forgotten. What time is it? What is wrong? You have forgotten, Corinthians.

Listen. You have been taught by Apollos. You have been taught by Cephas.

You have been taught by Paul. You have been taught by Barnabas. You have been taught by some of the greatest leaders that have ever been raised up in the first century church.

But you have forgotten, Corinthians. You have even been taught by those who saw Jesus. Because when Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, he said many of the eyewitnesses were still alive at the time.

So they actually were able to talk to people who walked with Jesus, who might have been healed by Jesus, who might have been touched by Jesus. These Corinthians were blessed people. But they forgot.

What did they forget? Do you not know that those who are running in a race are indeed all running? But one receives the victor's award. Be running in such a manner as the one who won the race in order that you may obtain the victor's award. Everyone who participates in the athletic games exercises constant and continual self-control.

One of the sure-telling signs of our condition today that we live in is the throwing off of the restraint of self-control. Almost every area of our life is excess and out of control. Almost every area.

That is a sign that we are carnal. Or it is a sign that we are yet living by the impulses, dictates, and desires of our natural human makeup. And if we're living by those desires, are we following the Lord? No.

No. Everyone who participates in the athletic games exercises constant self-control in all things. Those, to be sure, in order that they may receive a perishable victor's garland of wild olive leaves to be won as a crown of victory.

But as for us, we engage in Christian service exercising constant daily self-control to obtain a victor's garland in which is imperishable. As for myself... This is Paul now. Listen, brothers and sisters, please listen to the Holy Spirit.

God is saying to us that if we do not lay hold of this truth and fall at the feet of Jesus and let Him teach us what this means to us individually and to us as a body of believers, we will not fulfill the course that God has set for us. We won't do it. Just like the athlete who frivolously, frivolously goes about his training and has some days where he is exercising self-control and then other days he says, Oh, forget it.

It's not important. Let me tell you something. That's what sloppy grace is all about.

Sloppy grace. It doesn't matter. I can take it easy.

I can take a little break from the spiritual battle that I'm in. I can get intoxicated with the spirit of this world. It doesn't matter.

Well, maybe it doesn't matter, but you're not going to win the prize. You're not going to win the prize, brothers and sisters. I mean, if you just want to make it in by the skin of your teeth, fine.

But I tell you what, I wouldn't want to do that. Because the fact is, you might not just make it in by the skin of your teeth. And you might bring a whole lot of people into ruin and destruction.

I know this is a hard word. And I don't want to come across as being scathing or angry. But it's one that we need to hear.

Put away our toys. You know what Tiger Woods was doing when he was a boy and all the other kids were out playing? Take a guess. That's right, Brother Mike.

He was swinging golf balls with his daddy. But everybody else is playing, Norman. Everybody else is playing.

God says, you want to play? Go ahead. You want to win the prize? Follow me. Follow me.

Sarah, Rebecca, you want to play? Go ahead. I'll freely love you. I'll freely love you.

I'll not condemn you. But you want to win the prize? Follow me. But Lord, everybody else, son, daughter, son, daughter, don't worry about what everyone else is doing.

You want to win the prize? Follow me. You remember what Jesus said when Peter was so interested in what was going to happen in John's life? Lord, what about him? Jesus said what? Modern translation. It's none of your business what I'm going to do with John.

But you, Peter, you get your eyes off of John. Get your eyes off of Peter. Because you know, Peter, that you got yourself into a lot of problems because your eyes were on you.

And now you're worried about John. John is my disciple, and I'll do with him what I want. You, you get your eyes on me, and you follow me.

You want to be a winner? You want to be able to say hallelujah to God? I was able to be an overcomer through the grace of God and live a life in this polluted, perverted, condemned world that was pleasing to God? You want to be able to have that testimony when Jesus comes again in the clouds of glory? You want to be able to escape being ashamed at His coming? Then memorize this portion of Scripture. And wait on your knees until God shows you what it means. But we engage in Christian service exercising constant self-control to obtain a victor's garment which is imperishable.

As for myself, therefore, I so run in no uncertain manner. Uncertainty. A lot of uncertainty in the Christian life today.

A lot of uncertainty. I so swing my fists not as one who when fighting, misses his opponent. Merely beating the air and not striking a straight blow which finds its target.

Listen. But I beat my body black and blue and make it my abject slave lest somehow when I have preached to others I myself should be disqualified from obtaining the prize. I want to say that again.

And I want to ask everyone here to listen to the Holy Spirit. And I want you to ask the Holy Spirit to bear witness in your heart whether or not you have been taught by Jesus yet what this means to beat your body into subjection or whether or not you are living by the dictates of your body. And the body here represents the physical body, but not only the physical body, but the immaterial part of our being which corresponds to the fleshly, earthly, sinful desires.

Oh, I know. I know all hell. All hell rages against this truth.

I know. But you know what? I don't care. But I beat my body black and blue.

Now, you remember what I said earlier? We're going to stop in a couple minutes here. Remember what I said earlier? You write a little article on grace and what will people do? Oh, hallelujah. I love grace.

Grace makes me feel so good. Grace takes all my guilt away. And it does.

Grace makes me feel so loved and so accepted. Grace makes me feel okay with myself. Oh, don't get me going.

Lord, help me. Right? The blood of Jesus. Oh yes, the cross of Jesus.

Let me write an article. Let me write an article called Beating Your Body Black and Blue for Jesus and someone will cry out, You ascetic nut. You ascetic nut.

Get out of our Christian church. You make people feel uncomfortable. You take away our Christian liberty.

You take away our freedom to eat, drink, and be merry because we're saved and we're going to heaven. Let's indulge. Let's indulge.

Of course, we're Christians, so we do it all for the glory of God. Oh, God. How would You like to live inside my body? Yes, I beat my body black and blue.

You know what black and blue indicates? Uh huh. What does this indicate? Continually. Not July 1st.

September 1st because you were in church and God convicted you. And you realize that for months you've just gone your own way. Now it's going to be... Alright, give it a good beat now because we feel guilty.

But what happens to the beat when we leave? Back into real life. Glad I'm out from under that stuff. Ah, freedom.

It's true, I know. It's very true. I beat my body into subjection.

And make it what? My slave. Is your body your slave? And all that your body represents in your immaterial being? Brothers and sisters, in the presence of God with all seriousness, this is a message that God has birthed into my spirit that will not let me rest over day and night bringing me into account of every word that I speak. But I have to also be faithful and preach it.

And here's what the Lord said to me. And I'm going to say it to you because it's in the Word. But I beat my body black and blue and make it my abject slave lest somehow when I have preached to others I myself should be disqualified from the prize.

Any person, any group of people, any Christian who does not find in the grace of God and the Word of God and the Spirit of God the capacity to fulfill the meaning of this Scripture. And we know it doesn't mean asceticism. We know it's not denying ourselves so that we might be accepted before God.

That's not the issue now. But any Christian who fails to lay hold of this like the Corinthians were are going to be disqualified from winning the prize. There it is, black and white.

This is why our hearts backslide. This is why right here. Because we like the easy life rather than identify it as our enemy and deny it and call it what it is cursed and crucified.

Okay, brothers and sisters. Here we are in the presence of God. This is God's Word.

It's nice for the Spirit to move. But when God's Word tells us what the Spirit is trying to do when He moves, it's a whole different ballpark. Many people want the move of the Spirit out of the good feeling.

But now this is the Word working together with the Spirit. And this is what God is saying. So here we are.

God is asking us to simply come to Him and say, Lord, here I am. I trust You. Yes.

It will throw us into a valley of decision. It will. A valley of decision.

But brothers and sisters, don't miss what God is saying. Let's bow our hearts. Don't miss it.

This is only the beginning of understanding from God's Word this whole battle that we're in and how we need to beat our body into subjection. We'll find the whole New Testament is full of this Spirit. But for now, we just pray, Father, thank You for Your love.

Thank You for Your free love. Thank You for Your grace. Thank You for Your mercy.

I'm asking that now You will begin to enlighten us. And I'm asking You, Lord, to cause it to dawn on us that there is a whole life that we have not even really identified as an enemy that lurks in us that we need by Your grace and power to absolutely divorce ourselves from and have nothing to do with. I pray this will be the beginning of an unveiling in the hearts of everyone here.

And they will begin to see this life and their need to declare war against it by the power of Jesus Christ and beat it black and blue until it is our servant and not our master. Now, Lord, fulfill Your word and bring glory to Your name in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

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