

From a Heart of Saul to a Heart of Paul

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing our suffering as an opportunity to grow in Christ-centeredness and to get into the heart of God, where we can see our guilt and depravity and be transformed by the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 56:53

Scripture: Acts 9:1, Philippians 1:1

Topics: "Conversion", "Suffering and Redemption", "Transformation"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the transformative journey from a heart of Saul, marked by pride and self-importance, to a heart of Paul, characterized by humility and a deep understanding of Christ's suffering. He highlights that suffering can either harden our hearts or soften them, leading us to recognize our limitations and ultimately to Christ's redemptive suffering. The preacher calls for a shift from a self-centered perspective to a Christ-centered one, urging believers to see how their sin affects God and to embrace the healing that comes from understanding Christ's sacrifice. The sermon encourages the congregation to seek a deeper relationship with God, valuing divine things over self-importance, and to allow the Holy Spirit to work in their hearts.

Transcript

Let's just bow our hearts. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you, Lord, that your word has to be broken by your Son.

It has to be taught to us by the Holy Spirit. The heart has to be disciplined and exercised in child training to receive your word. We know that.

And so, Father, we acknowledge that you're the teacher in our midst, you're the shepherd in our midst, and you alone give the eyes to see in our midst. We all come on equal ground this morning, standing at the foot of Calvary, all of us in need of the touch that comes from your hand. And so, we pray, Lord, that you would break the bread of your word this morning, that you would bring the necessary suffering, the necessary discipline, the necessary child training, that you would order the necessary circumstances and pressures that in your eyes, Lord, you know is necessary to soften us adequately and to just soften our hearts, Lord, so that we can receive from your hand.

Please, Lord, we need this from you, Lord. Even now, Lord, help us, Lord, not to resist your prayers. That you're praying for us right now, regarding what we're all going through.

Help us not to resist it, Lord, but help us to surrender. Lord, help us to allow what we're going through to expose our hearts, as our sister last week testified, that what we go through is to reveal our hearts, to expose our hearts so that we have opportunity to run to you and to find what we need in you. Lord, I pray that you would not let the devil sow bitterness and anger and resentfulness and a cynical hard heart, that he would not be able to do that, Lord, while we're going through hard times, but that the Holy Spirit would rescue us from that and soften us so that we can have a song in the night, a song in the night.

Now, we commit this word into your hands. We beg you for the Holy Spirit's power to awaken us to see ever so clearly today your Son. Just a few days ago, I received a letter from a brother in another country, and the Lord was teaching him about suffering.

I failed to get the letter. I wanted to bring it this morning, but I forgot. But I find it to be quite an appropriate word about suffering.

He shared how suffering softens us if we let it, if we let it. He shared a suffering soul receives sight because sight comes when we feel pain and we cry out to Jesus for help. Now, there's always a danger when we suffer.

Millions of people in the world suffer, but their suffering does not lead them to the Savior. And in their suffering, they become cynical and hard and calloused and bitter and resentment builds up. Smoldering resentment builds up.

And rather than suffering becoming a tool in the hands of a sovereign God to soften the soul, suffering becomes an opportunity for Satan to sow his poison into the heart and into the soul and into the mind. And that soul, out of that suffering, becomes harder. But God wants to rescue us from the subtle scheme of Satan and wants us to rest in his loving arms.

Are you suffering today? Whatever you're going through, I don't know what it is, but God does. Whatever suffering you're going through, whatever pain you're experiencing, God intends that suffering to soften you, to bring you to him. Everyone in the Old Testament and in the New Testament who had a, listen, who had a significant revelation of God suffered significantly.

Everyone. Suffering forces the soul, when the Holy Spirit is working in that soul, to recognize its limitation. Suffering forces the soul to recognize its limitation and it woos the soul to look outside of itself for help, outside of itself for strength, outside of itself for encouragement, outside of itself for resources.

That's why our Lord allows us to suffer. Ultimately, our suffering should result in an awakening in our hearts. Not so much about our suffering, but an awakening as to the unspeakable suffering that our Lord went through.

Ultimately, a soul that is filled with the Holy Spirit is not preoccupied with its own sufferings. Though initially, when we suffer, it is the natural thing to be preoccupied with our own pain and our own suffering. But ultimately, God's intention for the suffering soul is to use that suffering to awaken the eye of the soul to Christ's suffering.

Because it is ultimately when we see the crucified lamb and the pain that he went through, entirely because of your sins and my sins, that the soul is healed. Strangely, and please consider this, have you not known someone, perhaps even your own self this morning, who has experienced suffering in some way? Perhaps the suffering of an addiction. Perhaps the suffering of a life-controlling habit.

If that person only becomes aware of the pain that that suffering brings to itself, or the pain that that suffering is bringing to others, an abusive husband, abusive mother, she comes to realize, I'm suffering and I'm causing my children to suffer. Strangely, that revelation might result in a temporary resolve to try and change. But ultimately, that temporary resolve will fail.

And they will resort back to the very thing that they've acknowledged is bringing pain in their life and in the life of others. Why? As I've been pondering and meditating on the subject of suffering, the Holy Spirit has been faithful to awaken into my soul an enlarged capacity to understand that God allows suffering, but ultimately it must result in the soul to see the suffering of Christ. Because it's only when we see his sufferings, that redemptive quality begins to work in our life.

It's only when the scripture comes to pass, behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. So the end of all from God's vantage point has to be an awakening in the soul to recognize and appreciate more and more and more the ultimate suffering and sacrifice that Christ endured for my sins, for my depravity, for my rebellion. And the reason why so often we can be chained and addicted and seemingly bound to life-controlling problems, and we experience cycles of grief and sorrow, and we experience accelerated times when we see that this sin of mine is bringing pain in my own life and is bringing pain to people I love.

But the reason why there doesn't seem to be lasting deliverance so often from these moments of revelation is because we've only allowed the suffering and the pain to awaken how it's affecting us and how it's affecting others, but we've not yet seen how it has affected God. When we see, not so much, the effects that sin has had on us, and there is a place for us to see that. There is a place to see that an abusive mouth is going to hurt people.

There is a place to see the effects of your sin on your own life, the effects of your sin on your children's life, the effects of your sin on your brother's and sister's life. But we're living in a time when there is an overemphasis on the effects of sin and the description of those effects as seen in dysfunctional families and divorces and child abuse and spousal abuse and there's a place for that. But there's an overemphasis on that and it's all and it's becoming man-centered, me-centered, self-centered.

And all of that me, how it's affecting me, how it's affecting my children, is eclipsing what the Holy Spirit would want to do in relation to the suffering we're going through. And that is not only let us see how horrible it is affecting us, but more than that, He wants us to see how it has affected the Lamb of God. It's the soul that sees their suffering caused Jesus to suffer that begins to get true deliverance from sin.

And so our failure to walk in deliverance is linked to our soul's inability to see how it has affected Christ. And the Holy Spirit wants to minister to us this morning and through divine revelation relight the flame in our soul to see the Son of God, to see His suffering, His pain that He endured, and to know that that is the ultimate effect of our sin. And a true broken-hearted man or woman is one that has not simply seen that their sin has hurt another human being, although we can't minimize it.

But a true broken-hearted man or woman is someone who has seen by revelation that their sin has broken the heart of God. Their sin brought Christ to calvary. Their sin caused God to bleed.

Their sin broke His heart. Their sin resulted in God saying to His Son, I have to forsake You. Their sin, my sin, Your sin caused Jesus to cry out, My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? There must be a revival coming back into our hearts, into our homes, into our speech, into our meditations, into our very

lifestyles of a renewed vision of what it costs the Son of God to redeem us.

We have to see that. It is the seeing of that revelation that frees the soul, that cleanses the soul, that heals the soul, that delivers the soul. Suffering.

Before we move on, let's bow our hearts and ask for help from the Holy Spirit. Lord, disentangle us from culture and from the society and from the spirit of this age that has latched itself into our thinking, into our homes, into our conversation, into our plan-making process. Process, Lord, that has trapped us in this man-centered, me-centered mentality.

Lord, deliver us from being the center of our universe and interpreting everything that is happening as to how it affects me. God, please, we pray You'll have mercy on us. Deliver us from this man-centered, self-centered mindset.

Emancipate us by the power of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit and help us to see that the universe revolves around God and His eternal purpose and not us. And therefore, Lord, I pray that You emancipate us from interpreting what we're going through now by way of circumstances, by way of suffering, by way of pain, simply in view of how it's affecting us. And help us to come to You and say, Lord, what are You after? What are You trying to do, Lord, to bring glory to Your name, to bring glory to Your Son? Lord, what are You doing through this pain and suffering that will more fully free me from self-centeredness to Christ-centeredness? The root, listen carefully, you remember that we were looking in Jude for many, many weeks now, the characteristics of embracing a false Jesus, a false gospel, and a false spirit? The root, Jude chapter 1 verse 16.

Now, just let's follow along with this. There's healing here. There is healing.

Brothers and sisters, there is healing here that if we embrace it and beg God to write it in our heart and we bring it into our homes, the whole home atmosphere will be radically changed. There's healing here by the power and presence of Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Now, please observe this and may God help us.

Verse number 16 of Jude, the qualities, the features, the characteristics of the spirit of this world and those who are under the spirit of this world. And there has been introduced into the world of Christendom a false Jesus, a different Jesus, a different gospel, and a different spirit which permits us to embrace the name of Jesus, the name of gospel, and permits us to embrace a so-called spirit that comes from God. But our lives, as we learned last week, are governed by lawlessness, a perversion of grace, immorality, impurity, having many idols rather than one God.

We serve many gods. When we embrace a false, different Jesus, we are not troubled with our conduct, but we are deceived with our speech. We become self-deceived.

And because we say with our mouth, Jesus, gospel, Holy Spirit, we feel that that's sufficient. But God wants us to be careful that we don't embrace something like that. Now, verse number 16, a few more other characteristics.

These are inveterate murmurers. Verse 16, inveterate. I had to look that one up.

The word means, what was it again? I forget. Unable to be changed. Unable to be changed.

Something fixed. Inveterate murmurers. Listen, brothers and sisters, the power, the root power of a murmuring spirit, the root power of a murmuring spirit, a grumbler or a complainer, those who murmur, listen, and grumble and constantly complain about their lot in life.

It's what it says in the Amplified. One who's constantly complaining about their lot in life. First of all, that tells you they know nothing of contentment.

Secondly, it tells you that they have forgotten the command to be thankful. The opposite of thankfulness is unthankfulness. And out of unthankfulness grows what? Grumbling, complaining, never happy about your lot in life.

Someone's always giving you a raw deal. It's always someone's fault. The root cause, the root strength in grumbling and complaining and unthankfulness and discontentment is this.

Listen closely. The suffering that I am going through is only being viewed in light of how it's affecting me and not in the bigger picture of, Lord, you've let this happen and so therefore I surrender myself to you and I pray that you, you, you are the center of my universe. You are the center.

Christ is the preeminent one. Lord, I'm praying that this suffering, this pain, this misunderstanding, this circumstance, this tragedy, this confusion, this bewilderment, even this failure and fall into sin. Lord, I'm praying that through it, you, you will somehow deliver me a little bit more from my own self and from viewing life from how it affects me and get me into the bigger picture so that I can be a being that lives with your will and view and therefore if my loss is your gain, then I gladly accept it.

Now listen, if you're living life with you in view and you experience loss, and I'm not only referring to material loss, there's loss in many different ways, but if you are the head hog in your life and it's all about you and loss comes your way, you are going to grumble, you're going to complain, you're going to be dissatisfied with the lot in your life and you are going to end up sinning against God. All right now listen, grumbling, murmuring, complainers about their own lot, going after their own desires, controlled by their own passions, their talk is boastful and arrogant. So boastful, bragging, arrogant talk also reveals a heart condition that is viewing life with me in the center.

Brothers and sisters, Christ Jesus came to deliver us from our own center. He came to deliver us from viewing life all around ourselves into a bigger picture where we are part of a family. He is God, He is Father and it's all about His will and His pleasure.

It's all about His desires. It's all about Him bringing glory in whatever way He chooses. Arrogant, they claim to admire men's persons and pay people flattery compliments to gain advantage.

When I'm the center of my universe, I will befriend people. I will show myself friendly. I might even flatter people but the reason why is I'm not interested in them.

I'm interested in what I can get from them. So I'm going to work you. I'm going to work you because I've got myself in view.

God helped the pulpits in this land that have become a place where preachers are befriending and flattering multitudes for their own advantage. God helped the pulpits, not only the pulpits but God help us all when the pursuit of our relationships is rooted in what we get out of it. Okay, let's turn our Bibles to Philippians chapter 1. Thank God for His word.

Father, please help us. Help us in Your word today, Lord. Philippians chapter 1. We're going to begin to look at a letter that was written to a group of believers and in it is hidden.

I believe it's hidden and it can only be opened to those who are attracted to the crucified Christ. They're attracted for one reason because it has dawned on them that He was crucified for them. Let me ask you a question.

Wouldn't everyone here agree that there would be a very, very strange attraction in your heart if you knew that you were personally guilty of a crime worthy of death and right before the sentence you were told while sitting in the cell that your punishment has been forgiven and canceled? And you say, but why? What did I do? How did this happen? And the judge comes and says, well, it has nothing to do with what you did. Nothing. Nothing at all.

It has to do with someone else. Someone came right before your sentence was about to be carried out and they said, I want to die for you. I want to suffer the penalty that you deserve.

Listen, please listen. God give us ears to hear. If you were delivered of that, wouldn't you have an incredible desire to want to get to know the person who laid their life down for you since you're the one that deserved the death that they died? You're the one that deserves the punishment that they suffered.

You're the one that deserves the pain that they suffered. You're the one that deserves the suffering that they suffered. Wouldn't you want to get to know that person? Wouldn't you sort of stand in awe of that person and wonder at their character and their love for you?

Wouldn't you like to get into their heart and want to know what makes them tick? okay guess who it is who gets into the heart of the Lord guess who gets into God's heart guess who is welcome into the heart of Christ guess who God welcomes casual onlookers casual onlookers know those who are overcome and devastated by the revelation that he took the rap two things have to be present in order to really get into the heart of God number one you got to really see the death sentence the guilt what you deserve you gotta really see it only God can show it only God can awaken a soul and show that soul the terror of their sin the uncleanness of their condition only God can do it that's the first stage and let me say this by way of passing and it's in the Word of God to gain entrance into the

heart of God requires that we see our guilt listen but to remain in the heart of God and go deeper in the heart of God requires the same thing over and over and over again because we don't see all at once the depths of our depravity matter of fact Paul and I've mentioned this many times publicly Paul at the end of his journey having served the Lord over 30 years claimed to be the chiefest of sinners he didn't say he used to be the chiefest of sinners he knew his true condition apart from Christ he started out by calling himself the least of the Apostles right at the beginning of his ministry then halfway through he changed the way he's viewed himself and he said he was less than least than all the Saints so he went from being an Apostle to just a saint then toward the end a few years

before he had his head cut off by bloodthirsty narrow he wrote Timothy and said Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the chief that's why Paul was brought by the Holy Spirit into the councils of God in Christ so deeply that today it is the standard for the Word of God and it's still feeding our souls and I still can't get most of what Paul taught I still can't get it commentaries help yes testimonies help yes but I can't get it it's because it's not available through mental comprehension it's available through the heart of God you've got to get into God to know what he's saying what got Paul in what got Paul in was

this after 30 years of walking with Christ he never forgot his true condition but he was more aware of it then than he was when he first started out

and that's what brought him into the heart of God so we need help here don't we we need help we need the Holy Spirit's help we need to see we need to pray for the Lord to help us to see so the the letter to the Philippians is a letter that's veiled to the heart that has lost sight of the Savior moreover it is a letter that is veiled to the heart that has lost to the wounds of the Savior because the wounds of the Savior constantly remind me of my sin and by the way Jesus was resurrected with a body that retained the wounds he will have that body for how long forever so every time in the age to come in our perfected state being like him that we will forget now every time we see him every time we behold him and we see the hole in his side and the his hands it will be a reverberating

testimony to us I am today because of what Christ became yesterday all right if you're at Philippians just hold your finger there I'm gonna read in Acts chapter 9 real quick because this is where Philippians starts Acts chapter 9 beginning in verse 1 now this is the beginning of seeing how Christianity is supposed to look in our lives how it's supposed to look in our lives corporately as a church but we can't just blow through this because this is not a lesson on doctrine it's not a simply doctrine this is a lesson on seeing Christ and partaking of the depths of Christ that's how we get into the substance of Philippians it starts with Acts chapter 9 meanwhile Saul still drawing his breath hard from threatenings and murderous desire against the disciples of the Lord went to the high priest

and requested of him letters to the synagogues at Damascus authorizing him so that if he found any men or women belonging to the way that's the Christian Church that he might bring them bound with chains to Jerusalem now as he traveled on he came near to Damascus and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around about him and he fell to the ground then he heard a voice saying to him Saul Saul why are you persecuting harassing troubling and molesting me and Saul said who are you Lord and he said I am Jesus whom you are persecuting it is dangerous and it will turn out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad to offer vain and perilous resistance trembling and astonished he asked Lord what do you desire me to do let's stop right there we read that because in Philippians chapter 1 verse 1

it starts out with Paul we can't go any further than that Paul Paul if we want to get into the heart of the book of Philippians we have to get into the heart of the man Paul and if we get into the heart of the man Paul we have to get into the heart of Christ Paul was a man with a mission he was a mighty strong big significant influential man but when Saul met Jesus he became Paul the word Paul literally means insignificant small of very little stature brothers and sisters Paul went from Saul of Tarsus the man inflated with self-importance the man inflated with ego and pride the man inflated with himself to having met the significant one the true important one the true big one and in meeting the man in glory the Lamb of God Saul became small and insignificant and small of stature he was

humbled and brought low and knocked off his high horse of glorying in human wisdom and human strength and human wit all the things that are found in Philippians chapters 1 2 3 and 4 spring out of and are maintained in a heart posture that is converted from a soul to a Paul and the moment our Paul becomes saw the life flow of the book of Philippians is cut off it's cut off we can keep reading it we can keep studying it we can keep learning the doctrine we might even memorize the chapters but it's empty because only a small insignificant broken heart can be given by the Holy Spirit the living realities that are locked within the book of Philippians Romans 12 16 what made the Philippians so special to Paul was that they shared and were partakers together with Paul in the humbling experience

of meeting the significant one and because they were partakers together with Paul in a genuine encounter with Christ they could understand and receive Paul's spirit and Paul's letter Romans 12:16 live in harmony with one and are a state of mind a worldview it represents suffering when I'm in view it represents pain when I'm in view if Saul goes through pain Saul curses God if Saul goes through suffering Saul gets mad at people Saul has no entrance into the book of Philippians that's why it starts out with Paul live in harmony do not be haughty another rendering snobbish high-minded exclusive but readily adjust yourself to people things and give yourselves to humble tasks never overestimate yourself brothers and sisters there's only one safety that we have to be free from the snare of

overestimating ourselves you know what that safety is keep seeing Jesus keep seeing Jesus never overestimate yourself we live in an age where there is such value being placed on us we're so important aren't we and yet we tell God you take your commandments out of the courts we're so important and we tell we tell our children in school don't you dare pray God have mercy on us we're not half as important as we think we are and God is a whole lot more important than we can ever imagine him to be we got it all backwards don't we don't be high-minded watch the spirit of this world watch it when people start bragging about you don't believe what they're saying it's not true don't believe it when people flatter you don't believe it when your company prospers and you think that it was your wisdom

don't believe it it's a lie it's not true it's not true you at your best you're a murderer and you crucified the Lord of Glory that's what we do at our best we're murderers we're adulterers we're fornicators we're breakers of the law that's man at his best oh I know this doesn't go over well but it's the truth man at his best plunges the sword into the side of the Savior and God at his best stretches out his arms and says father forgive them for they know not what they do now can you figure that out I can't that's beyond me but I want to know that love but I know the Lord has told me I can't know that love unless I am unless I am made broken and low and stay low and I want to just lovingly say to us all here this morning by the Holy Spirit guard your heart against pride guard your heart

against being overly in self inflated about yourself guard your heart guard your heart brothers and sisters there is a spirit in the world and it's seducing people it's a seductive spirit and it's making much of man and making little of Christ it's making much of what we can do and making little of what Christ has done it's making much of our wisdom and making little of God's wisdom and it must not come into our home we can't be entertained by the spirit we can't let our children be entertained by the spirit it will seduce him and destroy him everyone wants to be a hero today never overestimate yourself or be wise in your own conceits John 3:30 you don't have to turn there John the Baptist declared I must decrease he must increase the true nature of a heart that has been captured by a

revelation of the significant one is a life passion listen a life passion that says this I must decrease now John the Baptist at that time had the hearts of the people Christ came and John's disciples stopped following him and started following Christ and then some men began to say John how come you don't have the crowds anymore and that's where it was born John said no no I must decrease the lesson we learned there is this the heart that is under the power of the Holy Spirit recognizes its sole purpose is to point and bring people to Christ and once that's been done I have to diminish I have to get out of the way so that the vision is eclipsed by Christ everything I am everything you are must be governed by that purpose I must decrease he must increase all right we're going to come to a

close but I do want to mention the blessing that God has in store for everyone who is given a Paul heart and here's the blessing the next word what's the next word Paul and Timothy the word Timothy means this

to place value and worth upon divine things to place value and worth upon divine things when the heart is reduced and it is brought down and it is no longer haughty and proud and inflated with self-importance but is broken at the feet of Jesus it begins to value it begins to place significance and worth on divine things namely on the person and work of Jesus Christ a broken heart is not interested in what it can do a broken heart is interested in what God has done for it and what God can do through it one more time a broken heart is not concerned about what it can do but a broken

heart is concerned about what God has done for it and what God can do through it that's a broken heart that is the gateway into the book of Philippians and now what we need to do is we need to pray that God will do whatever it takes in our lives to give us a heart of Paul for a heart of Saul so that we can value and treasure and place immeasurable worth upon the person and work of Jesus Christ and be brought into fellowship with him deeper and deeper that is what will enable us to open up the book of Philippians and see the unspeakable calling that is set before us to serve God in closing I want to give you the four breakdowns chapter 1 Philippians the love of the lamb chapter 2 the lowering of the lamb chapter 3 the loss of the lamb and chapter 4 the life or living of the lamb those four

chapter divisions capture the totality of what the Christian life is supposed to look like the love the lowering the loss and the life Paul lost his life Christ became his life and out from that flowed these four chapters the church he wrote to received him received the same spirit and they were receiving the rivers of living water and now we have to pray God work this in us so we can walk in this too let's just bow our hearts for a moment please father we commit this word into your hands we ask that you'll do what is necessary to make it living help it Lord not be only doctrinal or help it not be just a teaching that we learn but Lord let it be the very explosion of Christ's life in our lives please Lord perform the truth in this book in our lives as we go through it step by step for

Jesus honor and Jesus is glory amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30603.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/phil-beach-jr/from-a-heart-of-saul-to-a-heart-of-paul/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net