



The Beatitudes

An Inductive Study

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Beatitude #6

Blessed are the Pure in Heart for they shall see God.

The inductive method is an investigative way of studying the Bible. It helps to provide an overall understanding of a passage of Scripture: what it says, the intended meaning to the original audience, and how it can be applied to today

Blessed Are the Pure In Heart, For they shall see God - Mathew 5:8

The Beatitudes, or blessings, Jesus teaches in His longest and most famous sermon, the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, all have one underlying theme in common: God is most concerned with our hearts and what we truly desire for our lives.

Unlike other religions, Christianity introduces a God that not only loves us unconditionally, but that also wants to know us, spend time with us and offer grace and love that we will never deserve. We know this is true because of the countless times throughout the Bible that Jesus calls us to draw near to Him. In **Matthew 11:28**, Jesus says, “Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Jesus wants us to genuinely seek Him in times of joy and trials and trust Him with our lives. Of all the beatitudes, this theme shines through the most clearly in the sixth beatitude, found in Matthew 5:8, which says, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”

When we are presented with the concept of purity, often our minds are led straight to abstinence, sobriety or having a clean, sinless life. Though these things do accurately define purity, they are external purities. Jesus says, “pure in heart,” which is referring to internal purity, once again showing His concern with our heart’s position.

Jesus doesn’t waste time speaking to our external lives because He knows that our hearts must first be changed. When we experience this heart shift, our behaviors, actions, and external lives will also change as a result of it. Jesus wants our hearts to genuinely desire things that are pleasing to Him – then, our lives will reflect and produce things that are pleasing to Him.

When we receive Jesus in our hearts and make the commitment to follow Him, He begins a transformation in our hearts. Our love for Him will translate into

a hunger to know Him and a thirst to live like Him. This is a pure heart: a heart that desires nothing more than to be with God because that truly is all our life should be about!

Within this beatitude, Jesus also promises that those who embody this pure heart will see God. Only those with a pure heart will know Jesus because that is what Jesus sees. He doesn't fall for the words that we say or the act that we put on for people in our lives. God knows our heart and our desires and that's what He is most interested in.

The truth is that even after we accept Jesus into our lives, we will still fail. But thankfully God continues to forgive us! He honors our heart's desires, and if our heart truly desires Him and His will for our lives, even through our failures, then we are blessed, and we will see God.

What is it to be pure in heart?

Søren Kierkegaard wrote a book called *Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing*. That is not a bad definition, provided that the one thing we will is the glory of God.

ACCORDING TO DAVID

Let me try to show you where that definition comes from in Scripture. We start with the closest OT parallel to this beatitude, namely, [Psalm 24:3–4](#):

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not lift up his soul to what is false,
and does not swear deceitfully.

You can see what David means by a “pure heart” in the phrases that follow it. A pure heart is a heart that has nothing to do with falsehood. It is painstakingly truthful and free from deceitfulness. Deceit is what you do when you will two

things, not one thing. You will do one thing and you will that people think you are doing another. You will feel one thing and you will that people think you are feeling another. That is impurity of heart. Purity of heart is to will one thing, namely, to “seek the face of the Lord” (verse 6).

ACCORDING TO JAMES

You can see this idea of purity in [James 4:8](#): Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you men of double mind.

Notice that just like Psalm 24 there is reference to both clean hands and a pure heart as preparation for drawing near to God, or “ascending the hill of the Lord.” But notice how the men are described who need to purify their hearts: “men of double mind.” That is they are men that will two things not just one thing. The impurity of double mindedness is explained in [James 4:4](#):

Unfaithful creatures! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

So, the double-minded man of verse 8 has his heart divided between the world and God, like a wife who has a husband and a boyfriend. Purity of heart, on the other hand, is to will one thing, namely, full, and total allegiance to God.

FROM JESUS’S MOUTH

So, if we ask, where in the gospels did Jesus explain purity of heart in this way? The answer would be [Matthew 22:37](#):

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

Not with part of your heart. Not with a double or divided heart. That would be impurity. Purity of heart is no deception, no doublemindedness, no divided allegiance.

“God is the one who purifies the heart, and the instrument with which he cleans it is faith.”

(Note: you can see the echo of this meaning of purity of heart in [1 Timothy 1:5](#), “The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere [i.e., unhypocritical faith].”)

Purity of heart is to will one thing, namely, God’s truth and God’s value in everything we do. The aim of the pure heart is to align itself with the truth of God and magnify the worth of God. If you want to be pure in heart, pursue God with utter single-mindedness. Purity of heart is to will that one thing. That leaves one last question:

3. How are the two bound together?

Jesus only gives us part of the answer here. It is a true part, but only part. He says that the pure will see God. That is, purity is a prerequisite for seeing God. The impure are neither granted admittance to his presence, nor are they awed by the glory of his holiness, nor are they comforted by his grace.

Jesus’s point is the same as [Hebrews 12:14](#): “Strive for . . . the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” In other words, blessed are the holy for they shall see God. There is a real purity and a real holiness which fits us to see the king of glory.

And of course, that leads every sensitive soul to cry out with the words of [Proverbs 20:9](#), “Who can say, ‘I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin?’” And with the disciples: “Who then can be saved?”

Jesus’s answer comes back just like it did to the disciples in [Matthew 19:26](#) — and this is the rest of the answer — “With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” In other words, God creates a purity for us and in us so that we can pursue purity. And by his grace we must seek that gift by praying with David, “Create in me a clean heart, O God” ([Psalm 51:10](#)). And we must look to Christ “who gave himself for us . . . to purify for himself a people” ([Titus 2:14](#)).

And the response of our hearts to God’s act of creation and Christ’s act of sacrifice is single-minded faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. As the Scripture says in [Acts 15:9](#), “God made no distinction between us and them, but purified their hearts by faith.”

God is the one who purifies the heart, and the instrument with which he cleans it is faith. Therefore, trust in the Lord with *all* your heart ([Proverbs 3:5](#)). Will this one thing. And you will see God.

How do we become Pure in Heart?

1. We Are to Seek God

“Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near” ([Isaiah 55:6](#)). Isaiah advises us to call upon the Lord while he is close. God is not wanting to move away from us — however, we frequently move a long way from him or erect a boundary between ourselves and him.

2. We Are to Focus on Christ and Things Above

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things ([Philippians 4:8](#)).

What we put into our minds will be portrayed in our words and actions. Paul advises us to program our brains with thoughts that are just, true, unadulterated, of good report, upright, and worthy of praise. How many of us have issues with unclean thoughts and fantasies? We are to analyze what we are placing into our minds through television, books, movies, and magazines.

Most importantly, read God's Word every day and pray. Request that he help us center our brains around what is acceptable and unadulterated. It takes practice however it is doable.

3. We Are to Stay Close to Christ

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded ([James 4:8](#)).

How are we able to draw close to God? James gives five ideas:

- Submit yourselves therefore to God (4:7). Understand that we need his pardoning and follow him.
- Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (4:7). Try not to permit him to allure us and entice us.
- Cleanse your hands...and purify your hearts (4:8). That means to carry on with an unadulterated life. Be purified from transgression, supplanting it with God's immaculateness.
- Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep (4:9). Try not to be hesitant to communicate profound ardent distress for our wrongdoings.
- Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up (4:10; [1 Peter 5:6](#)). Humbling ourselves implies understanding that our value comes from God alone.

4. We Are to Guard Our Hearts and Minds

Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it([Proverbs 4:23](#)).

Our hearts, our sensations of adoration and want, directs generally how we live, work, and play since we generally have the opportunity to do those things that we enjoy.

Solomon advises us to keep our hearts with determination (diligence), ensuring we focus on those desires that will keep us on the correct way, ensuring that our affections and desires push us toward the correct path.

How do we see God?

[Matthew 5:8](#) teaches that if we are pure in heart, cleansed and forgiven from sin and drawing near to Him, we "shall see God." What does it mean to see God? It is clear from other places in the Bible that it does not mean we will physically see God face to face.

The Lord told Moses, "Man shall not see me and live" ([Exodus 33:20](#)). [John 1:18](#) adds, "No one has ever seen God." Instead, we will be able to "see" in the sense of understanding God better. The principles of the Beatitudes in [Matthew 5](#) each has to do with being closer to God or satisfied in God. When we are pure in heart, we will be closer to God than if we live impure lives.

Jesus also notes that those who are pure in heart are "blessed." This Greek word can be translated "happy" and simply refers to a positive or joyful state of being. [Psalm 73:1](#) adds, "Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart."

We will certainly experience a greater joy in our lives when we have confessed our sins, draw near to God, and seek to live His way rather than ours. We will "see God" in the sense that we can more clearly understand His plans for our lives and walk in a way that pleases Him and helps others.