

WEEKLY STUDY GUIDE

Study guide for the week of July 26th

As we continue our sermon series entitled “Beatitudes: The Pursuit of Happiness,” we come to week 6 where we address our sixth Beatitude from *Matthew 5:8 (NRSV)* “*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.*” The word “beatitude” means blessing or to be blessed. Blessed means to be fortunate, enviable, possessing the favor of God, and spiritually prosperous. It is transcendent happiness. The word pure means right in the eyes of God. It means to be clean from the pollution and guilt of sin. It is also the quality of being sincere and upright. It is a single-minded desire to be more like Jesus. It is a single-minded desire to be holy (Leviticus 11:45; 1 Peter 1:15-16). ***Have you ever been single-minded about something? Is that normally a good thing or a bad thing?***

Blessed are the pure in heart.

Psalms 51:10 (NLT) “*Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me.*” The word create means to bring something into existence. The Psalmist is asking God to bring into existence an upright and sincere heart in him. This takes a lifetime. We will never be perfect, but we can give God permission to create a clean heart in us! A heart that follows after God. He goes on to ask for a renewed or loyal spirit. The Psalmist is asking for single-minded devotion to God. A loyal or right spirit that desires to live for God. ***Is God creating a clean heart in you? Have you determined to be single-minded in your devotion to God or have other things been pulling you away from Him?***

2 Timothy 2:20–22 (NLT) “*In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. 21 If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work. 22 Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.*” This scripture tells us that special utensils are for honorable use. It is important that we keep our lives clean so that we will be ready for every good work. This passage also tells us to RUN from anything that stimulates the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Run from those things, and pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. ***What does it look like to run from lusts and pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace?***

1 John 3:1–6 (MSG) “*What marvelous love the Father has extended to us! Just look at it—we’re called children of God! That’s who we really are. But that’s also why the world doesn’t recognize us or take us seriously, because it has no idea who he is or what he’s up to. 2 But friends, that’s exactly who we are: children of God. And that’s only the beginning. Who knows how we’ll end up! What we know is that when Christ is openly revealed, we’ll see him—and in seeing him, become like him. 3 All of us who look forward to his Coming stay ready, with the glistening purity of Jesus’ life as a model for our own. 4 All who indulge in a sinful life are dangerously lawless, for sin is a major disruption of God’s order. 5 Surely you know that Christ showed up in order to get rid of sin. There is no sin in him, and sin is not part of his program. 6 No one who lives deeply in Christ makes a practice of sin. None of those who do practice sin have taken a good look at Christ.*

They've got him all backward." What marvelous love has been extended to us that we have been called children of God. We are no longer slaves to fear, but we are children of God! God has extended HIS love to us! **Does knowing that you are a child of God help alleviate any fear that you may be feeling during this pandemic?** Jesus loves us and wants our lives to reflect His. Jesus' purity is an example for us to follow. This passage tells us that sin is a major disruption of God's order. Christ died on the cross to get rid of our sin and there is no sin in Him. No one who says that they are a follower of Christ makes a practice of sin. You can live deeply in Christ and make mistakes—or sin—but do you make a practice of it? You don't understand what Christ did for you if you make a practice of sinful behavior. Christ died so that we could be FREE from sin! He didn't die so that we could keep on sinning. Do you have a single-minded devotion to be more like Jesus? If so, you will see Him. **Is there a difference between committing a sin and making a practice of sin? Why or why not? What do these actions say about our heart?**

The pure in heart will see God.

Psalm 24:1–6 (NLT) "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. 2 For he laid the earth's foundation on the seas and built it on the ocean depths. 3 Who may climb the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? 4 Only those whose hands and hearts are pure, who do not worship idols and never tell lies. 5 They will receive the Lord's blessing and have a right relationship with God their savior. 6 Such people may seek you and worship in your presence, O God of Jacob." Who can stand in the presence of God? 1) Those whose hands and hearts are pure. We can be pure in the things that we think, say, and do. God desires for us to be holy just as he is holy. **How do we pursue a pure heart?** 2) Those who are devoted to God only. We can have single-minded devotion to God and His desire for our life. 3) Those who speak truth and speak it in love. **How can you speak the truth in love? How can you show mercy while still speaking the truth?** If we do these things, we will have a blessed relationship with God and will know Him more.

1 Corinthians 13:9–13 (MSG) "We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. 10 But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled. 11 When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good. 12 We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us! 13 But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love." Right now we see things imperfectly, but one day we will see with perfect clarity. Right now what we know is partial and incomplete, but we will know everything completely. When will this happen? When Jesus, our completeness, comes again we will see clearly! For now we have steady faith, expectant hope, and extravagant love! **We can't see everything clearly, so which one of these three things do you need most in your life right now?**

Hebrews 12:14 (NLT) "Work at living in peace with everyone, and work at living a holy life, for those who are not holy will not see the Lord." This scripture tells us to live at peace with everyone and to work at living a holy life. Those who are holy will see God. Those who are not holy will not see God. God desires for us to be clean from the pollution and guilt of sin. We should have single-minded devotion to be like Jesus. **What will you do this week to work at living a holy life before God?**