

# A DIFFERENT KIND OF LIFE

## The Lost Virtue

TEXT: **Mt. 5:8** *Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.*

INTRODUCTION: This verse has been called, "The Grandest statement in all of Scripture." It is indeed one of the most profound thoughts in all the Bible.

It constitutes one of the most constant themes that runs throughout the sacred pages.

In Genesis we have purity lost.

In Exodus we have purity sought.

In Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy we have purity taught.

In the Books of History, purity corrupted.

In the Psalms, purity praised.

In the Prophets, purity preached and purity promised anew.

In the Gospels purity is presented.

In the Letters purity is practiced.

In the Revelation purity is perfected.

Pick any book of the Bible, and you can find verse after verse and sermon after sermon that are the forerunners of this great cumulative exclamation by our Lord,

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

No sermon, no series, no group of great expositors could ever exhaust its meaning. To attempt to do so is like trying to empty the sea with a thimble.

There are so many questions I ask about this single yet inexhaustible verse of God's perfect Word:

1. What does it mean to be pure in heart?
2. Is it essential or extra?
3. What does the promise mean?
4. How can I live it?

This morning we begin with the first of those questions.

### I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN WHEN IT REFERS TO THE HEART?

Greek – cardia

A. Not basically the emotions.

In our culture the heart is seat of emotions and is therefore, symbolic of love. But it is not used this way primarily in the Bible, Old or New Testaments.

- B. The Heart refers to the inner man.  
1. It is the juncture of mind and will.

**Prov. 4:23** Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.

2. The heart is the inner man which is the source of outward action. Jesus pointed out that all outward actions are generated from within, from the heart.

Murder comes from hate in the heart.  
Adultery comes from lust in the heart.  
Stealing comes from greed in the heart.  
Lying comes from deceit in the heart.

Heart in the Bible often means what we mean when we say the “heart of the matter.” We mean the basics, the inside, the root part, the essential, and that’s what Jesus is here addressing.

Jesus is saying, it is not the outside that God is concerned about or that brings you into the kingdom or offers you real happiness.

It’s not what you look like outwardly:

Tall, short, thin, fat, pretty, ugly, 3 piece suit, holey jeans

It’s not what your outward circumstances are:

Pleasant, sorrowful, rich, poor, well, sick

It’s not even primarily what you do outwardly:

Go to church, carry your Bible, recite Scripture

Jesus is repeating and reinforcing a truth proclaimed by God since the earliest of times: “**Man looks on outward appearance but God looks upon the heart.**” 1 Sam. 16:7

3. That is why David said,  
**Ps. 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

**Ps. 73:1** Truly God *is* good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

4. See an example in Saul and David.  
John McArthur, “Saul was tall, dark, and handsome, but not much else.”  
Girls, be careful when you lay eyes on a young man who is tall, dark, and handsome. Make sure he is something else. Find a man who is pure in heart, and you will find a real treasure.

God let Saul be king over Israel, but Saul would not let God be King of his heart. So God said to Saul,

1 Sam. 13:14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him *to be* commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.”

Who was this man after God’s own heart? David! Listen to his words.

Ps. 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

Ps. 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; Try my mind and my heart.

Ps. 27:8 *When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.”*

David failed on the outside often, but he always returned to the Lord because his heart was right with God.

**The heart is the inner root of a person, the essence of what a man or woman chooses to be.**

That is why sometime we talk about trusting Christ as asking Jesus to come into your heart. We are not talking about the organ that pumps blood. We are not thinking of the source of our sentimentality. We are saying, Jesus, because of your death for my sins upon the cross and your glorious resurrection from the dead, I want you to come into the innermost core of my being and reign over my life as the King of my heart.

## II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PURE?

Greek – Katharos – clean, pure

Purity in our day is practically a lost virtue. Purity used to be an essential element in the life of a young man or lady. Today purity is the subject of twisted scoffing and sick jokes.

But friend listen!

- The scoffers and jokers and the soiled thinkers of this world are not those who will return to this earth on a white horse whose name is Faithful and True and who makes war in righteousness.
- Those who mock purity are not those who will sit upon the throne and rule the earth with a rod of iron.
- They are not the ones before whom every knee shall bow and every tongue declare Him Lord of all.

No, the King of kings, Lord of lords, Judge of judges, God of gods, says, "Blessed are the pure in heart."

What does He mean?

Pure has 2 shades of meaning.

**A. Unmixed, unalloyed, untainted by foreign substance as in pure gold.**

Ex. 20: 3 You shall have no other gods before Me.

Jer. 32:39 then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them.

Mt. 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.

A pure heart is a mind and will directed toward God and controlled by His Spirit and living by His principles.

It is a heart that has a singleness of purpose and motive.

**B. Clean – free from sin, filth, and iniquity**

1. Cathartic – an agent used to cleanse a wound  
Catharsis – with a counselor is a soul cleansing

Purity as our Lord here puts it means a sincerity of motive that issues forth in holy action.

Sincerity is not enough by itself.

Martin Luther on steps

Worshippers of Baal in Elijah's day

2. Verb – KATHARIDZO – to cleanse  
KATHAROS – is the result

**Pure means not only that which is clean and never soiled,  
but also that which was soiled and is now made clean!**

**C. There are five kinds of purity in the Bible**

1. Original – God alone
2. Created – Angels, Adam and Eve (no man now)

3. **Positional – Purity that is given to those in Christ**
4. **Practical – Living out the positional**
5. **Ultimate – what is given to the saints when we are made like Him**

Can't have 1 and 2. 4 and 5 come only after 3.

Conclusion: That is what Jesus came to do.

Prov. 20:9 Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"?

But Jesus came to make a trade. Our sin for His righteousness.

2 Cor. 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Last week we sang

**Oh, to see the dawn  
Of the darkest day:  
Christ on the road to Calvary.  
Tried by sinful men,  
Torn and beaten, then  
Nailed to a cross of wood.**

**This, the power of the cross:  
Christ became sin for us,  
Took the blame, bore the wrath:  
We stand forgiven at the cross.**

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they alone shall see God.

Oh, how happy are those who in the core of their being have singlemindedly trusted in Jesus,

They are filled with abiding joy because through Christ's death upon the cross, they have been cleansed of all sin.

And eternally blessed are they, because they alone shall abide in God's Presence forever.