

full manifestation of His glory to the saints. So **seeing God**, which constitutes ultimate blessing, will be to behold Christ in our nature in all His glory; and in so doing we will see God in Him. He is the express image of the Godhead. He is the one in whom the Godhead dwells bodily. Only those who have obtained a pure heart, undivided and clean, will see this glorious sight! *“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”* [John 17:24]

Our hearts are by nature filthy and so unfit to see God. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can wash away all our sins, and grant us this heart, with which we can see God. He is the Great Physician of the heart, come to Him today and seek His mercy! He will remove the guilt of your sins, and give you His Holy Spirit so that you will be made pure in heart.

Let me draw this study to a close by asking you the following questions. How clearly do you see God? Do you see him, as you once did when the Lord first saved you? What objects are obscuring your view of the Savior? Are you a man or woman of one passion, to be conformed to Jesus? I pray you will examine your heart, and if you find you have no desire for God, let alone be pure in heart; that you may cry to Him to grant you such a heart, and make you pure within by granting His Holy Spirit. Amen.

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Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART

The message this week is on the sixth beatitude, *“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”* [Matthew 5:8]

This is the greatest blessing that man can attain to, namely, to see God. But to do so, he must attain to purity of heart. This poses a problem, for in this life we can never attain to this utter purity of heart. So what does this beatitude teach if none can attain to it? We will examine this beatitude by looking at the three words: **heart, pure, and see.**

Let us begin with looking at how the word **heart** is used in Scripture. It is a very comprehensive word, and it occurs well over a hundred times. It can mean the emotions, the understanding, the seat of reason or of conscience, and the center of our motives and intentions as well as the seat of our desires, and it is the seat of faith. So the heart stands for the whole man. The heart, says the writer of Proverbs, is the *“wellspring of life”* (4:23).

How does God regard the heart? Now men are superficial in their judgments, for we judge by appearances. We see this in the case of Samuel when he was sent to anoint a son of Jesse as Saul's successor, he immediately thought it was Eliab, because he was tall and strong; yet he was mistaken. It was not any of the seven but David, the shepherd boy. We read these words of God to Samuel, *“But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”* [1 Samuel 16:7]

Not only does God look at the heart, He searches the heart. We read this in Jeremiah, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.”* [Jeremiah 17:9]

It is foolish in the light of this to play at religion. For it does not matter that others think you are religious if you remain an enemy of God. God desires our hearts. Solomon writes in Proverbs 23:26 *“My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eye observe my ways”*.

No wonder our Lord rebuked the Pharisees so strongly because they emphasized so much the ceremonial that they totally ignored the spiritual. They neglected heart purity which God desired in those who worship Him.

Let us now examine what is meant by the word **pure** in this verse. The word used for pure in Greek has different meanings. John Blanchard points out that it is used of corn from which the chaff has been sifted out. It is used of an army from which those who are discontent, cowardly or inefficient have been removed, so it is a force of completely first rate soldiers. It is used of metals, from which all impure ingredients have been removed. So the over all picture we get is that the word refers to *unmixed, unadulterated, and unalloyed.*

What does it mean then to be 'pure in heart'? Before giving what it means let me say it does not mean perfection. There are those who teach that at conversion the sinful nature was totally rooted out, and they now claim there is the possibility of living a sinless life. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that it does not mean that. It does that by giving us the lives of godly men, all of whom were guilty of sin, David, Abraham, Job, Moses, Elijah, and Paul. We also have direct Scripture testimony: *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* [1 John 1:8] *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* [Romans 7:24]

As A.W. Pink wrote, "One of the most conclusive evidences that we do possess a pure heart is to be conscious of and burdened with the impurity which still indwells us."

So what does 'purity' of heart refer to? It means, beloved, we are concerned with the motives and intents of our hearts in all that we do. Unlike the Pharisees who were more concerned with external appearance, rather than how they appeared in the sight of God. We are often more concerned with what men think of us than of what God thinks of us. It will be God who will judge us, not our neighbors or our ministers or our friends. Where there is no sincerity of heart, that religion is detestable to God. How much of today's religion would come under this category? What of your religion? Is it merely outward performances? Is it only to please men? When you attend a place of worship, is it to love and worship God? Or is it to be admired by others, because of your talents?

Sincerity is the opposite of hypocrisy and this is what God desires in His worshippers. This sincerity of heart is willing one thing. It is a heart not divided, or containing a mixture as was pointed out earlier. Let me just give two Scriptures which speak of this: *"Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."* [Psalm 51:6] *"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."* [Psalm 24:3]

The man, who is pure in heart, has no hidden agenda, no moral or spiritual or religious sleight of hand writes Blanchard. Let us all pray to the Lord in the word of the Psalmist. *"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in*

thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." [Psalm 86:11]

The man with a pure heart will pursue holiness in every area of his life. It is true he will never reach perfection nevertheless that will be his goal. He will hate every evil way. Beloved, is that a description of your heart? If a video was taken of your life even for one week, would it testify that that was your goal in life? If we had to give an honest account of what we have viewed or read, could we do so without shame? The Puritan Thomas Watson wrote, "A pure heart breathes after purity. If God should stretch out the golden scepter and say to him, 'ask and it shall be given thee, to half of the kingdom,' he would say, 'Lord, a pure heart.'" Would that be your desire? It has to become your desire if you are to enjoy the blessedness of seeing God.

Let us now look at what it means to **see** God. Are we not told in Scripture that God is invisible and therefore cannot be seen by men? It is true that the word 'see' can be used in different ways. We say "I see" when it is equivalent to I understand. Now it is true those who have been changed by the grace of God and given the Holy Spirit now see God in that they understand things that the natural man does not.

The believer in Christ now sees things that in his natural state he could not see. He sees the wonderful creation not as an accident, which is the lie of evolution; but as the handiwork of His heavenly Father. He is no longer blinded by the god of this world. The believer now sees God in the face of Jesus Christ as he reads the Word. The believers see God especially in their trials. What else explains the praises that were offered by the martyrs even as the fires were lit to burn them? They saw God and enjoyed fellowship with Him in a way unknown to us. We see this in the three youths in the fire in the book of Daniel. We see when Stephen was stoned, how he died seeing God.

Yet the promise of the beatitudes is not only in this life, but is fully to be accomplished in the future. Now there are passages of Scripture which speak of seeing God face to face. Let us read some. *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then **face to face:** now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."* [1 Corinthians 13:12] *"As for me, I **will behold thy face in righteousness:** I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* [Psalm 17:15] *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for **we shall see him** as he is."* [1 John 3:2]

Now some explain this seeing as 'mental seeing'. It is the perfection of understanding God as human beings are capable of. However we should not dismiss entirely physical seeing, for the Lord Jesus Christ continues in heaven His ministry in revealing God. Heaven is where faith is turned into sight. When we consider the object of faith on earth is the Lord Jesus Christ, so He will be the object of sight in heaven. On earth His glory was veiled, seen only now and then as He saw fit to reveal it, but in heaven it will be the