

"The Sermon on the Mount"

The Beatitudes

Part 7

Matthew 5:1-12

Introduction: On Wednesday nights we have been studying the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5-7. As we look at this Sermon on the Mount we must at all times keep in mind the sermon does not lay out God's way of salvation but in this sermon we find what life will be like after we are saved for the believer who is controlled by the Holy Spirit. So far we have looked at 5 of the Beatitudes:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

To be poor in spirit is to be in complete dependence upon God for every situation (even the deepest poverty) we face in our lives. It is to live in complete dependence upon Him and to trust Him with every situation that we face. It is holding tightly to His promises and living by faith in what His Word says about us and submitting to every situation that He allows in our lives. It is that faith in Him which pleases Him and thus floods the soul with joy and happiness for that kind of faith is a result of knowing Him deeply.

2. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

The mourning spoken of here is a godly sorrow over sin not only in our lives but also sin that we see in the world. We have a godly sorrow because it grieves us.

3. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

To be meek is to trust in the sovereignty of God in our lives. It is to accept whatever comes as His plan for us. It is to die to self and allow the Holy Spirit to have His way in our lives and to use the pain and the struggles as a furnace to burn away the dross. It is to believe that in all things we are more than conquerors because God uses the trials as His workshops to mold us into the image of Jesus Christ. Meekness refuses to seek vengeance against those that inflict pain into our lives but instead meekness accepts their actions as a part of God's plan for our lives also. Remember that when Jesus was reviled, He reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. To be meek is also to bow to God's chastening in our lives and to accept it with a teachable spirit so as to learn from the pain and the suffering that He has brought upon us. Meekness does not resist the plan of God no matter the pain. Let me remind you that Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter He was not dragged. Therefore, meekness is exercised in two different directions: toward God and toward man.

4. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

To hunger and to thirst after righteousness is to say, "No" to the appetites of the flesh and to say yes to the desires of the Holy Spirit. It is to desire to know more of God and to live in the will of God. It is a desire to be free from the struggles of sin.

5. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

The mercy Jesus speaks of here is something more than a feeling: it is an operative principle. It not only stirs the heart, but it moves the hand to render help unto those in need, for the one cannot be severed

from the other. So far from it being a well shut up or a fountain sealed, this mercy is a collection of acts of charity, from which issue streams of blessing. It does not exhaust itself in profitless words, but is accompanied by helpful deeds.

Tonight we come to the 6th Beatitude found in Matthew 5:8.

6. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

As we consider this Beatitude we must first of all consider the meaning of the phrase "pure in heart".

I. The wrong meaning of "pure in heart".

We must first of all clear up the false teaching that has surrounded this verse by different groups of people. To be "pure in heart" is not to be sinless as some groups teach today. They believe and teach that when a person is saved the old nature is completely done away with. They are much like the Pharisees of Jesus day. They insist there is no longer any sin in the person who has accepted Christ and therefore if you commit sin you were never saved to begin with.

Now we know that is completely wrong.

1 John 1:8-10

⁸ *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

⁹ *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

¹⁰ *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

The Bible is very clear that we still possess a sin nature and that we battle with sin every day. Consider what the Apostle Paul wrote:

Romans 7:15

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

Romans 7:24

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

The Apostle Paul struggled with sin in his life at times so from Romans 7 we know that when we get saved we do not become sinless. We still have the old nature and it battles with the Divine nature that is imparted to us.

Therefore to be "pure in heart" is not to be sinless but one of the greatest evidences of being "pure in heart" is to be conscious of and burdened with the sin that is still part of our lives.

II. The true meaning of "pure in heart".

Let me start by saying that to be "pure in heart" is impossible apart from knowing Jesus Christ as your Savior. It is not something that we can do on our own for all of us are born with wicked and deceitful hearts.

Jeremiah 17:9

9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Romans 3:10-18

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

¹³ Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

¹⁴ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

¹⁵ Their feet are swift to shed blood:

¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways:

¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known:

¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes.

The purification of our hearts takes place the moment we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior by faith.

Acts 15:7-9

⁷ And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

⁸ And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

⁹ And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

I want you to notice very closely the wording of Acts 15:9. The word "purifying" is not in the **past** tense but it is in the **presence** tense. That means that there is an ongoing process of purification within our lives and the purification is done by God.

The word "pure" in Matthew 5:8 also has a very interesting meaning. It carries the idea of a vine being cleansed by pruning so that it will be fit to bear fruit.

With that in mind notice the words Jesus spoke in John 15.

John 15:1-2

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away [lifts up]: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

The brackets in verse 2 are mine just so that you can see what Jesus meant when He said, "he taketh away". From this we can see that God is always at work "purifying" us so that we will be fit to bear fruit for His glory.

But we must realize that we also have a responsibility. As believers we have the Holy Spirit that indwells us but at the same time we still have the old nature. Therefore we have the responsibility of saying, "No" to the desires of the flesh and, "Yes" to the desires of the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 4:10-11

¹⁰ Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

¹¹ For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Therefore, to be "pure in heart" is to be surrendered to the Holy Spirit and to die to self. It is to allow the Spirit of God to have His way in our lives.

2 Corinthians 7:2-3

² Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man.

³ I speak not this to condemn you: for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts to die and live with you.

Notice closely what Paul said here to the Corinthian believers. He desired to die and live with them. This is dying to self and allowing the Holy Spirit to live the life of Christ through us. You will never know what it is to live until you first of all die to self. This is our responsibility and when this takes place it can be said that we are people of pure hearts for it is then that our hearts are controlled by the Spirit and not the flesh.

III. What does a pure heart look like in practice?

The next point we need to consider will deal with the area where the "rubber meets the road". In other words now that we know how a pure heart is attained we need to know how the pure heart operates in everyday surroundings.

1. Our motives will be pure.

When we are controlled by the Spirit we will have pure and not selfish motives. By this I mean that when get involved for the Lord we will do

it to glorify and honor Him. If we are controlled by the flesh our motives will be all about drawing attention to us. Our motives will be selfish, in other words when you do something you will do it to be seen by others. If you are controlled by the flesh you will even tell others of your good works. A pure heart has no desire for personal recognition but simply does it as unto the Lord.

Colossians 3:23-24

²³ And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

²⁴ Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

2. Our love will be pure.

When we are controlled by the Spirit the love we have for others will be pure.

1 Peter 1:22

²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

There are many believers today that say they love others but their love is not pure theirs is a feigned [pretend] love. It is all a show so as to convince others they are spiritual.

3. Our forgiveness will be pure.

When we are surrendered over to the control of the Spirit our forgiveness will be pure. I say this because there are many believers

today who claim to have forgiven those who have offended them but they have not. I know this because when they have any opportunity to cause harm to those who offended them they are quick to do so. That is not forgiveness. But when we are controlled by the Holy Spirit there is a pure forgiveness that flows from the believer.

4. Our concern will be pure.

When controlled by the Spirit our concern for others will be a pure concern. There are many believers today that claim to have a genuine concern for others but many times their "concern" is only for the purpose of learning more so they can talk with their friends about those who are struggling. When the Spirit of God is controlling us our concern will be pure and will be seen in the way we reach out to them. It will also be seen in the way that you do not share what you know about those who are struggling.

IV. The blessings of a pure heart.

Notice Matthew 5:8

Jesus tells us here the "pure in heart" will see God. This does not mean you will actually see God face to face for that is impossible because God is a Spirit. What it does mean is that when our hearts are pure and we are controlled by the Holy Spirit we will see God at work in our lives and in the lives of others.

1. We will see Him provide for our needs.
2. We will see Him open doors.
3. We will see Him use us in the lives of others.
4. We will see Him use us so that others can see Christ in us.

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The bottom line is that we will be fully aware of God's presence in our lives on a daily basis.

Conclusion:

A pure heart is one that brings great blessings into our lives but it requires a dying to self on a daily basis. In 1 Corinthians 15:31 Paul said, "I die daily". That is exactly what is needed for us to possess a pure heart.