



KICK OFF

Why is 'purity' not trendy?



KEY VERSE

Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."



BIG IDEA

Christians are people whose hearts have been cleansed through the work of Jesus Christ and therefore can see God. This is reflected in our relationships and conduct.



INVESTIGATE

THE PURE IN HEART Read Matthew 5:8

1. Unfortunately in English the word 'heart' means emotions. When the Bible is talking about 'the heart' what is it talking about?
2. Every place in the Old Testament that talks about purity of heart, it means a heart purified from idols. What do we learn about purity from

Psalm 24: 1—10

Ezekiel 36: 22—32

How does God intend to deal with Israel's uncleanness?

And in the New Testament we read:

Hebrews 10: 22

Mark 7: 14—23

3. Both the Old and New Testament emphasize being clean/pure in heart. What do we learn about how our hearts can be cleansed from Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Hebrews?

Jeremiah 31:33

Ezekiel 36: 26—27

Hebrews 10: 19—22



DIG DEEPER

Lloyd-Jones p 113-114 says of the 'heart' - the heart means the centre of the personality. It does not merely mean the seat of the affections and the emotions. The heart in Scripture includes all three (mind, emotions, will). It is the total man, that is the thing that our Lord emphasizes.

P 115 the word 'pure' has two aspects to it. It can mean singleness. It is open, nothing hidden. You can describe it as sincerity, it means single-minded, or single eyed devotion. One of the best definitions of purity is given in Psalm 86:11. The trouble with us is our divided heart. One part of me wants to know God and worship God and please God; but another part wants something else. Jesus seems to say, 'make it single-minded, let it be whole, let it be one, let it be sincere, let it be entirely free from any hypocrisy. The other meaning of purity is cleansed. "Pure in heart' means to be like the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth' - perfect and spotless and pure and entire.

Why is this necessary? Hebrews 12:14. Without holiness no one can see the Lord. Men and women try to reduce this to a little matter of decency, morality or intellect. But nothing less than the whole person is involved.

What does it mean to see God? The Christian can see God in nature, in the events of history...con'td

4. R.V.G. Tasker not only includes 'heart-righteousness' but says 'the pure in heart are the single-minded, who are free from the tyranny of the divided self, and who do not try to serve God and the world at the same time.' Discuss.
5. What is the consequence of being 'pure in heart'? What does this mean?

...the Christian can have a sense of God's presence...in His gracious dealings with us....But of course, that is a mere nothing as compared with what is yet to be. You are I are meant to enter into the presence of the King of Kings. Do you realize that a day is coming when you are going to see the blessed God face to face?
 ...The only way in which we can have a clean heart is for the Holy Spirit to enter into us and to cleanse it for us. Only His indwelling and working within can purify the heart.....a day is coming when I shall be faultless and blameless, without spot ...are you looking forward to it?



THINK AND APPLY—BENEATH THE VENEER

6. In what ways are we tempted to emphasize the external over the internal?
 - At home
 - At work/study
 - At church
7. Are there any areas in your life in which you are like the Pharisees—doing the right thing outwardly but with the wrong attitude/motivation?
8. What areas do you need to clean up?

PRAISE GOD that He is a holy God.

CONFESS that without God's work in our lives by His Holy Spirit, that we would never see God, because of our sin.

ASK GOD for a sense that our supreme desire and ambition would be to see God.

PRAY ALSO for a greater hunger and thirst to grow in Christlikeness in the church.



Praise God for the challenges raised by God's Word through this study.

Praying for others in your group:



How does this passage apply to our daily life?



For next week's study read Matthew 5:9