

Upside-Down Living
The Radical Message of the Beatitudes
The Focus of Undivided Affections
Matthew 5:8

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Oct. 28, 2018

How would you know if you have the pure heart that Jesus is talking about in **Matthew 5:8**?

I. You'll Have a New Desire that Unifies and Clarifies the Place and Priority for All Other Desires in Your Life

The word 'pure' in this verse has the sense of being unmixed or single. It means to be united and to want one thing instead of being fragmented all over the place.

Whenever the Old Testament talks about being pure in heart it always means a heart that has been purified from idols.

Psalm 24:3-4 "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol..."

Psalm 86:11 "... unite my heart to fear Your name."

Kingdom people who have a pure heart are able to keep life in perspective and to keep even good things from becoming God things. Their heart is more focused and settled on what matters most so that they're not as likely to get the wrong thing in the wrong place in their life.

An idol is anything or anyone that begins to capture your heart and mind and affection more than God. It's living on substitutes as you try to build your life around something in this created world.

Kingdom people still struggle to not fall into this trap, but they have a new desire that unifies and clarifies the place for all other desires in their life.

II. You'll Believe that the Same God Who No Longer Charges Your Sins Against You Can Also Wash You and Renew Your Heart and Mind

The same Jesus who died and rose again to change your legal standing before a holy God also did so to wash you and renew you from your past as well as your confusing present.

Matthew 1:21 "Call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

We read in **I John 1:9** that Jesus is faithful to forgive us and change our legal standing and then He's faithful to cleanse us and change who we are. You have to believe He can!

III. You'll Fight to Be Right Now What You Know You Will Be On that Final Day

I John 3:1-3 says you're a child of God upon whom God has poured out His amazing love! Despite all our struggles and shortcomings, we'll be made like Him!

Knowing where you're headed and what you're going to become changes how you live now and motivates you to prepare for it.

James 4:8 "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

I Peter 1:22 "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth..."

The Bible never talks about believers justifying themselves, but it does talk about Christians purifying themselves by their obedience to the truth of God's Word in every area of their life.

A. You're Willing to Confess Specific Sins

We got into the sinful mess we're in one specific sin at a time and we will experience the process of purification as we confess and repent of specific sins.

I John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The word 'confess' is the Greek word 'homologeō' that means to say the same thing about it that God says about it. You stop making excuses and you refuse to re-label it as something other than sin.

B. You're Not Surprised or Ready to Quit Every Time You Fail

When you set yourself to do battle against sins that have held sway over your heart, there will be times that you stumble and fall.

The people who make the most progress in the Christian life are those who get back up after they fall, because they refuse to listen to the lies of their enemy – Satan. See **Proverbs 24:16** and **Micah 7:8**.

IV. You'll Start Feeding on God's Word Instead of Just Reading God's Word

Ephesians 5:25-26 tells us that Christ washes His kingdom people with the Word.

John 17:17 "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

You have to feed on the Word instead of just reading it. That involves reflecting, applying, believing, thanking, confessing, rejoicing and responding to God's Word as you chew your way through it.

Look at **Psalm 1:1-2**. The Hebrew word for meditate in that verse is 'hagah' which isn't passive like you might think. Think of sinking your teeth into Scripture and biting off pieces to chew like a lion growling over its prey.

If you start feeding on God's Word, over time you'll experience the cumulative effect of being immersed in His Word like soapy water on dirty clothes in a washing machine that agitates so that the stains of sin are gradually and increasingly loosened from the fabric of your life.

Those who are pure in heart desperately want this process to continue so they submit themselves to God's Word and commit themselves to chewing on it for a lifetime.