

Life Group Lesson

May 16, 2010

“Blessed are pure in heart, for they will see God.” – Matthew 5:8

This beatitude is one of the most striking of all beatitudes. For who can claim to be pure in heart? If we peek into our hearts, we all know that we are not pure, we have thoughts, attitudes, desires which are not pure. We may hide it from others, but we cannot hide it from ourselves. So, what can we learn from this beatitude? Let me start with some of the bible verses related to ‘pure in heart’ and ‘seeing God’, and let the Word of God speak to you through it.

This word “pure” is the same we see in Titus 1:15: ***“To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.”***

The word pure here is *'katharos'* (Greek) meaning pure, clean, purified by fire; like a vine purified by pruning so that it will produce fruit.

To be a Christian requires us to be pure in heart. It is not our physical health but what we think and feel and do that makes us pure in heart. The pure in heart tend to see things in a pure light. They see others as persons God loves. The impure see them as what they can get out of them or even as sex objects. The pure rejoice over another person's success while the impure feel jealous.

How are your motives and what is really in your heart? Are you an example to others of Godly living? John 3:9-11 we see Diotrephes who had a wrong spirit. It says in these verses - *I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. 10 So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. 11 Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God.*

As a contrast we have Demetrius in the following verse of 3 John - *12 Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone - and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.*

The purity of your heart will shape the way you look at things. A heart purified by God protects from much hurt and harm. As it says in Proverbs 4:23, you and I must constantly guard our heart because out of it flow the issues of life.

Pure in Heart:

Below are some scriptures about a pure heart:

Psalms 24:4-5 – “He who has clean hands and **pure heart**, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false. He will receive the blessing from the Lord.”

1 Timothy 1:5 – ” The goal of this command is love, which comes from a **pure heart**, and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

Psalms 51:10 – “Create in me a **pure heart**, O God and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Psalms 119:9-10 – “How can a young man keep his way **pure**? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart. Do not let me stray from your commands.”

The word ‘Pure’ is an absolute term. You cannot say that this is ‘purer’. Being pure itself means that it is not defiled, polluted or mixed with impurities. The heart is regarded as being the seat of the intellect, the feelings and the will. Often heart implies the whole moral nature of fallen man. (Jeremiah 17:9) So, how can we make it pure? It is beyond our reach to make it pure. It is God who initiates, sanctifies and perfects the heart of man who put his trust in him. It begins when we realize that we cannot do it on our own. We go through the process of sanctification throughout our life. And it will be perfected when we will be glorified in Christ Jesus.

Sanctification is a difficult process. Water has to go through heat and fire to be purified. Gold has to go through fiery furnace to be perfected. In fact, the goldsmith would heat up the gold, skim off the dross (impurities) and continue that process until he could see his reflection in the gold. Can God see His reflection in you? 1st Peter 1:6-7 says, *“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith, of greater worth than gold which perishes even though refined by fire, may be proven genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”*

So, how can we pursue purity? By living, active fellowship with God through daily personal time with God in his words and prayer, allowing God to purify us through His Holy Spirit in us – “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

What did Jesus say about a pure heart? Quoting Isaiah, Jesus said, “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men” (Matthew 15:8-9). Explaining to the disciples, He said, “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man ‘**unclean**’...” (Matthew 15:19-20).

Paul said this about the impure heart: “This is the impure heart: To have a pure heart means to have a heart that is committed to living a life that is totally pleasing to God, because “... **the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts**” (1 Chronicles 28:9).

That is why David’s prayer was: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:23-24).

How Can We Have a Pure Heart?

Now the question is how can we have a pure heart, a heart that is morally clean? A heart that is fully devoted to God?

First of all, we have to realize that we, in and of ourselves, cannot attain a heart that is morally pure and fully devoted to God. As the Bible repeatedly tells us, “**The Lord saw ... that every inclination of the thoughts of his [man’s] heart was evil all the time**” (Genesis 6:5). As the prophet Jeremiah said, “**The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure**” (Jeremiah 17:9). And, “Can the

Ethiopian change his skin or leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil” (Jeremiah 13:23).

In his book, *The Sermon on the Mount*, Kent Hughes quotes a nineteenth-century Russian novelist, Ivan Turgenev:

“I do not know what the heart of a bad man is like. But I do know what the heart of a good man is like. And it is terrible.”

Questions:

How do you become pure in heart?

Is everything good or bad connected to the heart? (motives/intentions)

How is your heart? Is it pure?

How do you interpret the scripture “out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks?” (Matt. 12:34)

We said becoming pure is a process, much like refining gold or water. What process of sanctification are you going through to be made pure in heart? Talk about your steps of heart cleansing. How do you filter out the impurities? What is your filter? Etc.

How are your motives and what is really in your heart? Are you an example to others of Godly living?