



# VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

## SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS



## Let's Get Real!

Tim Badal | November 3, 2013 | Matthew 5:8

The Upside-down Kingdom Series, Lessons Learned from the Sermon on the Mount, Part 6

Turn in your Bibles to [Matthew 5](#). We're going to look at this passage under the heading "Let's Get Real!" As we've been focusing on the Beatitudes, Jesus has been challenging us to turn our attitudes upside-down. He starts His Sermon on the Mount with these eight character qualities that every follower of Jesus Christ is called to have. He calls us to see ourselves through God's eyes. He urges us to...

- ...be poor in spirit ([5:3](#)).
- ...mourn over our sin ([5:4](#)).
- ...be meek ([5:5](#)).
- ...hunger and thirst for righteousness ([5:6](#)).
- ...show mercy to those around us ([5:7](#)).

These attitudes will be tried and tested soon when we pivot from attitudes to actions. Jesus calls each of us to live out these attitudes on a daily basis, no matter what our circumstances are.

Jesus starts His sermon with the Beatitudes because He doesn't want us to think that if we just do enough good things we'll be okay. Jesus wants us to understand that if He is not ruling our attitudes He will never rule our actions. Some of you right now are wondering why you do the things that you do. You're struggling with sin and wondering, "Why am I struggling with these things? Why does temptation seem to befall me at every turn?" For many of us the answer is that we have not changed our attitudes in light of our relationship with God; therefore our actions are flawed. Because of this reality, Jesus now turns to the Beatitude of being pure in heart.

This attitude of being pure in heart begins at our relationship with God and then leads to our relationships with each other. Being pure in heart will not be easy. If you've been around the church for very long, you know that we have some handicaps along the way. We are sinners. Before we throw this Kingdom attitude by the wayside, we need to remember it is through this pursuit of purity that we have the wonderful privilege of seeing God. As followers of Jesus Christ, one of the grandest pursuits in this world is to see God. If we desire to see God—to experience His presence in this world and in the life to come—He says we need to pursue a life of purity.

Let's look at our passage. I'm going to start at the beginning of the chapter to give us a context of where we've been and then we will end with our specific passage in verse eight. Here is [Matthew 5:1-8](#):

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Let's pray.

Father God, we come before You and we want to see You. We know we are without hope if we don't see You. Stories of sickness, illness and death would leave us hopeless if we did not know that apart from this life and all its struggles, there is a life in eternity with You when we will gaze upon the beauty of the one and only true God. I pray that we would embrace that hope. To embrace that hope, we are called to live upright and pure lives, so I ask that You would teach us about this purity. I pray that I would get out of the way because I am an impure person; I have no right to stand and speak about such things. I'm glad that the Author of this sermon is not a man but is the Son of God. Thank You that You came, were one of us and lived a life of purity so that You could preach about purity. May we see You in all Your radiance and beauty. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Before we get to [Matthew 5:8](#), turn over to Matthew 7. We're going to fast forward to the last phrases of the Sermon on the Mount. At the end of His sermon, what would Jesus' scorecard say? [Matthew 7:28-29](#) tells us, "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."

We'll talk about this passage more later but for now we see that the people responded with great astonishment because of what Jesus said. They were blown away by His words. Every good preacher desires people to be astonished by his teaching. Sadly, none of us can astonish people the way Jesus did.

So what was it about Jesus' teaching that astonished people? [Verse 29](#) says that He astonished them because He spoke with authority unlike the scribes. This begs the question, "Wait a minute, weren't the scribes and the teachers of the law authority figures? Weren't they always telling people what they could and couldn't do? Weren't they always giving a litany of regulations? Didn't they speak with authority?" Why was Jesus' teaching different enough for the crowd to be taken aback? The answer is this: Jesus spoke with authority because He spoke as a real individual. His authority was most clearly seen in His Person, not the list of do's and don'ts that the Pharisees and chief priests were always giving.

In other words, Jesus was completely transparent. Jesus was real. There was no pretense, fakery or hypocrisy. There were no hidden motives or agendas to His teaching. Jesus believed what He taught and He lived in line with the will of God. In other words, He was a Preacher Who not only saw fit to teach certain things but to live them. How refreshing that was in Jesus' day! He was real with the people. So when we read His words we see that not only was He excellent in articulating truths, He also served as an example to the people. His teaching created a desire for each listener to personally experience those truths.

When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," those listeners who had given their lives to Christ and His teachings no doubt said, "I want to know how to do that. I want that Jesus. I want to see God in a way that I'm not seeing Him now." The sermon we are studying is 100% truth—100% Jesus. It's unmixed and uncontaminated. Jesus was real; He didn't fake His way through life or play games with people. Yet this is one of our greatest struggles as followers of Jesus Christ. We perpetually find ourselves playing games with God and with one another. We are never transparent. We're never real about our sins, struggles, hurts and pains. We keep those things behind masks.

If you would argue that this isn't true, I challenge you to go to a small group and experiment with this. After you enjoy the coffee and fellowship and get down to prayer time, watch what happens if someone opens up about their sin or struggles. You will hear a pin drop. You will see people's jaws go to the floor. Why? Because people don't talk that way. We mistakenly think that the way you make it through the Christian life is to not be transparent. We all recognize we're sinners but we just don't want to tell anybody what our sins are.

So then we're not real with one another and we have this dilemma. We're all striving for the same thing—hopefully that's purity—and we're all failing miserably in it, but you would never know because the last thing we want to do is share our struggles with one another. Then we wonder why we have all kinds of issues with one another, with our spouses and with our kids.

We see from the Bible that this game of masks and hiding ourselves began in the Garden of Eden. Before sin entered the world, man and woman danced around naked in front of each other and in front of their God. There was nothing to hide. There was nothing to be ashamed of, nothing that hurt the relationship in any way. But the second that sin entered the world, mankind went running for the trees to get away from God. They started covering themselves up because they were ashamed and wanted to conceal their shame.

So many of us want to conceal our sins, hurt and pain from God and from those around us. We struggle with being real and honest with the God Who already knows our issues and struggles. At the heart of this battle, Jesus comes in and says, "I want you to be pure in heart."

Being pure of heart strikes at the center of our struggle with not being real with one another or with our God. There are four things we need to look at to help us be real:

The Concept Behind the Word

The Counterfeits to Real Purity

The Challenges We Face

The Biblical Channel that Leads to Purity

## The Concept Behind the Word

What does the word "purity" mean? Many of us think we understand this word. You might say, "Tim, I've been a Christian for a while. I know what purity is. We don't need to belabor this so let's end early." I didn't fully understand this idea of purity until I spent some time studying it for this sermon. This purity is not a simple cut-and-dried idea but rather has a deep and profound concept within it that we need to understand.

This term "pure" is the Greek word *katharos* from which we get the English word "catharsis." Catharsis literally means the cleansing of the mind and emotions. Scholars suggest that this Greek word "purity" has two meanings. The first one is well known but the second one is not.

### *Free From Contamination*

The first meaning of purity is to have something free from contamination. You're probably thinking, "Yeah Tim, I've got that. That's easy. We don't want our pure things to have anything contaminating them." This meaning of purity comes as a result of cleansing something from dirt, filth and contamination. It was used three different ways:

- It was used when speaking of metals that were refined in a fire to remove all impurities.
- It was used when speaking of dirty laundry that had been washed clean.
- It was used when speaking of wheat that had been sifted so that the pure wheat was set apart from the chaff and tares.

So we have this idea of purity meaning to be like God. Jesus is saying, "I want you to be pure just as I am pure." Later in this text Jesus will say that we are called to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. That is a high standard and it isn't just for a certain time, because He says, "I want you to be pure in heart." The idea here is that our hearts are the mainframes or motherboards of all that we do. So Jesus is saying, "Your purity is not just to be seen on Sunday and then you can do whatever you want Monday through Saturday. It's not just to be seen when you're around Christians. It should be seen when you are around all people. Purity isn't something that you can put on and take off. Your purity should be seen in all that you do."

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones puts it this way, "Blessed are those who are pure, not only on the surface but in the center of their being and at the source of every activity."

Take a moment, think about this last week and ask yourself, “Have I been pure in heart this week?” Is everything that you were part of pure? Was everything you did—not only on the surface but at the very center of who you are—saturated with purity? Every activity? Every decision you made? Every word that you said? Every action? As followers of Jesus Christ we are called to pursue this kind of purity.

Why are we called to pursue such a high standard of purity? David tells us in [Psalm 24:3-4](#) that the only way we will experience God is when we pursue purity. You can’t have God and be impure. It would be like me saying, “I want a great relationship with Amanda but I’m going to have some girlfriends on the side.” I would never have fellowship with Amanda if there were girlfriends on the side. I probably wouldn’t be alive!

So we begin to think that we can have a relationship with God but at the same time we have all these other mistresses inside the heart and all these other things going on in our lives. God says, “This purity has to be part of your life if you want to experience God.” In [Psalm 24:3](#), David asks the questions, “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?” Who can experience God? Who can see God? David answers his questions in [verse four](#), “He who has clean hands and a pure heart...”

### *Fully Consistent*

Being pure also means being fully consistent. This word “purity” refers to something that is unmixed; there is no double allegiance. [Warren Wiersbe](#) writes that when Jesus speaks of purity the basic idea refers to “integrity, a singleness of heart as opposed to any kind of duplicity or a divided heart.” Jesus spoke of this purity in [Matthew 6:24](#) when He said, “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.” Jesus is telling us that our purity is seen through a single-hearted devotion for God.

When we start playing both sides of the fence, James tells us that we become double-minded. He goes on to say, “a double-minded man [is] unstable in all his ways” ([James 1:8](#)). Some of us are unstable because at one moment we choose God and the next moment we don’t. We choose God when it’s convenient. When it’s right, we’re moved in our spirits to do so and we get all excited about God. Then we leave that setting where we’re excited about pursuing God and the things of the world come into play. We think, “That TV show sure sounds funny.” Or we have friends with no-good connections who aren’t helping us walk closer to God; they’re pulling us down. We think, “But they’re fun to be around.”

The things of the world—TV shows, things on the internet and in magazines, etc.—are drawing us in yet, we want to follow God. God says you can’t love both things ([Matthew 6:24](#)). You’re going to despise one and love the other so you need to make a choice

Some of us need to make a choice about Whom or what we are going to serve. David tells us how we can pursue God and what that means in [Psalm 15:1-5](#):

O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?  
Who shall dwell on your holy hill?  
He who walks blameless and does what is right  
and speaks truth in his heart;  
who does not slander with his tongue  
and does no evil to his neighbor,  
nor takes up a reproach against his friend;  
in whose eyes a vile person is despised,  
but who honors those who fear the Lord;  
who swears to his own hurt and does not change;  
who does not put out his money at interest  
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.  
He who does these things shall never be moved.

Once we pursue a life free from sin and the contaminations of this world and become fully consistent in our allegiance to God, we are going to do something. Attitude will dictate action. So if you want to know, “Am I pursuing purity?” look at your

actions. Are your actions consistent with those of a pure life? If they're not don't just blame the actions—blame the attitude that is behind them.

Jesus said we'll be blessed. How will we be blessed? Let's put these two definitions of purity together. [Matthew 5:8](#) says, "Blessed is the person..." What kind of person does Jesus mean? The person who has been fully cleansed in character by Christ is the one who will be blessed. That's the idea of no contamination. This is a person who looks the same way in public as in private. If we have been cleansed by Christ Himself, there should be no difference between how we look in public and how we look in private.

Basketball coach John Wooden once said, "Character is what you are when no one is looking." What kind of character do you have? Are you the same way today as you will be tomorrow? Are you the same way around unbelievers as you are around believers? Are you the same way at church as you are in front of your TV?

In a nutshell Jesus is telling us that we need to be single-minded in our commitment because we have been made inwardly pure. Jesus has saved us and made us pure on His account, therefore our gratitude should cause us to live like Christ every moment of the day, no matter who is around or what's taking place.

## The Counterfeits to Real Purity

We need to understand that Jesus wasn't alone in speaking about purity. Purity was a hot topic during Jesus' days. When Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure," many people said, "Alright! Yeah, this is what we're talking about." In first-century Palestine, purity was a big thing. Everybody was trying to understand, "What does it mean to be pure?"

But notice that what Jesus preached is so different from what I would like to call the "counterfeits" of purity that were being preached at that time. Jesus was preaching the hot-button issue of the day. While there was cohesion on the question of purity, Jesus shocked people because His definition of purity and the way to achieve it was very different from what everyone else was saying.

### *The Pharisees*

When the Pharisees spoke of purity, their Beatitude would sound like this: "Blessed are the outwardly clean for they shall see God." These people believed that it was the job of God-followers to make themselves clean by doing certain things. Some of these things were God-given and good but others were manmade and foolish.

The Pharisees were notorious for judging other people. "Look at how clean I am and look at how dirty you are." That is why they would always bring dirty people to the forefront. The Pharisees believed that the pursuit of purity allowed them to judge others. Why? They thought, "I've made myself pure. Why haven't you? Look at all that I've done. Why can't you do the same thing?"

They had made themselves clean and now they could judge others as a result.

But Jesus had a word for them. He said in [Matthew 23:25-26](#) that the purity of the Pharisees was like cleaning the outside of the cup while leaving the inside completely dirty. We would never drink out of a cup that looks clean on the outside but has terrible, gross and sick things on the inside. But that was the Pharisees' religion: clean the outside and make sure everybody sees that clean outside. Who cares if you're rotten to the core inside?

Some of us have bought into that Pharisaical kind of living. Monday through Saturday we're filled with all types of debauchery and sin but just as long as we show up clean at church on Sunday, everything is okay. Just as long as I have enough "Christianese" and can speak the language of a sanctified individual I'll be okay. I can enjoy the things of God on Sunday and then run back to the things of the world that lead me to sin and debauchery for the rest of the week. Some of us are living in that perpetual cycle. If that is you, you've bought into the Pharisees' counterfeit idea of purity.

## *The Zealots*

The zealots' Beatitude about purity would sound like this: "Blessed are those who pursue purity in government and country." These people thought the way to purity was found through a nation that would give tacit acknowledgement to God. They saw the pinnacle of purity being a nation that was ruled by right and pure people who would pass right and pure laws.

If you think we are looking at ideas unique to first-century Palestine, you're mistaken. There are Pharisees in our day and within our church. There are zealots in our day and within our church as well. Some of us think that purity can be found by changing Washington D.C. We think that if we clean up Washington and all the politicians and start passing the right laws then purity will come. The more pure our nation becomes then the more pure we will become. We think it would be grand to plaster the Ten Commandments over every billboard, at every school and at every town hall. We would love to have people who don't acknowledge God open their days in school with prayer.

These things don't make a nation pure. Would they make us feel better? Yes, but they don't make us pure. What makes a nation pure is when God strikes at the heart of a nation through the hearts of the people and they are humbled because of their sin. They see God as pure, righteous and good; they bow the knee and exalt Jesus as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

Be careful that you don't start putting yourself under the teaching of pundits and radio hosts and their ideas of purity. I don't mean to name names, but as knowledgeable as people like Rush Limbaugh and Glenn Beck may be, we need to put ourselves under the purity of Jesus Christ. We can't be zealots who think purity comes through changing the nation around us. Jesus made it clear that the only kingdom we are to pursue is not the United States of America but we are to, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" ([Matthew 6:33](#)). This is a synonym for purity. When we pursue God, that is when other people will begin to follow God.

## *The Essenes*

The Essenes were people who found purity. Their Beatitude for purity would have been: "Blessed are those who isolate themselves from all the things of this world." They were totally at odds with the zealots because the zealots wanted to engage the culture, even if it was in an odd way. The Essenes said, "You find purity by ridding yourself of all involvement with the world and by isolating yourself." At first, they just isolated themselves from those people who didn't believe the same way they did. Then during Jesus' time they started building communes. They would go outside of the major cities, find a place where nobody was and worship there together. They said, "This is the way you find purity. You have to leave your home and your family. You have to come alongside some other devoted worshipers and you will find purity together when you get away from the world."

Some of us have bought into this way of thinking. Maybe we haven't left and gone into communal living but we live as if we are in a commune. We're so isolated from the world. We think, "The world is an impure place. If I engage the world I will become impure, so I am going to stay away from the world. I'll just do my thing: I'll hang out with Christians, go to worship and do all of that. But when it comes to my neighbors or other outside influences, I am going to set myself totally and utterly apart from those things."

Here's the problem: Jesus says that the world will see purity through us being salt and light to the world and neither salt nor light work from a distance. We cannot isolate ourselves from the world. We are submerged in the world; it's all around us. We're in it; we're just not of it ([John 15:19](#); [Romans 12:2](#)). Some of us are in the world and of the world. That's not right. We are to be in it but we're not to have bought into its way of life. Neither should we be out of the world and not of the world. We're to act as salt and light and to do that we must be in the world. We are to live differently—live like Jesus—and when we do, people will see purity.

Jesus did not save us from afar. He made His dwelling among us. The Greek word for dwelling (*skēnoō*) is the idea that He pitched His tent among us. If that's how Jesus saved individuals, then that's how we'll be part of saving those around us.

All of these ideas about purity are counterfeits. Here's the problem: all of them start with, "I can pursue purity on my own. I can get it my own way." That is how all manmade religions begin. Even within the Christian religion, some denominations will mistakenly say, "All you have to do is work hard enough. If you work hard enough then you'll be pure." So we find people

who just keep working, working, working and they never get anywhere. Are they seeing God? Are they experiencing God? No, they are left wanting more.

## *The Challenges We Face*

If we're going to pursue purity we have to understand there is a challenge before us. When we hear, "Blessed are the pure in heart," we immediately think, "How can I get that?" The answer is we can't. We cannot get purity on our own. Oh, you can try—and people do, they try and try and try—but you will never get it on your own.

We will never get purity on our own because we have a heart condition. Our hearts have a problem that is far too great for us to overcome on our own. The Bible tells us two things about our hearts in [Jeremiah 17:9](#). It's as if we sit down in the doctor's office and Jesus comes in as the Great Physician and looks at our hearts. He has two things to say about them:

1. "Your heart is a con-artist." Why? God says, "The heart is deceitful above all things."
2. "Your heart is beyond cure—it's desperately sick." He's telling us, "You're in trouble. There is no remedy in this world for that."

Here's the problem: we're so sick that we're dead and our hearts tell us we're not because our hearts are deceitful above all things. They deceive us into thinking everything is okay. We sin and our hearts tell us, "Well, I'm not that bad. I left my wife and kids, I've stolen, I've cheated, I've told lies, I've done this and I've done that—but I'm not as bad as so-and-so." We always default to, "I'm not as bad as Hitler." I wonder who Hitler compared himself to? Maybe he said, "I'm not as bad as Genghis Khan, okay?"

We go to the worst possible person we can think of and our hearts say, "At least I'm not as bad as them." Some of us don't even go as far as Hitler; we just look down the pew. "At least I'm not as bad you-know-who sitting over there. He's a lot worse than I am, so I'm okay and they're not." The heart is deceitful and sick. It's beyond cure.

My heart is grieved by churches that tell people they're okay when they're not. If you came here to be encouraged by things that will make your heart feel good, you came to the wrong place. You'll get the truth but I'm not sure if you'll be encouraged by it. But I want you to listen to what the Bible says; don't turn it off. This is the medicine that will save your life. These are not my words—I want you to notice what the Bible says about the challenge of purity in your heart.

- [Romans 5:12](#) says, "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned." We have had sin all our lives.
- [Romans 5:19](#) says, "...by the one man's [that's Adam] disobedience the many [that's us] were made sinners..."
- [Romans 3:23](#) says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
- [2 Chronicles 6:36](#) says, "...there is no one who does not sin."
- [Isaiah 53:6](#) says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned aside—every one—to his own way."
- [Micah 7:2-4](#) says, "The godly has perished from the earth, and there is no one upright among mankind; they all lie in wait for blood, and each hunts the other with a net. Their hands are on what is evil to do it well; the prince and the judge ask for a bribe, and the great man utters the evil desire of his soul; thus they weave it together. The best of them is like a brier, the most upright of them a thorn hedge."
- [1 John 1:8](#) says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."
- [1 John 1:10](#) says, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

You might ask me, "Tim, are you telling me even deep down inside I'm a sinner?" The Scriptures are telling you this.

- [Mark 7:21-23](#) says, "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."
- [Psalm 5:9](#) says, "For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction; their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue."
- [Titus 1:15](#) says, "To the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled."

What about the little children we have who are so cute? Are they sinful?

- [Ecclesiastes 9:3](#) says, "Also, the hearts of the children of man are full of evil, and madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead."
- [Romans 1:28](#) says, "And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done."
- [Genesis 6:5](#) says, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."
- [John 8:34](#) says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin."
- [Titus 3:3](#) says, "For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another."
- [Galatians 4:8-9](#) says, "Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?"
- [Romans 1:24-25](#) says, "Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen."
- [Ephesians 2:3](#) says, "...we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."
- [Proverbs 21:10](#) says, "The soul of the wicked desires evil."
- [John 8:44](#) quotes Jesus saying this about every one of us apart from Him, "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires."

You might say, "Wow, that's a lot of verses about sin." That's only ten percent of what the Bible says about our hearts. If you're saying, "I'm not as bad as I could be," my response is, "Bologna! Hogwash!" We are sinners to the very core. We might not live out all of that sin because of the common grace of God but we are sinners. Apart from the almighty grace and mercy of God none of us will see Him because we're all impure.

So what do we need to do? We need to get real with ourselves, take off the masks and acknowledge, "I'm a sinner and I'm in deep trouble. If I want to see God I have to get something that I don't have." That is the gospel. Jesus Christ made a decision to come and be righteousness on our behalf—we who were sinners, who were lost in our trespasses and sin and who had no chance of ever being pure. He died on the cross and shed His blood for us. "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)). That is the greatest exchange. We exchange our impurity for His purity and because of that we have fellowship with God Almighty.

But how do we get there? We bathe ourselves in the grace and mercy of God and follow a biblical plan.

## The Biblical Channel that Leads to Purity

There is a plan toward purity and that begins in an Old Testament passage. Turn to [Psalm 51](#). If we desire a pure heart, I think it's important to look at the example of a man who had a heart after God's own heart. David wasn't a perfect man. Psalm 51 was written by David after Nathan the prophet confronted him for committing adultery with Bathsheba. This was not a very pure time in David's life. Look at [Psalm 51:1-4](#):

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.  
Against you, you only, have I sinned



and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you may be justified in your words  
and blameless in your judgment.

## Purity Comes through Honesty

Notice the honesty that David has in his pursuit of purity. How do we get purity? We get it by honestly assessing who we are. Have you ever honestly assessed that "I am a sinner in need of God's grace"? Do you continually recognize that you are a sinner and are being showered daily with the grace of God? David got it. He said, "God, I've blown it. I've sinned against You and You alone. I have a problem." He was honest about his sin.

### *Purity Comes through Humility*

His honesty led to humility. Look at [Psalm 51:6-9](#):

Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,

and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness;

let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins,

and blot out all my iniquities.

The honesty says, "I'm a sinner; You are great. I'm filthy; You're clean. I'm impure; You're pure." Pursuing purity begins with an honest assessment of who you are and then moves to humility. You see who you are, you get down on your knees and you say, "God, I'm filthy! Why would You even put Your love and affection on me? I don't understand it but I'm willing to humble myself."

### *Purity Comes through Hunger*

Honesty and humility will lead to hunger. Look at [Psalm 51:10-15](#):

Create in me a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within me...

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

and sinners will return to you...

and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

O Lord, open my lips,

and my mouth will declare your praise."

David was hungry for a pure heart which was not just a one time thing. He was saying, "Cleanse me so that I can go to everyone else and tell them, 'I was impure but God made me clean.' I want to tell everybody I can about that." A pure heart will always lead to sharing that purity with others.

## *Our View Will Be Heavenly*

When we are honest, humble and hungry for the right things of God it is then that Jesus says we shall see God. Every believer should desire to see God. Jesus tells us the more focused our hearts are on Him—the more our lives are centered on His will and Word—the more we will be freed from the distractions of this world and the temptations of sin. As our hearts grow pure we will see more clearly.

When we pursue purity, we will see more clearly how Creation and the heavens declare the glory of the risen Lord. We'll be more intent about hearing His precepts and words that give us life. When we pursue purity, 2 Corinthians 3:18 says we will be transformed into Christ-likeness. But even that isn't the sum total of what it means to see God.

When we pursue purity, the Bible says there is a vision that no eye has seen or ear has heard that God has prepared for those whom He loves. One day we will see Him face-to-face.

Kent Hughes says, "In the split second of this kind of seeing, the believer will experience more joy than the sum total of the accumulated joys in this long life." It is then, brothers and sisters, that we will behold the dazzling blaze of His being that has always been and always will be the fascination of the angels.

Both Scripture and reason compel us to understand that seeing God will be the single greatest event of our external existence and it is only for those who are pure in heart. What a happy day it will be when we and all the saints who have gone before us will see God. On that great and glorious day we will rise, see God and shall be with Him forever.

So that begs the question, have you experienced a purity of heart? Are you experiencing an unmixed devotion to God alone? We can't achieve this on our own but as we pursue God in humility, we will be made pure. Is it in your plans this week to pursue God in purity so that you might be like Him and one day be changed and spend eternity with Him?

Let's pray.

Lord, I pray the words of 1 John 3:2-3, "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure." I pray this Scripture would be our life verse this week. I pray that we would know we are God's children and our salvation has not been fully realized yet. But on that great and glorious day when we see You in the clouds, we will be like You. I pray that this would be our desire because with that hope comes a desire to be pure.

So whatever is challenging that purity in our lives this week, I pray that You would help us push it away. I ask that You would help us pursue and seek first Your righteousness and Your purity, knowing that when we turn away from the lusts of the flesh and the desires of the eyes it is then—and only then—that we will truly experience You and see You in this life and in the life to come.

Oh God, we want to see You. The spirit may be willing but the flesh is weak, so encourage our hearts. Strengthen our feeble knees that we may be ready to take on a week of temptation and struggle. Help us find victory in Christ Jesus in the midst of our struggle. I pray that we may experience You, that we may see You and all that You are. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." We want to see You this week so make us pure. Give us a heart to pursue purity so that we may honor and glorify You in all that we say and do. In Christ's name we give it all. Amen.

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All Scriptures quoted directly from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

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