

## *The Pure in heart will see God*

The term "Beatitude" is not in the Bible but comes from the Latin word for "blessed" and that's how Jesus starts each one of the eight Beatitudes. In the original Greek text, blessed means being happy and so Jesus is describing a heavenly happiness, the happiness of being in favour with God, or "walking with God", a happiness of the highest kind. Last Sunday, I was going through the Tesco magazine and I found a very interesting guide to happiness by Sunny Kotecha.

In verse 8 Jesus says "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God", so this morning I want to invite you to look more closely at the nature of those who will see God.

What does the Bible tell us about the heart? **Romans 10** teaches us that "with your heart you believe and are justified", and in **Proverbs 16** we hear that "a wise man's heart guides his mouth". Jeremiah the prophet said "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

The Lord responds by saying "I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to what his deeds deserve (**Jer. 17:9-10**). The heart, the "wellspring of life", the control room of our personality is both important and open to God because He knows our hearts and sees our motives.

Last Sunday for our family Bible reading, we looked at Samuel anointing David as King and the fact that at first, the prophet wasn't very impressed by David as he was young and probably smelling of sheep. But this is what God told 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" (**1Sam. 16:7**). What does God see in your heart this morning; is that glorifying to Him or actually something you should get rid of? We sometimes sing "purify my heart", but is your heart in the right position as you approach the King of kings?

In **Psalms 24**, we find some instructions concerning those who may enter the sanctuary, those who may enter into God's presence and worship Him. The psalmist doesn't come up with extra complicated formulas but tells us very simply; "He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false" (verse 4).

Pure means "unmixed", with nothing to stain or modify. In the Bible, gold is often seen as something pure because when it is refined in fire it is genuine, without any alloys present. Our heart can only be pure when it is free from contamination with sin, not divided between God and the idols in our lives. Our heart cannot be pure and at the same time mix together what the world has to offer and what God's word tells us clearly to do.

How then can our hearts be pure knowing that we live in a dark world in stark opposition to God's will? The answer is that based on our own individual abilities, we are all disqualified from qualifying for a pure heart because sin is always present in our lives.

**Illustration:** Mum, the Queen of clutter.

In the same way, we are sometimes unable to clear our hearts of the attitudes that weigh us down and prevent us from seeing the King of glory. Which type of clutter are you still hanging on to, which motives or wills are creating the clouds that stop you from enjoying closer fellowship with God and consequently your neighbour?

Unless our hearts are pure, our lives cannot be, no matter how much our actions and our words might seem to suggest. And I believe that is what Jesus was trying to explain to his disciples in **Matthew 15** when they were debating with the Pharisees over the washing of hands before eating. Jesus told them that whatever comes out of the mouth is spiritually unclean because they find their source in evil thoughts which in turn come from an evil heart. Jesus is talking here about inward purity, because Christ's Gospel was and still is a Gospel of the heart and not of the head.

The good news however for those who know Jesus as Lord and Saviour, is that based on Christ's purity, they can purify their hearts because when God searches their hearts, he doesn't see their iniquities and shortcomings but instead the blood of the Lamb who was slain and which purifies them from all unrighteousness.

Helen Keller was a blind girl, she was also deaf. She was asked the following question on one occasion: "isn't it terrible to be blind?" She replied "It's better to be blind and see with your heart than have two eyes and see nothing". Christian what do you see with your heart?

The pure in heart will see God meaning that in their everyday lives, their intimacy with the Lord is such that they can see Him move in their circumstances, be it at home, in the neighbourhood or the workplace. They can see God's hands intervene in situation where those without hope are expecting and getting the worse. They can see God when they have fellowship with Him based upon personal faith in Jesus Christ (**1 John 1: 1-3; 6-7**). They can see God in His total being, everything that He is, in the Lord Jesus Christ. They can see Him by faith in His Son, they can see Him by faith within the word of God, his revelation of His being, they can see Him in his world - they can see him if they are saved. Do you know Jesus as Lord and Saviour this morning, does He know you? If not, ask Him to come and dwell in you so you can start enjoying life in all its fullness.

And then, as we read in **1 John 3:2-3**, our vision of God will reach its consummation when Christ returns because we will see Him as He is, with power and great glory.

A. In Psalm 51 verse 10, David said "Create in me a **pure heart**, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me". Why does David use the verb "create" and can man possibly have a "pure heart"?

B. Look at Matthew 15, verses 18 and 19, what is Jesus trying to explain to those listening when he says "But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man unclean"?

C. In 1 John 3 verse 2b we read "But **we** know that when **he** appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is". Who do the **we** and **he** refer to and does this verse suggest that we cannot see *him* in our everyday lives but will have to wait his appearing?