

“Blessed Are The Pure In Heart”

Introduction. In our study of the beatitudes, we come to what is undoubtedly one of the greatest utterances found anywhere in the Bible. As we leave here this morning, having studied the meaning of the words, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” we will realize that this beatitude can only be approached with a sense of awe and inadequacy.

Not only is the word of God pure, but its very intent is to purify and sanctify the heart of man to be a dwelling place for God. The whole thrust and direction of the word is summed up in 1 Timothy 1:5 and Peter explains both our initial purification and its extension (1 Peter 1:22-23).

This is the ultimate goal of every Christian. To “see God” is the whole purpose of religion. The order of these beatitudes have helped us in our understanding. The first three beatitudes are concerned with the importance of being aware of our need -- poor in spirit, mourning because of our sinfulness, and meek as the result of a true understanding of our nature. Then comes the statement of God’s provision: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst.” From that satisfaction, the results of “being filled” are mercifulness, purity of heart, and peacemaking. The inevitable result, as we will see, is persecution. The beatitudes lead up to the statement about hungering and thirsting and then describes the results that follow. In the first three we are going up one side of the mountain. We reach the summit in the fourth and then we come down on the other side.

I. “Blessed Are The Pure In Heart”

- A. The gospel’s emphasis is the heart. The heart was the whole focus of Christ’s teaching. The Lord undoubtedly meant the heart when He condemned the Pharisees for having only the outside clean (Matthew 23:25-31).
- B. Faith is ultimately not only a matter of doctrine or understanding or of intellect; it is the condition of the heart. All of these are vitally important, but the true theme is the heart. Your heart is the real “you.” In order to control the man, you have to control the heart (Proverbs 23:7; Mark 7:21-23)! The heart is involved in every act of rational man, and God must be enthroned in your heart!
- C. The heart has three components.
 1. The intellect.
 - a) The heart thinks (Genesis 6:5), believes (Romans 10:10), and understands (Matthew 13:15).
 - b) It is converted by faith (Romans 1:16; 10:17; Acts 15:9).
 2. The affection.
 - a) The heart desires (Romans 10:1-3), loves (Mark 12:30), and trusts (Proverbs 3:5).

- b) It is converted by repentance (John 14:15; James 4:8; 2 Corinthians 7:10).
 - 3. The will.
 - a) The heart intends (Hebrews 4:12), purposes (2 Corinthians 9:7), and obeys (Romans 6:16-18).
 - b) It is converted by baptism (Romans 6:1-5, 17-18).
- D. To have a biblical heart, it has to be undivided in its allegiance (Matthew 12:25, 30). A person who tries to love God and the world at the same time is in conflict. He is in constant turmoil. One part of him wants to know, worship, and please God, while the other part wants something else (Romans 7:23). Love is pulling him in two directions: love of the world and love of Christ. Man is not at peace with himself or God until he purifies his heart in undivided love and singleness of devotion to God.
- E. The word "pure" is from the Greek word *katharos* and is used 28 times in the New Testament. It is translated by such terms as "pure," "clean," "clear," and "innocent." It is used of physical cleanness (Matthew 27:59), of people fit for service and worship as an offering (John 13:10; James 1:27), of the heart and conscience being pure and clean (1 Timothy 1:5; 3:9), of something that is fit for the Christian to use (Romans 14:20), or innocent of any crime (Acts 18:6; 20:26).
- F. The words associated with *katharos* mean "genuine," "unmixed," or "unadulterated." These words describe something that is pure from every tint and mixture of evil. It could be said as, "Blessed are those whose motives are absolutely unmixed, whose minds are utterly sincere, and who are completely single-minded."
- G. This is a demanding beatitude. Those who do everything for God are to be congratulated. To be "pure in heart" one must think on the right things (Philippians 4:8; cf. James 1:13-15), love the right things (Colossians 3:1-2; cf. 1 John 2:15), and purpose the right things (Philippians 3:13-14; i.e., not putting ourselves in the position to sin [children alone at home, man flirting with a woman at work, watching a movie with filthy language, etc.]). The Jews of Jesus' day emphasized ceremonial purity, and moralists of our day emphasize moral purity. But Jesus went beneath it all and stressed purity of heart, for when the heart is pure, the whole life will be pure (2 Corinthians 7:1; James 4:8).

II. **"For They Shall See God"**

- A. The text says, "They shall see God." There is a natural longing on man's part to see the face of God (Exodus 33:18-23; John 14:8; 1 John 3:2). Does this mean only in the future sense? There is a way in

which this reward can refer to the blessings of the kingdom now and throughout eternity (Colossians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 15:24).

- B. The word "see" is frequently translated as "discern, understand, experience, possess, or enjoy" (John 3:3, 36). Therefore, to see God is to enter into a relationship with Him, to possess His kingdom, and enjoy His blessings.
- C. There are three distinct kinds of sight.
 - 1. Physical -- This sight enables us to distinguish material objects.
 - 2. Mental -- This sight enables man to discover the laws of nature.
 - 3. Spiritual -- This sight enables man to clearly see the unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18).
- D. The "pure in heart" see God in three senses.
 - 1. They see Him in physical creation (Psalm 19:1). They see it not as the heathen; i.e., simply as the world being created by many gods, but as the Father's creation (Romans 1:20).
 - 2. They see God in His manifold blessings (James 1:17), and in His providential guidance (Matthew 10:29-30; Hebrews 13:5-6).
 - 3. They see God in Christ who dwells in them through the holy word (John 14:9-11; 15:1-5; 2 Corinthians 9:8).
- E. The pure in heart possess spiritual discernment and with the eyes of their understanding they obtain clear views of the divine character and perceive the excellency of His attributes. When the eye is single, the whole body is full of light (Matthew 6:22). These are the people who will be eternally saved.

Conclusion. The fierce fight that is going on in the environmental world kind of symbolizes mankind gone awry. Men in wisdom make every effort to clean up the physical universe. We hear the cry, "Clean up the earth or it will perish." Our first concern should be cleaning the heart. This earth is only here for a short time, but the standing of a pure heart lasts forever (Proverbs 4:23). Please note that we are not talking about a perfect heart. Everyone has sinned (Galatians 3:22). Also, there are Christians who, having been forgiven, do not live perfect lives (1 John 1:8). I cannot purify and cleanse my heart in an absolute sense, but I can stay out of the gutters of life and have my heart in tune with the love, grace, goodness, and will of God (Colossians 3:5; 1 John 3:2-3).

The time is short and we do not have long to prepare. This life is so fleeting (Job 9:25-26). Are you looking forward to the feast? Are you preparing for it? Does it scare you to think that you may be spending your time on what will not be of any value to you in the judgment? Have you set the Lord before you (Psalm 16:8)? If you have not and want to change, then we have the perfect opportunity now.