

**Want To See God?**  
*Sermon on the Mount, Vol. 7*

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Matthew 5:8

Consider a scene from about 700 years before Jesus was born. Isaiah recounts this, from when the Lord called him to be His prophet to Judah.

*Isaiah 6:1–5: In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.*

*And one called out to another and said,  
“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts,  
The whole earth is full of His glory.”*

*And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. Then I said,*

*“Woe is me, for I am ruined!  
Because I am a man of unclean lips,  
And I live among a people of unclean lips;*

***For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”***

What stands out to any person or angel who sees the throne room of heaven is that it is **Holy**. When Isaiah was allowed to see this, his reaction was dramatic. Immediately, he experienced God's mercy and grace.

*Isaiah 6:6–7: Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a burning coal in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth with it and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven.”*

Consider where we have been so far in The Beatitudes:

*Matthew 5:3–7: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.  
Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*

It's easy to come up with a brand of faith that doesn't make strong demands on people. It's easy to preach things that help people to leave church feeling good. But the problem with that is that to do so you have to ignore what God says and replace it with man-made lies. The beatitudes (or  **blessings** ) which begin this great Sermon of Sermons are simultaneously both the **description** of a Christian and the **goals of discipleship**. It is appropriate to hold this teaching up to our lives and make a comparison.

## I. Who Is Blessed?

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

The **purity** described here is something only God can give. You need to be **pure IN HEART**. You can't make it by trying real hard to overcome your weaknesses. You can't achieve it by doing works of righteousness in the hope that you will have more on the good side of the ledger than the bad side of the ledger when you stand before God. You can't manufacture this purity by acting pious and doing things other people perceive as spiritual. No amount of religious fervor can drum up this purity.

It is **purity in the inner man**; purity before God who both desires it and makes it available to you, as He did for Isaiah. It's the purity David came to understand and describe when he faced the reality of his own sinful heart in light of his wicked deeds:

Psalm 51:6–8: Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

In both the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament, **heart** is the word used to describe the **real you**. Far more than your emotions, your heart is the **control center**; the place of decision-making; the private moral courtroom in which you weigh the things you do; the control knob on your conscience is in your heart.

Remember again the **historical context** of this. The Pharisees' brand of religion was built on the foundation of religious displays of fervor, the keeping of external morality, and rigorous keeping of a huge list of do's and don'ts. That kind of religion makes for great displays before men, but it is an abomination to God.

Luke 16:14-15: Now the **Pharisees**, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were scoffing at Him. And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for **that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God**."

You can't make a heart pure by working from the outside in. But God delights to make a life pure by working outward from the heart. It starts with the heart, and with you surrendering your heart to God for Him to do whatever He wants to do there.

Psalm 24:3–4:  
Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?  
And who may stand in His holy place?  
He who has **clean hands and a pure heart**,  
Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood  
And has not sworn deceitfully.

Psalm 51:10:

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,**  
*And renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

Psalm 73:1:

*Surely God is good to Israel,*  
*To those who are pure in heart!*

Psalm 125:4:

*Do good, O Lord, to those who are good,*  
*And to those who are **upright in their hearts.***

2 Timothy 2:22: *Now flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, **with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.***

1 Peter 1:22–23a: *Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another **from the heart**, for **you have been born again . . .***

1 Timothy 1:5: *But the goal of our instruction is love **from a pure heart** and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

Notice the connection of the **heart** with the **conscience**. It's all connected to the inner working of the Spirit of God in your heart, soul, mind, will, and conscience. As to purity of the heart, salvation purifies your heart—it solves a problem with sin you could do nothing about on your own. Then and only then are you able to walk in purity.

Hebrews 10:22: . . . *let us draw near with a **sincere heart** in full assurance of faith, **having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience** and our bodies washed with pure water.*

Purity of heart begins with your heart being sprinkled from an evil conscience (by the blood of Jesus Christ). It is a heart **purified by faith** which is then able to think on pure things.

## II. **What Does The Blessing Include?**

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

**For they shall see God** is the promise that comes with this blessing. As with every previous beatitude, **they** is an emphatic pronoun, giving the meaning **they and they alone**, no one else.

To **see God** in a literal sense is reserved for the age to come, first in an intermediate way when Jesus will bring His kingdom to earth, then fully in the New Heaven and New Earth of eternity. While that is true, to **see God** is not reserved only for ages to come. There is also an inward vision. A better way to say it is **understanding** or **perception** that

comes with inward purity. To walk with Jesus **opens spiritual eyes** hitherto blinded by unbelief.

2 Corinthians 4:3–4: *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has **blinded the minds** of the unbelieving **so that they might not see the light** of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

John 14:19: *After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also.*

While there is the *here and now* sense that this is true, we dare not diminish the future wonders of this promise. Contemplate these amazing realities we look forward to:

1 John 3:2: *Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because **we will see Him just as He is**.*

Job 19:25–27: *As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,  
And at the last He will take His stand on the earth.  
Even after my skin is destroyed,  
Yet **from my flesh I shall see God**;  
Whom **I myself shall behold**,  
And whom **my eyes will see** and not another.  
My heart faints within me!*

Psalms 17:15:  
*As for me, I shall **behold Your face** in righteousness;  
I will be **satisfied with Your likeness** when I awake.*

1 Corinthians 13:12: *For **now we see in a mirror dimly**, but **then face to face**; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.*

<p>How is your heart? Do you understand your spiritual poverty? Do you mourn over your sin? Does it make you meek? Are you hungering and thirsting for righteousness? Has God's mercy turned you into a conduit through whom He spreads mercy? Are you pure in heart, by His grace?</p>
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