

BE God's People: pure in heart

Matthew 5:8

MPS: Jesus purifies the heart by gospel redemption to see God as life's all-consuming glory.
OBJ: Every person should trust Jesus to purify their heart and see God because of three hopes.

INTRO This summer, LifePoint is raising our expectations for the summer. Jesus sets people free and transforms to "BE God's People", to live in God's blessing by His Kingdom values. Walking in godly wisdom begins by embracing Kingdom values. Set your Summer aim to live in God's blessing by His Kingdom values.

ILLUS What do you want to "see"?

My family and I vacationed in Colorado recently. It is always a glorious experience for me to **see** and experience the Rocky Mountains. I love it. I love to see my kids enjoy God's creation, laugh together over meals and activities, and our conversations in those times. I love my first sight of the mountain range, somewhere just West of Limon, CO, after three hours and 400 miles of Kansas.

What do you want to see in life? We all think about what we want to see. The desires of our heart, needs of life met, goals or accomplishments to achieve, the things we want for our children, all of these are things we want to "see" in life. I want to direct each of us to think about this today, as an all-encompassing focus of life, "what are you living to see?"

Jesus purifies the heart by gospel redemption to see God as life's all-consuming glory.

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

As we reach the sixth Beatitude we enter the core of Jesus' teaching and the "heart" from which all the others originate. "In this beatitude Jesus continues an important Old Testament theme in which a pure heart describes a person whose single-minded loyalty to God affects every area of life. The pure in heart are those who...have given undivided loyalty to God and his ways."¹ **The essence and reality of knowing God is a pure heart completely and eternally cleansed from sin's stain.**

Purity of heart is a state of our being, a change of nature that we cannot produce for or within ourselves. This is the only Beatitude in which "there is not specific hint of a situation of need."² Purity of heart addresses the one defining need of our whole life, that we are dead in our trespasses and sin.^{Eph2:1} A little rightness in one area does not erase impurity in other areas. **But purity of heart means clean before God in all of life.**

Purity of heart can be recognized but is often dismissed. Purity deals not primarily with our inward attitudes or outward actions, but the heart motivations behind all that we think, feel and do. "There is purity of heart when the motives behind the (mostly apparently good, but on occasion apparently bad) actions can stand up under open scrutiny."³ And that scrutiny is not only what is outwardly known by others, but rather what is known within by the individual and God. When one lives out of a pure heart they enjoy the peace of a clear conscience. **Only a pure heart produces a clean conscience.**

TRANS A pure heart is not only inward, though, as it is demonstrated by a specific outward expression.

A pure heart produces a single-minded devotion to God by an all-consuming love for Jesus. "Purity of heart and purity of conscience are closely related in the pastoral Epistles (cf. 1 Tim 1:5; 3:9; 2 Tim 1:3; 2:22; cf. 1 Pet 1:22)."⁴ While many New Testament writings instruct how God sent Jesus as an atoning sacrifice for sin, it is James that most clearly articulates how an all-consuming love produces a singlemindedness. James warns against being "a *double-minded man*,

¹Michael J. Wilkins, [Matthew](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 209.

² John Nolland, [The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 2005), 204.

³John Nolland, [The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text](#), NIGTC, 205.

⁴Donald A. Hagner, [Matthew 1-13](#), vol. 33A, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 94.



unstable in all his ways”, then exhorts us to, “*be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*”^{Jms1:8,22} The person who does not live in single-minded devotion is divided in loyalty, duplicit even in the state of their heart. **A pure heart is the originating and centering reality of knowing God that produces a life of single-minded devotion to God. Only an all-consuming love can produce single-minded devotion.**

Jesus commands our single-mindedness when he states, “Seek first the Kingdom of God”.^{Matt6:33} Single-minded devotion to Jesus produces a vision for God that cannot fade. A heart that is pure is not convoluted nor conflicted regarding what is most important, most desirable or needed. Anything, even the good things of life, that distracts or deters us from trusting and obeying Jesus divides our devotion and loyalty, and deceives us in following Him. **Pure in heart is not about religion or ritual, but about a singular love and loyalty to the one who makes the heart pure, the Lord Jesus Christ.**

TRANS The necessity for and glory of a pure heart points us to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has made Himself known. He has written His Law on our hearts and conscience.^{Rom1:18-23;2:15} Our own conscience incriminates us when we agree that what God has said in His Word is righteous and good. In our conscience we both accuse and excuse our unrighteousness. But God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.^{Rom2:15-16} All are guilty of sin. No one has a clean heart before God.^{Rom3:10} Without Jesus and by Him as the standard of our judgment, we are doomed and damned, hopeless and helpless. **The person that does not trust in Jesus cannot have a pure heart. And, they know it but will not admit it.**

But praise be to God: by the revelation of God IN Jesus we are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.^{Rom3:23-24} Faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross cleanses to purify every heart! **Faith in Jesus’ atoning sacrifice cleanses a sin-stained, hell-damned heart to make one clean and right with God, pure in heart.**

Jesus says the pure in heart shall see God because they lift their eyes to where our help comes from, to see our Helper!

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

²*My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.* **Psalm 121:1-2**

What powerful HOPE prevails, “*they shall see God*”! **Jesus is here, now He is our hope. And the hope He gives is eternal!**

TRANS **What can we see NOW to know, to be held by hope that that we shall see God?**

John’s first letter helps to understand and walk through the glory of our hope in this beatitude.

“Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared;

but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.” **1 John 3:2**

We have and are held by an eternal hope that is not determined by or diminished by this world. We are God’s Beloved NOW! What we are and shall be is not in question. **The pure in heart shall see God (then) because we are God’s (now).**

John tells us how we are to hold what we do not know and see now by what we do know and see: “*but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*” **God’s righteousness on us in Jesus serves as our prevailing hope to consider what it means to be pure in heart. Purity of heart is expressed in the placement of our hope.**

OBJ **Three HOPES hold Christians to look to Jesus for a pure heart and see God.**

#1. Our ultimate hope: Jesus is our living, eternal hope.

The primary understanding of this Beatitude is eternal! We do not see or know all that there is now, but what we do know and see now IS sufficient to hold and sustain us. Though we neither know nor see completely nor perfectly, He does! What we DO know and see is enough for now. **All Christian hope is centered on Jesus, who is our eternal hope.**

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.

Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. **1 Cor 13:12**



Peter tells of the hope we have by salvation in Jesus.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1 Peter 1:3

When by faith we repent of our sin and confess Jesus as Lord, we are born again. Our new being holds a new, eternal hope. The certainty of this truth holds us now to not lose hope in this world!

An all-consuming love for Jesus means He is our hope, not what we can know and see. Do not build your “faith in God” only on what you can see or know. And, be careful that you do not build your primary understanding of God based on what you do not know. Saving faith is established in the revelation of God’s truth in Jesus Christ. [Jesus is our living, eternal hope. You can trust God with all that you do NOT know and see because of all that you DO know and see now.](#)

An all-consuming devotion produces a single-mindedness in obedience to Jesus. Deuteronomy 29:29 reminds us that the secret things belong to God but that which has been revealed belongs to us. In other words, when your heart is devoted to Jesus you obey in faith what you do know until He reveals what you don’t know or understand. [A full devotion and single-mindedness sets what is known of Jesus as the object of obedience to Him, instead of what is not yet known to justify rebellion.](#)

Ultimately, what you “see” is not determined by what crosses your sight, but what you set your heart and mind on.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

²Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. Col 3:1-2

[Jesus is the living, eternal hope of the Christian life that transcends this world but motivates all of life in this world.](#)

#2. The hope of HERE: God transforms every believer into Jesus’s image by gospel redemption.

Hope in Jesus also produces something we can see of God here, the transformation He produces in us. Paul writes,

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. ¹⁴But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Cor 3:12-18

The Israelites could not look at Moses when he came down from the mountain from meeting with God because His face shone so brilliantly with the glory of having met with God. They covered their faces and could not look because their hearts were hard. So hard, in fact, that they could not look upon him nor read His word and understand it. Their eyes had to be “covered” from sight because their hearts are “veiled” against hearing from God. [Hearts that are hard in unbelief toward Jesus produce blind eyes that cannot see God at work.](#)

When we hope in Jesus, He removes the veil of our heart that enables us to see God. We see God by His Spirit that lives and works within us. And what we see is how we are being transformed into the glory of Jesus from one degree to another. [The Spirit enables us to see the Father’s glory by the redeeming work of the Son, Jesus Christ, within us.](#)

We see God as we live daily by the Spirit. Holy Spirit illumines our hearts to understand and apply God’s Word to our lives through the gospel to grow us in godliness. Holy Spirit produces spiritual fruit in us and makes us more like Jesus in our nature. Holy Spirit exercises spiritual gifts through us as we serve to minister. We see God at work in our lives as Holy Spirit counsels us toward holy thinking, comforts us in troubling situations, helps us when life is hard and guides us when



our way is dark or unknown. Hebrews tells us that without holiness no one will see the Lord. ^{Heb12:14} David cries out to God, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit in me." ^{Psa51:10} Holy Spirit works the holiness of God into the hearts of those who trust to transform into the image of Jesus.

We see God as we grow in our stewardship of all of life. A pure heart overflows in prioritizing time with God, and in gathering and serving with God's people. A pure heart overflows in giving of our treasure for the ministry and mission of the gospel. A pure heart overflows through our talents to serve God's mission. A pure heart overflows through the intentional use of our tongue, to glorify God and encourage and edify His people. *We do not see all of God in this life, but there remains an unlimited amount to behold if our heart and mind are set on Him.*

Finally, we see God as the gospel works to sanctify us in life. The practice of confession and repentance of sin becomes normal. We learn to live by less of me and more of Jesus taking over within us. We labor so others hear the gospel and seek to persuade them to believe. A pure heart gives in ever-increasing manner for the sake of the gospel. *Living so Jesus increases and we decrease in our life only flows from a pure heart and enjoys God's glory as a reward.*

Christian's hold this hope here, that God transforms every believer into Jesus' image gospel redemption.

TRANS But our hope in this world to see God from a pure heart does not culminate with us.

3. The hope of NOW: God is gathering the nations to worship at His throne.

The Scriptures command our view of God at work in the world. *For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.* (Hab 2:14) The refrain of Heaven's song proclaims this vision. "And they sang a new song, saying, "for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation." (Rev 5:9) And John continues, "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb". (Rev 7:9) *The hope of now is to join God in His mission, to serve and share the gospel and make disciples of all nations that will gather to worship at God's throne.*

LifePoint, God is saying, "can you SEE me NOW?" Christ-followers look to Jesus in hope to strip the veil from our heart and see what God is doing in the world among all peoples through the gospel. The mandate of the Great Commission makes our vision of God imminent to serve and see the name and fame of Jesus Christ made known among all people. *Our hope of NOW, in looking to Jesus from a pure heart, is to see God gathering the nations to worship at His throne!*

Jesus purifies the heart by gospel redemption to see God as life's all-consuming glory.

CLOSE Psalm 24 captures the essence of this Beatitude.

*Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? ⁴He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. **Psalm 24:3-4***

Is your soul bowing to any other? Is your loyalty divided between Christ and anything else? Are your hands clean? Are you living in obedience to Jesus as far as you know? Is your heart pure to see God?

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

