

Sermon: Pure in heart

Matthew 5:8

Pure in heart

Psalm 24:1-10

God cares about our heart condition.

1 Samuel 16:7, Matthew 12:34-35

To see God

Our purpose is to seek God.

Acts 17:26-27, Job 19:23-27

No mortal person has or can see God's total glory.

Exodus 33:21-23

Some have seen an appearance of God.

Isaiah 6:1-8

Everyone will see God for a moment.

Revelation 1:7

The pure in heart will spend eternity with God.

1 Corinthians 13:12, Revelation 21:3-4

Bible study: Pure in heart

Getting to know you

1. Last Sunday's sermon was on purity of heart and the privilege of seeing God. Is there anything about the sermon you would like to discuss in your small group?
2. Think of a moment in your life when you felt especially close to God. What caused you to sense his presence in that particular moment?

Going deeper

3. Read Psalm 51:1-6. This is the psalm that David wrote after his sin of adultery and murder was revealed. Do you have a hard time believing that such serious sins can be forgiven? And how can a sinner such as David be called a man after God's own heart?

Although we know in our minds that God can forgive any sin we commit (with the exception of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which is a special case), it seems too much to forgive such big sins. We like to think our own sins are not as serious as these big sins. We really want God to forgive our own sins but we aren't too sure we want him to forgive "real" sinners. That puts us in the same category as the Pharisees and Jonah. But the wideness of God's grace is good news. We can be sure that our sins are forgiven because God's grace is so amazing. No one has ever kept their heart pure. The only question is have we allowed God to clean up our stained hearts.

4. Why did David claim to have sinned only against God? Who else was affected by David's sin? Is he minimizing that damage?

Others were certainly hurt by David's sins. If we could see the true damage that would come from our sin, we would think twice before committing them. But all of that damage was done to people who belong to God. When you are hurt or offended, God takes it personally because you belong to him. He reserves the right to dispense justice and mercy.

5. Read Psalm 51:7-19. David must have repented well because he was restored by God. What can we learn about how to repent well from this psalm?

David doesn't justify or minimize his sins. He doesn't pretend that he can make it right. He throws himself on God's mercy and love.

He recognizes the cost and the evil of his sin. He recognizes God's right to

judge him.

He asks God to take away his guilt but also to make him a better person. He wants a pure heart and a steadfast spirit.

David recognizes that religious behavior cannot make up for sin. The sacrifices are worthless unless they represent a heart that is truly contrite and broken.

Although his worship of God doesn't take away his sin and guilt, David states that he wants to worship God out of gratitude for his mercy and grace.

6. Do you ever struggle with guilt from sin that you have already confessed and renounced? Read 1 John 3:19-24. What do you think this passage teaches about that problem?

Sometimes we still feel guilty of sin that God has forgiven. That's just because we're human. Our emotions don't always reflect reality. Our minds can tell our hearts that God has promised his cleansing and forgiveness so our hearts are wrong if they still feel guilt.

Putting it into practice

7. Ask God to reveal if you have a clean heart. If you do not, then ask God to clean it. If you do, then ask God to help you to know it without doubt.