

## **"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."**

by Hendrik Joubert

The *poor in spirit* are promised the *kingdom of heaven*, and the *pure in heart* will see *God* – which would you rather qualify for? It is obvious that Jesus is not announcing selective blessings for isolated qualities; He is describing what every individual who wishes to be part of the kingdom of His dear Son and see God should become, with each of the blessings pronounced emphasizing a different view of salvation. The focus is on eternity while our carnal minds often want the benefits in this life. Consider the warning concerning hard times immediately after the blessings are announced. (**Matthew 5:10-12**)

Realizing that the blessings are different ways of describing the eventual outcome helps us to allow the Bible to interpret itself when deciding, for instance, what is meant by the *meek will inherit the earth*, or land. The (spiritual) fulfillment of the *land promise* to the spiritual decedents of Abraham is announced. **For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.** (**Romans 4:13; Galatians 3:7**) The saying of the Lord declarers the essence (in Christ) which a shadow previously announced – foreshadowed. (**Colossians 2:16-17**)

What does it mean to be *pure in heart*? Humility helps us never to be as arrogant as to suggest that we have become perfect so that we no longer sin, and that this is what it means to be *pure in heart*. This level of perfection suggests perfect knowledge and understanding of the complete will of God. Being pure in heart deals with our attitude and the intent (motives) with which we engage in specific behavior – a pure *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*.

It was perfectly correct to present sacrifices to God; however the heart (motive) of the person was an important component: **"I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, And your burnt offerings are continually before Me. I shall take no young bull out of your house nor male goats out of your folds. ...<sup>14</sup> Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High;"...** (**Psalm 50:8-14; Isaiah 1:9-18**)

Engaging in the simple instructions to **obey the gospel of God** (**1Peter 4:17; 2Thessalonians 1:8**) may become equally meaningless if it is not done *from the heart*: **But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, <sup>18</sup> and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.** (**Romans 6:17-18**) When we do what God says we should do it from a pure heart by attaching the values and purposes God ascribes to it without diminishing it with our *interpretations*.

In **Numbers 20:12** we learn that doing *what* God says, *when* He says as well as *how* He says demonstrates faith in, and respect for Him. To adjust what God says

is to act out the attitude "**shall we...**" instead of "*thus says the Lord...*" Those who adjusts what God says leaves a poor example of disrespect: "**Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel,...**"

We may speak of purity in heart when we do what we do from the heart to express our love, gratitude and respect for the God who in essence is love. We should not have ulterior motives such as hoping that He is going to make us prosperous in this life, diminishing our worship to paying protection money, so to speak. I worship God because He graciously gave me the opportunity to escape a just condemnation.

We are not to engage in religious activities to be noticed by others, to receive recognition and honor from them. This exhortation forms part of the sermon on the mount: "**Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.**" (Matthew 6:1) We seek the glory of God, and not man. (John 14:42-43)

Pure in heart is to do what we are to do with conviction, not double-minded *hoping* it is okay, or that we will get away with it. **Romans 14:22-23. The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. <sup>23</sup> But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.**

We tend to concentrate on the freedom aspect of the statement – there is room for difference of opinion – and not on the fact that we may well condemn ourselves by what we approve. Faith comes from hearing, and hearing from the word of Christ. (**Romans 10:17**) When I say *I believe*, I should be able to supply *the word of Christ* which supports what I say without the influence of my subjective reasoning. To be pure in heart is to selflessly seek that which God desires for me to be – **not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.** (Ephesians 6:6)