



John Battaglia, D. Min.
PO Box 891, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-355-4161//Twitter @johnabattaglia
John.battaglia@capitolcom.org

Is It Possible?

Weekly Bible Study Schedule

Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 AM in HHR #5
(breakfast provided)

Thursday, March 16, 7:00 AM in HHR #5
(Casual conversations about the Bible and life)

Capitol Commission is non-partisan and non-denominational

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt 5:8 ESV)

Is it possible for anyone to be pure in heart? Who among us, certainly not me. Equally curious is the promise: “for they shall see God.”

“Man does not see what the Lord sees, for man sees what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7).

Chuck Swindoll rightly explains In Jesus' day, many of the religious authorities that claimed to serve the people were not "pure in heart." Hypocritical and phony, they played a role that lacked internal integrity. In Matthew 23—one of the most severe rebukes against hypocrisy in the entire Bible—we find words in strong contrast with the Beatitudes of Matthew 5. Instead of eight "Blessed are you's," there are eight "Woe to you's." Count them—Matthew 23:13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, and 29!

Woe unto whom? Well, read verses 25-28.

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all

uncleanness. So, you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Wow, Jesus said that! It is doubtful He despised anything among those who claimed to serve God more than hypocrisy—a lack of purity of heart. Did you notice what characterized the phony Pharisees?

They were big on rules and little on godliness

They were big on externals and little on internals

They were big on public commands and little on personal obedience

They were big on appearance and little on reality

On the outside, they "appeared righteous to men," but inwardly they were "full of dead men's bones...full of hypocrisy." Why did He hate that so much? Because it represented the antithesis of servanthood. Time after time, therefore, He announced, "Woe to you...!"

God knows where I, John, hide, and where you hide. What we don't want Him to see. Adam and Eve hid from the LORD in the Garden of Eden when they ate the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. When Christ followers are not pure in heart human tendency is to duck from our "stuff"; is to shrink from our shame; is to relocate to a dimly lighted street. Yet, God faithfully relocates to us; gets into the middle of our "stuff"; lights our path toward forgiveness.

He offers us a better place; a place without shame. That place is not on the outside of our skin, rather, on the inside of our heart. We do not need to conceal our brokenness God already sees it. I want to see Him. He is not hiding from us, and nothing is hidden from Him.

Back to Matthew 5:8—the "pure in heart." Jesus extols this virtue. The term *pure* literally means "clean." It's the idea of being uncontaminated, without corruption or alloy. Without guile...sincere and honest in motive.



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Pure (*Katharos* – Greek word) describes a heart which is **pure in motive** and which exhibits single mindedness, undivided devotion and spiritual integrity. “*Katharos*” gives us our English word *catharsis* which is used to describe a cleansing of one's mind or emotions.

“*Katharos*” has two basic meanings: “clean” and “unmixed; the second meaning, “pure in heart” involves being unmixed as well as being clean.

The Pure in Heart See God

Heart (*Kardia* – Greek word) figuratively used for the thoughts and will of a person. It is the engine that drives our decisions. Our heart, the most inner part of us, is the root of our actions. Our public actions will reveal our inward desires and motives.

“For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness” (Mark 7:21-22)

God wants to give us a pure heart. He does this when we turn to Christ in repentance and faith. He can purify your heart. He can shine into your heart “*to give you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Gold with the dross removed is pure gold.

There is a real purity in the heart of a believer, but it is mixed. It is real gold, but it is mixed with dross. Where there is a longing for purity and a loathing of our impurity, there is purity of heart.

When Jesus says “Blessed are the pure in heart” He is saying, “Blessed is the person whose heart is undivided.”

A Stepping Stone to Faith

I want to speak especially to the person who feels that the baggage they carry is so great, the mind and the heart has

become so twisted, that you cannot imagine ever being whole again.

Trusting Christ to cleanse you seems further way than you can stretch right now. You may believe that He could forgive you, but deep in your heart you can't ever see yourself being different. The desires of your heart are all messed up and you can't imagine your own heart being clean.

I want to give you a stepping stone to faith. Actually, what I am going to describe is where faith begins. The beginning of faith is to say: “If I was in Christ, and he was in me, I believe He could make this heart clean.” I'm inviting you to take your stand there today.

If you feel that you cannot yet trust Christ to cleanse you, I invite you to take this first step today. Believe that He could make your heart clean.

It would be a miracle. But He changed the hearts of other people. God changed the apostle Paul's blasphemous and murderous heart.

Believe this: If the power by which Jesus was raised from the dead were to work in you, your heart could be made clean. Settle that in your mind. Write it down: “My heart could be made clean. I believe that if I was in Christ, and He was in me, He could make me clean.”

“You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21)

“God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

I believe that if He cleansed me, I would be clean.

Settle this conviction, this conclusion, in your mind and in your heart, and then when it is settled that you believe He could do it, take the next step and ask Him to do it for you.