

A Pure Heart Is A Prerequisite To See God

(Matthew 5:8)

The beatitudes as recorded in **Matthew 5:3-12** are series of teachings by Christ on the mount.

They were taught after Jesus had victoriously overcome the temptation by Satan.

The teaching conveys a deeper meaning of spiritual truth beyond physical understanding by comparing two needful in each verse from above.

In this **verse 8**, the two needful are "**pure in heart**" and "**see God.**"

The passage is metaphoric because God is Spirit, **John 4:24** "*God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.*"

When anyone is in the Spirit (*full understanding of the word*) he would be able to see or feel the Spirit.

In the sermon, Christ is pointing "qualities and characters" of His would-be Christians.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." **Matthew 5:8**

Christ, in this verse, teaches that those who have or possess a pure and sincere heart, free from hypocrisy and other sins, will experience a deep personal relationship with God.

When anyone is no longer happy with the teaching of Christ, such person(s) should look inwards of himself or their self.

UNDERSTANDING THE BASIC TERMS AND APPLICATION

Blessed: This simply means happy as translated from the Greek word **Makarios**. The pure in heart will be those happy people to be with God.

Pure: This is translated from **Katharo** which in the Greek sense means "*being cleansed*" or "*Clean*".

To be pure means being free from sins, contamination (*dirt of the spirit*) or impurity, or morally upright, e.g. Cornelius, **Acts 10:1-2**.

He was a devoted, feared God, and praised with giving arms generously. Men are made pure or cleansed by the blood of Christ, through obedience to the saving gospel of Christ.

Mark 16:15-16 *And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

Baptism translates us from darkness into light. **1 John 1:7**- *But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sins.*

The use of **pure** in most time in the scripture is connected to the "**heart.**" (**1 Timothy 1:5; 3:9, 2 Timothy 1:3; 2:22, Titus 1:15, Hebrews 10:22**)

1 Timothy 1:5 "Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith."

Hebrews 10:22 "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

In biblical usage, "**Pure**" and "**holy**" are used together to describe God's character and expectations from Christians.

"But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conducts, because it is written, *"Be holy, for I am holy"*, **1 Peter 1:5-16**.

Christians are expected to be clean in their thoughts, intents and emotions. "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me", **Psalms 51:10**.

Similarly in this regard, Apostle Paul has called on the Church to be pure and holy. **Ephesians 5:27** that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Our marriage relationship must be pure, the bed undefiled, **Ephesians 5:23-26**, **Hebrews 13:4**, **James 1:27**.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

Therefore, individuals and the church must have a self-appraisal against sinful doctrines, practices, worships, and social-spiritual activities because God looks into or at the Church.

Revelation 2:4 "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."

The Heart: Ordinarily, the heart is the human physical organ that pumps or circulates blood and oxygen around the body.

The Bible uses the "**heart**" figuratively. **What does it therefore mean?**

- It is used for the inner being, including thoughts, emotions, and intentions of man.
- It is also the entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and emotional elements of man.
- It is equally used for the "*hidden spring*" of personal life.

The Bible describes human depravity (*corrupt practices or being corrupt, evil, perverted*) as being in the heart of man.

According to one writer, "*sin is a principle which has its seat in the centre of man's inward life, and they defile the whole circuit of its action.*"

This is the truth in **Matthew 15:19-20** - "*For out of the heart proceed evil, thought, murder, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.*"

All actions (*whether right or wrong*) come from within the heart of man.

According to **J. Laidlaw** the heart represents true character but conceals it (*Hasting Bible Dictionary*).

God urges us to have a pure or clean heart that can make us to be happy to dwell with him.

Prerequisite: This means a requirement or condition that must be met before something else can happen or done.

Pure heart is a necessary step that comes before seeing God. One must be spiritually and morally upright before one's relationship with God deepened.

This is not about our beautiful outing or well speaking nature etc. but the inner man that yearns for God always. Cornelius was a morally upright man, but the blood of Christ must make him pure, hence he must be baptized - **Acts 10:1-48.**

Baptism is a requirement for salvation, for forgiveness of sins, for becoming members of the Kingdom of Christ (*The Church of Christ*) and to be truly called Christians.

Baptism is a prerequisite to remember the death of Christ (*The Lord's Supper*).

Faithfulness to the end of our Christian life is a requirement to eternally be with God.

"To See God": This is not mere eyesight. This is being close, experiencing God's presence, understanding His nature, and enjoying fellowship with Him.

It is a feeling of the presence of God. Adam sinned and he couldn't get close to God. God's relationship or fellowship with Him was severed, **Genesis 3.**

A Christian who is clean in heart can hear the voice of God, falls into trance "to see God." "...Peter went up to pray about the sixth hour...he fell into trance. **Acts 10:9-11**

THINGS THAT ENABLED PURE HEART TO SEE GOD

There are some things when a Christian is deeply involved in them, makes him or her pure in heart to see God.

Prayerfulness: This is a constant dedicated talk with God, seeking His guidance and strength in your life, **Ephesians 6:18** "*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—*"

Fasting: This focuses on spiritual growth and self-discipline by abstinence from food, drink, and pleasure, (**Acts 9:9; 13:2-3; 14:23, 2 Corinthians 6:5; 11:27**)

2 Corinthians 11:27...*in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness...*

Fasting should be a culture of the Christian life as seen in Apostle Paul. Fasting should not be seen or done only when they are challenges or problems of life. It should be like we pray, sing, study the word etc.

Meditation on God's Word and Fear for Him: This is for every Christian to create time to read, study the scriptures and meditate on the word.

The fear of God is to keep His commands, reflecting on the Scripture and applying it to your life (**Psalms 1:1-2, Ecclesiastes 12:13.**)

Psalms 1:1-2 "*Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the*

scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night."

Worship and service in His holiness: There are solemn worship and entertaining worship.

We must know that which pleases God in your individual capacity and as a church in the way we worship and praise.

Others things that could promote pure heart to see God include but not limited to the following.

Sincerity: This means to be genuine and true to oneself.

Humility: This involves letting go of pride and self-centeredness, *Philippians 2*

Self-reflection: This is regularly examining your thoughts and actions.

Forgiveness: This is letting go of grudges and bitterness. Love for God and man.

THINGS THAT WILL NOT ENABLE PURE HEART TO SEE GOD.

Wickedness and joy in committing sins: This is regarded as sin of commission which Christian commit. For instance, sin like lies, gossip, murder, fornication, worldliness etc. remove the purity of the heart to see God.

The Foolishness of refusal to do what is good: This is sin of omission

and capable of affecting pure heart to see God. *James 4:17 To him who knoweth to do good but refuses to do to him is a sin.*

No sin is justifiable before God. *James 2:10* Let's be guided by the scripture always. *2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Peter 1:3*

Social media addiction: Constantly attaching oneself to social is capable of blocking your strength and purity of heart. This is because the good, the bad, and the ugly are always there for anyone to consume. *Romans 1:32, 1 Thessalonians 5:22*

CONCLUSION

Christ is encouraging his followers to pursue a life of spiritual and moral upright, seeking a deeper relationship with God as we are learning from the Sermon of the Lord on the Mount.

Therefore, let us continually examine ourselves. *2 Corinthians 13: 5*

Examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith.

Prove yourself. Do you not know yourself that Jesus Christ is in you unless indeed you are disqualified?

Joel Uto