



Sermon Text: Matthew 5:8

Sermon Date: June 9, 2019

Continuing our study of the Beatitudes, we focused on verse 8, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” We examined it in three stages.

THE POINT

In seeking to understand the point of the verse, we gave special attention to two words. First, we learned that “heart” means much more than just emotions. In biblical usage, the heart is the center of personality that includes the mind, the will, and the emotions. Jesus is teaching that the person blessed by God is pure way down deep at her core. The second word we examined was “pure.” There are two distinct but related sense of this word in Scripture. Pure often means moral cleanliness. So Jesus is promoting internal purity as opposed to merely external ceremony. In a second sense, the word pure signifies singular focus and undivided loyalty. Jesus then could be talking of a person who is completely devoted to God’s kingdom. These two meanings are interrelated: the person who is single-minded in commitment to righteousness will also be inwardly pure.

THE PROBLEM

Seeing the point of the Beatitude causes us to confront the problem: How is this possible? How can we ever be pure in heart? The Bible’s appraisal of the human heart is devastating (Jeremiah 17:9; Genesis 6:5; Proverbs 20:9). The human heart is deceitful and wicked. It is a poisoned spring from which all our polluted thoughts, words, and actions flow. It is impossible clean in our own power. As we have seen throughout, this Beatitude drives us back to the beginning of the Beatitudes—to confess our poverty of spirit, to mourn our sin and inability, and then to cry out for God to do the miraculous work that is required. God must create a pure heart within us, as David recognized in Psalm 51. To have a pure heart, we need a new heart.

THE PRIVILEGE

In the second half of the verse, we encounter life’s highest privilege—to see God. Since nothing is higher than God, there is nothing greater and more satisfying than to see and enjoy Him. As Randy Alcorn writes, “God’s greatest gift to us is, and always will be, himself.” While there is a sense in which the pure in heart can see God here and now in His Word and His world, this verse awaits fulfillment in Heaven. As we think about the wonder of seeing God, we must examine our desires. What do we truly and deeply long for? What makes heaven truly heaven in our minds?

APPLICATION

After looking at these three points, we ended with a few ways to begin applying this beatitude to our lives.

- **Be honest with God about the condition of your heart:** External righteousness is appealing because we can fool people into believing something that isn’t true; But we can never fool God. He sees your heart with perfect clarity. So be honest with him about it. Confess your heart to God. Ask him to search you and reveal the state of your heart.
- **Acknowledge your desperate need for His cleansing work:** Humble yourself before Him and admit you can’t make yourself clean. While this isn’t an invitation to laziness it is an admission of dependence.
- **Look to Christ with the light that you have:** Being like Christ is fueled by beholding Christ (2 Cor. 3:18). The pure in heart see God and in seeing God, you grow purer in heart. They feed one another.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from Sunday?
2. In what ways do you struggle with the tendency toward external religion?
3. How does this Beatitude examine your desires?