

Transformational Spirituality

Blessed are the Pure in Heart Matthew 5:8

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Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

1 Introduction

1. Sequence

Need	Satisfaction/God's provision for our need	Results
Poor in spirit	Experiencing the fullness of the kingdom of God	Inheriting the kingdom of God
Mourning over our sin	Experience the comfort of God through forgiveness	Forgiven
Meekness	Humility	Inheriting the earth and Christlikeness
Thirst and hungering	Righteousness	Filled
Merciful	Humility, mercy motivated and forgiveness	Shown mercy

Being poor in spirit, mourning over our sin, meekness, thirsting and hungering for righteousness and being merciful all flow out of a heart which is pure. Verse 8 is one of the greatest verses in Scripture therefore many would think that it should come at the top of the list. But Jesus is teaching these Beatitudes in the correct order. To see God we need to first of all to be poor in spirit, mourn, be meek, thirst and hunger after righteousness and be merciful.

2. What Purity of Heart Does Not Mean

It does not mean that we are sinless and we do not sin. This view point would contradict the whole counsel of God's word. Scripture testifies to our human weaknesses and propensity to sin.

- Noah got drunk and yet he was known as a righteous man.
- Abraham lied and he was known as the friend of God.

- Moses disobeyed God and yet he was known as the greatest of prophets and God would speak to him face to face.
- Peter denied Jesus and yet God used him to preach the first sermon in the history of the church which led to 3000 conversions in one day.
- Paul struggled with sin in his own life (Rom 7:21).

3. What Does God Require?

Psalm 51:6

Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

4. What Does God Look Upon?

1 Samuel 16:7

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

God looks at the heart which comprises of:

- Mind
- Conscience
- Affections
- Will

2 The Meaning of the Heart

2.1 The gospel of Jesus is concerned about the heart

2.1.1 Jesus confronted the Pharisees on two issues

Their external piety

Their internal wickedness

2.2 2.1 Jesus put emphasis on the heart and not on the intellectual.

2.2.1 The Christian faith is about the condition of the heart. Intellectual knowledge of Scripture is important but more important is the condition of the Christian's heart.

2.3 2.2 Jesus stressed the importance of inner transformation of the heart.

2.3.1 The heart of the gospel does not put great emphasis on external behavior and conduct. It starts with the question: 'What is the state of your heart?' If the heart is pure then our behavior and conduct will be Christlike.

2.4 2.3 Jesus points out that the heart is the seat of all our troubles.

Matthew 12:34

You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

2.4.1 We cannot change by changing our environment. Developing our intellect won't solve our problems - the heart has to be transformed into Christlikeness.

Jeremiah 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things

and beyond cure.

Who can understand it?

2.5 2.4 What is the biblical meaning of the heart?

2.5.1 It is the center of our personality, which consists of:

Emotional

Intellectual

Blessed is the person who is pure at the center of his being

Will

2.6 2.5 What does Jesus mean by being pure in heart?

2.6.1 Meaning

It means to be without hypocrisy; it is single-minded. Jesus spoke about removing the evil eye. Therefore to be pure in heart is to have nothing hidden. It is single-minded or single-eyed devotion to Christ. The best definition of being pure in heart is found in Psalm 86:11. Our biggest problem is that we have divided hearts. One part of me wants to worship God and the other part wants something else other than God. That is why Paul speaks of the members of his body being at war with each other (Rom 7). And so the Psalmist prays to God: 'Unite my heart to fear your name. Make it one!'

Psalm 86:11

Teach me your way, O Lord,
and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart,
that I may fear your name.

It means cleansed without defilement

Rev. 21:27

Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Rev. 22:14

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

It means to be like Jesus himself - he was sinless. We can't be sinless but we can sin less. And we sin less when we are transformed into the likeness of Jesus.

It means we should live to the glory of God.

It means that we desire to know God.

3 To What Measure is the Heart Now Made Pure?

3.1 Answer

3.1.1 Only in part in this life.

3.1.2 The work of grace in the heart is begun here, but it is only completed when we die and go to be with the Lord (Phil 1:6).

Philip. 1:6

being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

3.1.3 Romans 8:23 tells us that we have only received the 'firstfruits' of the Spirit.

Romans 8:23

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Acts 15:9

He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.

The tense of the verb is purifying their hearts by faith - it is a continuous experience.

Titus 3:5

he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,

The renewing work of the Spirit is a continuous activity and experience within us.

3.2 What is our responsibility?

3.2.1 Daily picking up our cross and deny self: this is Christ-centered but self denial is self-centered.

3.2.2 Sincere confession of sins

3.2.3 Walking in the path of righteousness

4 How is the Heart Made Pure?

4.1 The four-fold work of the Holy Spirit

4.1.1 Imparting a holy nature within us at the new birth

4.1.2 Giving to us a saving faith which unites with to a holy Christ

4.1.3 Sprinkling us with the blood of Jesus which cleanses our consciences

4.1.4 Protracted sanctification so that we put to death our carnal nature and live for God

5 What is Spiritual Purity?

5.1 Answer

5.1.1 Undivided affections

5.1.2 Godly simplicity

5.1.3 Purity of desires, motivations and intents

5.1.4 It is to be attracted to the beauty of holiness

5.1.5 The fear of the Lord: to hate what God hates and to love what he loves

5.1.6 Pure thought life - what pollutes the heart clouds the vision

5.1.7 Maintain a pure heart by setting the Lord always before you (Ps 16:8).

Psalm 16:8

I have set the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

6 Seeing God

6.1 How?

6.1.1 At work in your life and in the life of other Christians

6.1.2 Through the moving of the Holy Spirit

6.1.3 In nature

6.1.4 In history

6.1.5 In his Word