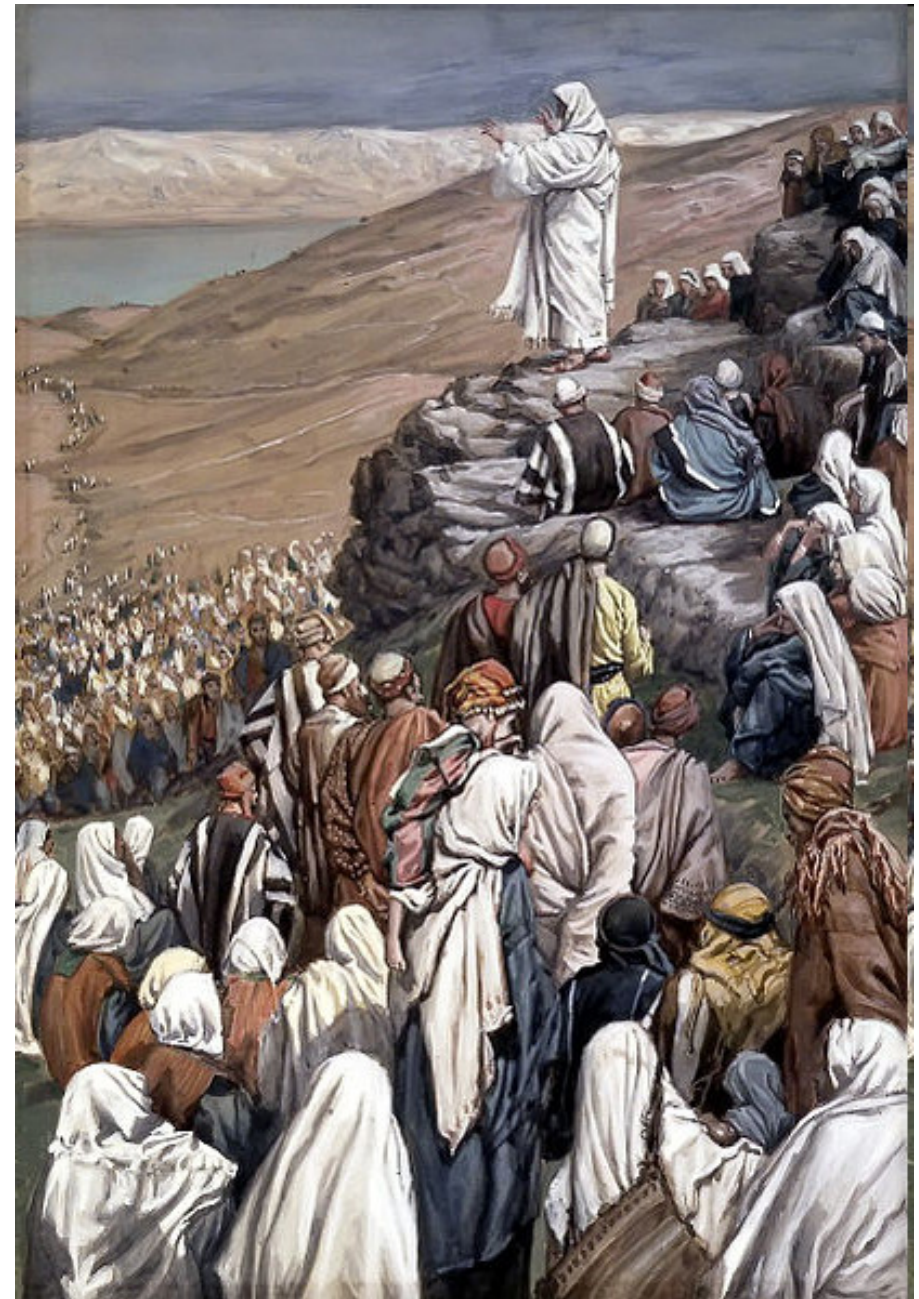


THE BEATITUDES


(PART 2)



- ❑ The Beatitudes are a set of teachings by Jesus from his famous "Sermon on the Mount" as recorded in Matthew 5:3-12.
- ❑ The term 'beatitude' comes from the Latin adjective 'beatus' which means **happy, fortunate or blissful**.
- ❑ The Greek word used in the Beatitudes for 'blessed' is 'makarios' which means: **supremely blest; by extension, fortunate, well off - blessed, happy.**



James Tissot - The Beatitudes Sermon - Brooklyn Museum

A digital illustration of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a white robe with a hood. He is standing on a rocky mountain peak, looking out over a vast, hazy landscape under a blue sky with light clouds. His right arm is extended forward, palm up, in a gesture of blessing or teaching.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown
mercy. **Blessed** are the
pure in heart, for they will
see God. [Matt 5:7-8]


THE BEATITUDES

- ❑ The word 'blessed,' the first word of each beatitude, isn't a word we use every day. While most English translations use 'blessed,' some modern Bibles use 'happy' instead.
 - Matt 5:7 (Good News Translation) "Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them!"
- ❑ But somehow **substituting 'blessed' for 'happy' seems to trivialize the word.** There isn't really a good substitute or more modern English word for 'blessed'.
- ❑ According to the People's New Testament, "The word blessed is first applied to God, and **means more than happy, as it has sometimes been translated.** Happiness comes from earthly things; blessedness comes from God."

THE BEATITUDES

- ❑ This is the manifesto of the kingdom of God, but unlike a worldly kingdom, there are **totally different values**:
 - Together, the Beatitudes present a new set of Christian ideals that **focus on love and humility rather than force and exaction**; they echo the highest ideals of the teachings of Jesus on mercy, spirituality and compassion.¹
- ❑ The teaching is expressed as eight blessings. Each Beatitude consists of two parts:
 1. A condition: "BLESSED ARE..."
 2. The outcome: "THEY WILL..." or "THEIRS IS..."

¹ Wikipedia - Beatitudes <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatitudes>

A digital illustration of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a white robe with a blue sash. He is standing on a rocky mountain peak, looking out over a vast valley with a winding river and distant hills under a clear blue sky. His right arm is extended outwards.

Blessed are the
merciful, for they will
be shown mercy.

[Matt 5:8]

THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ Being merciful doesn't mean performing occasional and isolated acts of compassion. We should be habitually merciful.
- ❑ We are merciful when we show compassion for the miserable or wretched, who are in need of material or spiritual assistance - or perhaps forgiveness.





1. Mercy sometimes entails providing the material and practical needs of others:

- Matt 25:35 "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..."

THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ **Feeling sorry** for, or having compassion for those who are suffering, is only the first step in being merciful. When we actually **do something**, that is the most important part.
- James 2:15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but **does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?**
- 1 John 3:17-18 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, **let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.**
- Rom 12:13 Share with God's people who are in need. **Practice** hospitality.

THE MERCIFUL



- Prov 14:31 He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but **whoever is kind to the needy honours God.**
- Eph 4:28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, **that he may have something to share with those in need.**

THE MERCIFUL

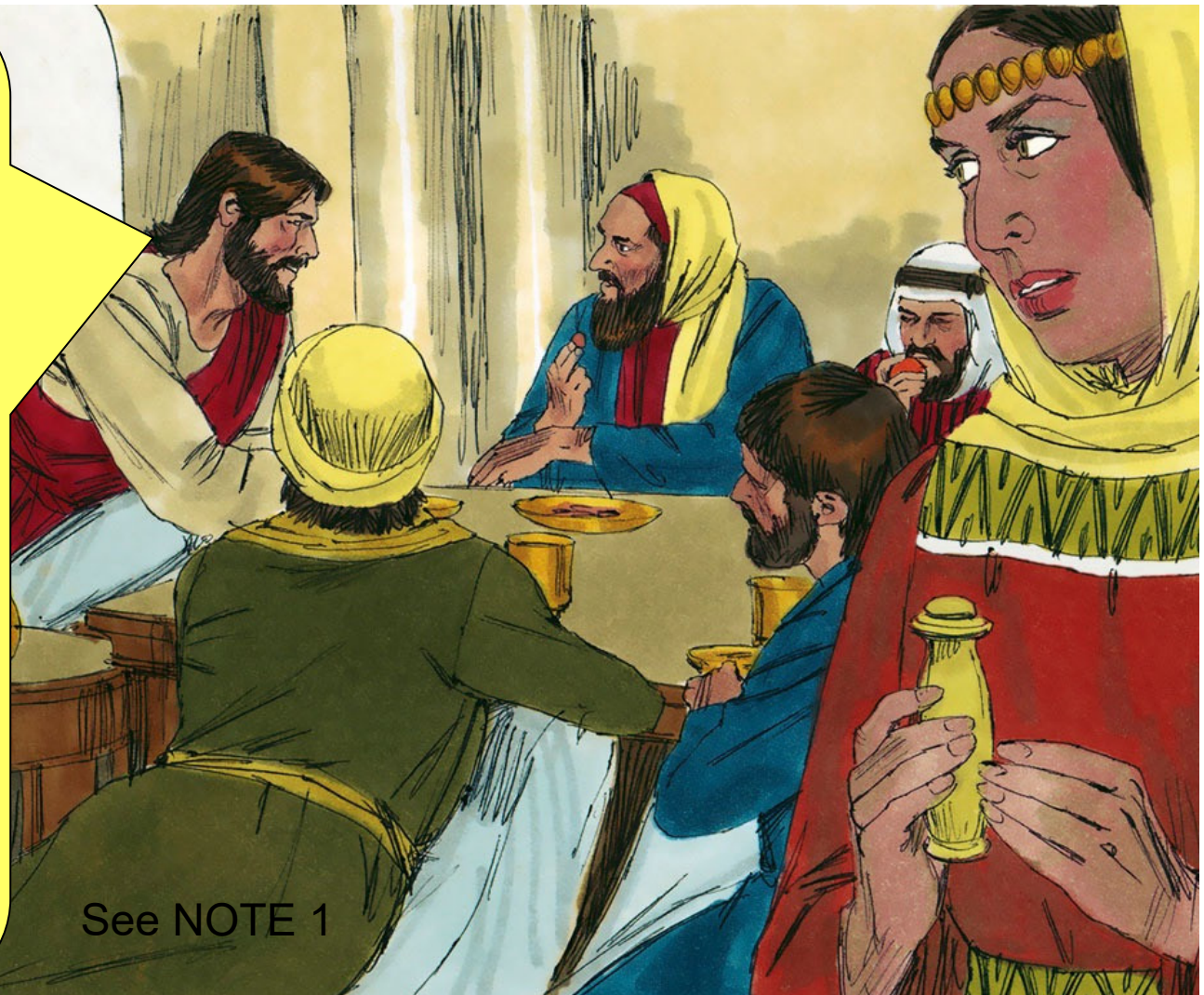
The blessing:

- a) Those who are merciful and compassionate to the poor and needy will be blessed by God:
 - Prov 14:21 ... blessed is he who is kind to the needy.
 - Acts 20:35 "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work **we must help the weak**, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: **'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'**"

b) Those compassionate towards others who are less fortunate materially, will be repaid at the resurrection.

➤ Luke 14:12 Then Jesus said to his host:

When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid.



See NOTE 1

But when you give a banquet,
invite the poor, the crippled, the
lame, the blind, and you will be
blessed. Although they cannot
repay you, **you will be repaid
at the resurrection of the
righteous.** [Luke 14:13-14]



... 'Come, you who are **blessed by my Father**; take your inheritance, **the kingdom prepared for you** since the creation of the world... I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' [Matt 25:34-36]



c) The merciful will
receive the kingdom:

THE MERCIFUL

2. Mercy sometimes entails meeting the spiritual needs of others. Our ministries must be motivated by love and mercy. To illustrate this point, consider the case of Nicholas Bhengu, where John Bond recalls, "I asked Bhengu whether he felt anything when he prayed for the sick. Actually, he spoke of that sense of compassion. He said that invariably when he felt like that, a healing occurred. Bhengu told me of a dream he had... from which he dated his healing ministry. Up to that time he had prayed for the sick but with small results. In his dream, Bhengu, who was very fastidious about hygiene, found himself in a Basotho hut surrounded and pressed by people afflicted with loathsome diseases. He shrank from contact with them as they reached out towards him." ¹

¹ <http://www.nuparadigm.co.za/Bond%20Book/Spiritual%20Happenings.html>



Then in his dream he saw Jesus descend through the thatched roof of the hut. Jesus moved among the sufferers touching them and healing them. Then He ascended through the roof again. As He went, He turned to Bhengu and spoke. "You do the same" He said. From that time, great miracles began to attend Bhengu's ministry. ¹

¹ Ibid.

THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ This is reminiscent of Jesus who was motivated by compassion to touch the unclean leper when he healed him. The leper, who was an outcast, would have never felt a human touch since his disease became apparent.
- Mark 1:40-42 A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean."



Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!"

THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ In fact, all of Jesus' ministry was motivated by compassion for people:
 - Matt 9:35-36 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, **he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.**



THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ Matt 14:14 When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had **compassion** on them and healed their sick.
- ❑ Matt 20:33-34 "Lord," they answered, "we want our sight." Jesus had **compassion** on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.



THE MERCIFUL

3. Mercy sometimes entails forgiving those who have wronged us.

- Prince Felix of Schwarzenberg entered the diplomatic service and was appointed foreign minister of Austria in November 1848. After the Hungarian revolt was suppressed in 1849, someone suggested to Schwarzenberg that it would be wise to show mercy towards the captured rebels. "Yes, indeed, a good idea," Schwarzenberg replied. "But first we will have a little hanging." →



Felix of Schwarzenberg

THE MERCIFUL

← His comment illustrates the problem we have with Jesus' words in Matthew 5:7: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." As a purely theoretical concept, mercy sounds like a good idea. Even those who reject Jesus as Lord are impressed by these words. The problem comes when we find ourselves in situations where we are required to actually implement them. On those occasions we find we are more in sympathy with the sentiments of Prince Felix. Approving of mercy and actually showing mercy are two very different matters...

I don't have a problem with mercy if I am on the receiving end. It's when I am the one required to show mercy that I struggle...¹

¹ John Koessler - professor of Pastoral Studies Dept. at Moody Bible Institute

THE MERCIFUL

- There is a story told about a mother who came to Napoleon on behalf of her son who was about to be executed. The mother asked the ruler to issue a pardon on behalf of her son, but Napoleon pointed out that it was the man's second offense, and justice demanded death. "I don't ask for justice," the woman replied.

"I plead for mercy." The emperor objected, "But your son doesn't deserve mercy." "Sir," the mother replied, "**it would not be mercy if he deserved it**, and mercy is all I ask." Her son was granted the pardon.¹



¹ Ibid.

THE MERCIFUL

There is only one kind of person you can show mercy to: a person who doesn't deserve it.

- ❑ Because of this, it is much easier to accept than it is to give.
- ❑ When I experience mercy, I know that I have nothing to lose and everything to gain. We accept God's grace because we know we are sinners and it is our only hope. But what happens when someone sins against us? How do we respond when someone says something behind our back or when someone takes advantage of us? How do we feel when we do something for someone and they forget to thank us? What if that person treats us cruelly? Now suppose that person is a fellow member of the church and claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ? →

THE MERCIFUL

← Because we are Christians, we are comfortable with the language of grace. It is a part of our vocabulary... We sing, "Only a sinner saved by grace ..." or "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me." We say these things about ourselves, and we feel good about it. We enjoy the experience of God's grace.

But it can be a very different story when it comes to showing that same grace to each other. It is one thing to sing about being a wretch. It is something else to have to worship with a person who acts like a wretch. So while we sing about grace, what we practice, in many cases, is retaliation. We rush out from the King's presence, with the words of absolution still ringing in our ears, and find our fellow servant who owes us.→

THE MERCIFUL

← We grab him by the neck and begin to throttle him crying, "Pay me what you owe me!" There is the person who feels slighted by the chairman of the committee and resigns saying she is too busy to continue to serve. There is the person who slips out the side door week after week after the service rather than greet the person who offended him a month ago.

There are a thousand whispers, a thousand slights, each one prompted by a genuine offense received at the hands of a fellow brother or sister in Christ. It's not that we despise the notion of mercy—how could we? But mercy is not something that comes naturally to us, even after we have been born again. Real debt is extremely hard to forgive. ¹

¹ Ibid.

THE MERCIFUL

Mercy implies loss:

- What is it that keeps us from abandoning ourselves to the grace Jesus talks about in this beatitude? Why do we keep accounts of the offenses committed against us and compound interest daily on those debts? Is it because we don't really understand mercy? Perhaps. Or maybe it is because we really do understand it!

Perhaps we're reluctant **because we realize that if we respond in the way Jesus describes here, we must cancel the debt.** If we behave as Jesus teaches, we will suffer loss—our debtor will get away without having to pay for what he has done. There is something deep within us that recoils at this thought.¹

¹ Ibid.


THE MERCIFUL

The blessing:


- Matt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- Those who extend forgiveness will receive God's mercy. It's a spiritual principle. Like it or not, the Bible repeatedly teaches us that mercy and forgiveness from God is dependant on how we treat those who have wronged us.

THE MERCIFUL

- ❑ Wesley's Notes on Matt 5:7 - Whatever mercy therefore we desire from God, the same let us show to our brethren.



Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. [Luke 6:37-38]

A digital illustration of Jesus with a beard and long hair, wearing a white robe with a hood. He is standing on a rocky mountain peak, looking off to the side with a serene expression. His right arm is extended forward, palm up. The background shows a vast, hilly landscape under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

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

[Matt 5:8]

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ In the Greek, the word for "pure" has the idea of "clean, pure, unsoiled, and not dirty." It was used to refer to refined metals such as gold, iron, and silver. That is, the word referred to metals with all the impurities removed. It was also used to refer to **clothes that had been washed clean** and to grain that had no chaff... "Pure" referred to all of the undesirable elements being removed.¹
- ❑ God can purify hearts that were once impure. Even after his terrible sin David prays:
 - **"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."** (Ps 51:10)

¹ <http://www.neverthirsty.org/pp/series/Life/LH045/LH01.html>

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ Have you noticed how some people can see something dirty in almost every situation? The impure can see something dirty in everything, while the pure in heart look for goodness and purity in everything around them.
 - Titus 1:15 **To the pure, all things are pure**, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.
- ❑ And so Paul warns Timothy:
 - 2 Tim 2:22 **Flee the evil desires of youth**, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord **out of a pure heart**.

PURE IN HEART

But how can we be pure in heart?

1. Study and live by God's Word:
 - Psalms 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure?
By living according to your word.
2. By remembering that Jesus will come one day and we'll have to give an account of our lives:
 - 1 John 3:2-3 ... But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.
Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

PURE IN HEART

3. By not succumbing to peer pressure

- 1 Tim 5:22 ... do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

4. By avoiding sexual immorality

- 1 Thess 4:3-7 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should **avoid sexual immorality**; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honourable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God ... The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. **For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.**

PURE IN HEART

5. By not grumbling

- ❑ Recognize that you have a deceitful and wicked heart.
 - Jer 17:9 (KJV) The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked.



IF YOUR LIFE STINKS - IT IS BECAUSE YOUR THINKING AND YOUR ATTITUDE STINKS!

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ The deceitful (deceptive) heart says:
 - Things shouldn't be the way that they are.
 - God should do things differently. People shouldn't get sick, suffer or have bad things happen.
 - People should act differently and treat me better.
- ❑ The pure heart doesn't complain and argue incessantly.
 - Phil 2:14-15 Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become **blameless and pure**, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.

PURE IN HEART

6. By checking your thought life

➤ Phil 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, **whatever is pure**, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - **think about such things.**

❑ People's New Testament - The Jew, under the tuition of the Pharisees, cared little for the state of the heart, so that outward forms were duly kept. Jesus, however, demands that the heart, the affections, the mind, shall be purified, as the fountain from whence flows the moral and religious life. A pure heart begets a pure life; an impure heart, a corrupt life.

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ It is not enough to clean up our act on the outside.
- Matt 23:25-26 (NIV)
"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean."



The aim of Jesus is not to reform the manners of society, but to change the hearts of sinners.

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ So Jesus would not be satisfied with a society in which there were no acts of murder, but one where men no longer have hatred - which is the root cause of murder.
- Matt 5:21-22 (NIV) "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."



PURE IN HEART

- ❑ Again Jesus is not content with a society in which there are no acts of adultery, but wants one where men no longer have lustful thoughts - which are the root cause of adultery.
- Matt 5:27-29 (NIV) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."



PURE IN HEART

- ❑ The deceptive heart tells us...
 - The problem is out there.
 - Those people/circumstances are the source of my pain.
- ❑ The pure heart realizes that:
 - The problem is within.
Out of the men's hearts comes all kinds of evil which make us spiritually 'unclean'.



Matt 15:19 (NIV) For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

PURE IN HEART

- ❑ The Biblical teaching about strongholds is that they exist in our thought life, not external places in a town where Satan resides:



**DEMOLISHING
STRONGHOLDS**



- 2 Cor 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to **demolish strongholds**. We demolish **arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God**, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

PURE IN HEART



- ❑ So the battle is in the mind. To be pure in heart we need to take every thought 'captive' and submit it to the scrutiny of the Scriptures - making it obedient to Christ. That is the battle against strongholds.
- ❑ John Piper says, "So the heart is utterly crucial to Jesus. What we are in the deep, private recesses of our lives is what he cares about most. Jesus did not come into the world simply because we have some bad habits that need to be broken. He came into the world because we have such dirty hearts that need to be purified." ¹

¹ <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/blessed-are-the-pure-in-heart>

PURE IN HEART

The blessing:

a) You will be the recipient of God's goodness:

- Ps 73:1 (NIV) Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are **pure in heart**.



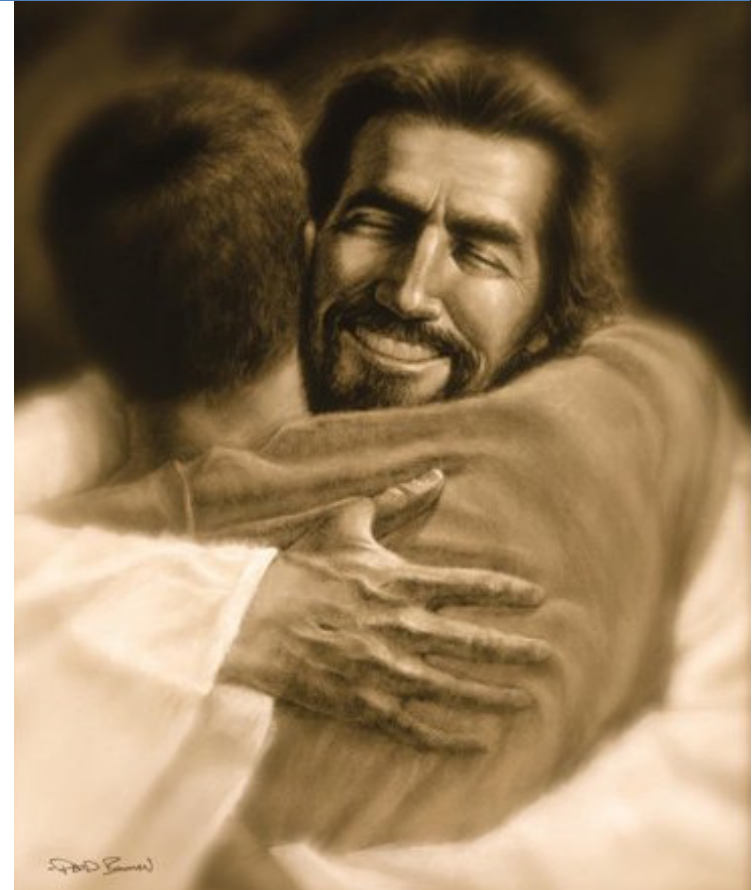
PURE IN HEART

b) The pure in heart will see God.

❑ Barclay renders Matt 5:8 as follows, "O the bliss of those whose motives are absolutely pure, for they will some day be able to see God."

➤ Psalm 24:3-4 (NIV) Who may ascend the hill of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? 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.

❑ Clean hands refers to actions while a pure heart speaks of motive.



PURE IN HEART

- ❑ But the promise of seeing God is not only a future blessing, but by being pure in heart we have access to his presence now - while still in this world.
 - James 4:8 (NIV) Come near to God and he will come near to you. **Wash your hands**, you sinners, and **purify your hearts**, you double-minded.
- ❑ John Piper comments:
 - Notice that just like Psalm 24 there is reference to both clean hands and a pure heart as preparation for drawing near to God, or "ascending the hill of the Lord." But notice how the men are described who need to purify their hearts: "men of double mind." That is they are men that will two things not just one thing. →

PURE IN HEART

← The impurity of double-mindedness is explained in James 4:4: "Unfaithful creatures [lit. adulteresses]! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

So the double-minded man of verse 8 has his heart divided between the world and God, like a wife who has a husband and a boyfriend. Purity of heart, on the other hand, is to will one thing, namely, **full and total allegiance to God**.

PURE IN HEART

- c) They will be vindicated by God. The Psalmist goes on to say of those who have "clean hands and a pure heart":
 - Psalm 24:5 (NIV) They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Saviour.
- ❑ The dictionary definition of vindication is:
 - the action of clearing someone of blame or suspicion.
 - proof that someone or something is right, reasonable, or justified.
- ❑ God knows that the pure in heart will often receive unfair treatment in this world. But he has promised that he will ultimately vindicate them.

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