



Matthew 5:8

Pure in Heart See God

Moses saw God. The LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend ” (Exodus 33:11). Moses communed with God. He was a friend of God. What a high honor and privilege! But even Moses could not look upon the glory of God and live. Yahweh said in Exodus 33:19-23,

And He said, I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion. But He said, You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live! Then the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen" (Exodus 33:19-23).

No one had looked into the face of God until He became flesh and dwelt among men. The apostle John says, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him" (John 1:18).

However, Moses had an unusual experience with God. When he came down from Mount Sinai Moses didn't know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him (Exodus 34:29). Such shining is always unconscious. His brother Aaron saw that the skin of his face shone, and they became afraid to come near him (v. 30). When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and speak to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded, the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him (vv. 33-35).

A general irradiation and illumination radiated from the face of Moses. His whole face was irradiated in a strange, wonderful and unusual manner in which those familiar with him had never seen before. The Hebrew word is used for a sunrise. This spiritual illumination for Moses was so mighty, so powerful that it irradiated his countenance. His spirit had entered into a new fellowship with God. His whole personal being was mastered, captured and illuminated by fellowship with God. He was supremely conscious of God.

King David asked the age-old question, Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? Then he proceeded to answer it, He who has clean hands and a pure heart . . . (Psalm 24:3-4). Jesus said the spiritually prosperous shall see God.

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THE SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS ARE PURE IN HEART

Jesus said, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matthew 5:8). That is what Christianity is all about. The gospel of Jesus Christ is concerned about the condition of the heart and our seeing God.

"Blessed are the pure in heart"

The Pharisees in Jesus day, much like legalists in our day, were scrupulously concerned with the external, ritual purification. They ignored the inside. They kept the letter of the law, but the heart was unclean. Jesus was not concerned with religious rituals but the defiling influences of sin upon the inner man (Matt. 23:25, 28). Out of the heart proceeds . . . Jesus went on to emphasize evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies, etc. The condition of the heart was the center of all His teachings. Everything comes from the heart.

The word "heart" refers to the center and source of the whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition. It is the place where we make our moral decisions. It is the computer center or control room of our personality. The heart represents the whole of our inner state, thought and will as well as emotions. It is the center and source of the whole personal life, with its thinking, feeling and volition. Psychologically it is the seat of man's combined energies, the focus of his personal life, the seat of the rational as well as the emotional and volitional elements in human life. This is the center of the moral and religious life of the individual. The spiritual influence and activity have their origin in the heart of man.

Jesus is concerned that the very center of our being is pure. He demanded purity of heart. He stated that this is the core of the problem with man. It is not his circumstances but the center of his personality where problems develop.

The result of this kind of purity is that they shall see God. "

The word "pure" has the root idea of one that is being cleansed, free from impure mixtures, without blemish, spotless. The basic idea is single-mindedness. The pure in heart have clarified their values, and have pure motives. There are no hidden agendas, no double motives, and no self interests. They declare with all of their heart, "I can do nothing else so help me God." There is a singleness of mind as to motives of service. The pure in heart is completely loyal to God because cleansing of the heart has taken place. They are free of dishonesty and deceit.

The pure in heart have an intimate fellowship with God which can come only from a personal encounter with Christ. It is not a once in a lifetime, or once in a great while, but a daily surrender to Christ as lord of your life.

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A religious leader asked Jesus one day, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law? And He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment'" (Matthew 22:36-38).

If your relationship with God is right you will love Him with your total being. The pure in heart is one in whom there is no deceit, but genuine honest, open transparency before God and men. The primary idea is sincerity with God. Motives and goals are not divided when the heart is pure. There is a single-minded focus on the kingdom of God. The pure in heart do not try to serve God and self at the same time. There is a clear motive and loyalty to God. The goal of the pure in heart is to please God alone. Therefore the thoughts and emotions are focused on a right relationship with Him. Their only interest is to serve God with complete, total sincere devotion to Him.

When we have such a relationship with God we are free to take off the masks and enter into His holy presence as His welcome friend.

Opposite of the pure in heart

The *opposite* of a pure heart is one that is divided. Without singleness of purpose it is impure. The double-minded person tries to serve both God and the world system. The apostle James in 4:8 wrote: "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

The divided self tries to serve two opposing masters at the same time. The double-minded are blind spiritually and their loyalties are divided and therefore cannot see God.

Pure in heart is closely related to faith in James 1:5-8. "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

There are no hidden agendas when the heart is pure. There is no ulterior motive in service of the Master. It is focused with one clear objective to glorify Him alone.

Is there a singleness of purpose? Read what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-24. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

When was the last time you tried to walk in both directions at the same time? Why try to do it spiritually?

First John 2:15-16 reminds us, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."

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Our purity of heart is threatened by anything that causes us to lose our "first love" relationship with God. Jeremiah said, The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (17:9). Our trouble is in the heart. It is wicked and it is deceitful.

How do we lose that first love? Anytime we love money or things more than the Lord will break our fellowship with Him. Sinful, forbidden cravings and lust can capture your first love relationship. You can fall in love with what you have, or with what you are able to do. When our love is not pure toward God, our fellowship with Him is broken. Our relationships with other believers reflect upon our relationship with God.

Jesus demanded that we have pure hearts, open, honest, genuine, nothing hidden, with sincerity and single – mindedness. Can you give some examples of such people?

EXAMPLES OF THE PURE IN HEART

We have already noted Moses who By faith left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen (Hebrews 11:27).

Isaiah experienced inner cleansing

The Prophet Isaiah saw a thrice-holy God sitting on the throne of eternity. Isaiah 6:1-7 describes that personal experience.

"In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory. And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said, Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said, Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven. "

Isaiah experienced cleaning of his heart by the Lord God. The apostle John helps us to understand Who Isaiah saw in John 12:41. These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him referring to the preincarnate Word of God.

David experienced a catharsis in his own heart

Origen said, Every sin stains the soul. King David is the only person in the Bible who is described as a "man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22). When we turn to the Psalms we see the man who saw God in his heart because God had cleansed him. Psalms thirty-two and fifty-one beautifully illustrate this cleansing of the soul.

How blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered! (32:1). Oh, how blessed many times over, or How blessed many times over, blessing upon blessing, upon blessing. We could read, Deeply blessed, satisfied, and marvelously blessed over and over again. That was Yahweh's cure for David's sin of murder and adultery. Only God can cleanse like that!

In Psalm fifty-one King David shares the cleansing of his heart. The imagery is powerfully set against the ugliness of filthy sin. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin (v. 2). We can

ugliness of filthy sin. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin (v. 2). We can hear the pounding, stamping and vigorous rubbing of the clothes against the stones to loosen the dirt.

Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom. Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow (vv. 6-7). Only after cleansing has taken place can he hear the joy and gladness of the LORD. Hide Thy face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquity (v. 9). Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me (v. 10). Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit (v. 12).

God is not interested in the sacrifices and burnt offerings of our modern society. He is not interested in our religious platitudes and intense religious emotions without a pure heart. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise (v. 17). What God longed for in David's heart is the same thing He desires of us. Then we too, like David, can Be glad in the LORD and rejoice you righteous ones, and shout for joy all you who are upright in heart (32:11). This is a theme you will find through out the Psalms.

What made David a "man after God's own heart" was his single-minded focus. He was a Jesus described the pure in heart. He loved the LORD God with all of his mind, with all of his heart and all of his soul.

The apostle Paul experienced a change of heart

The Apostle Paul saw Jesus as one born prematurely out of time. After giving evidence of those who saw the resurrected Jesus the apostle Paul then says, And last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also (1 Corinthians 15:9). When did that happen? Acts 9:3-7 records the event.

Paul was approaching the city of Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him and the impact caused him to fall to the ground. He heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? Paul said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do. The men who traveled with him stood speechless. They heard the voice but saw no one. Paul alone had an encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus and it radically revolutionized his life. From that time on with singleness of purpose he lived Christ. He had a singleness of purpose to serve Christ and his life was characterized as being in Christ. It was so radical for Paul he could say, If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17a; cf. Philippians 3:8-16).

Jesus is our best example

If we are going to be pure in heart it means we are going to be like Jesus Christ. He had an undivided heart. He alone has loved the LORD God with all His heart, and with all His soul and with all His mind. Jesus is our best example of a single minded pure heart. He was set on doing the will of God and He stayed in the shadow of the cross during His whole ministry. Listen to Him praying in the Garden of Gethsemane when He was facing the cup of the wrath of God the next day. He was praying, "Not My will, Your will be done." In Matthew 6:33 Jesus got to the heart of our problem when He said to His disciples, Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. "

The Psalmist said in Psalm 19:14, Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer. "

THE SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS SEE GOD

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The impure in heart never see God, here or in eternity. God unveils Himself to the pure in heart like to the apostle John on Patmos in Revelation. Even now we see a glimpse of Him who is invisible, but one day we will see Him as He is.

The eschatological future is clearly in mind. Those who have been justified by faith in Jesus Christ and cleaned in His precious blood will be ushered into His holy presence the moment they pass from this earthly life. It is our blessed hope to bow in His holy presence, cleaned, washed and robed in His pure righteousness.

Like Moses we will have fleeting shadows of those wonderful experiences of His presence with us, but to see God as Jesus is in the presence of the heavenly Father is impossible for us to experience in this life. It is something that is reserved for that day when we "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is" (1 John 3:2). That we will not experience while on this earth. It is available to the believer on in the consummation when Jesus comes for us or we die in Christ. The pure in heart will be ushered into His presence.

The pure in heart will be where God is, to see Him in the full radiance of His glory.

The possibility is ours

Jesus said it is possible to have a direct, intimate personal knowledge of God. God is imminent. Wherever we are God is here. He is at work all about us right now if we have eyes to see Him. When He has prepared our hearts He invites us to join Him in what He is doing. We can see Him at work when someone asks us what is it that makes you different from other people. God is at work when someone asks how can I know Jesus Christ as my Savior.

God can be seen as He sustains us with His grace in time of deep personal needs or in time of crisis. The Holy Spirit bears witness in our hearts of His presence with us. We are never out of His presence anywhere on the face of this earth. I in you, and You in Me, are words of encouragement from Jesus to every believer.

The apostle Paul wrote, "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

The child of God who has a pure heart has nothing to hide, nothing to defend and nothing to explain. He is free to be honest, open, genuine and transparent with God and men. His face is unveiled before God and people. He advances from glory to glory until that blessed day when Christ comes and he is like Him through all eternity. Even so, come Lord Jesus. ”

When do we see God?

We see God when we have *fellowship* with God based upon personal faith in Jesus Christ (cf. 1 John 1:1-3, 6-7). Sin breaks our fellowship, but not our son-ship. In the context of this marvelous fellowship with God John reminds us that we have a bar of soap that cleanses when that fellowship is broken. All self effort at cleaning is futile. Only God alone can cleanse the heart because there is only one detergent that will cleanse.

If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His son, cleanses us from all sin (v. 7). This is the only way fellowship can be restored. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us for all unrighteousness (v. 9).

We see God when we *worship* Him with a pure heart (1 Jn. 1:8-10). That was true of David, Isaiah and the disciples. There is that sense of His presence of knowing Him and sensing that He is near. When the heart is pure we see Him in our own experiences, in His gracious dealings with us in His grace and mercy. As we grow in His grace we see Him in ways we have never experienced Him before. Like Paul, Now we see through a glass, darkly. One day however we will see Him face to face.

The pure in heart will see Jesus when He *comes* in power and glory! *What a day that will be!* (Rev. 1:7, 9ff; I John 3:1-3; 4:4-6; Jn. 17:24; Rev. 22:3-4). It is a life lived in full fellowship with God that begins now in the new birth and reaches its fulfillment at the consummation when Christ returns. Seeing God implies a direct and immediate knowledge of God.

One of my favorite verses of Scripture is 1 John 3:2-3. We are already called the children of God because of the great love the Father has bestowed upon us. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope *fixed* on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Not only will we see Him, but also we will be like Him! In Christ we will at last attain God's original intention for mankind. What awesome grace.

One day every eye shall see Him

The Bible teaches that every eye will see Him, whether we plan to, or don't want to. Both saved and the lost will see Him. Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen (Revelation 1:7).

Moreover, because Jesus was obedient and humbled Himself even to die on the cross, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 1:8-11). We have the opportunity today of bowing before Him as a volitional choice. But there is a day coming when we not have a choice. He will come as a sovereign King and every knee will bow and confess Him before men.

Have you seen God?

The pure in heart have come under conviction about their poverty of spirit and are mourning over the impurity of their hearts. Cleansing of heart comes only by means of the shed blood of the Lamb of God. "If we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). This is the only way to a pure heart.

Do you have an intimate love personal relationship with Him?

Do you know why we don't have a clearer vision of God? Our hearts aren't naturally pure. We by nature tend to be double minded. The pure in heart long to hear Jesus say, "Well done my good and faithful servant!" The pure in heart "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." The pure in heart are willing to ask themselves what is my motive of service? What is my purpose in serving Christ? There are no hidden agendas, no double purposes. They come with pure motives, high and holy principles and singleness of purpose. Ask God to reveal to you anything in your life that is causing you to lose your first love for Him. Mourn over it and God to give you strength to overcome it in your life. Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those

(2 Corinthians 7:1). Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart (2 Timothy 2:22).

We see Him as we *grow in His love and grace*. With pureness of heart the Holy Spirit removes the veil of our unbelief.

Let's go back to the opening illustration in the life of Moses for a closing moment. Recall how Moses put the veil over his face until he went in to speak with God? Note what happened when that glory faded! The apostle Paul tells us Moses . . . used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away (2 Corinthians 3:13). Ouch! Only Christ can remove that veil.

Whenever a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. It is the veil of the heart. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (v. 18).

Why did Moses keep the veil on his face after the glory had faded? Moses was afraid the Israelites would see the glory had faded! He hid the faded glory behind a veil, a façade. He did not let anyone see what was actually going on behind the veil. It was a veil of pride. It was a problem of having an unclean heart. We think we can do something for God and our eyes are blinded to the fading glory and hearts are impure. We project an image and hide our real selves behind the veil of pride and hypocrisy. We use double entry spiritual book keeping to cover our pride. Our veil of unrighteousness is an impure heart.

Those who with a simple, undivided heart seek the kingdom of God shall see Him. Jesus prayed that we might behold His glory (John 17:24). Oh, Spirit of God sanctify our hearts that we may see You today. Help us to Keep our heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23).

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